

**STATEMENT OF SENATOR HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
NOMINEE FOR SECRETARY OF STATE
SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE
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Thank you, Senator Schumer, for your generous introduction, and even more for your support and our partnership over so many years. You are a valued and trusted colleague, a friend, and a tribute to the people of New York whom you have served with such distinction throughout your career.

Mr. Chairman, I offer my congratulations as you take on this new role. You certainly have traveled quite a distance from that day in 1971 when you testified here as a young Vietnam veteran. You have never faltered in your care and concern for our nation, its foreign policy or its future, and America is in good hands with you leading this committee.

Senator Lugar, I look forward to working with you on a wide range of issues, especially those of greatest concern to you, including the Nunn-Lugar initiative.

And Senator Voinovich, I want to commend you for your service to the people of Ohio and ask for your help in the next two years on the management issues you champion.

It is an honor and a privilege to be here this morning as President-elect Obama's nominee for Secretary of State. I am deeply grateful for the trust – and keenly aware of the responsibility – that the President-elect has placed in me to serve our country and our people at a time of such grave dangers, and great possibilities. If confirmed, I will accept the duties of the office with gratitude, humility, and firm determination to represent the United States as energetically and faithfully as I can.

At the same time I must confess that sitting across the table from so many colleagues brings me sadness too. I love the Senate. And if you confirm me for this new role, it will be hard to say good-bye to so many members, Republicans and Democrats, whom I have come to know, admire, and

respect deeply, and to the institution where I have been so proud to serve on behalf of the people of New York for the past eight years.

But I assure you that I will be in frequent consultation and conversation with the members of this committee, with the House Foreign Affairs Committee, the appropriations committees, and with Congress as a whole. And I look forward to working with my good friend, Vice President-elect Biden, who has been a valued colleague in the Senate and valued chairman of this committee.

For me, consultation is not a catch-word. It is a commitment.

The President-elect and I believe that we must return to the time-honored principle of bipartisanship in our foreign policy – an approach that past Presidents of both parties, as well as members of this committee, have subscribed to and that has served our nation well. I look forward to working with all of you to renew America’s leadership through diplomacy that enhances our security, advances our interests, and reflects our values.

Today, nine years into a new century, Americans know that our nation and our world face great perils: from ongoing wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, to the continuing threat posed by terrorist extremists, to the spread of weapons of mass destruction; from the dangers of climate change to pandemic disease; from financial meltdown to worldwide poverty.

The seventy days since the presidential election offer fresh evidence of the urgency of these challenges. New conflict in Gaza; terrorist attacks in Mumbai; mass killings and rapes in the Congo; cholera in Zimbabwe; reports of record high greenhouse gasses and rapidly melting glaciers; and even an ancient form of terror – piracy – asserting itself in modern form off the Horn of Africa.

Always, and especially in the crucible of these global challenges, our overriding duty is to protect and advance America’s security, interests, and values: First, we must keep our people, our nation, and our allies secure. Second, we must promote economic growth and shared prosperity at home and abroad. Finally, we must strengthen America’s position of global leadership – ensuring that we remain a positive force in the world, whether in working to preserve the health of our planet or expanding dignity and

opportunity for people on the margins whose progress and prosperity will add to our own.

Our world has undergone an extraordinary transformation in the last two decades. In 1989, a wall fell and old barriers began to crumble after 40 years of a Cold War that had influenced every aspect of our foreign policy.

By 1999, the rise of more democratic and open societies, the expanding reach of world markets, and the explosion of information technology had made “globalization” the word of the day. For most people, it had primarily an economic connotation, but in fact, we were already living in a profoundly interdependent world in which old rules and boundaries no longer held fast—one in which both the promise and the peril of the 21st century could not be contained by national borders or vast distances.

Economic growth has lifted more people out of poverty faster than at any time in history, but economic crises can sweep across the globe even more quickly. A coalition of nations stopped ethnic cleansing in the Balkans, but the conflict in the Middle East continues to inflame tensions from Asia to Africa. Non-state actors fight poverty, improve health, and expand education in the poorest parts of the world, while other non-state actors traffic in drugs, children, and women and kill innocent civilians across the globe.

Now, in 2009, the clear lesson of the last twenty years is that we must both combat the threats and seize the opportunities of our interdependence. And to be effective in doing so we must build a world with more partners and fewer adversaries.

America cannot solve the most pressing problems on our own, and the world cannot solve them without America. The best way to advance America’s interest in reducing global threats and seizing global opportunities is to design and implement global solutions. This isn’t a philosophical point. This is our reality.

The President-Elect and I believe that foreign policy must be based on a marriage of principles and pragmatism, not rigid ideology. On facts and evidence, not emotion or prejudice. Our security, our vitality, and our ability to lead in today’s world oblige us to recognize the overwhelming fact of our interdependence.

I believe that American leadership has been wanting, but is still wanted. We must use what has been called “smart power”: the full range of tools at our disposal -- diplomatic, economic, military, political, legal, and cultural -- picking the right tool, or combination of tools, for each situation.

With smart power, diplomacy will be the vanguard of foreign policy. This is not a radical idea. The ancient Roman poet Terence, who was born a slave and rose to become one of the great voices of his time, declared that “in every endeavor, the seemly course for wise men is to try persuasion first.” The same truth binds wise women as well.

The President-Elect has made it clear that in the Obama Administration there will be no doubt about the leading role of diplomacy. One need only look to North Korea, Iran, the Middle East, and the Balkans to appreciate the absolute necessity of tough-minded, intelligent diplomacy – and the failures that result when that kind of diplomatic effort is absent. And one need only consider the assortment of problems we must tackle in 2009 – from fighting terrorism to climate change to global financial crises – to understand the importance of cooperative engagement.

I assure you that, if I am confirmed, the State Department will be firing on all cylinders to provide forward-thinking, sustained diplomacy in every part of the world; applying pressure and exerting leverage; cooperating with our military partners and other agencies of government; partnering effectively with NGOs, the private sector, and international organizations; using modern technologies for public outreach; empowering negotiators who can protect our interests while understanding those of our negotiating partners. There will be thousands of separate interactions, all strategically linked and coordinated to defend American security and prosperity. Diplomacy is hard work; but when we work hard, diplomacy can work, and not just to defuse tensions, but to achieve results that advance our security, interests and values.

Secretary Gates has been particularly eloquent in articulating the importance of diplomacy in pursuit of our national security and foreign policy objectives. As he notes, it’s not often that a Secretary of Defense makes the case for adding resources to the State Department and elevating the role of the diplomatic corps. Thankfully, Secretary Gates is more concerned about having a unified, agile, and effective U.S. strategy than in spending our precious time and energy on petty turf wars. As he has stated, “our civilian

institutions of diplomacy and development have been chronically undermanned and underfunded for far too long,” both relative to military spending and to “the responsibilities and challenges our nation has around the world.” And to that, I say, “Amen!”

President-elect Obama has emphasized that the State Department must be fully empowered and funded to confront multi-dimensional challenges – from working with allies to thwart terrorism, to spreading health and prosperity in places of human suffering. I will speak in greater detail about that in a moment.

We should also use the United Nations and other international institutions whenever appropriate and possible. Both Democratic and Republican presidents have understood for decades that these institutions, when they work well, enhance our influence. And when they don’t work well – as in the cases of Darfur and the farce of Sudan’s election to the former UN Commission on Human Rights, for example – we should work with like-minded friends to make sure that these institutions reflect the values that motivated their creation in the first place.

We will lead with diplomacy because it’s the smart approach. But we also know that military force will sometimes be necessary, and we will rely on it to protect our people and our interests when and where needed, as a last resort.

All the while, we must remember that to promote our interests around the world, America must be an exemplar of our values. Senator Isakson made the point to me the other day that our nation must lead by example rather than edict. Our history has shown that we are most effective when we see the harmony between our interests abroad and our values at home. And I take great comfort in knowing that our first Secretary of State, Thomas Jefferson, also subscribed to that view, reminding us across the centuries: “The interests of a nation, when well understood, will be found to coincide with their moral duties.”

So while our democracy continues to inspire people around the world, we know that its influence is greatest when we live up to its teachings ourselves.

Senator Lugar, I’m going to borrow your words here, because you have made this point so eloquently: You once said that “the United States cannot

feed every person, lift every person out of poverty, cure every disease, or stop every conflict. But our power and status have conferred upon us a tremendous responsibility to humanity.”

Of course, we must be realistic about achieving our goals. Even under the best of circumstances, our nation cannot solve every problem or meet every global need. We don't have unlimited time, treasure, or manpower. And we certainly don't face the best of circumstances today, with our economy faltering and our budget deficits growing.

So to fulfill our responsibility to our children, to protect and defend our nation while honoring our values, we have to establish priorities.

Now, I'm not trying to mince words here. As my colleagues in the Senate know, “establishing priorities” means making tough choices. Because those choices are so important to the American people, we must be disciplined in evaluating them -- weighing the costs and consequences of our action or inaction; gauging the probability of success; and insisting on measurable results.

Right after I was nominated a friend told me: “The world has so many problems. You've got your work cut out for you.” Well, I agree that the problems are many and they are big. But I don't get up every morning thinking only about the threats and dangers we face. With every challenge comes an opportunity to find promise and possibility in the face of adversity and complexity. Today's world calls forth the optimism and can-do spirit that has marked our progress for more than two centuries.

Too often we see the ills that plague us more clearly than the possibilities in front of us. We see threats that must be thwarted; wrongs that must be righted; conflicts that must be calmed. But not the partnerships that can be promoted; the rights that can be reinforced; the innovations that can be fostered; the people who can be empowered.

After all, it is the real possibility of progress—of that better life, free from fear and want and discord—that offers our most compelling message to the rest of the world.

I've had the chance to lay out and submit my views on a broad array of issues in written responses to questions from the committee, so in this

statement I will outline some of the major challenges we face and some of the major opportunities we see.

First, President-Elect Obama is committed to responsibly ending the war in Iraq and employing a broad strategy in Afghanistan that reduces threats to our safety and enhances the prospect of stability and peace.

Right now, our men and women in uniform, our diplomats, and our aid workers are risking their lives in those two countries. They have done everything we have asked of them and more. But, over time we have seen that our larger interests will be best served by safely and responsibly withdrawing our troops from Iraq, supporting a transition to full Iraqi responsibility for their sovereign nation, rebuilding our overtaxed military, and reaching out to other nations to help stabilize the region and to employ a broader arsenal of tools to fight terrorism.

Equally important will be a comprehensive plan using all elements of our power – diplomacy, development, and defense – to work with those in Afghanistan and Pakistan who want to root out al-Qaeda, the Taliban, and other violent extremists who threaten them as well as us in what President-Elect Obama has called the central front in the fight against terrorism. We need to deepen our engagement with these and other countries in the region and pursue policies that improve the lives of the Afghan and Pakistani people.

As we focus on Iraq, Pakistan and Afghanistan, we must also actively pursue a strategy of smart power in the Middle East that addresses the security needs of Israel and the legitimate political and economic aspirations of the Palestinians; that effectively challenges Iran to end its nuclear weapons program and sponsorship of terror, and persuades both Iran and Syria to abandon their dangerous behavior and become constructive regional actors; that strengthens our relationships with Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, other Arab states, with Turkey, and with our partners in the Gulf to involve them in securing a lasting peace in the region.

As intractable as the Middle East's problems may seem – and many Presidents, including my husband, have spent years trying to help work out a resolution – we cannot give up on peace. The President-Elect and I understand and are deeply sympathetic to Israel's desire to defend itself under the current conditions, and to be free of shelling by Hamas rockets.

However, we have also been reminded of the tragic humanitarian costs of conflict in the Middle East, and pained by the suffering of Palestinian and Israeli civilians. This must only increase our determination to seek a just and lasting peace agreement that brings real security to Israel; normal and positive relations with its neighbors; and independence, economic progress, and security to the Palestinians in their own state.

We will exert every effort to support the work of Israelis and Palestinians who seek that result. It is critical not only to the parties involved but to our profound interests in undermining the forces of alienation and violent extremism across our world.

Terrorism remains a serious threat and we must have a comprehensive strategy, leveraging intelligence, diplomacy, and military assets to defeat al-Qaeda and like-minded terrorists by rooting out their networks and drying up support for their violent and nihilistic extremism. The gravest threat that America faces is the danger that weapons of mass destruction will fall into the hands of terrorists. To ensure our future security, we must curb the spread and use of these weapons – whether nuclear, biological, chemical, or cyber – while we take the lead in working with others to reduce current nuclear stockpiles and prevent the development and use of dangerous new weaponry.

Therefore, while defending against the threat of terrorism, we will also seize the parallel opportunity to get America back in the business of engaging other nations to reduce stockpiles of nuclear weapons. We will work with Russia to secure their agreement to extend essential monitoring and verification provisions of the START Treaty before it expires in December 2009, and we will work toward agreements for further reductions in nuclear weapons. We will also work with Russia to take U.S. and Russian missiles off hair-trigger alert, act with urgency to prevent proliferation in North Korea and Iran, secure loose nuclear weapons and materials, and shut down the market for selling them – as Senator Lugar has done for so many years.

The Non Proliferation Treaty is the cornerstone of the nonproliferation regime, and the United States must exercise the leadership needed to shore up the regime. So, we will work with this committee and the Senate toward ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and reviving negotiations on a verifiable Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty.

Today's security threats cannot be addressed in isolation. Smart power requires reaching out to both friends and adversaries, to bolster old alliances and to forge new ones.

That means strengthening the alliances that have stood the test of time—especially with our NATO partners and our allies in Asia. Our alliance with Japan is a cornerstone of American policy in Asia, essential to maintaining peace and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region, and based on shared values and mutual interests. We also have crucial economic and security partnerships with South Korea, Australia, and other friends in ASEAN. We will build on our economic and political partnership with India, the world's most populous democracy and a nation with growing influence in the world.

Our traditional relationships of confidence and trust with Europe will be deepened. Disagreements are inevitable, even among the closest friends, but on most global issues we have no more trusted allies. The new administration will have a chance to reach out across the Atlantic to leaders in France, Germany, the United Kingdom, and others across the continent, including the new democracies. When America and Europe work together, global objectives are well within our means.

President-Elect Obama and I seek a future of cooperative engagement with the Russian government on matters of strategic importance, while standing up strongly for American values and international norms.

China is a critically important actor in a changing global landscape. We want a positive and cooperative relationship with China, one where we deepen and strengthen our ties on a number of issues, and candidly address differences where they persist.

But this not a one-way effort – much of what we will do depends on the choices China makes about its future at home and abroad.

With both Russia and China, we should work together on vital security and economic issues like terrorism, proliferation, climate change, and reforming financial markets.

The world is now in the cross currents of the most severe global economic contraction since the Great Depression. The history of that crisis teaches us the consequences of diplomatic failures and uncoordinated reactions. Yet

history alone is an insufficient guide; the world has changed too much. We have already seen that this crisis extends beyond the housing and banking sectors, and our solutions will have to be as wide in scope as the causes themselves, taking into account the complexities of the global economy, the geopolitics involved, and the likelihood of continued political and economic repercussions from the damage already done.

But here again, as we work to repair the damage, we can find new ways of working together. For too long, we have merely talked about the need to engage emerging powers in global economic governance; the time to take action is upon us. The recent G-20 meeting was a first step, but developing patterns of sustained engagement will take hard work and careful negotiation. We know that emerging markets like China, India, Brazil, South Africa, and Indonesia are feeling the effects of the current crisis. We all stand to benefit in both the short and long term if they are part of the solution, and become partners in maintaining global economic stability.

In our efforts to return to economic growth here in the United States, we have an especially critical need to work more closely with Canada, our largest trading partner, and Mexico, our third largest. Canada and Mexico are also our biggest suppliers of imported energy. More broadly, we must build a deeper partnership with Mexico to address the shared danger arising from drug-trafficking and the challenges of our border, an effort begun this week with a meeting between President-elect Obama and President Calderon.

Throughout our hemisphere we have opportunities to enhance cooperation to meet common economic, security and environmental objectives that affect us all. We will return to a policy of vigorous engagement throughout Latin America, seeking deeper understanding and broader engagement with nations from the Caribbean to Central to South America. Not only do we share common political, economic and strategic interests with our friends to the south, our relationship is also enhanced by many shared ancestral and cultural legacies. We are looking forward to working on many issues during the Summit of the Americas in April and taking up the President-Elect's call for a new energy partnership of the Americas built around shared technology and new investments in renewable energy.

In Africa, the foreign policy objectives of the Obama administration are rooted in security, political, economic, and humanitarian interests, including:

combating al Qaeda's efforts to seek safe havens in failed states in the Horn of Africa; helping African nations to conserve their natural resources and reap fair benefits from them; stopping war in Congo; ending autocracy in Zimbabwe and human devastation in Darfur; supporting African democracies like South Africa and Ghana--which just had its second change of power in democratic elections; and working aggressively to reach the Millennium Development Goals in health, education, and economic opportunity.

Many significant problems we face challenge not just the United States, but all nations and peoples. You, Mr. Chairman, were among the first, in a growing chorus from both parties, to recognize that climate change is an unambiguous security threat. At the extreme it threatens our very existence, but well before that point, it could very well incite new wars of an old kind—over basic resources like food, water, and arable land. The world is in need of an urgent, coordinated response to climate change and, as President-Elect Obama has said, America must be a leader in developing and implementing it. We can lead abroad through participation in international efforts like the upcoming UN Copenhagen Climate Conference and a Global Energy Forum. We can lead at home by pursuing an energy policy that reduces our carbon emissions while reducing our dependence on foreign oil and gas—which will benefit the fight against climate change and enhance our economy and security.

The great statesman and general George Marshall noted that our gravest enemies are often not nations or doctrines, but “hunger, poverty, desperation, and chaos.” To create more friends and fewer enemies, we can’t just win wars. We must find common ground and common purpose with other peoples and nations so that together we can overcome hatred, violence, lawlessness, and despair.

The Obama administration recognizes that, even when we cannot fully agree with some governments, we share a bond of humanity with their people. By investing in that common humanity we advance our common security because we pave the way for a more peaceful, prosperous world.

Mr. Chairman, you were one of the first to underscore the importance of our involvement in the global AIDS fight. And you have worked very hard on this issue for many years. Now, thanks to a variety of efforts—including President Bush’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief as well as the work of

NGOs and foundations—the United States enjoys widespread support in public opinion polls in many African countries. This is true even among Muslim populations in Tanzania and Kenya, where America is seen as a leader in the fight against AIDS, malaria, and TB.

We have an opportunity to build on this success by partnering with NGOs to help expand the infrastructure of health clinics in Africa so that more people can have access to life-saving drugs, fewer mothers transmit HIV to their children, and fewer lives are lost.

And we can generate even more goodwill through other kinds of social investment, by working effectively with international organizations and NGO partners to build schools and train teachers, and by ensuring that children are free from hunger and exploitation so that they can attend those schools and pursue their dreams for the future. This is why the President-Elect supports a Global Education Fund to bolster secular education around the world.

I want to take a moment to emphasize the importance of a “bottom-up” approach to ensuring that America remains a positive force in the world. The President-elect and I believe in this strongly. Investing in our common humanity through social development is not marginal to our foreign policy but integral to accomplishing our goals.

Today more than two billion people worldwide live on less than \$2 a day. They are facing rising food prices and widespread hunger. Calls for expanding civil and political rights in countries plagued by mass hunger and disease will fall on deaf ears unless democracy actually delivers material benefits that improve people’s lives while weeding out the corruption that too often stands in the way of progress.

Our foreign policy must reflect our deep commitment to the cause of making human rights a reality for millions of oppressed people around the world. Of particular concern to me is the plight of women and girls, who comprise the majority of the world’s unhealthy, unschooled, unfed, and unpaid. If half of the world’s population remains vulnerable to economic, political, legal, and social marginalization, our hope of advancing democracy and prosperity will remain in serious jeopardy. We still have a long way to go and the United States must remain an unambiguous and unequivocal voice in support of women’s rights in every country, every region, on every continent.

As a personal aside, I want to mention that President-elect Obama's mother, Ann Dunham, was a pioneer in microfinance in Indonesia. In my own work on microfinance around the world – from Bangladesh to Chile to Vietnam to South Africa and many other countries -- I've seen firsthand how small loans given to poor women to start small businesses can raise standards of living and transform local economies. President-elect Obama's mother had planned to attend a microfinance forum at the Beijing women's conference in 1995 that I participated in. Unfortunately, she was very ill and couldn't travel and sadly passed away a few months later. But I think it's fair to say that her work in international development, the care and concern she showed for women and for poor people around the world, mattered greatly to her son, and certainly has informed his views and his vision. We will be honored to carry on Ann Dunham's work in the months and years ahead.

I've discussed a few of our top priorities and I know we'll address many more in the question-and-answer session. But I suspect that even this brief overview offers a glimpse of the daunting, and crucial, challenges we face, as well as the opportunities before us. President-elect Obama and I pledge to work closely with this Committee and the Congress to forge a bipartisan, integrated, results-oriented sustainable foreign policy that will restore American leadership to confront these challenges, serve our interests, and advance our values.

Ensuring that our State Department is functioning at its best will be absolutely essential to America's success. This is a top priority of mine, of my colleagues' on the national security team, and of the President-elect's. He believes strongly that we need to invest in our civilian capacity to conduct vigorous American diplomacy, provide the kind of foreign assistance I've mentioned, reach out to the world, and operate effectively alongside our military.

I realize that the entire State Department bureaucracy in Thomas Jefferson's day consisted of a chief clerk, three regular clerks, and a messenger – and his entire budget was \$56,000 a year.

But over the past 219 years the world, and the times, have certainly changed. Now the department consists of foreign service officers, the civil service, and locally engaged staff working at Foggy Bottom, in offices across our country, and at some 260 posts around the world. And today, USAID carries

out a critical development mission that is essential to representing our values across the globe.

These public servants are too often unsung heroes. They are in the trenches putting our policies and values to work in an increasingly complicated and dangerous world. Many risk their lives, and some lose their lives, in service to our nation. And they need and deserve the resources, training, and support to succeed.

I know this committee, and I hope the American public, understand that right now foreign service officers, civil service professionals, and development experts are doing work essential to our nation's strength – whether helping American businesses make inroads in new markets; being on the other end of the phone at a United States embassy when an American citizen needs help beyond our shores; doing the delicate work of diplomacy and development with foreign governments that leads to arms control and trade agreements, peace treaties and post-conflict reconstruction, greater human rights and empowerment, broader cultural understanding and stronger alliances.

The State Department is a large, multi-dimensional organization. But it is not a placid or idle bureaucracy, as some would like to paint it. It is an outpost for American values that protects our citizens and safeguards our democratic institutions in times both turbulent and tame. State Department employees also offer a lifeline of hope and help – often the only lifeline - for people in foreign lands who are oppressed, silenced, and marginalized.

Whether they are an economic officer in a large embassy, or an aid worker in the field, or a clerk in a distant consulate or a country officer working late in Washington, they do their work so that we may all live in peace and security. We must not shortchange them, or ourselves, by denying them the resources they need.

One of my first priorities is to make sure that the State Department and USAID have the resources they need, and I will be back to make the case to Congress for full funding of the President's budget request. At the same time, I will work just as hard to make sure that we manage those resources prudently so that we fulfill our mission efficiently and effectively.

In concluding, I hope you will indulge me one final observation. Like most Americans, I never had the chance to travel widely outside our country as a child or young adult. Most of my early professional career was as a lawyer and advocate for children and who found themselves on society's margins here at home. But during the eight years of my husband's presidency, and then in my eight years as a Senator, I have been privileged to travel on behalf of the United States to more than 80 countries.

I've had the opportunity to get to know many world leaders. As a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee I've spent time with our military commanders, as well as our brave troops serving in Iraq and Afghanistan, and I have immersed myself in an array of military issues. I've spent many hours with American and non-American aid workers, businessmen and women, religious leaders, teachers, doctors, nurses, students, volunteers and others who have made it their mission to help people across the world. I have also learned invaluable lessons from countless ordinary citizens in foreign capitals, small towns, and rural villages whose lives offered a glimpse into a world far removed from what many of us experience on a daily basis here in America.

In recent years, as other nations have risen to compete for military, economic, and political influence, some have argued that we have reached the end of the "American moment" in world history. I disagree. Yes, the conventional paradigms have shifted. But America's success has never been solely a function of our power; it has always been inspired by our values.

With so many troubles here at home and across the world, millions of people are still trying to come to our country -- legally and illegally. Why? Because we are guided by unchanging truths: that all people are created equal; that each person has a right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. And in these truths we will find, as we have for more than two centuries, the courage, the discipline, and the creativity to meet the challenges of this ever-changing world.

I am humbled to be a public servant, and honored by the responsibility placed on me by our President-Elect, who embodies the American Dream not only here at home but far beyond our shores.

No matter how daunting our challenges may be, I have a steadfast faith in our country and our people, and I am proud to be an American at the dawning of this new American moment.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, for granting me your time and attention today. I know there is a lot more territory to cover and I'd be delighted to answer your questions.

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