

Hearing Transcript

Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Hearing on Violent Extremism and Foreign Assistance

April 12, 2016

GRAHAM:

The Subcommittee will come to order. Our hearing today is on the causes and consequences of violent extremism and the role of foreign assistance.

I would like to welcome our distinguished panel of witnesses -- Deputy Secretary of State Tony Blinken; Bono, lead singer of U2 and co-founder of ONE and (RED); General James Jones, former National Security adviser, supreme allied commander in Europe and president of the Jones Group International; and Kelly Clements, deputy United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

I'll make a short opening statement, let Senator Leahy do the same, and we'll have a seven-minute round.

So, number one, this was a good day for photographers. Hope you got a good shot there. I just gotten back from my 30-something trip to the region. I had the pleasure of being in Turkey with Bono and Egypt. And each person here is tasked, in their own way, of trying to inform the Congress in making policy decisions to deal what I think is a crisis that you either pay now or you pay later.

To the American people, we cannot ignore this. The goal is for people to stay at home and not come here, not go to Europe, but stay in Syria. You name the country. They don't have to lead -- leave. The reality is the average refugee has been displaced from their home for 17 years.

In Turkey, we met people in a camp, preschoolers that were four years old, most of them were born in the camp. I could not tell them when they would get to go home. If the war in Syria ended tomorrow, it would be a nightmare to reconcile Syria, but that day I hope is coming and we'll have to deal with that problem.

The idea of humanitarian assistance is absolutely necessary because some of these people are without food, and water, and shelter. It is in our national security interest, and I think General Jones will tell us to get ahead of this problem before it turns into the jihadist army of the future.

But humanitarian aid has to be looked at in terms of reality. There's an op-ed piece today by Bono in the New York Times. I would recommend you read it. But it talks about the dilemma of humanitarian aid and developmental assistance.

When you realize that most of these kids and their parents are not going any -- back home any time soon, what kind of skill set should they possess to make them viable human beings in the

country where they're going to live for a while? And if they ever do go back to their home, what do they bring back with their home?

Every day goes by that a kid is not educated in one of these camps, and most of them are not in camps, they're actually in the cities of the country that they've been displaced to. In Turkey, the government of Turkey has been extraordinarily generous making payments, free health care. Jordan, our friends in Jordan, are completely overrun. In Lebanon, there are more Syrian refugee children in Lebanese primary school than Lebanese children.

To think that will not affect us is naive. To think that there's no solutions -- well, that's just wrong. To think it's easy is just crazy.

So here's the deal. I'm going to work with Senator Leahy and the members of this Committee to put together an emergency relief package. And if you don't think this is an emergency, I welcome the contest. I welcome the debate.

This account is one percent of the federal budget. And because of world events it is tremendously under siege. And I don't want to take money away from PEPFAR. I don't want to take money away from Malaria. I don't want to take money away from the Peace Corps. I'm not going to take money away from Embassy Security.

So what do we do? I think we have to recognize we have an emergency on our hand. Then we have to come up with a long-term strategy and it has to be world-driven, not United States-driven.

In the op-ed piece I referenced, Bono suggested that now is the time to think big. I could not agree more.

We know, in the past, that radicalized populations were turned around. Germany and Japan were very radicalized populations. The Marshall Plan did work. Out of that effort we have now two stable democracies that are allies.

The difference is the war is still going on, and we don't have an occupation force. Radical Islam is spreading its wings all over the Mid-East and throughout Africa. And the question for this Committee, the country, and the world is, how do you destroy radical Islamic extremists and other radical ideologies?

General Jones will tell us about the limitations of military power. Mr. Blinken will tell us about the limitations of diplomacy. Mr. Bono will tell us about the possibilities of the private sector joining with the government -- to give people hope that have none now.

I'm a pretty hawkish fellow, but I have learned a long time ago, about 30 trips ago that you're not going to win this war by killing terrorists. The biggest threat to radical ideology is a small schoolhouse educating a poor, young girl. That will do more damage to the radical Islamic extremist than any bomb to drop on their head.

We have schoolhouses here at home, are in great state of disrepair. We have a lot of domestic needs and we have \$19 trillion in debt and counting. I am sorry the world is not more convenient in terms of the needs back here at home.

I do not ignore people in South Carolina when I say we need to spend some money over there. I tell people back home either we invest over there or they're coming here.

9/11 is becoming a distant memory, but not for me. The money this country spent just on the money side after the attacks of September 11, 2001 is in north of a trillion dollars. The two wars of Afghanistan and Iraq is about a trillion and a half. We can argue about how we spent the money, should we spent the money, but we are where we are.

No, I'm not here, Tony, to argue with you about Syrian policy. I'm here to find a way to go forward, to use what is commonly called "soft power: to supplement a military strategy. And I would conclude with this.

To our NGO community, you can do just as much good as any battalion of soldiers because without your assistance on the ground trying to give people hope, nothing will ever change.

To take the land from the enemy is one thing. To hold it is another. That's where we come in.

For a fraction of what we spent in the past, if we do it wisely through a worldwide effort, I think we can turn this around before it's too late. If we do nothing, I know exactly what's going to happen.

Some of our friends are going to fall, and the people in these camps today are going to be our enemies. So you have two choices when it comes to these young people. Get involved in their lives now or fight them later. I choose to get involved in their lives now and let them do the fighting later because without their help we will never win this war.

So I want to thank each member of the panel to come and share with you -- share with us your vision of how to move forward.

To this Subcommittee, I think we have a great opportunity with a modest amount of money to make a huge difference. I intend to do that, but I cannot do it without your buy-in, without your support, and without your advice. Times are tough at home. But when you go to the -- one of these refugee camps and you visit the Mid-East, you know it could be worse.

Senator Leahy?

LEAHY:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the fact you're holding this hearing. I also appreciate the four witnesses. Each bring unique perspectives on the challenges.

I once introduced Bono in an event and said that there are millions of people who never know your name, never be able to purchase your music or go to one of your shows. All they know is their life is better because of the work you've done. And you haven't stopped since that time. You've focused the world's attention on poverty in Africa, the very tangible ways we can dramatically improve the lives of millions of people. I'm glad Ali and your children are able to be there with you because I know they -- they share strongly in your -- your great commitment.

General Jones is one of the most distinguished public servants I know. I knew him from way back when, I think, he was a major there long before he became four-star -- before he's (inaudible), long before he's our head of NATO. He has this long and distinguished career.

I've also heard General Jones say so many times it is important as military forces. There's no substitute for diplomacy and development. And the General has been concerned about Africa and where we are long, long before this hearing.

And, General, I admire you for that.

And Deputy High Commissioner Clements is no stranger to any of us here. She's worked on refugee issues at the State Department, the United Nations for, I think, over 25 years if I'm correct. It seems that every time we've had an issue here you -- you've been involved, and I appreciate it.

And then I could take a list of 40 issues, and Secretary Blinken is involved in every one of the 40 with expertise on those issues. That's been helpful to those of us here in the Senate. But I know from President and others, it's been helpful to them. We look at the horrific crimes committed by groups like ISIL and Boko Haram.

Now, we can, as Chairman, you said and others said, we can limit the territory control of these organizations through the use of force. We're not going to defeat terrible and pernicious ideas by bullets and bombs. And I think our foreign aid programs can't substitute for government policies and strategies in places like the Middle East and north Africa, which must promote stability and opportunity. They have to protect fundamental freedoms. If they don't, then they don't have a real counter to terrorist recruitment, and those policies and strategies in that area are often lacking.

Now, we support a wide range of programs to address these issues, and these threats are clearly economic and social development and so on. But spending -- just spending more money is not going to do it. We have to do better. We have to know the underlying causes. So that's why I want to hear from everybody here.

I have an article written by Admiral Stavridis and General Zinni, and we were talking about the General Zinni just earlier, a letter to the Appropriations Committee signed by 18 of our former colleagues, including former Majority Leaders Frist and Daschle. I'd ask for those to be part of the record.

GRAHAM:

Without objection.

LEAHY:

And while I will also do this on the floor, I'd ask that the op-ed piece that Bono wrote at today's New York Times be made part of record...

GRAHAM:

Without objection.

LEAHY:

... because they talk about the development in diplomacy, how we need that to be used to combat terrorism. So I mention these things because you have a Republican and a Democrat from different political backgrounds, and we have worked together on these issues for years and years. I was almost going to say way back when I had hair, but you weren't born then...

GRAHAM:

Well, I'm catching up with you on the hair part.

LEAHY:

But the thing is, give us the ideas of what to do. We'll try to do it.

GRAHAM:

Thank you very much, Senator Leahy.

General Jones, when it comes to what to do, you're a military man. You've had a distinguished military career. Can you tell us why you support this idea of economic assistance, foreign assistance in general from the military point of view?

JONES:

Mr. Chairman, thank you, and Members of the Committee, Senator Leahy, thank you very much...

GRAHAM:

Yeah.

JONES:

... for this invitation to testify today. I commend your leadership on a matter of great importance to our interests in the future of the human enterprise. I'm very honored to be here with our fellow witnesses who devoted much of their lives to the cause of human development, peace and stability.

Secretary Blinken and I go back a long ways to his days in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and -- and the National Security Council. And I'd like to publicly recognize the tremendous work he's doing over at the State Department.

From personal observation, there's no more passionate, thoughtful and informed and effective advocate for development in the security nexus than Bono. Millions live better and more hopeful and peaceful lives because of his work and because of many efforts of this Committee.

And I thank you for that and congratulate you, Bono.

You have my full statement, Mr. Chairman, and with your permission, I'll summarize very briefly.

During most of my active-duty military service, our national security was defined by the struggle against communism and the Soviet military threat. Security was expressed in the calculus of comparative troop strength, weapons count, and nuclear through weight.

Today's threats are exponentially more diverse and more complex than those we faced in the bipolar world we left behind in the 20th century. They include the likes of cancerous terrorists and criminal enterprise, failing states and conflict triggering massive refugee flows, grave natural resource threats and the ongoing battle for hearts and minds between the forces of modernity and those of hate and intolerance.

These challenges are synergistic and extreme, yet so are the opportunities created by many positive trends in the march of human advancement. But if our future is to be defined by our opportunities rather than the threats, it demands and I stress demands far deeper conception and understanding of national -- international security, one less reliant on reaction and far more focused on anticipation and even prevention, one that centers on disarming the root causes and major multipliers of conflict and instability, and one that in the long run is much less costly than what we practice today.

Viewed through that lens, what comes in a sharp focus, in my view, is that the premier strategic threat to global security and to our own is not any single country or any single ideology or any

single weapon, it is human need -- the unsatisfied demands for life basics including food, energy, water, dignity and a better future for masses living on the edge. And as I understand it, the purpose of this hearing is to examine the causes and consequences of island extremism.

For many extremist leaders and their acolytes, the attraction to violent Islam is born of religious fanaticism and the selfish lust for power. Others find their attraction in depraved quest belonging. For multitudes, the simple motivation is sustenance, fear, and coercion. But what is abundantly clear, however, is that extremist bank on leveraging human want and desperation for their own purposes. They seek to exploit human misery in the pursuit of scale.

As scale -- at scale, and with increasing access to sophisticated weaponry, violent extremism is as great a threat to global stability and prosperity including our own as any state power.

I have long felt that the United States and developed nations have a deep moral obligation and self interest to end the plague of ISIS, Boko Haram and their ilk. Unquestionably, defeating this barbaric threat has a military element associated with it, but defeating radicalism strategically requires a far broader toolkit. And that's where we and the like-minded allies and our collective foreign assistance play the most crucial role.

U.S. foreign assistance has produced great achievements over the last century to alleviate poverty, advance global health, and respond to natural disasters and human emergencies. The return on investment in global influence and national security is enormous. The key now is investing our resources more wisely to leverage the full spectrum of U.S. and allied capabilities to defeat violent extremism and the conditions that give it oxygen in the most vulnerable populations and places on earth.

It seems to me that we must to realign the strategy to face today's threats, the same way we calibrated to defeat the dark "isms" of the last century with major overhauls in policy and organization, such as the 1947 National Security Act and the 1986 Goldwater-Nichols legislation.

We need global development and a counter extremism campaign that is as sophisticated and passionate and resourced as any fight we have taken on in our history, designed and resourced as if the future depends on it because it does. I would submit such a new framework must be guided by four principles.

One, the battle plan must recognize that stability in the 21st century is a complex ecosystem, an integrated symphony of security, development, and good governance rooted in the rule of law. Our foreign engagement and assistance programs should be synthesized to cultivate these three coefficients in concert.

Two, it must integrate the public and the private sector. No amount of foreign assistance can substitute for the transformational power of economic growth and employment, which is fueled by private sector investment.

Three, it must recognize that the threats posed by lack -- by education, food, energy and water and security to stability. Lack of access to these resources is a major driver of poverty, conflict, and extremism. That means core to everything we do, our diplomacy, policies, practices, and innovations must be promoting wise stewardship of the natural systems required to sustain human well-being.

And four, the campaign must engage the whole of the U.S. interagency, the whole of society, and the whole of our alliances to deliver security development and governance assistance that changes people's lives.

In this century, as it was in the last, shaping a world of peace and prosperity will require American leadership at its best. We can, we must, and I believe we will rise to the extreme challenges and opportunities in the still young and hopeful century.

With your approval, Mr. Chairman, I would like to submit three documents for the Committee's consideration. One is an article from the Atlantic Council's Task Ahead publication on modernizing global engagement. The second brief is a relevant NGO initiative on the topic. And the third is a recently -- a recent speech I gave on water security.

Please accept my deepest appreciation to the -- for the Committee and to my fellow witnesses for your devotion to American leadership in the cause of global security development and stability. It is the mission of our time, and it is a cause for the ages. Thank you, Sir.

GRAHAM:

Thank you, General.

I recognize Senator Perdue who's here. He is on our last trip, so thank you for coming, Senator Perdue.

Mr. Blinken?

BLINKEN:

Mr. Chairman, as a wannabe musician, I could only dream of one day opening for Bono. So thank you and thank you to the Ranking Member for making that dream come true.

(LAUGHTER)

It's not the Verizon Center, but I'll take it.

And thank you more seriously for having all of us here today. I'd like to focus my remarks on our efforts to counter violent extremism, but I'd welcome any questions you or the panel have on the Administration's response to what is a global refugee crisis.

A little over a year ago I traveled to Paris shortly after the Charlie Hebdo attacks. Our Ambassador Jane Hartley convened faith leaders and activists from communities across the city, working to try to bring people a little bit closer together in the wake of that attack. One of them was an extraordinary woman, Latifa Ibn Ziaten, a French Moroccan Muslim woman, the mother of five, including a son named Imad.

Imad was a member of the first paratroop regiment of the French Army. He was stationed near Toulouse in 2012. And there, he was murdered alongside three brothers in arms, three children, and a rabbi by a radicalized 23-year-old from Izards in France.

Soon after that, Latifa, his mother, traveled to Izards. She talked to those who knew her son's murder. First is a shy boy who loved soccer or football. Later is someone who racked up 15 charges for petty crimes and spent a year in jail for assault where he was radicalized.

When Latifa returned home, she started Imad Ibn Ziaten Youth Association for Peace, working in France's at-risk communities to promote interfaith dialogue and help families steer their children away from radicalization to violence -- the path that had resulted in her son's death.

While Latifa's story shows our capacity to find greater understanding even in the midst of unimaginable tragedy, her son's death reminds us also of the complexity of the origins of violent extremism in the modern world -- and only hardens our resolve to defeat it.

The United States has mobilized countries around the world to disrupt and defeat terrorist groups and individuals who threaten our common security -- starting with Daesh and Al Qaeda, including Boko Haram, Al-Shabaab, AQAP and others. Our comprehensive strategy is making significant progress, as detailed in my written statement, which I submitted for the record.

But even as we advance our efforts to defeat Daesh on the front lines, we must work to prevent the spread of violent extremism in the first place -- to stop the recruitment, the radicalization, and the mobilization of people, especially young people, to engage in violence and terrorist activities.

Since President Obama hosted the White House Summit on Countering Violent Extremism over a year ago, the Department of State has stepped up to play a lead role in what is a growing international CVE movement through our diplomatic engagement and foreign assistance. We have notified Congress of our intent to empower a retooled Bureau of Counterterrorism and Countering Violent Extremism to try to lead this effort. The Bureau will promote a more strategic approach to countering violent extremism, alongside ongoing counterterrorism partnerships and engagement.

In F.Y. '17, the President's budget requests that we build upon and expand our current CVE efforts. We seek \$186.7 million toward countering violent extremism. That includes \$59 million for CVE as a portion of the overall Counter-Terrorism Partnership Fund. The request also includes \$21.5 million for the new Global Engagement Center, to try to counter Daesh's narrative. Additionally, we have invested in innovative programs to make communities more resilient against extremism.

These resources would enable us to expand partnerships with national and local governments, civil society, community leaders, the private sector in key countries to address the drivers of violent extremism, which I'm happy to address when we get to questions. And these resources would allow us to implement effectively the first-ever joint USAID and State Department strategy on preventing and countering violent extremism, governed by five core priorities.

And quickly, they are, first, to engage and amplify locally credible voices that can expose the true nature of violent extremism and its denial of human dignity.

Second, to increase support for innovative regional, country- based and thematic research on the drivers of violent extremism and on effective responses.

Third, to work more closely with our partners at the national and local levels around the world to actually adopt more effective policies to prevent the spread of extremism.

Fourth, to strengthen diplomatic efforts and local partnerships to address some of the distinct underlying political, social, and economic factors that put communities at risk in the first place. And General Jones alluded to some of those.

And fifth and finally, to strengthen the capabilities of our partners to prevent radicalization to violence, especially in prisons, and to help ensure that former fighters are rehabilitated and reintegrated back into society wherever possible.

Ultimately, at the heart of our strategy, is a commitment to the principles that have underwritten an unprecedented era of greater peace and prosperity over the last seven decades since World War II -- good governance and pluralism, the rule of law and fundamental freedoms, human rights and human dignity.

That commitment extends to those we flee violence around the world. When it comes to refugee resettlement and the refugee crisis more generally, our first priority is to safeguard the American people. But at the same time, we must and we will continue to provide refuge to the vulnerable, which has been the bedrock of our country for centuries.

Over the last several months, we've heard divisive and hateful rhetoric in all corners of the world, including the United States that's conflated refugees with violent extremists and demonized those fleeing persecution, violence, and terrorism. Our ultimate success in the fight against violent extremism will be determined by our ability to hold fast to the very values terrorists oppose -- our capacity for reason, for wisdom, and for compassion.

I returned to Paris just a -- a month ago, and I met again with that same group that I saw just after the Charlie Hebdo attacks. Latifa wasn't there, and the reason was because she was in Washington where Secretary Kerry announced her as one of the 2016 International Women of Courage Award winners.

Mr. Chairman, Members of this Committee, many of you in this room have been vital leaders in countering extremism, including through the foreign assistance appropriations. Your leadership

is helping to ensure that in their very acts of terror, violent extremists are precipitating exactly what they hope to destroy, a world a little bit more closely bound together in defense of dignity, justice, and peace.

Thank you very much.

BONO:

Right. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Ranking Member Leahy.

Thank you, Members of the subcommittee.

My name is Bono. I'm the co-founder of the ONE Campaign, and I'm just going to jump right into it because I've been told not to filibuster.

And as you know, the Irish invented the filibuster.

(LAUGHTER)

So I'm going to read this because that makes it faster. I've just returned from Africa and the Middle East where I was lucky to join a CODEL led by Senator Graham there. I visited Kenya, Jordan, and then with the team Turkey and Egypt. This visit revealed one fact and two fictions. The fact is that aid can no longer be seen as charity, a nice thing to do when we can afford it.

If there's one thing I would like you to take away from this testimony, it is that aid in 2016 is not charity. It is national security. And when it's structured properly with a hard focus on fighting corruption and improving governance to qualify for that aid, it could be the best bulwark we have against the violent extremism that are gaining traction in the Levant and the Sahel.

The two fictions the expedition revealed to me were, number one, that this refugee problem is temporary. The typical crisis that creates refugees lasts 25 years. On our trip, Senator Graham and I heard the term "permanent temporary solution" thrown around but without the irony of that phrase requires.

The second fiction is that it's simply a Middle Eastern problem. Refugees are flowing from all over the world, especially Africa, actually. Of the top 10 countries that are hosting refugees today, five of them are African.

In Europe, the problem has moved from practical to existential. In 1989, the world that divided Europe came down, a remarkable moment to live through. Who could imagine in 2016 another set of walls being built up? This time, made of mesh and razor wire, but walls nevertheless.

Members of the Subcommittee, let me soberly suggest to you that the integration of Europe, the very idea of European unity, is at risk here. Europe is America's most important ally since the Second World War. Are we not your most important ally in the fight against violent extremism? This should really matter to you. I know it does.

Put simply, as we Europeans have learned, if the Middle East catches fire, the flames jump any border controls, and if Africa fails Europe cannot succeed. It's not rocket science. It's math. Here are the numbers.

By 2050, the African population will have doubled to 2.5 billion -- twice that of China. Forty percent of the world's youth will be African, which personally excites me because I have a sense of who they are and want to be. Of the ONE Campaign, seven million members, three million of them are African.

We have a sense of their potential as an engine of growth that can roar, but we also fear that if the young people of Africa are misled and marginalized, their anger could be channeled not to hope, but to hate. And choices stark we fast track our friendship or invite new enemies.

I know that you, in this room, believe deeply that freedom is more powerful than fear, that hope is more contagious than hate. And I know you'll agree with me when I say that sometimes hope needs a bit of help. Well, this is one of those times. You see, to defeat bad ideas, you need better ideas. But the good news is we have them.

UNHCR have great ideas of humanitarian support can be done better and provide jobs and hope. They witness how the mood of a -- of a camp changes if there's a classroom built for kids. They see the despair in the faces of skilled workers not allowed access to the labor market. But soberly, I have to say to you the international community, though it means well, is having a lot of meetings about the crisis. And I believe it's issuing a record number of press releases, but what it's not doing is cutting checks.

As of last month, as you kind of about to hear, the U.N. humanitarian response plans for 2016 had only received nine percent of the funding they require -- nine percent. And grants are handed out annually, which is kind of on a hand-to-mouth basis with no predictability, which makes it impossible for these agencies to plan, which is madness. It's absolute madness.

Another idea that I heard that might be of serious interest to this Committee is to prioritize the support of the countries along the Sahel and the Levant who are not yet in crisis. Now, I know this sounds counterintuitive, but the people I met, especially the military, told us it is critical that these countries not only survive but that they thrive.

Imagine if the chaos that ripped through Syria were to engulf Egypt -- or God forbid Nigeria -- these are gigantic countries. This is not melodrama. We now know that people, when running from war, will risk the most treacherous journeys -- doctors, teachers tying their children to their chests as they tie themselves to floating corks and tin cans on the Mediterranean Sea all for the promise of a better life.

When you think of an exodus on that big scale you realize that we have some -- we better have some big ideas to meet the challenge, and we do. And I'm really encouraged to sit here and hear them come from a bipartisan committee. These countries need aid, but it's not just aid. Commerce is urgent here. New trade agreements are critical. Concessional loans from the World Bank are essential.

Dr. Jim Kim and the World Bank are really being innovative here, so is Gayle Smith who runs USAID. You should be proud of these people. Anti-corruption campaigners in our own office around the corner in the ONE Campaign will tell you that the reforms necessary to qualify for the loans can be as important as the loans themselves.

The Africa Development Bank has been right out in front on this stuff. President Akin Adesina understands that corruption kills more people than AIDS, T.B. and malaria combined, so tackling corruption has to be part of this package. In fact, he was also one of the first leaders to call for a modern Marshall Plan as a partnership for progress. So, what -- what might that mean?

Well, the Marshall Plan, as America knows, was the first time the world witnessed development as security on a grand scale. The Marshall Plan was an idea big enough to meet the moment in history. It was an idea as big as the sacrifice Americans made in the fight for freedom, an idea that showed America could not only win the war, but the peace as Lindsey Graham keeps reminding us, an idea big enough to change the world, an idea, like the idea of America itself.

You see, the peaceful Europe that I gratefully grew up in, the one that is so under threat right now, was born of the Marshall Plan, history's greatest example of national generosity as national security, which is what I'm talking about today. And I'm not alone.

Trade, and development, and security, that's what Jim Jones is talking about today, and he's not alone. Senator Graham not alone when he spoke to the Washington Post yesterday. It's the same thing.

Finance minister of Germany, Mr. Schauble, not known for his wild pronouncements, has invoked this. King Abdullah of Jordan, the same. Actually, King Abdullah is worth thinking about because he's a leader who's also a military man. It's not coincidence that he's a military man because, I think -- I'm sure -- military leaders, at least the great ones, know the cost of failure will ultimately be borne by them by the men and women they lead into battle and have to face as they come home.

This is a new century. These are new threats. This is politically very hard.

I hope I understand the challenges. I hope I understand the pressures you face as leaders, but in truth I probably don't. But I'll tell you what I do understand. I understand that America is not ready to give up on its greatness, and I am not either. That's what got America to the moon. That's the spirit that brought mankind back to earth when you signed up to fight the largest health disaster in the history of the world -- HIV/AIDS.

There were members on this Subcommittee who refused to accept aids was a problem that couldn't be solved. And since 2002, we now have nearly nine million people who owe their lives to the U.S. taxpayer. If you're a U.S. taxpayer, you're an AIDS activist. Think about that.

I'm here today to testify to the United States Senate that I have seen the impossible made possible right here in these halls, and we need that leadership again. In this moment of great jeopardy. It is who you are. It is your essence and your calling. And when you serve history, you serve the people of America. And when you write history, we all live it. Thank you very much.

CLEMENTS:

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member -- Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, Members of the Subcommittee, on behalf of the High Commissioner and the U.N. Refugee Agency, I'm pleased to appear before you to speak on the global refugee crisis, especially to bat cleanup for four heroes.

On a personal note, it is also a particular thrill to testify today with Bono whose advocacy on behalf of the world's poorest has pushed leaders to act and whose early music helped to shape my high school years.

(LAUGHTER)

Mr. Chairman, you have my full statement for the record so I'll summarize, as well. As this Subcommittee is well aware, world attention to refugees has perhaps never been greater. Yet forced displacement is nothing new and steadily growing in recent years. And of the 60 million uprooted people, some 20 million have crossed an international border and are, therefore, refugees, while the remaining 40 million people are primarily those who are displaced within their own borders, internally displaced persons.

If the uprooted formed a single country, it would be the world's 24th largest. Last year, more than 42,000 people fled their homes every single day. And at the same time, the number of refugees who were able to return home was at its lowest level in three decades.

New conflicts emerged and the existing ones drag on with no solutions in sight. The human and financial resources of UNHCR and our partners are stretched like never before in order to respond to new crisis while continuing to adequately attend to those displaced for many years.

It's also important to note and, in fact, clarify that while refugee camps are a favored visual image for the media, most refugees are not in camps. Rather an estimated 65 percent of refugees globally and 90 percent of Syrians do not live in camps. They live in towns and villages.

Mr. Chairman, the humanitarian system at large is faced with a critical humanitarian and financial dilemma. The funds available for humanitarian aid are not keeping up with the rapidly expanding needs. UNHCR continues to make very difficult decisions. Our programs in Africa, for example, are at a breaking point with only 35 percent of needs being met last year.

Beyond the funding challenges, we are witnessing today an unprecedented attack on the ability of uprooted individuals and families to find protection from harm. In some cases particularly in industrialized countries this attack takes the form of policies that prevent or discourage asylum seekers from accessing protection. In other cases, we see closure of borders making it nearly impossible for persons fleeing persecution and violence to find safety in neighboring countries.

I was in Serbia last month when the Macedonia and other borders closed, essentially ending the Western Balkans route north, leaving thousands trapped in countries unclear of their futures. Not since the period proceeding World War II have we witnessed such popular rejection of the notion of protecting refugees. Within this climate, it is all the more essential to ensure non-discriminatory access to quality asylum and protection while taking legitimate steps to ensure their own security, countries should not slam their borders shut to those who are themselves the victims of violence, persecution, and often terrorism, and who have no other means of finding safety.

As recent events have shown, such efforts can have the unintended consequence of supporting the business of smugglers and human traffickers. In contrast, efforts to identify quickly those persons who are in need of international protection to address their needs are not only in line with international law, but also with the finest of humanitarian traditions. This approach recognizes that effective counterterrorism measures and the protection of human rights are complimentary and mutually reinforcing goals.

We look to the United States to uphold its longstanding leadership role in international refugee protection, consistent with the ideals on which this country was founded by continuing its example of welcoming those who are amongst the most persecuted and most vulnerable in the world today. But amongst these challenges there is hope.

This week in Washington we will support efforts by the World Bank and other partners to increase development assistance and resources for countries that are hosting large numbers of refugees and, in many cases, are geographically on the front lines of our collective security. Last week, a gathering of donors and agencies agreed through the Wilton Park principles to a series of steps to support countries hosting large numbers of refugees, including the development of innovative financing instruments.

Another effort is the U.N. high level panel on humanitarian financing, to agree on implementable actions of what we call the "grand bargain" to improve the way humanitarian aid is mobilized and delivered including hopefully multiyear plans.

At the same time, UNHCR is working with governments and other partners to find new and creative avenues for refugees to find temporary and permanent legal protection. We call on governments to explore various ways for refugees to move legally and access employment without putting themselves in harm's way.

As I conclude my statement today, I leave you with three main messages. First, the traditional responses to forced displacement including humanitarian aid and resettlement need to be reinforced and complimented with vigorous and creative alternatives that can be pursued now. In

the absence of the political solutions, we need robust, humanitarian, and development responses, particularly in refugee hosting countries that are currently buckling under the strain.

Second, the current attacks on the refugee protection system fueled, in part, by an unjustified link of refugees and terrorists often fail to recognize that refugees are the victims and not the perpetrators of violence and extremism. National security goals are in no way at odds with refugee protection, and UNHCR stands ready to help governments develop protection-sensitive border management policies.

And finally, U.S. leadership. It's critical to maintaining global refugee protection. Americans care deeply about refugees and the U.S. government translates this compassion into strong diplomatic, moral, and financial engagement that enables the humanitarian community to care for millions of uprooted people in need.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee, I will end with a thought from one of the many passionate UNHCR team members working on the front lines of humanitarian response on the islands of Greece. She was commenting on a refugee who perished fleeing to Europe and her sentiments reinforced the need for action. She said, "She escaped bombs, she carried mountains, and yet she died at Europe's feet. Let us carry her along the way."

Thank you for holding this hearing and for your ongoing interest in tackling these fundamental issues, and we stand ready to assist in any way possible. Thank you.

GRAHAM:

Thank you all very, very much.

General Jones, I just returned from Turkey. Turkey is -- is no longer taking refugees from Syria. Are you aware of that?

JONES:

Yes, sir, I am.

GRAHAM:

Mr. Blinken, has Jordan taken refugees from Syria?

BLINKEN:

As a practical matter, very, very few.

GRAHAM:

What about Lebanon?

BLINKEN:

Also, it slowed down. They put requirements on admissions, but as a practical matter make it difficult for people to get in.

GRAHAM:

So I want the Committee to know that people in Syria are trapped. There's no place to go.

General Jones, what's going to happen inside of Syria with this dynamic militarily? People trapped with no place to go.

JONES:

I -- I don't have the crystal ball on that, but I would say that nothing -- nothing good is going to happen. I think the -- you know, the humanitarian catastrophe that -- that the Syrian situation portends is -- is one of the great unanswered questions in terms of a solution of our time. We -- we, collectively, with the United States providing the leadership, I think, have to do a lot more to solve this problem.

GRAHAM:

Is it fair to say, Mr. Blinken, that Jordan really can't take any more refugees and survive?

BLINKEN:

The burden on Jordan, the burden on Lebanon, the burden on Turkey, as you saw firsthand, Mr. Chairman, is extraordinary. And if you equate it, for example, to the United States, if you look at Lebanon, somewhere between a quarter and a third of the population is now a Syrian refugee. That's as if we have taken 50 or 60 million people in the space of just a few short years.

And the burden on their systems, on their infrastructure, on their economies is, as you've seen, dramatic. So the challenge, I think, for us is to devise ways to help them, in effect, help refugees because the two problems that we have are that we -- are, in effect, pursuing humanitarian emergency solutions to the refugee crisis on the one hand and development on the other. These two things need to come together because, as you said and as others have said, these countries

are going to be facing these challenges for a long time. We have to find ways to create what amounts to a win/win solution. That is the host communities have to benefit along with the refugees. That's where we need to put our focus.

GRAHAM:

Bono, from your point of view, the whole Marshall concept is to deal with that reality. People are in Jordan, they're in Lebanon, they're in Turkey. Many of them are going to be there a long time. The whole approach is to leverage better outcomes and not just help people with food, shelter, water and clothing, but also deal with the reality that you want to make these human beings assets where possible. What did you learn on this trip? What was the takeaway for you?

BONO:

I was -- you know, a singer should understand microphones. I think the Egypt piece really disturbed me because I just saw the scale of this -- this country, and -- and it's vast, it's extraordinary, very sophisticated country. And you could feel trouble brewing and mechanisms that were put into place to -- to clamp down on Islamists and jihadis. We're now clamping down on just anyone who criticized human rights people, Christian NGOs. Numbers of people disappearing going up.

And you could see, it's almost a mechanism going on its own -- its own momentum. And that -- that worried me. And I -- it was just a way above my pay grade to figure out how you would turn people back. But I noticed that President Sisi was very, very concerned about the economy as he should be because it's on the slide.

And I thought, well, you know, is there a way that we can make, you know, trade agreements and things like that conditional on reform and human rights and things like that that would help him turn his country back from a precipice, which we need him to do.

GRAHAM:

That was a -- the one thing we're not...

BONO:

(Inaudible).

GRAHAM:

Excuse me. One thing we're not talking about is writing a check and walking away.

BONO:

No.

GRAHAM:

We're talking about if you do A, then you can get a better deal trade-wise, and A has to be something that will counter extremism. If you do B, you can get loans at a lower rate. That's the whole concept. And I want the panel to see if you agree with this that we're not just throwing money at a problem, we're trying to get better outcomes using some resources. Is that the whole theory of the case here?

BONO:

Yeah, I think it is. It's -- it's leverage. And -- and I really think that, you know, that you can't underestimate the trade piece. You can't underestimate the concessional loans piece and the effect of tackling corruption because as people have to reform to get those concessional loans, they will do the painful work of reforming. It's only the stick and carrot we have.

GRAHAM:

Ms. Clements, what percentage of refugee assistance comes from the American taxpayer in terms of worldwide assistance?

CLEMENTS:

We -- about 35 percent of our budget was supported last year by the United States government.

GRAHAM:

You're asking of us for more. Are you going to ask other people for more?

CLEMENTS:

We are absolutely doing that, and not only governments. And obviously, there are a number of traditional donors that have been very generous, but also private sector. Unfortunately, thanks to the Europe crisis I'm afraid, we actually raised \$300 million from private sector supporters, but, of course, that helps to fund critical life-saving protection and assistance requirements for our agency and the many partners that we support and saves a whole lot of lives in the process.

For the Committee's information, I am sure the members know this that this year we're going to be 30 percent below the F.Y. '16 number for international disaster assistance. We're cutting nine percent below the F.Y. '16 enacted levels for migration and refugee assistance. We got problems here at home, but these numbers are real. What would it mean to you if we enact these cuts?

CLEMENTS:

It would be quite -- nearly impossible for us to meet immediate needs. It's very difficult for us now. We were about half-funded last year, 50 percent. The United States does a tremendous amount to support \$1.3 billion last year, but we need a lot more support because we've got about \$7 billion in requirements in 2016, alone.

GRAHAM:

What if we restored the money with the -- with the condition that other people have to match what we do?

CLEMENTS:

It's hard to place conditions, Mr. Chairman, on support in saving lives, and so we could caution against conditions that on humanitarian life-saving assistance. Obviously, pushing governments and others to give more absolutely needs to be on the table.

GRAHAM:

OK. Senator Leahy?

LEAHY:

Thank you. Mr. Chairman.

And I -- I referenced Bono earlier your op-ed piece. I read it and reread it. And the needs, the emergency needs of Syria and other refugees, countries in the Middle East and North Africa. I think of a country like Jordan, which is so heavily saturated with refugees, and you wonder what this does in the long-term effect on any country.

And there's no question we need money. We -- we can't even see them did pass emergency funding in this country to deal with the Zika virus, which is spreading through our own country or -- or do some of the things we need here. I say this not because I am opposed to help and foreign aid. You know my record very well in that regard.

These countries you talked within Europe, do they act as though they're willing to spend more money? I listened to what miss Clements said and I know her rights.

BONO:

Yeah. In short, Senator, there -- Europe hasn't mobilized at the level it needs to, but I think that's about to change. I mean, what I was trying to do and I don't know if I -- I can do it just by reading is -- is to dramatize the situation. I'm talking about an existential threat to Europe the likes of which we haven't seen since the beginning of the 40's. And really and truly we're seeing in Hungary and Poland, the movement to the right is kind of hyper- nationalism, a sort of localization, hyper-localization in response to globalization, I guess.

We're talking to U.K. is talking -- is voting on leaving Europe. This is unthinkable stuff. And you should be very nervous in America about it. And we see the leadership of Chancellor Merkel. I -- I think she's an extraordinary leader on this crisis, and which you see she faces criticism in her own party.

LEAHY:

Right.

BONO:

What the German people have shown the way here -- actually they've become the very hearts of Europe. That's brilliant. And I think she deserves a peace prize or something like that. She's -- she's done extraordinary things. She's the -- there is gathering momentum.

I spoke with David Cameron about -- about gathering around stopping the refugee crisis as he's finding -- he's finding very difficult politically to take in more refugees. I think that's a mistake for the U.K. I think all countries need to take in more refugees.

My Pink friends back here will back me up on that. Is that right?

LEAHY:

(Inaudible).

BONO:

And...

LEAHY:

And I would hope there's a realization in those countries that millions, maybe tens of millions of these refugees, no matter what happens, are never going to go back home. And that's going to have -- I mean, I think we have to do more than just money. We got to have the ability to work with these countries to help them absorb the refugees that are there and make a life worth living. We can't have just -- well, none of us have suggested refugee camps. They're going to be absorbed in there so you're going to have to invest in economies. You're going to invest in the institutions, educational, medical, everything else.

BONO:

But you don't want this to spread. That's really what I -- that's why I think we're all gathered here is there -- it's so complex to -- to try and solve Syria's problems.

The UNHCR know how to help with refugees. We just need to get them financed. But I'm asking this Committee, what will you -- what will we be asking you to finance if this spreads? If this --if this chaos that's going along the region. And, you know, particularly, just so I understand a bit about because I spent a lot of time in Africa, you see this phenomenon of three extremes -- extreme ideology, extreme poverty, and extreme climate. I guess, you'd call it a parched earth. It's a geological phenomenon, the Sahel.

If you look at the (inaudible). In fact, it goes all the way to Afghanistan. If you really want to look, it is a geological phenomenon. But those three extremes make one unholy trinity of an enemy and our foreign policy needs to face in that direction.

I know John Kerry is. I know Senator Kerry is, but it's -- it's even bigger than you think. So whilst we sit here and talk about, you know, getting cuts and where are we going to pay for it, and God knows I'm in awe of you, lawmakers. I worked with Dick Durbin. I worked with so many of you on, you know, on making the impossible possible. I don't know how you do it.

LEAHY:

But you're...

BONO:

But if you don't do it now, it's going to cost a lot more later, I do know that.

LEAHY:

But you're also going to have to deal with the people that are there. We have -- you talked about Egypt.

I'd like to ask Secretary Blinken, do you think the leadership, President Al Sisi and the leadership are going to allow dissent? Are they going to release political prisoners? I mean, some -- nobody even knows where they are. Is that -- is that going to change? I mean, we could -- we already have a lot of money in the pipeline for them. We could add more money, but are they going to change in any way?

BLINKEN:

It is a huge challenge, Mr. Ranking Member.

First, these are faces you know, acute security problems, real security problems including in the Sinai terrorism, and they're real, and we need to be helping them.

On the other hand, what we know very well is that in the absence of creating space in their society for people to express their views to associate freely and to come together, they are going to sow the seeds of long-term instability. And even if it works in the short run, it's not likely to work in the long run, so they have a profound self-interest in coming to the realization that creating space and opening up is actually the best path to dealing in a sustainable way with the challenges that they face. So we're working on that with them. We're deeply engaged in trying to move them in that direction. But I have to tell you, we're deeply concerned with the direction that we've seen Egypt take if closing down that space, putting people in jail for expressing their views, civil society being cracked down upon including many of the partners that we have in trying to implement some of the programs in Egypt.

LEAHY:

Raise more questions. I'm agreeing with all you're saying, I just, I am worried how -- so many times repression within a country has led to greater extremism, which creates even more problems, so thank you for being here. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We'll work together on this.

GRAHAM:

Senator Mikulski or do you had to go? So we're going to...

MIKULSKI:

Is that OK?

GRAHAM:

Nobody wants to (inaudible).

MIKULSKI:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I'm going to an Intelligence Committee hearing exactly on violent extremism, exactly in the region that we're talking about. I want to thank you for hosting or organizing this hearing to all the men and women at this table who have devoted their lives to making the world a better place.

It's particularly important, Mr. Chairman, that you also held this in the month of April. It was in April of 2014 that 200 girls in Nigeria going to school were kidnapped by Boko Haram. Those girls have never been found. Many of them are probably dead and some probably wished they were dead. And when I looked at what we're talking about here, I am looking at the impact of really women and children, particularly children.

According to you, Commissioner Clements, globally, women and children continue to comprise 80 percent of the uprooted with more than half being children -- uprooted. What an incredible, incredible world.

And we see what's happening to children around the world, not only in the region being discussed today, but I believe children are on the move and they can -- will constitute a tremendous threat in the future unless we show them humanity, compassion, and a way forward.

Right now, a little girl is shot in her head or a teenage girl because she wanted to go to school and read. She wins the Nobel Prize for it, but she continues to talk about one book, one teacher, one kid. Girls are being recruited in sexual slavery in the most despicable things. Boys are being recruited as child soldiers and into gangs. They're moving not only in Africa, but they're moving in Central America -- the gangs, the murder rates, et cetera. So unless we focus on the children, I believe we are going to ride the wind in the future.

You've said, Mr. Blinken, that the perception of discrimination will turn somebody against you. We all remember who helped us or who helped our mother and father. We also remember who didn't help us and didn't help our mother and father. So let me tell you where I'm getting because it is Central America, and so how are we going to really focus on this? Because I would say right now the children of the world feel that they're hated, that they're rejected, that they're pushed aside.

Their mother and father is either being deported or they see the agony of their father who bribed his way to get to Europe or the desperation of the mother trying to find bread for them. What are they going to think about? Oh, kumbaya? Isn't -- isn't the West great? Don't we want to go for democratic principles and constitutional reform?

We are sowing the seeds of hate and the seeds of desperation.

So, Mr. Blinken, I'm saying to you, and then also to the High Commissioner, what can we do to help?

My own NGOs in Baltimore -- (inaudible) say, "We have to advance the money before we get reimbursed. Money often goes to the U.N., above the U.N., but it often is trickled down so, one, not only are we talking about new money here today, we're talking about money being used smartly. So, number one, are we really going to focus on the children? Number two, are we going to get money out to the NGOs who are truly the ones there where the money in -- in donor countries where they are?"

BLINKEN:

Thank you, Senator, and I very much share your concern. We're at risk of creating a lost generation of children, and we know what that means. First, it means at the very least, they will not have the skills and knowledge they need to become productive members of society, even the society they become refugees in or if they're able to return home.

But even worse, that's the -- the best-case scenario. Even worse, we know that absent those skills, absent having an education, they are much likely to become prey to crime, to violence, to early marriage, to sexual exploitation and, indeed, to extremism and terrorism. So what can we do about it?

Just focusing on the Syria crisis, which is generating so much of the attention, although as you rightly point out, this is a global crisis. And as Kelly pointed out, it's truly global in nature. We're focusing on Syria, I would think of that in terms of concentric circles.

First, what can we do inside of Syria itself to take away some of the drivers that are pushing people out? Of course, the number one driver is violence. And there, of course, ending the civil war is job number one. Secretary Kerry is working on that eight days a week. As we know, it is incredibly difficult. But even as we do that, working on the cessation of hostilities, sustaining that, working on getting more humanitarian assistance in, that takes away some of the drivers. But then once people get to Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan...

MIKULSKI:

Don't do that. I mean, I know all the concentric circles and so on, and that's my problem. We end up going around in circles, so that's the big picture. But right now, let's go to what I asked. Right now, there are these children either trying to get across water with little life -- maybe -- maybe a life vest on. They're in a raft. Do we -- do they have a lifeline? And then what are you focusing to get the aid out while we're working on these big picture solutions?

BLINKEN:

I would say very specifically, Senator, when -- the reason I mentioned circle is this, when you get to the countries of first asylum -- Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan -- we know what is pushing people to take that risky journey, to put themselves in the hands of smugglers, to put themselves on the high seas, jeopardize their lives is not the violence because that's gone. It's two things. It's an absence of access to school and education for the kids, and it's an access -- lack of access to employment, to jobs for the parents. So a big focus of our effort is working with those three countries in particular to try and open up both access to schools and access to jobs.

We're working closely with UNHCR, with UNICEF on that. Partly, it's a question of resources. Partly it's a question of these compacts that we're talking about. So, for example, on the jobs front, it's awful hard if you're a politician in one of these countries to say, you know what, I'm going to give a job to a Syrian refugee even though you, my fellow citizen, don't have one. So we're looking at innovative solutions to take -- to do that.

The Europeans are looking at creating greater access to their markets for products that are produced in special enterprise zones where refugees are employed. We're (inaudible) just to give specific sectors where they're not competing with the local citizens.

On the education front, we've been doubling and tripling our efforts in a number of ways. One, we've been building schools. We've been building classrooms so that there's capacity to actually educate these kids alongside the locals. We've been working to support double and triple shifts for teachers so that they can educate Syrian refugee kids in the evening, even as they educate local children during the day. And we're working on things in the informal education sphere so that while people are not yet in a formal program, they can still be learning and still get a credit. Our government is working with all of those governments to get accreditation for informal learning. And all of this we're doing in partnership with UNHCR, with UNICEF, and with other organizations.

MIKULSKI:

My time is up but...

CLEMENTS:

Maybe very briefly on...

MIKULSKI:

(Inaudible) Ms. Clements also answer part of the...

GRAHAM:

Absolutely.

CLEMENTS:

Very briefly, Senator. On your question related to the -- the issues related to education, in particular, maybe just to note because we talked in the last round of questions significantly about money, it isn't just about money. It's about policy changes we actually need from governments to make it possible for refugees to work, make it possible for freedom of movement, and make it possible for kids to be in school, whether or not those are national systems or even the ability for NGOs and -- and international organizations to provide reinforced (inaudible). You put -- you put your finger it in terms of that being the key from our perspective.

The issues related to Central America, thank you very much for raising it. It's a great concern to us, too. We see a looming refugee crisis on the horizon very much so with regard to unaccompanied children, with regard to women on the run. These are issues that are of great concern. And in terms of our ability to be able to support, we think we need a regional approach in terms of sharing responsibility. We need to increase reception capacity. We need to increase direct assistance to people that are very much in need. We also need the cooperation of those governments to help us do that.

Thank you.

MIKULSKI:

Thank you.

GRAHAM:

Senator Boozman?

BOOZMAN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General Jones, in your testimony, you talked about the importance of public/private partnerships to advance our foreign policy priorities. This is certainly an issue that many of us have also extensively raised not just for the resources that can be leveraged, but for the logistical and technical expertise that the private sector brings.

Well, I think the -- that the U.S. government has gotten better at creating these partnerships. I often hear from businesses, particularly small businesses that it can be incredibly difficult to partner with the government. Have you heard similar concerns? Are there any particular recommendations that you can offer that would accelerate and streamline the partnership process?

JONES:

Thank you, Senator.

I think -- I think the American private sector is still the private sector that's one of the most admired around the world, and one of the ones that has really, frankly, almost since the Marshall Plan has had to develop itself on its own. And -- and I think the time is here for increased public and private sector partnership as an instrument of our foreign policy almost. And I still do a fair amount of traveling around the world, and I'm always and particularly in developing countries, where are you? Where's -- where's -- where are the Americans? We have the Chinese here, but where -- where are the American companies?

And many times the answer is we can't -- we can't operate here because -- because of corruption, and so on and so forth. But I really believe that there are -- that there are three pillars to our 21st century engagement. One is certainly security.

And I think organizations like NATO could do a lot more than they're doing, although I give them credit for their presence in Afghanistan. But 25 years ago, this year, I participated in Operation Provide Comfort in Northern Iraq, which was a refugee operation, a humanitarian operation rescuing almost a million Kurds from a human stampede caused by Saddam Hussein. And from that came the region that we now call Kurdistan, but it was security. It was followed by economic development, and also -- thanks to the international organizations -- rule of law. Those three things, it seems to me, are -- are important.

On the refugee problem, if you think the -- the Middle East is interesting now and a challenge, we have -- you have the entire African continent that is ready to explode one way or the other. There will be 16 national elections in Africa this year. Most polls show that young Africans are not looking to stay in Africa. They want to go somewhere else because they don't believe they have any future. So, that should motivate our European friends to join with us in this -- in this partnership.

Lastly, I just like to make a point that on threats that there is an established, growing nexus between organized crime and terrorism. Organized crime is -- is and terrorism have figured out ways to cooperate together. You have extreme rise in illegal drugs, illegal traffic, and illegal cigarettes, trafficking people, trafficking arms. And -- and there's an unholy alliance there that provides the funding for much of the terrorist challenges that we face today.

But I do think, to answer your question, I do think that a closer working relationship on the foreign policy level between the public and the private sector can show the power of the

American economic engine and stimulate recovery and avoid future conflict in many of these countries.

BOOZMAN:

You mentioned just now the presence of China in Africa. Bono mentioned it, I think earlier, as he was speaking. Talk to us a little bit about that. Talk to us about -- you had a good article in the Atlantic Council's Task Ahead. Talk to us a little bit about their motives. Talk to us about, you know, if that's good for governance, all of those kind of things.

JONES:

Yes, Sir. Well, the -- the Chinese...

BOOZMAN:

Human rights.

JONES:

... up until, I think it was 1990, the United States was the number one trading nation on the African continent, and we surrendered that, around that closing years in the -- in the last century to china. And China has -- makes it very easy in many -- in many countries. They show up with not only a lot of money, but they show up with their own workforce.

It's actually had an effect that I think is, in Africa, is beginning to dawn on some of these countries that -- that when the Chinese actually engage in big projects, they do them but they do them with their own colonies of workers. For example, in Algeria, they tied up a prison ship full of Chinese prisoners to -- to develop a -- to work on projects in Algeria.

The American way, the international way -- the European and American way is -- and American companies do this regularly in Africa, don't get much credit for it. At least, the United States doesn't, the countries do. But in addition to working in the region, they -- they do things that are helpful. Electrifying villages, building roads, providing schools. And there's -- there's many, many examples of individual American companies on the continent of Africa doing great things, sometimes with NGOs, sometimes not, but mostly apart from our government.

And -- and what I'd like to see is I'd like to see a closer -- I'd like to see the United States get credit for -- for that. These are American companies that are doing good things. But in order to do that, I think we need, you know, the secretary of Commerce who's doing -- has done great work, and I admire her greatly, but we need more of that connection at the -- at -- around the National Security Council table to figure out, how do we do that? How do we project that?

We did the Marshall Plan once. It would be very hard to do today, but something like that has to happen and it has to happen not only on a national scale, but an international scale. And as I said, if the Europeans aren't concerned, solve the Syrian refugee problem, there's another one, there's another tsunami of refugees coming right behind it if we don't prevent it.

BOOZMAN:

Thank you.

Bono, I want to thank you. You know, one of the great problems that we have is that there's lots of people throughout the world, but there's not much constituency for them. You know, lots of people verbalize this and that, but as far as the constituency, we have that problem in our country and -- and we're -- you know, we're tremendously benevolent and are certainly doing our share.

But I'm always impressed with your young people that come from Arkansas or wherever I visit with them. They're knowledgeable. They're passionate just like you are, and it really does make a difference. And so that -- that's a big deal, so thank you very much.

BONO:

Yeah, thank you. I'm stunned as well. And people say that America is ready to sort of close in on itself, but America becomes America when it looks outward. You know, when you're a continent behaving like an island, you're not America. It's just -- this is not who you are. And -- and I think waking up across the nation, actually, in these very cantankerous times politically, there is people actually who think, well, this is one thing we can agree on. And that's why I'm proud of -- of the ONE Campaign.

In fact, one of the reasons I got interested in this refugee crisis is because all the great work that's been done by a lot of people on this Committee, a lot of people in America, in the fight against extreme poverty over the last 10 years could be undone. We worked together, Senator Durbin, we worked on debt cancellation.

With Senator Leahy, we worked -- with Lindsey Graham. I mean, I've got to know -- David Perdue -- there's Senator Purdue. We were traveling around. And I'm thinking, who's the Republican, who's the Democrat? And -- and, of course, they're talking on other subjects., very easy to find that.

But on -- on this stuff? This is like the one thing you all agree on. And it brings out the best in you, I'm sure of that.

BOOZMAN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

SHAHEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you all very much for being here today and for testifying. I certainly agree with all of the comments about the importance of aid. It is about our security and the impact of what's happening in Europe, affecting us in the United States, because we do have trans-Atlantic alliance that has been absolutely critical to world order.

We had a hearing this morning in the Foreign Relations Committee on ISIS and international terrorism. And one of the conclusions that I drew listening to the testimony and our witnesses generally agreed with this is that we've been good in the United States when it comes to military efforts, so we were successful in Afghanistan in throwing out the Taliban initially. We were successful in Iraq in our military efforts. We've been working to try and take back territory from ISIL that has been successful. But we have been -- and we've been successful in efforts to support refugees and camps and to make sure that aid gets there. But we've been less successful when it comes to governance, what many people call nation building, the economic and social implications, and the ability to improve government -- governance in countries that are failing.

I would like to ask if you all agree with that and the extent to which you see the need to address that as being critical to countering violent extremism and, therefore, how do we do better with what we're doing -- been doing in the past because, so far, we haven't been as successful in those areas as I think we need to be if we're going to address the concerns that we're all talking about today in terms of countering violent extremism.

And I don't know, I see you blinking -- you're nodding, Mr. Blinken. Would you like to respond to that first?

(LAUGHTER)

BLINKEN:

(Inaudible), Senator.

SHAHEEN:

You can blink, too.

BONO:

I'm the nods, he's the blink.

SHAHEEN:

Yeah.

BLINKEN:

No, I think you're -- you're right on the mark, Senator. This -- the challenge of actually moving from -- in the case of, say, Iraq or -- or Syria, from liberating territory to then stabilizing it, but then not just stabilizing it, helping people rebuild, but then not just rebuilding, actually finding a sustainable political...

SHAHEEN:

Right.

BLINKEN:

... accommodation. That's where the challenge really comes in.

And I think you have to look at -- at each country in its particulars. But unless we're able to get at some of these underlying issues even when we succeed, as we always do militarily, it won't be sustainable, so that is very much part of the challenge.

What we're trying to focus on, for example, in dealing with the programs to counter violence extremism where we're working not just with national governments, but with local governments, with community leaders, with municipalities bringing, for example, mayors together to talk about how they're dealing with the challenge in their own communities. We're taking these programs. We're also trying to apply metrics and evaluation to them to figure out what actually works and what doesn't and when it doesn't work to change it. Let me give you one quick example.

We just stood up something called the Global Engagement Center, which is our effort to message against...

SHAHEEN:

Yeah, I want to ask you about that.

BLINKEN:

So, maybe just to jump into that, one of the critical pieces of the effort against Daesh is to counter the narrative that's attracting young people to its -- to its cause. And we were not satisfied with the effort that we had -- that we had going. We brought in a team of experts,

technology experts, from Silicon Valley and other places, a so-called sprint team in the jargon of Silicon Valley. They spent a month with us and they looked at what we were doing and they made some recommendations. And as a result of those recommendations, we reformed what we were doing, and that led to the Global Engagement Center.

And in a nutshell, what we're doing less of now is direct messaging in the voice of United States because we found that actually wasn't so effective. We were not the best messenger in this space. What we are doing, instead, is trying to identify, elevate, and build the capacity of local, credible voices.

Second, instead of playing this whack-a-mole game where they would put something up on social media, we'd immediately try to counter it. We've worked on doing it much more thematically. And so, for example, very successfully, we found the testimonies of defectors from ISIL or from Daesh, and we put those together in a way that's incredible effective because what it says to people is what you think you're signing up for is not the reality and they have much more credibility than we do saying that it ourselves. So, in these ways, we stood up this -- this effort. It was based on trial and error, but it was based on figuring out what works, what doesn't work, and we're determined to do that across the board.

BONO:

Can I add something to that...

SHAHEEN:

Sure.

BONO:

... which is a little bizarre just to -- coming from -- from observing this culture and how elusive maleness is. We forget how elusive maleness is in a -- in a world where materialism decides your machismo. If you have no access to material things, you -- you exaggerate your maleness. I think we have to think about young men and think about that.

And -- and it's funny, you're going -- don't laugh, but I think comedy should be deployed because if you look at national socialism, and Daesh and ISIL, this -- this is the same thing. We've seen this before. We've seen this before, very vain, they've got all the signs up there. Really, it's a show business.

And the first people that -- that the Adolf Hitler threw out of Germany were the (inaudible) and the surrealists. It's like you speak violence, you speak their language, but you laugh at them when they're goose-stepping down the street, and it takes away their power. So I'm suggesting that the Senate send in Amy Schumer and Chris Rock...

(LAUGHTER)

... and Sacha Baron Cohen. Thank you.

(LAUGHTER)

SHAHEEN:

Actually, that's not the first time I've heard experts on how do we counter violent extremism talk about that.

BONO:

I'm actually serious. Not a bad (inaudible).

SHAHEEN:

No, and -- and it is one of the things that I know we're looking at. But it also speaks to the importance of empowering women around the world and focusing on human rights for women and children and making sure that they -- we have the same focus on what's happening with them in, particularly, countries that where we're seeing violent extremism the most are countries where women have not historically been empowered, and so it makes that even more, more...

BONO:

Ugly (inaudible).

SHAHEEN:

... and a -- a critical need for our foreign policy.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

GRAHAM:

General Jones wanted to...

JONES:

Senator Shaheen, if I could just add a little bit to that. Generally the practice that we followed over there, many, many years, has been one of reacting to bad things. I would -- I would suggest that in the years ahead being proactive has a skill set all to itself in terms of what you could do. First of all, for example, on the security measure, if you -- if you can't do everything everywhere, but let's -- let's suggest a failing state in Africa the size of Nigeria, for example, and what that would cause or a failing state like the Congo or pick any other large country.

So the question is, if you're worried about it now, isn't it cheaper and more effective to engage now proactively to fix what needs to be fixed whether it's security, whether it's -- and then by security I don't mean -- I don't mean American forces or NATO forces going in to -- to fight a war, I mean, to go in and help people learn how to defend themselves and in some cases you can stitch together entire regions of -- of several countries that would -- would benefit from that kind of training.

And while you're doing that, you can encourage the private sector to go in and start showing people how the lives are better in a -- in a capitalist system, a free market system that education, distance learning, all of these things. So, the problem is that we tend to do one very well and in the case of Afghanistan and Iraq, there was no real plan to nation build, and -- and I think that's the -- that's the missing link. If you're going to do one, be prepared to do, you know, the other things that have to be there, but it's much cheaper to be proactive than to be reactive. That I'm very sure.

SHAHEEN:

You know, I totally agree with that. I think we haven't yet, however, aligned the priorities in our spending in a way that supports that. Look at how much we spend for humanitarian aid, for USAID, for diplomatic efforts and compare that to what we're spending on the military side and, you know, there's a huge disparity, and so we've got to begin to realign our priorities so that we're focusing more on prevention than we are on reacting to the situation.

JONES:

We have the benefit of unified command -- unified geographic commanders in most of the major regions of the world. And I think that with a little bit of tweaking in the right direction, that is not just security but economic development rule of law that I think you have forward bases already in regions that we want to affect. And I think that would be a good way to engage proactively to prevent future conflicts.

SHAHEEN:

Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

GRAHAM:

Senator Daines?

DAINES:

Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is a great panel today. Thanks for being here.

Americans are the most generous people in the world when it comes to humanitarian aid and they're contributing to relief efforts that span the globe. At the same time, you know, this panel today, my fellow colleagues are weighing how best to contribute government resources where the needs are overwhelming. You sit and listen to the needs of the world today. At the same time, having limited resources, how do we counterterrorism? How do we provide humanitarian relief? How can we be most effective on behalf of the American taxpayer?

I want to start with General Jones, first of all, and I want to tell you thank you for your service to our country. As a son of a marine, myself, I got raised right. Thanks for what you've done for our nation, and thanks for coming today.

I want to start with a question for you, General. This past weekend in the Philippines, at least 18 Filipino soldiers were killed in fighting with an ISIS-linked Abu Sayyaf terrorist organization in the southern portion of the country. That's clearly indicative of the threat the Islamic State and related terror groups pose not only to the Middle East but Asia-Pacific and the entire world. The U.S. Special Forces use strict operations doctrine by embedding with local forces and builds strong partnerships as they battle these terrorist organizations on a special task force with the Philippines following 9/11. We're starting to see the U.S. take this approach now in Operation Inherent Resolve.

My question for you, somebody who has a lot of experience, do you feel this tactic is an effective way to counter violent extremism?

JONES:

The critical ingredient, I think, that you need to have is -- is that wherever we engage that the people of that country and the government of that particular country have to want what we're offering. I think imposing what -- what our values are and what our goals are is -- is the long road to perdition usually.

So, you know, in the Philippines where I've spent quite a few years, the Mindanao problem has -- has been with us for a long time. And the two, three or four extremist groups that -- that exists there, what worries me is -- is that if I understand it correctly, there's an effort of appeasement of this violent extremist groups. And personally I'm opposed to that because that just gives them an accurate point from which they will expand their base of operations, so I'm a little bit removed.

I'd defer to Secretary -- Secretary Blinken about our -- our current policies. But as a matter of principle, I don't -- I don't favor appeasing extremists. I think you have to root them out, stamp them out, and a lot of it depends on the will and the capacity of the people. I think we can help them do these things, but I don't think we can do it for them.

DAINES:

Secretary Blinken, notwithstanding national disasters and unforeseeable contingencies, the extensible goal of foreign aid is to assist countries and to get them to attain certain humanitarian and institutional conditions in which aid is no longer required. As you look at your longer-term goals, as you look at the investment we make in aid, what are some measurable benchmarks that might indicate if a country is effectively utilizing U.S. assistance to improve governance, combat terrorism? And what, if any country, can you maybe pull out that could be viewed as a model of success?

BLINKEN:

Sorry. First to speak on the previous question, I very much agree with -- with General Jones on the point he made. We are trying to work by, with and through local partners to build their capacity, but with them along the way.

You're exactly right that ultimately success for the foreign assistance business is to get out of that business. We want countries to actually get on their own feet to be able to be effective and to provide for their own citizens. And, indeed, ideally we'd like to channel as much as possible to the -- to the private sector and have it work that way.

But in the near-term, as we look at these programs, what we are trying to do is develop clear measures and metrics of effectiveness. And just to give you one example, in the violent extremism space, trying to counter that, on the one hand, it's a little tough to measure how many people didn't become radicalized in a way that's -- that's unknowable. But what we are trying to do is, first of all, have some consistency across the -- the programs.

Second, we're making sure that we have third parties come in and evaluate what we're doing to see if the goals of the particular programs are actually being met. And in particular, we're trying to look at when we provide assistance or we transfer knowledge to a recipient, how are they actually using that? And is it making a difference?

DAINES:

Secretary Blinken, if you look at the -- the landscape, which country, if you had to kind of stack rank -- and I realize perfection is never going to be attainable, but certainly there's better outcomes than others. What country stands out perhaps as a model saying this has been a model of success?

BLINKEN:

Well, I think you have to look at different -- at different particular areas. Obviously, there are countries in the past that were beneficiaries of our assistance in one form or another that are now leading countries around the world if you go no further than South Korea, for example.

DAINES:

That's a good example.

BLINKEN:

But in the present -- in the present day, I think it varies very much program-to-program, sector-to-sector. It would be hard to rank order, I think, countries across the board. We've seen, for example, Jordan use some of the assistance we provided effectively to start to make important macroeconomic changes. That's the kind of thing we're looking for. We've seen other countries that have not made those important changes.

DAINES:

In the time of -- just, Bono, a question, we talked about the Syrian humanitarian crisis earlier and this potential lost generation of children as these refugee camps turn into long -- long durations, often perhaps even much of a lifetime. From your perspective, what would you say is the most effective way if you were to tell this Committee where we can invest American taxpayer dollars to ensure that we don't lose a generation of these Syrian children?

BONO:

In short, listen to Miss Kelly Clements. I think they're doing a spectacular job. I'm glad to hear you think about that and I -- because, you know, I've witnessed, I've talked to those families and you get to know them. You go in, of course, and they're refugees, you come out, you got to know them.

Syrians, I will tell you, though, are particularly industrious. I would never underestimate them. They're definitely worth the investment. I was a friend of -- lucky, fortunate to be a friend of Steve Jobs. There was a Syrian. He was a son of a Syrian migrant, and, you know, he has that industriousness.

And as a funny story in the camp, I think it was Zaatari Camp, there was -- the Dutch people were giving 600 bicycles out to the camp. And -- and within -- I think within minutes, they had

set up a bicycle repair shop to deal with the bikes. And when the bikes arrived, they had the delivery service for pizza before they had the pizza place.

(LAUGHTER)

So these are the best people in the world. They're extraordinary people. And I -- they'd be so moved to hear you talk about them today.

DAINES:

Thank you.

Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

COONS:

Thank you, Chairman Graham, and thank you for the chance to have this hearing and to work with you on this important issue.

To General Jones, great to see you again. I think our last conversation was in Rwanda, and I'm pleased to see you continuing to pursue the same line of analysis.

And, Deputy Secretary Blinken, thank you for your decades of service to our nation at the highest levels.

And, Bono, great to be with you again.

And, Deputy Commissioner Clements, thank you for your pointed and constructive proposals.

One of my own hardest days as a Senator was actually with Senator Graham at the Zaatari refugee camp in Jordan, seeing both the enormous challenges and the real potential of a refugee camp filled with thousands of Syrians of all ages and backgrounds.

And a mentor, to me, Tony Lake, who now runs UNICEF, who was a professor of mine in college, has, for some time now, been arguing, as I believe many of you do, that we need to realign our imagination, reconsider the -- the funding that we provide for humanitarian relief in an emergency situation and the investments we make in development and recognize that millions of refugees are likely to be outside their countries of origin for a very long period of time.

And if we change direction and make investments in a wiser and more targeted way, in partnership with the private sector, in partnership with allies around the world, we can make a significant difference not just in combating violent extremism, although that is a -- an essential goal of our conversation here today, but also in continuing to build up human kind and to relieve suffering.

Bono, I was moved to hear you talked about how the American people are genuinely generous and how our investment in the Marshall Plan really laid the foundation for a Western Europe that's united, and stable, and free. And your reference to PEPFAR, which largely, through the work of senior senators on this Committee has made possible, a relief that's touched the lives of nine million. I'll also mention the Ebola crisis in West Africa, one where volunteers from around the world joined with the United States in turning around the trajectory of a tragic disease.

So I am encouraged and challenged by your terrific op-ed in the New York Times. By what I've heard from all of you about the -- the Sahel and the Levant, and the ways in which we ought to be working together to craft a more disciplined and thoughtful plan.

General, in your written testimony, you have about as good to call to arms as I heard. And I quote, "We need a global development campaign plan that is as sophisticated, serious, and passionate as any fight in our history designed and resourced as if the future depends on it because it does.

JONES:

That's right.

COONS:

With the time remaining, I'd be grateful if each of you would simply speak to, so if Congress were to embark on a large-scale plan for foreign assistance, that combined all of these elements, real investment in human development, alongside humanitarian relief, partnership with our allies in a sustained way that would prevent fragile states from becoming failed states, what would it look like? What conditions would you put on our aid? How would you decide which countries would come in that ark of attention and care and which would be out of it? And how would we tell the American people how long this would last and what our goals are?

General, I'd be interested in what role U.N. peacekeeping plays in the stabilization.

And, Bono, I, of course, would be interested in what role you think communications and mass culture plays.

And, Deputy Secretary Blinken, how far you think we already are down the road towards developing and delivering this.

And then, of course, Deputy Commissioner, how you see the plight and role of refugees as being at the center of this. So think big and tell us how you would structure it, if you would, please, gentlemen.

JONES:

Oh, thank you, Senator. The -- I'll try to be very brief. I just am of -- I'm of the opinion that -- that we are -- in order to deal with the challenges, the -- and the threats that face us and mankind, really, that we have to approach it a little bit differently.

When I was National Security adviser, we tried to work on the more holistic approach to responding to international threats, things like cyber security, energy security, water security, food security, and, of course, the conventional definition of security that we leaned on for so many years in the 20th century.

In the world that we face today, people -- people have choices and people know a lot more and people in the -- in the disadvantaged developing countries have access to information that shows them that they don't have to live like this. And the battle is on between extremist ideologies who captivate those minds and said the reason that you are not doing better is because of these guys, and generally they point to us.

But I'm -- I'm very optimistic that if we can -- if we can put together a -- a strategic concept for how each administration deals with these kinds of problems more holistically to include the private sector and the public sector working together, to -- to advance the idea that America doesn't have to do this alone. The -- what we -- what we can do, I think better than anybody, is certainly provide assets and resources, but also provide an organizing principle around which other countries would follow.

And the North Atlantic Treaty Organization is a good example, I think, of an international organization of 28 countries that has a fantastic history but what is its future? And if we can't -- if we can't lead that organization into the 21st century by being more proactive, more preemptive and -- and more strategic in our thinking, which saves money in the long-term, then -- then I think we have a difficult time.

So leadership -- U.S. leadership, I think, and organizing principles to do these things, to bring international public and private sectors together, to -- to help countries that are on the fringe of going one way or the other in terms of democracy, and -- and whose people know exactly what they're missing and will not hesitate to move by tens of thousands across the Mediterranean from Africa to -- to Europe if -- if they don't see hope for the future.

So it's agriculture, it's food, it's water, it's physical security, but it has to be -- and it's -- it's using organizations like the U.N., obviously, NGOs. We have to find the table where everybody can sit together and -- and plan this. It's not as expensive as it looks. What's expensive is when you have to go through another Iraq or Afghanistan or Libya without a complete toolkit that says, OK, you're defeated. We got security, now what?

COONS:

Thank you.

JONES:

The now what is what's been missing.

COONS:

Thank you, General.

JONES:

Thank you.

COONS:

Mr. Chairman, may other members of the panel respond or...

GRAHAM:

Sure.

COONS:

I'm beyond my time.

(CROSSTALK)

COONS:

Deputy Secretary Blinken, briefly if you might, what countries are in, what countries are out?

BLINKEN:

Sir, first I'd very much describe what -- what General Jones said.

Second, in terms of the countries that are in, the countries that are out, of course, we have to do an assessment of which countries are most at risk, which countries matter to us the most in terms of our own interest and security, and then which are most likely to actually be willing to be partners and to make the changes necessary?

Conditions you mentioned, we want to make sure that, in fact, what we're trying to do is really leverage our assistance in different ways.

First, leverage it so that the countries in question that receive it actually make the changes that we think are the right ones to make in terms of having sustainable outcomes in all the areas that General Jones just talked about.

Second, always deleverage our assistance get other countries to put in as well. And one of the things we're trying to do, for example, on the refugee crisis is we'll -- President Obama convened a summit meeting on the margins of the U.N. General Assembly in September. And one of the goals of the summit meeting is to increase the assistance provided around the world by 30 percent to the international -- to the global refugee crisis so the (inaudible) to even take part in the summit, to be at the table is to do more so we can do -- do that, too.

Third, I think even as we're thinking about assistance and designing such a program, we also just have to be looking at innovative solutions that are not necessarily driven by -- by money. So, for example, we were talking earlier in the refugee crisis, we need to be doing things like ending this divide between the way we provide humanitarian assistance and the way we do development aid. These things need to be married together, both on the way we budget and the way we think about problems, and the way we invest in them.

Second, we were talking about providing concessional loans to middle income countries that don't qualify for them but could use them very effectively -- the Jordans and Lebanons of this world.

Third, innovative ideas like creating enterprise zones where if companies invest in those zones and countries invest in those zones, the product they produced get preferential treatment. The people employed in those zones may well be refugees or people who are at risk. So, ideas of those kind, I think, are the kind of thinking we need to have to make this work more effectively.

COONS:

Those are terrific ideas.

Bono, you've done an amazing job of leveraging world interest in your leadership to provide relief to millions from HIV/AIDS. How would we do the same in this unique challenge?

BONO:

I am very humbled to have you ask that question, Senator, and to hear you debating with Senator Graham is one of the great thrills of my life and some extraordinary place on the far end of the globe. And I hear your passion on these -- on these subjects.

I'm -- I'm not sure exactly what the Marshall Plan looks like. I liked that three-tiered approach that I thought Tony brought up there. I can speak better about the Sahel because I know it better than -- than the Levant, which you all do.

But I -- I just want to remind people, Africa is really rich. I mean, not just in its resources, but its people. It's extraordinary. And -- and I think it will be an amazing partner for us going forward. I just think for trade, for commerce.

Remember, the Marshall Plan did really great for the U.S. Keep thinking about -- I mean, at the time people are saying, we can't afford it, we can't afford it. But actually, the 50's and 60's were born out of these, you know, new customers. Can you believe a rock star talking about? (Inaudible) it's true.

And -- and so I -- I think the biggest problem in the way of that growth, any African will tell you, is reform, and finding corruption, tackling corruption. The Africans are leading this, but you make it easier when you make these packages conditional on that kind of form. That's what they want.

The finance minister say to me all the time on debt cancellation that, you know, the really key piece of that, Bono, was having our debt counsel, we had to reform. So I think it's a -- it's a fantastic thing to arrive in the region, these difficult regions. And you can advise them to reform or you can say, Look, here's what happens when you do. Here's the club. You want to be in this club, because it's a great club. And -- and so I think that's -- that's the way I'm seeing it.

And just to end, just to say, I think we need an America that is strong like the general describes, but also an America that's smart. You're strong and smart when you -- when you talk like this. And I'm just amazed. I'm actually (inaudible) listening to you all today, and so I'm having an into myself thing and going, wow, people really get this thing and they're talking about, you know, asking the American people to go further. And that hurts you politically, but that's real leadership, isn't it when you do the right thing and it costs you?

COONS:

Thank you.

CLEMENTS:

It's really easy to come after these three gentlemen because, obviously, they -- the -- the concepts are inspirational but also very concrete.

Just a couple of things to add. We talk about this arc of crisis from Southwest Asia, Middle East through the Horn of Africa and the Lake Chad Basin. In terms of that being a stretch of where people are being disrooted, that would probably be where to focus in terms of a so-called Marshall Plan Redux.

Second, if -- don't forget the political. It's tremendously important. We're talking a lot about humanitarian development. We're talking about failed states, governance issues, and so on. Obviously, all that's important. If we can get the -- when we do have those crises solved, it would make a tremendous difference. Syria, Iraq, and Somalia, those three crises alone are responsible for almost half of the -- of the uprooted people we were talking about earlier, so that needs to be part of the overall equation. And then I couldn't agree more in terms of marrying the humanitarian development approaches in a real concrete way.

We have a moment now that we haven't had in decades in terms of political attention, including of the Subcommittee. Thank you.

COONS:

I'd like to thank Senator Leahy and Senator Graham for your tremendous leadership at the Subcommittee, and the entire panel for what you've done to raise our eyes and to challenge us to confront this moment of both opportunity and real difficulty for millions of people around the world. Thank you.

GRAHAM:

Senator Merkley?

MERKLEY:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. And -- and I appreciate all of your testimony very much.

And, General Jones and Bono, it's great to connect with you all again. Senator Coons led a delegation, and we were able to meet in Rwanda, and to be in -- in the field discussing the -- the challenges is a wonderful compliment to being here in Washington, D.C., and discussing the -- the challenges.

Mercy Corps is an organization headquartered in my home state of Oregon. And I connected with them about how -- what they would recommend in terms of countering violent extremism. And I'll just share with you all the points that they made.

They said in siloed single sector programming and support multi- sector, multiyear programs to create systems within which youth can thrive.

Second, target the most vulnerable youth. Be vigilant about ensuring you don't simply reach privileged youth in urban centers.

Third, shape the future CVE, countering violent extremist strategies through rigorous, iterative analysis of the political, social, and economic factors that drive youth to support violence.

And fourth, increase investments in two-track governance programs. Connect youth voices with meaningful reforms on the issues of corruption, predatory justice systems, and exclusive governance structures.

I just wanted to mention those and -- and see if you all would find those things to fit with your own experience or -- or if you'd like to take issue with them. Anyone?

Yes, thank you.

CLEMENTS:

Thank you. Maybe I can just start this time in terms of, obviously, Mercy Corps is a tremendous partner of UNHCR and -- and others, and does tremendous work around the world.

One thing to mention is the issue of integration. Nothing can be more powerful in terms of averting radicalization and preventing violent extremism, is to having hosts and refugees side by side, and friends, neighbors, et cetera.

I have to say in terms of the U.S. being a leader on refugee resettlement, one of the reasons it has been so successful historically, we see the same thing north, in Canada, and on Australia is that there's a real integration. So in terms of preventing that kind of extremism, welcoming people into the community is definitely the first and the strongest step. Thanks.

MERKLEY:

Thank you. Anyone else? Yes, Deputy Secretary Blinken.

BLINKEN:

Yes, Senator, I think the -- the points that Mercy Corps makes are -- are on the money and, in fact, consistent with the way that we're -- we're looking at the problem.

In particular, I think exactly as they said, the -- the multisector programming is vitally important. We have to have these interconnections, and that's exactly what we're trying to do. For example, in trying to bring together what we're doing on counterterrorism with what we're doing on countering violent extremism, that is what we're doing before the problem becomes a problem and then what we're doing afterward, we can actually create much greater coordination of efforts.

So, for example, if you're training a law enforcement organization to deal with terrorism, but you're also helping to understand what the drivers are of terrorism, it may be able to be more effective at getting to the problem before it starts, so bringing these things together is vitally important.

Second, you're -- I think you're exactly right about targeting the most vulnerable. And indeed, we're trying to think about our assistance programs and the work that we're doing focused on the communities most susceptible to creating or having people in their midst become -- become radicalized. And it goes as far as our exchange programs, for example, to make sure that people are bringing over, represent those communities, and benefit from -- from the work that -- that we're doing.

And then exactly right as well that we need to be elevating their voices, not so much ours, but their voices because ultimately, the most effective messengers, the people that have the most credibility are people who are speaking to -- to their own. So, that fits in very much of what we're trying to do.

MERKLEY:

Thank you. I was particularly struck by the emphasis on the rigorous iterative analysis because we have to continuously test different strategies and then see what's working, and what's working in one part of the world may be very different than what's working elsewhere.

Bono, I join my colleagues in thanking you so much for the work of the ONE Campaign and RED. My daughter, Bren (ph), is enjoying interning with your organization and -- and is moved by the -- the mission as so many Americans are. You mentioned a number of things I want to particularly stress.

First, that aid is not charity, it is national security. So often, I have asked my colleagues if we had another dollar, do we do more for security in the world through these types of programs than we do through procuring another weapon, if you will? And I -- I think that the balance still is too much on the weapon in foresight and not enough on this side. And certainly that ties in with the - - the notion that, I think, the way you put it was it's more cost-effective to invest in civility today than to address crises later.

You also noted that it's important to connect, if you will, humanitarian aid and development efforts. And I think that's an immediate short-term and longer-term strategy. Would you like to just expand on that?

BONO:

Yeah, sure. Just on the military piece, the extraordinary thing about General Jones is, 10 years ago, he was talking about the reimagining of the military.

I -- I went to the Atlantic. Is that what it's called? The big military gathering.

(UNKNOWN)

(OFF-MIKE)

BONO:

Yeah, Atlantic Council. And there were all these Ph.D.s standing up. They were all generals. I'm like, wow, this is a -- they're so cerebral and they're so philosophical. And you realize that the -- the military is ahead of the politicians on this one. I mean, they really understand what has to be done. And I'm amazed by that. It's in an asymmetrical conflict, you just can't use the old strategies. And there's new weapons needed. And sometimes those weapons are education, you know, fighting disease. And it's really cheap.

And I remember with the AIDS stuff that we did, I remember telling President Bush, "Paint those antiretroviral drugs red, white and blue, Mr. President, because they're the best advertisement for America you're ever going to see." He was like laughing except now when he arrives in Africa, everyone is applauding the dude. And America pulls very well. It's amazing.

So -- and then on -- on the -- on the long-term versus the short-term, the humanitarian aid and long-term developed, they are coming together now. And you can't care about development and poverty and not care about conflict because 50 percent of the poor come out of fragile conflict-prone areas. So I'm learning, you see, from Kelly, and she's learning from other people smarter than me. But -- but it is -- it coming together. But we -- it used to be two separate silos, and I'm glad to say that it's coming together.

And I also just -- it wasn't your question, Senator Merkley, but because we're in Rwanda together, I think -- I think Rwanda is an -- an example of a country that came out of conflict, that took our investment in aid and actually has done quite an incredible job. And I know it's frustrating for some of us that President Kagame went -- went on for a third term. He's absolutely convicted on his -- his security. The security of his country was the right -- he was -- he was doing it for the security of his country. But aside from that, he is doing a spectacular job and he is an example, I think, of -- of how to do this right.

MERKLEY:

One of the things that tremendously struck me there was the -- the government's emphasis on no longer talking and identifying as tribal entities, but as Rwandans. And yet it's a fragile moment still. And one of the concerns he expressed was that campaigns will cause people to immediately either directly or indirectly reach back out to their tribal roots and the memories are so -- so painful. It's a situation we have a hard time fully comprehending given what -- what past in Rwanda.

I'll just close with noting -- I appreciate the emphasis on corruption. There has been mentioned of the Global Anti-Corruption Summit in London and that the U.S....

BONO:

Right.

MERKLEY:

... will back an ambitious set of proposals. I'd love to hear more about that, but I am out of time.

GRAHAM:

Senator Durbin?

(UNKNOWN)

Thank you.

DURBIN:

Thanks, Mr. Chairman, for this hearing and thank you for your suggestion on the Marshall Plan.

At the risk of ruining your political reputation, I respect you very much.

(LAUGHTER)

GRAHAM:

Just keep it to yourself.

DURBIN:

Right. Thanks to this panel. History tells us that World War II was a learning experience for the United States. We were not open to refugees. We turned them away -- the refugees from Europe, the refugees -- Jewish refugees coming in, trying to escape the Holocaust. And after the war, we tried to change that policy and point in a new direction. And for the most part, we've done it.

Now we're faced with the humanitarian crisis of our time, the refugee crisis of our time coming out of Syria, and Afghanistan, and so many other place.

Bono, I can remember the first time we ever sat down to talk. It was about HIV/AIDS. And I remembered my first reaction, the reaction of most to this issue and this crisis was fear. What does this mean? Am I going to die? How many people are going to die? Is there any way to stop it?

The reaction to this refugee crisis, the first same reaction, fear. How many of these people are coming? And what are they going to threaten us? So it's not unusual for us to face new challenges with the first reaction in fear. And I hope that we have -- we're certainly have grown out of it when it comes to HIV/AIDS. We're much more knowledgeable, and thoughtful, and know what we can achieve.

The question is, will we get back on right track when it comes to refugees? We got to get beyond this pause thinking around here and get back to the reality of a lot of deserving people.

I was on the island of Lesbos, and I saw them coming in on these leaky, rubber plastic boats with little babies with water wings that we put on them, wading pools. That's all they had to protect them as they came across the straits. And I thought how desperate these people must be to risk their lives and the lives of their children to bring only what they can carry.

And I guess my question comes down to this -- it's more of a general question. I think the genuine concern in Europe and the other places is about the uncertainty of when this is going to end. Is there going to be an end to this flow of refugees? Is there a finite number that we have to contemplate in terms of absorbing into Germany, absorbing into Sweden, how many?

The uncertainty of that is certainly understandable because as you have said, speaking of your experience in Africa, this is not confined to the Middle East. And I remember when the -- an ambassador from Italy told us Syrians ranked third in the number -- in the country, sending us refugees into Italy. Two firsts are coming out of Africa.

So, my question to you is this -- if this humanitarian crisis is not abnormal but the new normal in our world where people are living longer because of public health, surviving, where we see, as you ticked it off the extreme ideology, extreme poverty, extreme climate, can we engage our friends of the world of like mind to make investments to allow these people to stay in place rather than to strike out in desperation to find some refuge, some opportunity?

BONO:

Yeah, it is a giant -- it's a giant challenge, but it's kind of an American one. And -- and I think if you get your best and brightest focus on it as, you know, as I'm listening to you today, you can see that we're going to get is somewhere. But in the private sector, you see there's Mark Zuckerberg and they're trying to bring access to the Internet to people who can't afford it.

There's -- I've had conversation with Larry Page at Google, Ilam (ph), there's lots of people, your tech people. They're determined, incredible parts of -- of your -- of your society.

Bill Gates, we can do anything in the ONE Campaign or indeed RED without Bill and Melinda Gates. So, Warren Buffett, the -- I mean, your -- it's a -- it's the whole country that's showing the way, not just -- not just the public sectors, the private sector. And it's going to do it. You can do it because strangely enough they've done studies on bringing, you know, the Internet to developing countries, and it's transformative. And that's just one thing.

So, electricity, you know, your innovations in solar. It's incredible the president has an initiative to bring power to Africa. It's really good. And these -- these are transformative.

I -- the only thing I worry about, and I'm guilty of this, is I'm great -- I'm great at raising the alarm. And -- and there's a serious crisis and we really need to attend to it. But I don't want to drag down the vision of this as to -- away from what it could be because it could be your greatest chapter.

You're talking about China, see the influence of China. In 50 years' time, I will tell you this, in 50 years' time, if the United States walks away from the continent of Africa -- I'm speaking about and just cedes all that influence of China will be seen as the worst foreign policy mistake of the start of the 21st century. It's that big.

And why would you? These are people they love you. They want their entrepreneurs. They're smart. They're coming to your universities. And great that China is, you know, competing with that, too. And I hope to see China, I'd like to see -- I think President Xi, one thing about him is he's very, very big on tackling corruption both in China and now I want to see that in -- in Africa. And if he starts to tackle corruption in Africa, it would be transformative. I'm not sure he's watching C-SPAN at the minute, but I'd love -- I'd love to have a conversation.

(LAUGHTER)

DURBIN:

Mr. Chairman, thank you very much for this hearing.

Thank you all.

GRAHAM:

Thank you. Thank you, too.

Thank you all very much. Just to wrap it up, a couple of observations. We're trying to be proactive. The whole goal of this hearing is to focus on the problem is going to get worse if somebody doesn't deal with it now. It's better to invest now or you're going to pay later.

Losing Jordan would be -- I don't think that's going to happen, but we got to get a grip on this refugee crisis. It's just not providing food, shelter and clothing. It is providing a way to integrate

them into the countries over there, so they don't come here. It is designed to undercut a radical extremism, which is a hopeful life versus a glorious death.

Ten years ago when you first tackled the AIDS crisis, no one could ever imagine in their wildest dreams how successful it had been, and we still got a ways to go. If I can tell you, mother to child AIDS transmission has been reduced by 75 percent. There are five countries inside the 20 yard line that can be self-sufficient when it comes to dealing with their AIDS problem -- South Africa leading the charge.

Millions of people are alive today because of what we did 10 years ago and to the American people. If I thought there was a way to do this differently, I would choose it. I don't want soldiers to go over there unless they have to go. And I can't find a way, General Jones, to provide security over there without some of us being there helping in that endeavor.

I cannot find a way in my own mind to deal with encountering violent extremism without some kind of international plan of which we'll be a part to change the economies of these regions to give people hope. The more education a child has, the better off we'll do.

I'll end on a positive note. After 37 visits to Iraq and Afghanistan, I can assure the American people that they're not buying what these crazy people are selling. They don't want to go down that road. They don't want to turn their daughters over to ISIL. They, being the mothers and fathers. And I can promise you, you are safer here when we're helping people over there.

And this whole concept of coming up with a Marshall Plan for the 21st century, call it what you like. It is long overdue. We've spent a lot of money, but the most important thing we've done is spend 6,000 plus lives and thousands of people have had their lives disrupted, legs blown off, and traumatic brain injury. I can go on and on and on.

I would like to make the next 10 years more successful. And the only way I know to do that is to have something outside the military solution that compliments security once you achieve it because once you achieve security, you will lose it if you do not do the things we talked about.

So with that, I want to thank you all.

And, Senator Leahy, if you want to say anything, we'll wrap it up.

LEAHY:

No, at the risk of...

(LAUGHTER)

... damaging your career back home, I agree with you.

(LAUGHTER)

And -- but all four of the people here, people that we've known for a long, long time.

GRAHAM:

You made enormous difference today, and you will look back on this hearing, I hope, and say that's when it began to change.

LEAHY:

It gives us -- it gives us -- Senator Graham and I, we have to bring members of both parties together to vote for this bill. You know, the way the public is. Why are we giving 25 percent of our budget for an aid? Of course, it's a fraction. It's a fraction of one percent. And the return, you know, pay for it now or pay many, many, many times more later on.

And -- and what you've given us is a lot of ammunition to work with both Republicans and Democrats, so I thank you.

GRAHAM:

Thank you.

LEAHY:

(Inaudible).

GRAHAM:

Yes, sir. I ask that the testimonies submitted by today's witnesses as well as the testimony provided by USAID, United State Institute of Peace be included in the record. Any questions for the record be -- can be submitted until Friday, April 15th.

The hearing is adjourned.