

DRIVING A GLOBAL, WHOLE-OF-SOCIETY RESPONSE TO CLIMATE ACTION

HEARING BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS FIRST SESSION

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CONTENTS

	Page
WITNESSES	
Kerry, The Honorable John, Special Presidential Envoy for Climate, U.S. Department of State	9
INFORMATION SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD	
Letter submitted for the record	41
APPENDIX	
Hearing Notice	57
Hearing Minutes	58
Hearing Attendance	59
STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD	
Statement for the record from Representative Connolly	60
RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD	
Responses to questions submitted for the record	62

DRIVING A GLOBAL, WHOLE-OF-SOCIETY RESPONSE TO CLIMATE ACTION

Wednesday, May 12, 2021

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:03 a.m., in room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Gregory Meeks (Chairman of the committee) presiding.

Chairman MEEKS. The Committee on Foreign Affairs will come to order.

Without objection, the Chair is authorized to declare a recess of the committee at any point. And all Members will have 5 days to submit statements, extraneous material, and questions for the record, subject to the length limitations in the rules.

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

As a reminder to Members, please keep your video function on at all times, even when you are not recognized by the Chair. Members are responsible for muting and unmuting themselves.

Consistent with House rules, staff will only mute Members, as appropriate, when they are not under recognition, to eliminate background noise.

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

Let me say good morning to everyone and welcome Special Envoy John Kerry to today's committee hearing entitled Driving a Global Response to Climate Action.

Last month's Leaders Summit on Climate, the first summit for the Biden Administration, was another strong signal to the world that the U.S. is back after years of costly absence. And the stakes could not be higher. Although the threats sometimes seem distant, we cannot turn back the clock.

This is especially true of climate change where we have lost precious time in responding to a mounting crisis. Even if we achieve our ambitious goals of keeping 1.5 percent warming within reach, our children will still have to learn to live on a dramatically changed planet. Many will have to move from uninhabitable land, if they can. Others, who are not so lucky, must endure more frequent and severe weather events: fires, drought, and pollution, which have become the new perilous norm.

But, yet, I remain an optimist. The Biden Administration committed to drastically reduce U.S. emissions by 2030. Now, certainly this is ambitious, but ambition is what we need right now.

We welcome the British pledge to ban non-electric, non-electric vehicles by 2030, which sparked similar plans in at least 16 other

countries and several U.S. States. And on the global level, we saw China set long-needed targets on Coal. Brazil pledged to end deforestation by 2030. Argentina and others committed to deploy more renewables. Japan, South Korea, and Canada made more ambitious pledges than those in Paris.

Now, as a believer in the science behind climate change, as well as the benefits of trade, investment, and American ingenuity in the face of competition, what I see is opportunity. A well-defined plan on climate action will create high-paying, good jobs for the American people. And our committee will play its crucial role in getting us there.

We are exploring legislative options that will support innovative approaches with civil society and the private sector. And as Chair, I fully support efforts to galvanize climate option in the lead up to the Glasgow and beyond.

It is not just about summit diplomacy and commitments on paper, it is about paving the road to Glasgow and follow through beyond. There remain obvious hurdles in achieving the necessary collective action, however. Yes, we have work with strategic competition—competitors like China and Russia, but we also have to hold them accountable. And, yes, they will require investment in developing countries. And, yes, it will involve helping our neighbors, as good neighbors do.

What do we do as leaders on the global stage to tackle this problem? We work strategically with other ambitious countries to spark the momentum leading up to Glasgow. This includes the G-7 and the G-20, which shows a multilateral approach has us moving in the right direction.

We must also empower the U.S. Government, including through the International Development Finance Corporation, to have global reach assisting all countries, including all those in the Caribbean, Eastern Europe, and Africa to have access to needed financing and investment opportunities. When it comes to building a green, resilient economy, adapting and protecting one's people, countries should not be left with only China as an option, whose investments often come with strings attached. Financing options should not be based solely on income criteria, but on vulnerability and risk to external shocks.

In the years since, we survived the hottest years on record and emitted the highest levels of carbon in human history. The gap of what is being done and what needs to be done has also grown. And I think of the words of John F. Kennedy, Jr., who said, "Every accomplishment starts with the decision to try."

So, I pledge not only to try, as the Chairman of this committee, but demand that we do our best to save this planet.

With that, I will turn to my good friend and the Ranking Member of this committee, Mr. McCaul, for his opening statement.

Mr. McCAUL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding today's hearing. And I want to welcome you, Secretary Kerry, back to the Hill. It is good to see you.

I believe the climate is changing. And we must take steps to address it. However, the answer is not the Paris Agreement in its current form.

The People's Republic of China is the world's leading greenhouse gas emitter, and is responsible for almost 30 percent of global emissions. Yet, the Paris Agreement does the bare minimum to hold the PRC accountable, while allowing them to continue increasing their emissions until 2020—2030.

At the same time, it disproportionately penalizes American workers and American industries, even though the PRC emits over twice as much carbon dioxide as the United States.

And, Mr. Secretary, I understand you have a big challenge ahead of you. We had a good visit on this issue. But I just do not see how we can truly make an impact if China isn't held to the same standards as the United States. Last year alone, the Chinese Communist Party brought more than three times as many new coal-powered plants online in the PRC as the rest of the world combined. And they aren't just polluting at home. Beijing is exporting coal-fired power plants throughout the developing world through their Belt and Road Initiative.

In fact, the CCP is the biggest financier of coal plants in the world. It is clear the Chinese Communist Party does not care about the environment, but they have proven time and again they cannot be trusted, and are not a reliable partner in addressing climate change.

That is why I have worked with Representatives Graves and McMorris-Rodgers to introduce the Paris Transparency and Accountability Act. Our bill acknowledges it is vital we renegotiate the Paris Agreement to create a level playing field. And it calls for this new agreement to be submitted for Senate approval. Any comprehensive agreement that will significantly impact American jobs and the American economy deserves that much.

Our bill would also ensure there is sufficient oversight of the committees, and commitments the President makes on behalf of the American people under the agreement. And it makes certain those commitments do not jeopardize our national security or our competitiveness.

Like you, Secretary Kerry, I am a father, and I care about the world we are leaving behind for our children and our grandchildren. And we have that in common. Yet, after the United States finally achieved energy independence in oil and natural gas, we now appear to be trying—or tying our future energy needs to the CCP-dominated supply chain such as solar panels and electric batteries.

If we truly want to reduce emissions, we must keep all these options on the table. That also means investing in renewable energy. But it also means expanding our nuclear energy capabilities, including, as you and I talked about, the development of small modular reactors with zero carbon emissions.

And it means utilizing fossil fuels with a smaller environmental impact. For example, LNG from my home State of Texas has significantly lower lifecycle emissions than coal or Russian piped gas. The United States has been a leader in addressing climate risk through innovation and technology. Now, more than ever, we need to take advantage of our strengths, which have enabled us to become energy independent.

So, Secretary Kerry, I look forward to hearing your thoughts on what steps can be taken to address climate risk in a responsible way that also protects American interests and jobs.

And before I close, I and many of my colleagues are concerned by alleged conversations that you have reportedly had with Iranian Foreign Minister Zarif after you were Secretary of State. Iran is the world's largest State sponsor of terror and one of our biggest adversaries. I hope that you will address these allegations today before Congress, and I hope you will reassure this committee that classified or sensitive information was not shared with Iranian officials when you were either Secretary of State or after you left your post.

Again, thank you for being here today. And, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Chairman MEEKS. Thank you, Mr. McCaul. Now I will introduce our witness.

On January 20th, 2021, John F. Kerry was sworn in as the Nation's first Special Presidential Envoy for Climate, where he leads the United States international effort to address climate change. In recent years, Special Envoy Kerry was a Carnegie Endowment for International Peace's first ever visiting distinguished Statesman, following his 4 years as the 68th United States Secretary of State.

In that capacity, he was a critical part of the successful negotiations in the Paris Climate Agreement. From 1985 to 2013 he served as a United States Senator, representing Massachusetts, and was the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee from 2009 to 2013.

Secretary Kerry served in the United States Navy, completing two combat tours of duty in Vietnam for which he received a Silver Star, a Bronze Star, and the Combat V, and three Purple Hearts.

He received his undergraduate degree from Yale University and his law degree from Boston College Law School. Most importantly, he is an American patriot, a patriot and a close friend of mine.

And I welcome Secretary John Kerry. Without objection, the witness' prepared testimony will be made part of the record. And I now recognize the Honorable John Kerry.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE JOHN KERRY, SPECIAL PRESIDENTIAL ENVOY FOR CLIMATE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Mr. KERRY. Well, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member McCaul, distinguished Members of the committee, it is a great privilege for me to be able to be here and a pleasure to testify to you today. And I look forward to answering your questions and having, hopefully, a really good dialog on the subject of the climate crisis that we all face, and also explaining President Biden's climate agenda.

And, Ranking Member, I expect to have the opportunity, I will address your questions. And I particularly look forward to talking with you about the Paris Agreement and China. And I think, hopefully, there will be a lot of discussion about China today.

But during his campaign President Biden identified climate crisis as one of the four historic crises facing our country, alongside COVID-19, the economic crisis, and the racial division in our country.

And I think, personally I think he was right to do so.

Everywhere around the United States and around the world we are all living with these mounting costs, present day costs, of global warming and of a more volatile climate.

2020 set a new record, U.S. record of 22 weather and climate disasters costing over \$1 billion each. Last year's tally of 22 hurricanes, floods, droughts, and wildfires shattered the previous annual record of 16 such events. And that was set only 4 years ago. So, these natural disasters have cost the United States, our taxpayers, more than \$1.79 trillion since 1980.

The 2020 U.S. wildfire season burned more than 10 million acres—an area greater than the State of Maryland. We saw five of the six biggest wildfires in California's history last year, as well as the single largest wildfire in Colorado's history.

2020 was the warmest year on record. The last decade was the warmest decade on record. The decade before that, the second warmest; the decade before that the third warmest. You do not have to be a scientist to begin to feel that we are looking at a trend line.

For the first time in our country's history, NOAA now considered Fairbanks, Alaska, as a warm summer continental climate because for 4 months of the calendar year the average temperature is now 50 degrees Fahrenheit or more.

As my friend Secretary Blinken noted recently, we are fast running out of records to break.

And that is why I was so honored to be asked by the President to lead his all-out diplomatic effort to ensure that the United States is once again a global leader in combating the climate crisis.

As the Special Presidential Envoy for Climate, it is my job to make sure that the rest of the world sees that the United States is re-engaged, re-energized, and re-dedicated to tackling the climate crisis both at home and abroad. In practice, that means marshaling all of our resources to ensure that we can keep a 1.5 degrees Celsius within reach. That is the target.

Scientists started out in Paris, Ranking Member, with a well below 2 degrees. But then, because the island States and very vulnerable nations thought that was not good enough, 1.5 was adopted. And now, as of 2018 when the scientists reported back on where we were, they said we have got to try and achieve the 1.5.

So, unless emissions targets across the world are enhanced and implemented, we are now headed into a dangerous world above 3 degrees Celsius of warming. That is the current direction we are on.

Now, keeping 1.5 degrees alive is our north star over the months to come. But achieving that goal is going to mean bending the emissions curve downward substantially by 2030. That makes this the decisive decade in the climate fight. And at home, that will entail an all-of-government effort, an interagency effort, to which my colleagues across the Administration are now fully dedicated, including my good friend from Massachusetts and National Climate Advisor Gina McCarthy.

My friends, I spent 28 years as a Senator, and 4 years as Secretary of State. And I have voted on important issues like you do and are now. I will just share with you from an imperative analysis

here, these stakes could not be more serious, not just in terms of damage and problems, but in terms of economic possibilities. A race, if you will. Who is in the race and who isn't? And what technologies are going to define the future?

The United States is contributing a declining share of global annual emissions. The Biden Administration has made important and measurable strides just in the first weeks. At the President's landmark 100-days-plus Climate Leaders Summit on April 22d and 23d, we put forward a very strong 2030 emission reduction target alongside ambitious new targets which we worked on with Canada, with Japan, with the EU, in order to implement a stronger 2030 goal.

And the U.K. has set a new pace-setting 2035 goal with a 78 percent reduction in emissions.

Many of our closest allies, a coalition accounting for more than half of the global economy of the world, are now clearly committed to climate technology leadership and the pace of emissions reductions required globally to meet the goal of keeping 1.5 degrees alive. That means 55 percent of the global GDP is now committed to move in the direction of keeping 1.5 alive. But it also means that 45 percent is not yet. And that is the challenge, Ranking Member, that you raised with China and others. And we will talk about it.

South Korea came in with a recent announcement that it will strengthen its 2030 target later this year.

And we are far from alone. Argentina has updated its 2030 target. It is ramping up renewables, including sourcing from U.S. suppliers. So, we gain.

South Africa moved forward with peaking, with setting a new peaking year, moving a full decade forward to 2025.

Additionally, the Chinese Government did commit to implement the Kigali Agreement to the Montreal Protocol to phase down HCFCs, and they indicated that they will now strictly control coal-fired power generation projects, building on their 2020 commitment to achieve carbon neutrality before 2060.

So, there is much more to be done, in China and elsewhere, and we are working with partner governments to secure enhanced action and additional pledges ahead of the COP26 global climate summit in November. But, my friends, this represents, what I have described, is actually the result of a pretty serious sprint that we have been engaged in since January 20th when I came into this job and the President issued his executive orders a day later.

Now, I know that today's hearing is focused on our efforts abroad. But I also know that every member here is deeply concerned with our economic health and prosperity here at home.

The fact is, addressing the climate crisis is integrally related to our economic recovery here in the U.S. It is a huge opportunity for jobs, for new technology, for our communities. Yes, there is a transition involved in some of that. But we have been through transitions before as a Nation. And just as America led the world in the industrial revolution, just as we led the technological revolution, we can and will lead the energy revolution.

And just as we developed the lightbulb and the airplane, and just as we developed the internet and vaccines, and went to the Moon, we can and will develop the battery storage technologies, the direct

air capture technologies, the green hydrogen, the smart-grid technologies that will change the world and stave off the catastrophic impacts of the climate crisis.

There are tough choices in politics. We all know that. But this is not one of them.

Because in addressing the climate crisis, we are actually taking advantage of the greatest economic opportunity the world has ever known.

Before the pandemic, two of the three fastest-growing jobs in the country were wind turbine technicians and solar photovoltaic installers. From 2017 to 2020, clean energy jobs grew by an average of 6 percent each year, faster than fossil fuels and the rest of the energy economy, and about twice the pace of the U.S. economy as a whole.

We now have more Americans working in clean energy—3 million—than we have bankers or middle and elementary school teachers, and clean energy jobs outnumber fossil fuel jobs in the U.S. three-to-one. And it is broad-based. Clean energy jobs outnumber fossil fuel jobs in 81 percent of rural counties.

So, there is an even bigger growth opportunity for the U.S. in the years to come.

In 2020, global investment in clean technologies crossed the \$500 billion mark. And the International Energy Agency predicts that clean energy investment could triple during this decade.

Solar and wind investment is forecasted to be five times larger than that for coal or for gas-fired power plants through 2050—that is 30 more years it will be five times higher. Similarly, the size of the global electric vehicle fleet is expected to jump to 116 million in 2030, up from only 8.5 million in 2020.

Jobs and dollar figures alone do not tell the whole story.

We are also seeing that clean energy can power our homes and businesses. For a period on April 24th in California, California's electrical grid was powered—California obviously being the size of, it is what, the sixth largest nation in the world—well, in April 24th its electrical grid was powered by 95 percent energy, renewable energy, without any loss in reliability or supply. Countries as diverse as Denmark, Ethiopia, and Slovakia now all power 80 percent or more of their grid with emissions-free generation.

We see markets moving inexorably in the direction of clean energy and low-carbon solutions.

Ahead of the summit, six leading United States banks pledged to mobilize \$4.15 trillion of low-carbon capital by 2030. That is over the next 10 years, 4.15 trillion spent in investment. America's three largest U.S. asset managers also announced that \$19 trillion in assets that they manage will be moved to low-carbon investments by 2050.

American automakers are positioning to lead the global electric vehicle revolution.

The transformation I am talking about is not a future projection. It is happening here and now. It is a reality as we speak.

The trajectory toward the new energy economy is now unmistakable in so many sectors. As we saw over the last 4 years, much of that movement is irrespective of Federal action. It is not the Government saying go do this, the marketplace is moving in that direc-

tion. And so, dollars are rapidly draining away from investments that do not fit squarely within that crucial 1.5 degree pathway, which boards of directors all across our country, the boardrooms of our biggest corporations, they are talking about ESG—environment, social, and governance—and its requirements. They are talking about sustainable development goals. And they are setting their own goals in order to set investment on a different track.

So, Members of the committee, there is already so much progress being made. There is much more work still ahead. And as we move toward the COP26 global summit in Scotland this November, we are clear-eyed about the bold goals that we have set for ourselves. Our engagement is designed to help build out opportunities for our country. President Biden knows how important it is for the United States to join the nations around the world to meet the challenge of the climate crisis.

I served here, as I mentioned earlier, on Capitol Hill for 28 years. I have always had respect for the oversight role of Congress. And I have already had several productive exchanges with Members of the committee. And I look forward to continuing those discussions in the months ahead.

I welcome your guidance, and your feedback, and input as we work to implement a critical agenda for our Nation and for the world. It is ambitious, but it is also essential.

So, I thank you, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Kerry follows:]

**Statement of the Honorable John F. Kerry
Presidential Special Envoy for Climate
U.S. Department of State
Before the House Foreign Affairs Committee
May 12, 2021**

Thank you, Chairman Meeks, Ranking Member McCaul, and distinguished Members of the Committee. It is my pleasure to appear before the committee today to discuss the Biden Administration's international climate agenda.

During his campaign, President Biden identified climate change as one of the four "historic crises" facing our country, alongside COVID-19, the economic crisis, and racial inequality.

He was right to do so.

Everywhere across the United States and around the world, we've seen the mounting costs imposed by a warming and more volatile climate.

2020 set a new U.S. record of 22 weather and climate disasters costing over one billion dollars each. Last year's tally of 22 hurricanes, floods, droughts, and wildfires shattered the previous annual record of 16 such events -- which was set only four years ago. These natural disasters have cost the US more than 1.79 trillion dollars since 1980.

The 2020 U.S. wildfire season burned more than 10 million acres -- an area greater than the state of Maryland. We saw five of the six biggest wildfires in California's history last year, as well as the single largest wildfire in Colorado's history.

2020 was the warmest year on record. The last decade was the warmest decade on record.

For the first time in our country's history, NOAA now considers Fairbanks, Alaska, a warm summer continental climate because -- for 4 months of the calendar year -- the average temperature is 50 degrees Fahrenheit or more.

As my friend Secretary Blinken noted recently, we're fast running out of records to break.

And that's why I was so honored to be asked by President Biden to lead his all-out diplomatic effort to ensure that the United States is once again a global leader in combatting the climate crisis.

As the U.S. Special Presidential Envoy for Climate, it's my job to make sure that the rest of the world sees that the United States is re-engaged, re-energized, and re-dedicated to tackling the climate crisis both at home and abroad.

In practice, that means marshalling all of our resources to ensure that we can keep a 1.5 degrees Celsius limit on warming within reach. Science tells us that beyond this point, the consequences are catastrophic.

Unless emissions targets across the world are enhanced and implemented, we are headed into a dangerous world above 3 degrees Celsius of warming.

Keeping 1.5 degrees alive is our north star over the months to come. But achieving that goal will mean bending the emissions curve downward substantially by 2030 — making this the “decisive decade” in the climate fight. At home that entails a whole-of-government, interagency effort to which my colleagues across the administration are now dedicated, including my good friend, National Climate Advisor Gina McCarthy. The stakes here are serious. Communities that have contributed the least to the climate crisis — which are historically marginalized — are projected to disproportionately bear its costs and are already feeling its impacts.

The U.S. is contributing a declining share of global annual emissions. The Biden Administration has made important and measurable strides in our first weeks. At the president's landmark 100-days Climate Leaders Summit on April 22nd and 23rd, we put forward a very strong 2030 emission reduction target alongside ambitious new 2030 targets from Japan and Canada, steps by the EU to implement its 2030 target, and the UK's new pace-setting 2035 goal. America and many of its closest allies—a coalition accounting for more than half the global economy—are now clearly committed to climate technology leadership and the pace of emissions reductions required globally to keep a safer 1.5 degree Celsius future in reach. And we know that this coalition is growing, including South Korea's recent announcement that it will strengthen its 2030 target later this year.

And we were far from alone.

Argentina has updated its 2030 target and is ramping up renewables, including sourcing from U.S. suppliers. South Africa moved forward its peaking year by a full decade to 2025.

Additionally, the Chinese government committed to implement the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol to phase down HFCs and indicated that they will now “strictly control” coal-fired power generation projects, building on their 2020 commitment to achieve carbon neutrality before 2060.

There is much more to be done, in China and elsewhere, and we’re working with partner governments to secure enhanced action and additional pledges ahead of the COP26 global climate summit in November this year. But this represents a serious sprint in just our first 100 days in office.

I know today’s hearing is focused on our efforts abroad. But I also know that every member here today is deeply concerned with our economic health and prosperity here at home.

The fact is, addressing the climate crisis is integrally related to our economic recovery here in the U.S. It’s a huge opportunity for jobs, for new technology, and for our communities.

It’s a transition – no question. But we’ve been through transitions before. And just as America led the world in the industrial revolution – just as we led the technological revolution – we can and will lead the energy revolution. And just as we developed the lightbulb and the airplane – just as we developed the internet and vaccines that save millions of lives – we can and we will develop the battery storage technologies, the direct air capture technologies, the green hydrogen, and the smart-grid technologies that will change the world and stave off the catastrophic impacts of the climate crisis.

There are tough choices in politics – believe me. We all know that. But this isn’t one of them.

Because in addressing the climate crisis, we are actually taking advantage of the greatest economic opportunity the world has ever known.

Before the pandemic, two of the three fastest-growing jobs in the country were wind turbine technicians and solar photovoltaic (PV) installers. From 2017 to 2020, clean energy jobs grew by an average of 6 percent each year, faster than

fossil fuels and the rest of the energy economy, and about twice the pace of the U.S. economy as a whole. We now have more Americans working in clean energy—3 million—than we have bankers or middle and elementary school teachers.

Clean energy jobs outnumber fossil fuel jobs in the U.S. three-to-one. And it's broad-based, too: clean energy jobs outnumber fossil fuel jobs in 81 percent of rural counties.

And there's an even bigger growth opportunity for the U.S. in the years to come.

In 2020, global investment in clean technologies crossed the 500 billion dollar mark -- and the International Energy Agency predicts that clean technology investment opportunities could triple during this decade.

Solar and wind investment is forecasted to be five times larger than that for coal and gas-fired power plants through 2050. Similarly, the size of the global electric-vehicle fleet is expected to jump to 116 million in 2030, up from only 8.5 million in 2020.

Jobs and dollar figures alone don't tell the whole story.

We're also seeing that clean energy can power our homes and businesses. For a period on April 24th, California's electrical grid was powered by 95 percent renewable energy, without any loss in reliability or supply. Countries as diverse as Denmark, Ethiopia, and Slovakia now all power 80 percent or more of their grids with emissions-free generation.

We've also seen markets moving inexorably in the direction of clean energy and low-carbon solutions.

Ahead of the summit, that's why six leading U.S. banks pledged to mobilize 4.15 trillion dollars of low-carbon capital by 2030. America's three largest U.S. asset managers also announced that 19 trillion dollars in assets that they manage will be moved to low-carbon investments by 2050.

American automakers are positioning to lead the global electrical vehicle revolution.

The transformation I'm talking about isn't some future projection. It's happening here and now. It's a reality, as we speak.

The trajectory towards the new energy economy is now unmistakable in so many different sectors. As we saw over the last four years, much of that movement is irrespective of federal action – dollars are rapidly draining away from investments that don't fit squarely within that crucial 1.5 degree "pathway."

Members of the Committee, there is so much progress being made already – and much more work ahead. As we move towards the COP26 global summit in Scotland this November, we are clear-eyed about the bold goals that we've set for ourselves. Our engagement is designed to help build out opportunities for our country. President Biden knows how important it is for the United States to join with nations around the world to meet the challenge of the climate crisis.

I served here on Capitol Hill for 28 years. I have always respected the oversight role of Congress. I have already had several productive exchanges with members of the committee, and I look forward to continuing those discussions in the months ahead. I welcome your guidance, feedback, and input as we work to implement this ambitious climate agenda.

Thank you, and I look forward to your questions.

Chairman MEEKS. Thank you, Secretary Kerry, for your testimony. And I, too, look forward to a insightful conversation, and dialog, and questions with our Members.

I want to inform all Members we have a hard 1 p.m. stop. And so from henceforth I will be adhering strictly to the 5-minute rule. So, I am going to be—not meaning to be disrespectful to anyone—at 5 minutes I will be banging the gavel so that we can get to as many Members as possible.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. Chairman, I am sorry to interpose, but I was just asking my staff. We originally, the hearing was set from 10 to noon. And I can push to 12:30. But I am flying commercial and have a flight that I have to make. So, I have to leave here by 12:30.

Chairman MEEKS. Got it. My information, I have been corrected, so we have an even harder gavel purpose.

Mr. KERRY. So, at 12:30.

Chairman MEEKS. I will be very mindful of the 5-minute rule to get as many Members to ask their questions as possible.

I will recognize Members by committee seniority, alternating between Democrats and Republicans. If you miss your turn, please let our staff know and we will come back to you.

If you seek recognition, you must unmute your microphone and address the Chair verbally, and identify yourself so that we know who is speaking.

I will start by recognizing myself for 5 minutes.

Mr. Secretary, vulnerable communities across the world are already facing severe adverse impacts of climate change from drought, crop failures, severe weather events, rising seas, and even a changing ocean chemistry. Those that can move and adapt, they will. However, historically marginalized communities will likely face the brunt of the impact in the incoming years.

So, my question to you is how can we ensure that global efforts to combat climate change do not neglect these communities?

Mr. KERRY. We are trying, Mr. Chairman, to pay very, very close attention. We started at the summit. And I will tell you why.

I remember in Paris in that negotiation where I had the privilege to lead our team, in the lead-up to Paris there was not enough dialog with marginalized countries, less developed countries, people who suffer the greatest problems. There are about 138 nations on the planet all of whom are less, they are a fraction of 1 percent of emissions. I mean, within fractions. But they are the ones suffering the greatest consequences.

I have been on the phone in the last weeks with the President of the Marshall Islands, the President of Fiji—I mean the Prime Minister of Fiji, others. They are facing not just adaptation; they may have to move altogether. Those nations, most likely, some of them are facing extinction, and that is existential for them.

So, we invited those nations not to wait until we get to Glasgow. We had about 20 of those nations involved in the climate summit the President just had. So, the President invited the 20 biggest emitters in the world, biggest, most powerful economies. We had President Xi, we had Russia, we had Modi, so forth. But he also invited Bangladesh, and the Marshall Islands, and small entities because we wanted to hear from people about this demand for adaptation and mitigation.

Now, we depend on you. Congress will decide what it is willing to appropriate to this task. The President has put forward a proposal to double the amount that we are doing for adaptation, and to triple the amount we are doing for resilience on behalf of other countries.

And as you know, there is a Green Climate Fund. It has maybe about 10 billion in it total at that point. It is a part of the larger commitment made in Paris for the world to mobilize about \$100 billion on an annual basis by 2020 in order to help those nations do what they need to do to respond to this crisis.

We have never been able to get to the 100 yet. We are at 80 billion right now. And I think it is going to be very difficult in Glasgow if the developed world cannot step up.

Let me put this in perspective.

A hundred billion to try to help 138 nations that do not, some of them do not even have electricity, to be able to respond to what is happening, measure that against the fact that about two or 3 years ago we all spent here in America \$265 billion just to clean up after three storms: Harvey, Maria, and Irma.

Irma had the first sustained winds of 185 miles an hour for 24 hours.

Harvey dropped more water in the greater Houston, Louisiana area in 5 days than goes over Niagara Falls in an entire year.

And Irma and Maria, we all know, savaged the infrastructure of Puerto Rico.

So, if we do not want to just rebuild and rebuild, if we want to get the world enlisted in this, we have got to begin to look at some greater effort to help countries adapt and to help people build resilience so that we are a global community shifting our energy basis in an appropriate way to avoid this crisis in the long run.

And I think this is something that President Biden is going to continue to try to ask you to help him with and help our country do, because a lot of people are going to suffer if we cannot do that.

And the military, by the way, our own military will tell you that climate crisis is a threat multiplier. And so conflict will grow as people are fighting for a place to live, a place to have water, a place to be able to feed themselves. And we already do have climate refugees on the planet. So—

Chairman MEEKS. My time has expired.

I now recognize Representative McCaul for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCCAUL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And welcome, Mr. Secretary. You have a very enormous challenge and a very important one in front of you.

Secretaries Blinken and Pompeo both said that the CCP is committing genocide against the Uyghur Muslim population. Last month this committee marked up a bill that I introduced along with Chairman Meeks condemning this genocide. You recently said that—were quoted saying, “We have other differences on human rights,” but those should not get in the way of something that is as critical as dealing with climate.”

I know you can try to compartmentalize it. The problem is it is intertwined. Because when you look at the supply chain and you look at China, they dominate the critical mineral supply and solar

supply chains, all coming out of Xinjiang Province which we believe is using slave labor to create these renewable energy sources.

So my question to you is how can you assure us, or ensure that this quest that we are on, that slave labor coming out of China where genocide is taking place as we speak, are never a part of the climate solution in the United States?

Mr. KERRY. You are absolutely correct, Ranking Member McCaul. It is a problem. Xinjiang Province not only produces some of the solar panels that we believe are being in some cases produced in forced labor by Uyghurs, but also there are a significant amount of rare earth minerals that is used in the solar panels themselves.

It is my understanding that the Biden Administration is right now in the process of assessing whether or not that will be the target of sanctions. I have heard some discussion about it. I am not privy to where that decision is at this point in time.

But I can tell you that nothing can be traded. And I have made that very clear. President Biden has made it very clear. Climate is existential for everybody on the planet. We have to deal with it. And because China is nearly 30 percent of all the emissions on the planet, China has got to be part of the solution, not part of the problem.

So, we have had very direct conversations with the Chinese on this. They have moved somewhat in the course of the last month-and-a-half, 2 months, after we have engaged.

For instance, they had a peak date of peaking in terms of their emissions by 2030. That is where we began. And they were not willing to change it. And in addition, they were not even discussing mitigation during the course of the next 10 years.

Well, we have been having some very serious conversations about the reality of the science, the 1.5 degrees, the need to hold it. And so, China has now announced, President Xi announced, he announced a number of things:

No. 1, that they believe this is a climate crisis now. Our joint statement, that is entitled U.S.-China Joint statement on Climate Crisis. They have never done that. They now have, in the body of the text, they have agreed they have to change and do something into 2020, 2030's.

They have agreed that the peaking now they think may be able to take place by 2025–24. We do not know yet.

So, we are in an ongoing negotiation with them. And where we are at the aftermath of the summit that we had where President Xi made some of these announcements is that we have got to go back to work. We have five more months left to get them to embrace something that we believe you will view, hopefully, as a legitimate, you know, a legitimate initiative that makes sense. We are not there yet.

And so I think both on the—you know, and I have made it clear there are serious issues we all know with China, issues of Hong Kong, to Taiwan, to the South China Sea, to access to the marketplace, cyber and cybertech. These are big challenges. But, historically, we have always proven ourselves capable of negotiating, even when we have big disagreements. Ronald Reagan went to Reykjavik and negotiated with the Evil Empire, Gorbachev. And they

came away from there repurposing over 50,000 warheads which we both had pointed at each other.

Mr. McCAUL. Can I just say in closing, I think your successes will be tied to China. And I think that the more you can hold them to the same standards as the United States——

Mr. KERRY. Mike.

Mr. McCAUL. The more you can hold the CCP to the same standards as the United States, I think the more successful you will be. But we are not seeing that right now.

Chairman MEEKS. The gentleman's time has expired.

I now recognize Representative Brad Sherman of California for 5 minutes.

Mr. SHERMAN. Ambassador Kerry, welcome back.

We all know climate change is not free, it is not going to pay for itself. And, as you point out, it is the issue of our time. It is worth the effort.

There is a tendency of Americans to think it is all about us. And if we just live our lives differently, everything will be as it should. Yet, the United States and the EU combined are way less than 20 percent of the emissions. The U.S. is 11 percent; the rest of the world almost 90 percent.

So, while the whole U.S. Government, the people of the United States are focused on reducing our emissions, you and you alone are able to head the effort to deal with almost 90 percent of the problem while all your fellow Americans are focused on 10 or 11 percent of the problem. You have an important job.

And as we focused on, we are dealing with China. And China has grudgingly made a few comments. As you just pointed out, they have been willing to use the word "crisis." But the fact is, even if China uses the word "crisis," even if they make a commitment, they may not actually do anything on the ground. What they do on the ground is more important than what they say.

And every week they build a new, large, coal-fired power plant, week after week. And when you build this plant it is not with the intention that they are going to decommission it five or 10 years after they put it online. As others have pointed out, they are also financing coal-fired power plants around the world.

You are a very good diplomat. You are very persuasive. But all you have in your toolbox is a chance to appeal to the conscience of a regime that Ranking Member McCaul has described as genocidal, a regime that puts its own people by the millions in concentration camps. And we have given you the job of appealing to their better nature, appealing to their conscience and getting them to spend hundreds of billions of dollars in order to help their fellow human beings.

So, my question is, would you be in a stronger position if we were threatening, gave you the power to impose an additional 10 percent tariff on all goods coming into the United States from China and, of course, work with our allies to do the same thing?

Right now our total average tariff on goods coming from China is less than 10 percent, just a bit less than 10 percent. And it occurs to me that you may, through great diplomacy, be able to get a genocidal and conscience-free regime to make a statement or two.

But to actually get them to stop building a coal-fired power plant every year, you may need more arrows in your quiver.

Mr. KERRY. Well, Congressman, thank you for the question.

The fact is that Europe is considering a border adjustment mechanism. And this is a mechanism which President Biden has also asked us to evaluate as a means of placing an additional cost on the cost of goods that come from places that are not responsible in what they are doing, or how they are being produced.

Now, no decision has been made about deploying that or doing it. But I think Congress looking at this would be a very, you know, important analysis, an important undertaking to sort of look at the dynamics of this.

But let me share with all of you, if I can, in this negotiating process I learned over the years, both negotiating in the Senate and here in Congress, but more importantly with other countries, and especially in the Iran nuclear agreement, Ronald Reagan had a saying, you know, "trust but verify." We changed that a little bit and have a saying, do not trust but verify.

And in this endeavor with China you have got to be eyes wide open. You cannot go in and just take their word.

Chairman MEEKS. I apologize to you, Mr. Secretary, but Members are reminded again, if you want your questions answered you have a certain amount of time you have to ask them, because I am stopping at 5 minutes.

I now recognize Representative Chris Smith of New Jersey, who is the Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, and Global Human Rights, for 5 minutes.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. And, Mr. Secretary, welcome to the committee.

As you know, under President Xi Jinping, human rights abuse throughout China have significantly worsened, including the pervasive use of torture, religious persecution, human trafficking, and genocide against Muslim Uyghurs. Paper promises made by Beijing, as you know as well, are simply not kept. Broken promises are the rule, not the exception, under Xi. And the people of Hong Kong are suffering as we speak because of it.

As you know, Xi Jinping has completely reneged on the promises made in the 1984 Sino-British Joint Declaration that facilitated the conveyance of Hong Kong from the U.K. to China beginning on July 1st, 1997, that autonomy, human rights, including press assembly, association, religion, would be exactly the same as before the handover for at least 50 years.

Xi Jinping has completely reneged on promises made in the basic law of Hong Kong, adopted by the Chinese People's Congress in 1990 before the give-back that autonomy, human rights, and adherence to the rule of law would be protected.

The Chinese Communist Party, again as you know, has not been truthful concerning the origin of COVID-19. The CCP tells lies concerning the genocide against the Uyghurs, and continues to brazenly violate its WTO obligations, U.N. sanctions on North Korea, and so much more.

So, two questions:

During your trip with leaders of the Chinese Communist Party, did you raise human rights in general?

Did you ask them to stop the genocide against the Uyghurs and the brutal suppression of Hong Kong, and other massive acts of cruelty?

And, if you did, how did they respond?

And, second, given the Chinese Communist Party's massive unwillingness to honor its word, do you believe the CCP will honor its word on climate? Mr. Secretary?

Mr. KERRY. Of course, I raised, I have always raised the issue of human rights in every conversation I ever had as secretary anywhere I was related to that issue.

Mr. SMITH. But on this trip as well, Mr. Secretary?

Mr. KERRY. Yes, but I am just about to get to it.

In this trip I raised it with the Chinese officials, not the climate folks, because the climate, you know, climate emissary for China, Xie Zhenhua, has been their Special Envoy on Climate for about 20 years. And, you know, we could casually talk about it, but he does not have any input or capacity to do anything on it.

But I have raised it at the highest levels with officials in China and they deny certain things that we allege, obviously, and move on. It is a wall of, you know, different attitude about what, what they are willing to acknowledge and not acknowledge.

Clearly, we have a very different perception of what is happening, for instance, in Xinjiang than they are willing to acknowledge.

So, a decision has to be made, whether by Congress or the Administration, how we will respond to that. You have legislation, Ranking Member McCaul, and maybe that is the way it is going to be responded to.

I am not, that is not my lane. My lane is very specifically to try to get the Chinese to move to do what we need to do with respect to climate itself.

And I will just point out something to everybody on the committee. China is already the leading producer in the world of solar panels, wind turbines, electric vehicles, and lithium ion batteries. They produced 72 percent of all the solar panels globally in 2019. That is up from the last year when they were at 67 percent.

U.S. companies only produced, you know, a very minor amount compared to that. So—

Mr. SMITH. Mr. Secretary, I know the Chairman will have to cut me off and everybody else at 5 minutes. But do you believe that they will honor their word on this issue of climate?

Mr. KERRY. As I said earlier, do not trust, and verify. You have to set up a structure where you are doing things which you can see happening and you can measure. And that is what is critical here. This is not a question of relying on somebody's word.

But I do want to share with you, and I wanted to share this a moment ago in answer to the prior question, let me just share with you what was published in an internal meeting of President Xi with the Communist Party Members about a week-and-a-half ago. And this is new.

"President Xi: China will make cutting emissions a focus of its ecological strategy in the next 5 years. President Xi Jinping said, he vowed," vowed is used, to cutoff projects which consume a lot

of energy and cannot meet global standards.” And he talked about moving away from coal and how they are going to do it.

Now, we are going to have to check on that.

Chairman MEEKS. The gentleman’s time has expired.

Mr. KERRY. I would rather have those words than not have them. And now we get into the verification.

Chairman MEEKS. The gentleman’s time has expired.

I now recognize Representative Albio Sires of New Jersey, who is the Chair of the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere, Civilian Security, Migration, and International Economic Policy, for 5 minutes.

Mr. SIRES. Mr. Secretary, thank you for being here.

During President Biden’s Leaders Summit on Climate, Brazil pledged to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050, and eliminate illegal deforestation by 2030. One day after making this pledge, President Bolsonaro approved a 24 percent cut to the environmental budget for 2021.

What should the U.S. policy toward the Brazilian Amazon consist of? And how can we address the consistent lack of adequate spending on environmental regulations by the current government in Brazil?

Mr. KERRY. It is a terrific question. And the answer is we are trying to set up a new structure of verification and accountability. Promises have been made in the past. Brazil actually did quite well between 2004 and 2012. Deforestation was making prog—they were making progress in stopping it.

But in 2012 to 2020 Amazon reached a 12-year high in the level of deforestation. And, unfortunately, the Bolsonaro regime has rolled back some of the environmental enforcement.

We have had this conversation. They say they are committed now to raise the budget. And they are going to put together a new structure.

We are willing to talk to them, not with any blinders on, but with an understanding of where we have been. But if we do not talk to them we are guaranteed that that forest is going to disappear.

And scientists are telling us today that the level of cutting of the forest is so significant that there is a possibility it has reached a tipping point already in the ability of the forest to remain a rainforest.

In fact, a week ago there was an article saying that the Amazon is now releasing more carbon than it is consuming. So, we have already—something is going on. So, we need to figure that out.

The bottom line is, we are going to engage in order to try to find out what is possible, and we will report back to you. I assure you, before we wind up going to Glasgow we will have a better sense of where we are in the next month.

Mr. SIRES. Thank you. And going to the Northern Triangle, the dry corridor of Central America has been experiencing years of severe drought and floods, made much worse by the climate crisis. These impacts are destroying livelihood across Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador, and pushing people to migrate to the U.S. out of desperation.

Are we planning to deal with this in this Northern Triangle, these countries, to stop this push north because of the severe drought in the area?

Mr. KERRY. I hope we are. I think people are trying to put together those responses now, from what I understand.

When I was secretary, and the President was the Vice President, we became very involved with those countries, with Guatemala, with Honduras, with El Salvador. We went down there. We met with the Presidents. And we tried to—because we also saw the connection of what was happening with their dislocation, and then the pressure on the border of the United States. It was part of the culture of people moving because they couldn't grow things anymore. And that has a serious impact on their livelihoods.

So, what we are doing now is trying to figure out what was back then we put some money on the table. We helped them deal with some of the problems within their community to be able to hold on to those populations and to be able to provide a food chain and a capacity to survive.

But this is, this is a harbinger of what may come as more and more regions are not able to pursue the livelihood that they used to pursue in the way that they did because the climate is changing.

So, I know the Administration is focused on this now, and trying to, you know, mobilize initiatives.

Mr. SIRES. Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

Chairman MEEKS. The gentleman yields back.

I now recognize Representative Steve Chabot of Ohio, who is the Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific, Central Asia and Nonproliferation, for 5 minutes.

Mr. CHABOT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, as has already been stated, the PRC is one of the worst actors on the world scene, whether we are talking about stealing half a trillion dollars of our intellectual property every year, or employing unfair trade practices that undermine our economy and destroy American jobs, or conducting a massive military buildup, or using aggressive bullying tactics against Japan, Taiwan, Philippines, India, Australia, Vietnam, and others.

In fact, if you read an article in the Wall Street Journal this morning, you can even add Sweden to that list. Not to mention the atrocities against the Uyghurs, Tibetans, Falun Gong, the crack-down on Hong Kong, and a variety of behaviors aimed at reorienting the world to revolve around Beijing.

And, indeed, when he testified in March, Secretary Blinken said that confronting this menace is the biggest geopolitical task of the 21st Century.

Now, I know you are focused on climate, but the American people deserve to know where this Administration's priorities really are. Is it climate change that is the top priority for this Administration, or is it confronting a more and more aggressive Chinese Communist Party?

I know you will probably say something along the lines that we can walk and chew gum at the same time. And I get that. But when push comes to shove and the President has to either play nice with China to get them to cooperate on climate change or confront them on their latest attempt at stealing American jobs, or

bullying an ally, or committing genocide, what is it going to be, Mr. Secretary, in your opinion?

Mr. KERRY. It has to be all of the above. There is no choice. This is not an either/or. And the President does not see it as either/or.

The best way the United States of America, frankly, can aggregate efforts to deal with these many different legitimate concerns about China's behavior is for us to be strong. The stronger the United States is you are going to address more of these issues.

And by stronger I mean one of the, one of the things that I overheard years ago was a new narrative that is coming out of China about how this century is the century of China, and the United States is in decline, and the West is in decline, and the liberal order of the West is in decline, and that they cannot make decisions, and they cannot pass budgets, they do not get anything done, they are not investing in their country. I have heard this out there.

And I just have to tell you that the best thing we could do is be more competitive. When I say 73 percent of these items are being built in China and sold around the world, they are cornering the market on that, why aren't we? What has happened to us that we are not the country that is pushing the curve on the technology, and the R&D? Now, that is what President Biden has put forward.

Mr. CHABOT. Thank you, Mr. Secretary, but the Chair has been, he has been pretty strict with our time, and I am running out of time. So I want to get one more question in, if I can.

Mr. KERRY. Sure. Sorry.

Mr. CHABOT. And I commend him for being strict with all of us.

Mr. KERRY. Yes, right.

Mr. CHABOT. When you signed the Paris Agreement and praised China for participating, China at that time emitted about 20 percent of the total global emissions. Now they have gone up to 27 percent. And even though the previous Administration had pulled us out, we have been going down. And, in fact, since 2005 we have gone down I believe it is 4 billion tons, or excuse me, a billion tons and they have gone up 4 billion tons. So, they are going in just the wrong direction and we are going in the right direction.

And I think the United States should be commended for that. But as some of the other Members have indicated, even if we reach an agreement with the PRC on this, in light of the fact that they pretty much break every international agreement that they make, why should we trust them?

And I know we say trust and verify, but there is a lot of skepticism not only by this committee, I think, but the American people for good reason overall.

So, in the short time that I have got left could you address that lack of trust of the PRC as to whether they will followup an agreement?

Mr. KERRY. Obviously the lack of trust is real. I mean, they do not trust us and we do not trust them. And we have to find a way forward in the midst of that that they have a global crisis that cannot be solved by any one—

Chairman MEEKS. The gentleman's time has expired.

I now recognize Representative Gerry Connolly of Virginia, who is the President of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, for 5 minutes.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding this hearing. And welcome back, Mr. Secretary, to the House Foreign Affairs Committee. And thank you for addressing the Sustainable Energy and Environmental Caucus last week. We really appreciated your presentation.

I wanted you to talk a little bit about the engagement with our alliance, the North Atlantic Alliance's Membership especially. The Secretary General of NATO Jens Stoltenberg comes from Norway, has visited Svalbard, has seen firsthand the effects in the Arctic of climate change: the receding glaciers, the opening up of the Arctic waterways to additional shipping and exploitation of natural resources. How, especially with the Alliance, can we anchor a commitment to reversing climate change, addressing climate change with the Alliance specifically?

And how did those conversations go when you met with the European Council and other allied Members in Europe?

Mr. KERRY. Well, thank you, Gerry.

Jens Stoltenberg, the head of NATO, is deeply committed on the climate issue. And he is also very seized by the reality that this is a defense security issue. And he, together with Secretary Austin, General Austin also, and General Milley, are both seized by the notion that they have serious challenges within the military to deal with with respect to readiness, deployment, conflict. There are a lot demands that are falling on the military.

There is not a "military solution" here, but the military has a big carbon footprint. And it is already wrestling with the issue of fuels for aircraft, of supply chains, and so forth.

I think, you know, there are, there are also some interesting contributions that current military capacity may provide with respect to the provision of power because there are small unit nuclear capacity energy providers in literally small, mobile reactors. And that may be something that is going to be combined with the technology that Bill Gates is pursuing for small modular reactors, which he is building a prototype of.

And I met with a group at MIT recently who were talking about the possibilities of literally what they call a quantum battery, which is a small nuclear battery that is the size of a container the length of these tables.

So, there are very exciting things that Jens Stoltenberg and the military are starting to grapple with about how they will contribute their part, as well as be ready for the crises and the challenges that may come, and the consequences, the threat multiplier that they believe the challenge is.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Me too, Mr. Secretary. And thank you for your leadership. I am so glad you are in the position you are. We look forward to supporting you over the coming years.

I yield back.

Chairman MEEKS. The gentleman yields back.

I now recognize Representative Joe Wilson of South Carolina, who is the Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on the Middle East, North Africa, and Global Counterterrorism, for 5 minutes.

Mr. WILSON. Thank you, Chairman Greg Meeks, for your leadership, very positive leadership.

Secretary Kerry, taking up with the issues of Congressman Steve Chabot, last week a report revealed the People's Republic of China's greenhouse gas emissions exceeded those of United States and other developed countries combined. China currently accounts for nearly 30 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions, not including emissions associated with the Belt and Road Initiative.

Do these trends show a serious commitment to its advertised targets?

Mr. KERRY. A great question. Let me be clear. And I want everybody to agree with your fundamental premise, China produces more emissions than all the rest of the OECD countries put together. They are currently funding coal, external coal-fired power.

What we have been working on, this is one of the things we have really engaged on in quite—we have had some very heated discussions about this. Because, obviously, it is not sustainable. There is no way the United States and the rest of the world can get to our goal if China does not join in and become part.

It is not just China. There are other countries who are part of that 45 percent. We need to see greater reductions in India. India, however, Prime Minister Modi has made a commitment to deploy 450 gigawatts of renewable energy. We have created a partnership with India because of that commitment, because they do not have the finance and technology completely. So, we are going to try to help them bring the technology to the table, bring the finance to the table. And they have to do certain things internally to make this happen.

But, if you deploy in the next 10 years 450 gigawatts of renewables, then India is in keeping with the 1.5 degrees. So, it is a huge step forward. It is worth the investment.

Mr. WILSON. And, Mr. Kerry, I am so grateful for the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. What a great job he has done for the people of India.

On another issue, what is the Administration's justification for canceling the Keystone XL pipeline, which created American jobs, for refusing to implement the required sanctions on Nord Stream 2 pipeline which promotes the Russian intimidation of Europe?

Mr. KERRY. Well, I do not know where the, where the latest is on the Nord Stream, so I cannot speak to that here with any authority.

What I can tell you is that on the Keystone the Administration is trying to put teeth in its words and its commitment to a climate crisis. We do not need to be building that additional infrastructure at this moment when we have other options, which are readily available to us, for how we supply and what we supply.

We need to do a greater build-out of alternative renewable in this country.

Mr. WILSON. But, Mr. Secretary, this creates—destroys jobs in the district I represent. The tires that are used for the—in Fort McMurray, Alberta, Canada, are made in South Carolina. And so you are destroying jobs all over the United States of what had been an achievement, and that is energy independence. And that needs to be promoted.

And so I deeply regret. And then Nord Stream 2, what that does to Europe is just so sad for the people of the—our allies across Europe.

Thank you very much. And I yield back.

Mr. KERRY. Well, Congressman—

Mr. ISSA. Would the gentleman yield. Could I just use a little bit of the time.

Chairman MEEKS. The time belongs to Mr. Wilson.

Mr. WILSON. I yield.

Mr. ISSA. I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I apologize, I did not mean to cut you off. We can both talk. Go ahead, Mr. Secretary.

Mr. KERRY. No, I was just going to say that we opposed Nord Stream, as I think you know. We, the Obama Administration, myself, we were involved in those discussions. And notwithstanding, they went forward. And you know what the State of play is right now.

But I just very quickly say to you, we should not be leaving people behind. And that is President Biden's code here. He does not believe that doing this transition has to be massive job loss.

Mr. ISSA. And, Mr. Secretary, quickly on behalf of the member that yielded, the cancellation of this pipeline in the United States does not change the amount of oil, it does change how that oil is coming through. Isn't it true that pipelines are more carbon-delivery efficient than trains, or trucks, or other forms of delivery? If you could answer just that question.

Mr. KERRY. Yes, that is true. I think that is true. But it does not mean we necessarily want to be adding another line when there are other alternatives.

But, is it better than train, and better than truck? Yes, it is.

Mr. ISSA. Thank you.

Mr. KERRY. In my judgment.

Mr. ISSA. Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

Chairman MEEKS. The gentleman's time has expired.

I now recognize Representative Ted Deutch of Florida, who is the Chair of the Subcommittee on the Middle East, North Africa, and Global Counterterrorism, for 5 minutes.

Mr. DEUTCH. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary Kerry, it is good to have you back. Your appointment as Special Presidential Envoy is, I think, a strong signal by President Biden right out of the gate that he attaches great significance to this issue. I have been heartened by your and the Administration's pace, ambition, and I think pragmatism, as evidenced by the bold yet achievable initiatives that were announced at the President's Summit last month.

As the founder and co-Chair of the bipartisan House Climate Solutions Project, and a Member of Congress from South Florida, I know firsthand how important it is that we approach this challenge with realism as much as with urgency. Sea level rise, intensity of storms, so many ways that climate change is impacting us right now.

That is why we reintroduced the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act in April to put a price on carbon. The legislation will help the U.S. reach net-zero carbon emissions by 2050, and will re-

turn 100 percent of the net revenue back to American families to help them afford any increase in energy costs, and have money left over to help with the daily expenses as our Nation recovers still from the pandemic economy.

So, I wanted just to ask about your coordination with our geopolitical partners on how to present a united front when dealing with countries with which we have a more adversarial and difficult relationship.

So, you talked earlier about the EU. If you could expand upon that, is part of the strategy to stay aligned with the EU specifically on carbon pricing schemes and carbon tariffs so that we can collectively pressure China on this issue more effectively?

Let's start with that.

Mr. KERRY. No decision has been made at this point in time about carbon pricing. The President, it is not in his current plan. He is, obviously, embracing a clean electricity standard. That would be one big step forward if Congress were to come together on that.

But I think you all need to develop further what that proposal might look like and whether or not it is possible.

Mr. DEUTCH. We do have to do that. We will have those conversations. It is, this is the moment when so many, as you well know, so many companies already place carbon in their own analysis. They are simply waiting, as so many are, for the price to be imposed so that we can actually see this urgent approach that will get us to net zero.

But I just want to get back to the question. You could broaden it if you like if you care not to talk about carbon pricing, but just generally staying aligned with the EU and bringing collective pressure on China, can you speak to that, the approach that you are taking there and how that can lead to the results that we are all looking for?

Mr. KERRY. Well, I just had a meeting yesterday, or I think it was yesterday, yesterday or the day before with all of the European foreign ministers. I did it virtually, obviously, with them in Brussels. And we discussed exactly this. It was alignment as we go into these next 5 months going into Glasgow.

We agreed to work extremely closely together, that we needed to unify, particularly with respect to some of our conversations with China, with other countries, where we are trying to move more rapidly to a mutuality of effort here.

So, the answer is yes, we are trying to align as much as we can. But we are also trying to solicit from them help with other countries.

I mean, my, my small staff that I have is engaged with really major dialogs with about 25 nations right now, and in running around the world, Indonesia, Australia, and many others. And we are trying to get Europe to come together with us in that effort because there is much that they can bring to the table. There is great expertise, great technology, and a huge commitment on this. Because Europe has committed to a 55 percent reduction.

And Germany, in Germany the Constitutional Court of Germany just decided that the Government was not doing enough for future generations. And Angela Merkel, the Chancellor, had to go back to

the Government. They just put together a new plan. They have moved up by 5 years their commitment to net-zero. And they have raised the level of their reductions to about 65 percent. So, there is a serious effort here which we hope to bring to the table——

Chairman MEEKS. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. DEUTCH. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman MEEKS. I now recognize Representative——

Mr. PERRY. Point of order, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. MAST. Point of order.

Chairman MEEKS. Point of order.

Mr. MAST. Are our questions and the Secretary's responses so unimportant that we must cut him off? I know we want to get to everybody, but we are here to hear his answers. Is that so important——

Chairman MEEKS. As I reminded Members, you can form your questions without statements. If you make statements it is going to mean a reduction of time.

Mr. MAST. Totally agree. But can we hear his answers?

Chairman MEEKS. If they stay within the timeframe of 5 minutes, you can.

Mr. MAST. So, not that important. Check.

Chairman MEEKS. I now recognize Representative Scott Perry of Pennsylvania for 5 minutes.

Mr. PERRY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, would you say you have a good relationship with Foreign Minister Zarif?

Mr. KERRY. Right now I do not have a relationship with Foreign Minister Zarif.

Mr. PERRY. Well, when you had one, when you were negotiating, was it good or was it bad?

Mr. KERRY. I would characterize it as professional.

Mr. PERRY. OK, professional.

You have still got a security clearance?

Mr. KERRY. Do I?

Mr. PERRY. Yes.

Mr. KERRY. Yes, I do.

Mr. PERRY. You do. Okay.

So, you're a smart guy, Navy lieutenant, Senator for many decades, Secretary of State. You know that since 1979 Iran is responsible for killing more Americans than any other nation-State; right? I suppose you know that?

Mr. KERRY. I have heard that.

Mr. PERRY. Yes, of course.

You went to Yale, so you are probably familiar with 50 U.S. Code 2204, 18 U.S. Code 2381, I suspect. I am not going to get into it. If you want me to, I will.

But, Mr. Secretary, the foreign minister claimed that you had discussed more than 200 Israeli operations against Iranian-backed terrorists in Syria. Did you provide information to Mr. Zarif on Israeli operations against Iranian-backed terrorists during or following your tenure as Secretary of State?

Mr. KERRY. On no occasion. Never.

Mr. PERRY. Never.

So, Mr. Zarif is a liar?

Mr. KERRY. Mr. Zarif may be confused or incorrect, or he is trying to embellish his—what I read about that article said that he was portraying himself as out of the loop and whatever. And quite emotional, apparently, is what I read. And I have seen him be quite emotional.

And I cannot vouch for why he did that, what he said. I am just telling you that did not happen. End of story.

Mr. PERRY. That never happened. And I know you are not under oath. But we have seen many Administration officials come to this Congress and lie straight faced to Members of Congress.

You are saying for the record that that—

Mr. KERRY. The first time—

Mr. PERRY [continuing]. Never occurred?

Mr. KERRY. The first time I ever heard this number 200 was when I read the article a few days ago. I have never heard of that.

Mr. PERRY. Well, that is heartening to hear. But I will tell you that there is reason for suspicion in this, in this Congress and across America. And I just want to go through the record.

In 1985, you as Senator traveled to Nicaragua, against the Administration's wishes, to meet with Marxist leader Daniel Ortega.

In 2006, you traveled to Syria to meet with the dictator Bashar al-Assad, contradicting President Bush's efforts to isolate Assad for supporting Hezbollah. And I remind you that it is a sea of war and horrifying activities in Syria right now. I mean, if we could have done something with Assad then maybe we wouldn't be dealing what we are dealing with now.

In 2018, you told the Palestinian Authority to hold on, the Palestinian Authority to hold on and be strong, and play for time, and do not yield to the President's demands.

And, finally, following your term as secretary, we know that you met with Mr. Zarif. I know that you said you had a professional relationship, apparently it was not a good relationship, but professional enough that you met with him at least three times to discuss how to save the JCPOA, undermining President Trump's peace efforts.

I remind you that as we speak, the Iranian proxy Hamas is raining down rockets across Israel right now.

That is why people are right to be skeptical. That is why we ask this question. And so you say you are surprised and have no recollection of ever discussing these activities with Zarif regarding Israel in Syria. One more time, Mr. Secretary.

Mr. KERRY. I did not discuss, I did not even know about this number, as I said, until we, until we read the article the other day.

Mr. PERRY. I'm not asking about the number.

Mr. KERRY. No, I never had a discussion with him about Israel with respect to attacks or anything. No. I told you. That is the end of the story.

But let me, I want to say something to what you just said. I traveled to Nicaragua as a United States Senator with another United States Senator on an officially sanctioned U.S. Senate trip in order to try to learn about what was happening with respect to the war in El Salvador. And, you know, Ortega was one of many people we met with.

We met with people like you do on any given trip as a member of the U.S. Congress. And we were handed a letter we brought back to the United States. We turned it over to President Reagan and to Vice President Bush. They had a big meeting about it because he was offering some kind of peace initiative. And that was the end of it.

We did not have any further involvement or engagement in that.

Mr. PERRY. He is a brutal dictator and a communist.

Mr. KERRY. You are damn right.

Mr. PERRY. Yes, that is exactly right.

Mr. KERRY. You are damn right.

Mr. PERRY. You are supporting America.

Chairman MEEKS. The gentleman's time has expired.

I now recognize Representative Karen Bass of California, who is the Chair of the Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, and Global Human Rights, for 5 minutes.

Ms. BASS. Well, thank you, Mr. Secretary, for taking the time out with us today.

Mr. KERRY. Thank you.

Ms. BASS. Before I ask my question, and I did want to talk about Africa, similar to the conversation we were having before the hearing, was there anything else you were trying to say that you did not have time to?

Mr. KERRY. Simply that I think it is important for people to understand that in the course of being an ex-secretary you do wind up going to various events that you are invited to, and you have conversations, for instance, Munich Security Conference. There are only four times that I know of that I saw Prime Minister Zarif in the aftermath of being secretary. And they were all at an international event or sanctioned period of time.

So, I, I just, you know, I do not think that—well, I do not think it needs any further comment.

Ms. BASS. Okay. No problem.

So, I wanted to ask, how do we balance our interests abroad with our domestic interests and all that we need to do in terms of maintaining the pace of the growth of jobs in the renewable energy space and then what it is that we are trying to do internationally, especially in regard to Africa?

Mr. KERRY. What was the first part of the question?

Ms. BASS. About how we maintain our interests abroad. I mean, we have our goals around climate domestically. And, obviously, the connection internationally. But the international focus I wanted to zero in on.

Mr. KERRY. Well, I think, thank you, Representative, it is a very important focus. The fact is that Africa is one of the most negatively affected continents as a consequence of the climate crisis. And it is exacerbated by virtue of the fact that so much of Africa is still undeveloped, less developed. I mean, there are about 860 million people with no electricity, and most of them are in Africa.

And, so, we have an enormous challenge in order to help with adaptation, help with resilience. But, also, in the doing of that to help with development. We used to do that more.

Right now we are basically, I mean people are legitimately complaining about some of the things that are happening out there

with respect to either China or another country, but the fact is that China is filling a void. We used to do that. We do not do it now.

Ms. BASS. Could you imagine a possibility of the EU and the United States working together to address an infrastructure problem like you mentioned, two-thirds of the continent—

Mr. KERRY. Sure.

Ms. BASS [continuing]. Doesn't have electricity? Could you envision the EU? The EU is going through its whole reckoning. They have the issue with the migrants. We know why they travel and risk their lives.

Mr. KERRY. I could easily envision that. I think it would be very productive. But it does require some funding. It is very hard to do if you are not in that business anymore.

And to a large measure, we have stepped back our budget over the years. I think, I mean the total budget of everything we do abroad with USAID, and our embassies, and the entire State Department, is around \$51 billion or so, 52, somewhere in there. I do not have the latest figure. But it has not changed in a number of years. It has been cut to some degree in the last few years. So we cannot do that.

Ms. BASS. Do you see this Administration proposing significant increases?

Mr. KERRY. Well, I do not know what the President is going to decide. He has the four crises he is trying to deal with now.

Ms. BASS. Yes.

Mr. KERRY. He has to build back from COVID.

You all have rapidly addressed the initial legislation. There is obviously more coming. But, hopefully, we will get back in that business. It begins here at home, I understand that. It begins here at home. But you have to be able to go further abroad also.

I mean, we are only, we are now, actually, down to 11 percent of the world's emissions. Last year we were at 15 percent. And then we moved down.

So, that means that 89 percent is in the rest of the world.

Ms. BASS. Uh-huh.

Mr. KERRY. And there is no way to solve this crisis. Mother nature does not decide, oh, it is only coming from here or it is coming from there. It is the conglomerate amount that makes the difference. And if 89 percent of it is coming from the rest of the world, we, as a leading economy, leading nation, need to step up in order to help those other people be able to solve the problem because it is our problem, too.

Ms. BASS. In the international conferences is there ever any attention paid or focused to Africa.

Chairman MEEKS. The gentlelady's time has expired.

Mr. KERRY. The answer is yes.

Chairman MEEKS. I now recognize Representative Adam Kinzinger of Illinois for 5 minutes.

Mr. KINZINGER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And, Mr. Secretary, thank you for spending a little time with us

To echo your comments about development and competition, I think it is important. We, you know, we cannot both cut our international affairs and funding and development budget and then ex-

pect to be able to compete with China when they are using money as a soft power weapon. And I think that is an important point.

More to the task at hand, I am a strong supporter of an all-the-above approach to fighting climate change. And I fear that some, including the Administration and our allies, have written off the largest source of carbon-free energy on the planet. For example, the EU has developed policies is clearing nuclear energy from their green goals.

As you may know, my district is home to four nuclear power plants that are critical to the U.S. goal of cutting carbon emissions. Unfortunately, years of regulatory hurdles have left many of these plants on a weak financial footing.

Would it be possible for the United States to meet our climate change goals if we took a similar approach to nuclear as our European colleagues have? And maybe with that, if you can explain why in the fight against climate change the EU appears to be taking this tool off the table?

Mr. KERRY. The nuclear tool off the table?

Mr. KINZINGER. Yes, sir.

Mr. KERRY. Well, Germany has very much taken it off the table. Others have not.

As you know, France provides about 70-some percent of all their power comes from nuclear. 20 percent of our power comes from nuclear. And we still have, we have another nuclear plant, I think, coming on.

China is building, I think, 12 or 13 nuclear plants. And so they are trying to diversify a little bit.

But nuclear has been off the table, obviously, for a number of reasons. It became uneconomical in the aftermath of a combination of Three Mile Island, Fukushima, and Chernobyl. And, you know, the economics of it do not work at the current moment.

On the other hand, there are lots of people who believe that it may become very difficult to get the kind of baseload guarantee we need for our businesses, our homes, and communities without having something like small, next generation, fourth generation modular nuclear as part of the mix.

So, it is being pursued. I think the U.S. Government is currently putting something like \$500 million or so into the R&D and development of this. Bill Gates is putting a similar amount of his own money into it and building a prototype. And it may well be that this is going to come back into the dialog because the pace at which we have to reduce is so significant.

I am told by scientists and experts in the field of emissions reduction, that about 50 percent of all the emissions we need to cut are going to come from technologies that we have not yet developed or taken to the marketplace. So that, I mean, that is astounding.

So, whether it is direct air carbon capture, or green hydrogen, or storage, we still have a lot of discovering to do. And whoever breaks through on those things, boy, that is going to be, you know, that will be competition for the wealth of Amazon, and Bezos, and others. It is going to be an extraordinary amount of money made by people who come up with several weeks of storage, or with cheap green hydrogen.

Mr. KINZINGER. Thank you, sir. I do not mean to cut you off. I just do have another question. I appreciate it.

So, I introduced with Congresswoman Spanberger the Energy Resource Governance Initiative Act, which would formalize an initiative at State to make sure that the U.S. and our allies are leading the way on responsible mineral sources. Unfortunately, many of our clean energy technologies purchase their materials from the Chinese Communist Party who are the world's leading polluters.

What else can be done, not only to push back on the CCP's policies, but to encourage American companies to source their materials from responsible partners?

Mr. KERRY. Well, I think we can create incentives. That is something that you all have a huge capacity to do.

And, you know, I think the second thing to do is get aggressively into those markets.

I mean, clearly the tax, the tax credit on renewables has worked. It has been extremely effective. And so we are seeing I think, you know, the more you create one incentive or another in the directions that we need to move, the more impact you are going to have on the marketplace.

Mr. KINZINGER. Thank you, sir.

Let me just close with saying that—just another plug—that I hope the Administration pushes forward on the congressional mandated sanctions on Nord Stream 2.

I had a question but no time, so I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. KERRY. Thank you.

Chairman MEEKS. The gentleman's time has expired.

I now recognize Representative Bill Keating of Massachusetts, and the Chair of the Subcommittee on Europe, Energy, and the Environment and Cyber, for 5 minutes.

Mr. KEATING. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Secretary for being here.

You know, just in the last couple of days we had a landmark decision affecting U.S. energy policy here in the United States with the record of decision on Vineyard Wind, which was the first major offshore wind project in our Nation. You know, it was just 7 months ago that the former President was using wind power as a punchline in his campaign rallies. And within the next 7 months we are likely to be breaking ground under the Biden Administration in construction on this project.

This project really meets so many our needs and priorities, our energy goals, our environmental goals, and our employment goals—good jobs.

And this project also unlocks the projects for the whole eastern seaboard. And this project alone, one project, would have enough energy produced for 400,000 homes, for all their energy needs for a year. And the potential on the eastern seaboard is for 10 million homes being able to get their power from offshore wind in the future as well for a whole year.

It is a great example of a public/private partnership. And with your efforts with the Administration and internationally, to me I get great optimism out of seeing the private investment that is going to occur. That is going to help us meet our goals. Without it, we will not be successful.

The Biden Administration in the tax policy recognized this in terms of clean energy tax credits and advancing clean electricity production, by providing a 10-year extension in production tax credits, investment tax credits for energy generation, whether it is solar, wind, or energy storage. That is just part of what they are doing.

But you touched upon it in your opening remarks, we have to get a partnership on the private side going forward. Can you give us a little more detail about the Glasgow Financial Alliance for net-zero and the change to bring together 160 firms with assets in excess of \$70 trillion?

And, also, could you touch upon how we can use our alliances, our transatlantic alliances with our partners, to better coordinate the private investment side of how we are going to finance this going forward?

It is a very important issue. And if you could take the remainder of your time, my time, just touching on the potential that is there, what your plan is, what can be done?

Mr. KERRY. Well, thank you, Congressman. Thank you very much. And I agree with you that it is very exciting what is happening with Martha's Vineyard Wind possibilities.

I really am excited about having a chance to share this with our colleagues here. And I particularly want to call attention of this to our friends on the other side of the aisle.

I think that when you look at this challenge of climate crisis, the U.N. has done a thorough analysis of what it is going to cost us. Most economists will tell you today that it is more expensive not to respond to the climate crisis than it is to respond. And the private sector understands this.

In Europe they demanded disclosure in the sector investments. And they have a new standard on disclosure with respect to investments.

What has happened is the largest asset managers in the world, the BlackRocks, and the Vanguards, and others, have made a decision already that this is an area for major investment and investment returns. It is not a give-away. And so banks have come together, the six major banks in the United States, our biggest banking institutions, have volunteered that they are going to commit in climate sector over the next 10 years \$4.16 trillion.

And they joined, they have joined a thing called the Net-Zero Asset Managers Initiative. There is, in addition to that, a Net-Zero Banking Alliance. There is a Net-Zero Asset Owner Alliance that is 37 institutions with \$5 trillion. The Net-Zero Banking Alliance is 28 trillion in assets; 43 banks have committed to this.

And the Glasgow Financial Alliance for net-zero brings a lot of those others all together. So, there are about 130 financial institutions, worth a hundred-and-some trillion dollars in assets being managed for lending, they are committed to be investing in this sector over the course of the next years. That is going to be—

Chairman MEEKS. The gentleman's time has expired. Sorry, Mr. Secretary.

I now recognize Representative Lee Zeldin of New York for 5 minutes.

Mr. ZELDIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary Kerry, did you meet with Iranian Foreign Minister Zarif in Munich during the Munich Security Conference in February 2019?

Mr. KERRY. I do not know if I met with him in 20—I do not have a recollection of 2019.

Mr. ZELDIN. You maybe do not remember the year.

Mr. KERRY. I met with him, I know I met with him, I know I met with him in 2018. And I met with him, I met with him I think twice in 2018, and twice in 2017.

Mr. ZELDIN. Do you recall meeting him in Munich during the Munich Security Conference?

Mr. KERRY. I recall meeting him. I just cannot remember exactly which year or when it was.

Mr. ZELDIN. Were there other U.S. participants in that meeting?

Mr. KERRY. Well, I think it was not a meeting. I think I just—

Mr. ZELDIN. Were there other U.S.—

Mr. KERRY [continuing]. Exchanged pleasantries.

Mr. ZELDIN. Were there other Americans with you in that discussion?

Mr. KERRY. I do not recall. There were in one or two, but I do not recall which ones.

Mr. ZELDIN. In the meetings that you did have with U.S. participants, who were the U.S. participants?

Mr. KERRY. In Oslo I met with I think, I think John, a fellow named John Finner might have been with me in Oslo.

I do not know in New York. I cannot remember who was with me in New York. It was during the UNCA, during the United Nations meeting.

And the Oslo meeting was a public event which I did with the High Representative of the EU, the former High Representative of the EU—no, she was then still sitting High Representative. And it was hosted by the Norwegian Peace Institute.

Mr. ZELDIN. Okay. Well, I'm just asking which U.S. participants were in the meeting? Any other names there?

Mr. KERRY. But I remember I had other people with me. I would have to go back and figure out. I do not recall who was the traveling party.

Mr. ZELDIN. Did the discussion involve foreign affairs?

Mr. KERRY. Writ large, yes.

Mr. ZELDIN. Did it involve U.S. foreign policy?

Mr. KERRY. I mean not—I mean, it involved sort of listening to views of what is happening in the world, where are we, where are we going, what do you think about this, what—I mean, just general conversations, similar to one, by the way, that many Members of Congress met with him during that same period when I was in New York and had a meeting in New York. He met with Congress, he met with the New York Times editorial board, he was on T.V. It was a public dialog.

Mr. ZELDIN. Yes. I am just asking about your meetings.

Any other meetings with—how many meetings did you have with Zarif during the Trump Administration?

Mr. KERRY. I think during the Trump Administration I had four meetings.

Mr. ZELDIN. Did you have any phone calls with Zarif during the Trump Administration?

Mr. KERRY. No. No.

Mr. ZELDIN. Would messages, communications be passed between the two of you—

Mr. KERRY. No.

Mr. ZELDIN [continuing]. Separately during this time?

Mr. KERRY. No. The only time we ever had any communication was about the specific meeting to get together to compare notes on what was happening in the world.

Mr. ZELDIN. Did you have access, did you obtain any classified information during the Trump Administration?

Mr. KERRY. No.

Mr. ZELDIN. Do you recall having a conversation with the House Intelligence Committee Chairman Adam Schiff at the Munich Security Conference?

Do you recall having an extended conversation with the House Intelligence Committee Chairman Adam Schiff at the Munich Security Conference?

Mr. KERRY. I think we had a, I think we had a beer in the Rathauskeller underneath the thing. But I do not recall specifically very much.

Mr. ZELDIN. Okay. There was a main room—because I was there as well—there was a main room where there was a bunch of speakers. And I was there. I watched. And you guys had an extended conversation. You do not recall that conversation?

Mr. KERRY. In the, in the main hall?

Mr. ZELDIN. Yes.

Mr. KERRY. It is entirely possible. I just, I remember sitting with him and having a beer with him.

Mr. ZELDIN. But you do not recall having that conversation with the Chairman?

Mr. KERRY. I do not recall the conversation. It is entirely—I think he, yes, I think he sat beside me. We sat on the right side of the hall looking toward the stage. And I think we sat there—

Mr. ZELDIN. Okay. Well, I mean, you guys were standing.

But, when you guys met with Zarif, when you were talking about U.S. foreign policy would you advocate for your position on policy?

Mr. KERRY. The only time—I did not advocate for my position. When I, during the period of time I met with Zarif we were in the agreement. From the time President Trump pulled out of the agreement in May 2018, and I do not recall having another conversation with him after.

Mr. ZELDIN. Yes. Well, we are running out of time.

We have one president at a time, and those conversations weren't helpful.

I yield back.

Mr. KERRY. Well, one president at a time—

Chairman MEEKS. The gentleman's time has expired.

I now recognize Representative David Cicilline of Rhode Island for 5 minutes.

Mr. CICILLINE. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. Thank you for your service to our country.

I do want to correct my friend Mr. Keating. Of course, Rhode Island is the offshore wind capital of America. This project he is speaking about is the second one, and we welcome the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to the industry. But, seriously, it is exciting for Rhode Island and Massachusetts but, obviously, particularly exciting for us in Rhode Island as we lead the industry in this area.

You know, there has been a lot of discussion about the importance of climate, responding to the climate crisis because of the consequences to our planet, you know, our ability to maintain a habitable planet and, obviously, understanding the economic opportunities that renewable energies present.

But I would also like you to spend a moment talking about what the implications are to conflicts around the world. We know climate change risks starting, prolonging, or exacerbating armed conflicts around the world. The U.N. Security Council meeting organized by the United Kingdom recently sought to expose the link between our warming climate and conflict. We have seen how drought has made the conflict in Syria that much more difficult. And how States like Mali face threats from insurgents because of issues like food insecurity.

And I think it is one thing that people do not hear enough about. And so I would love to hear your thoughts on the nexus between climate change and conflict and why, if we do not invest in a real climate response, that we might risk further conflicts in the future.

And then my second question, and I will give you time to answer both of them, is there was a recent report by the U.N. Environment Program that outlines the importance of dramatically and quickly reducing global emissions of methane and because of all the dangers that methane presents. And particularly since methane helps create smog, cutting emissions in half to present as many as 250,000 deaths each year worldwide if we do this.

Can you speak about the UNEP report and what steps the Biden Administration is taking both here in the United States and in concert with our partners around the world to reduce methane emissions?

Mr. KERRY. I will try to run through that really quickly. First of all, the implications of the climate crisis to all of us in terms of foreign policy and military are that you could have millions of people who are homeless, literally their habitat is no longer habitable.

Last year in Pakistan it was 130 degrees in one community. In the Middle East it was 130 degrees. Here in California, in Death Valley, it was 130 degrees. The human body is not prepared or it is not meant to be living in 130 degrees. It is going to go up still in some of those places.

We have seen heat, heat waves in the ocean literally, with massive die-off and impact on the food protein source for millions—billions of people actually.

So, as that gets disrupted you are going to have downstream impacts. If the Himalayas cease to have the ice, or begin to reduce in its amount, you are already seeing water impacts. Rivers are going to start to dry up. Billions of people rely on those rivers for food in parts of the world. The Mekong, the Yellow River, the Yangtze, the Yang, the Ganges, these rivers are all sourced in

places that rely on the ice sheet, the melt, the snow. As that changes you could have profound impacts.

This is not conjectural. It is already happening in certain places. There are climate refugees today, just not yet in the millions depending on. But if you have a complete collapse in a region, those people are going to be knocking on the door of a place that is livable. And there will be, we have already had wars over water, we had fights over water, conflict as water becomes more of a problem.

Our own reservoir, the Ogallala Reservoir which is the principal reservoir of the United States of America, has challenges. Go to the Four Corners of Nevada and Colorado, et cetera, and find out how development is already being impacted by lack of water.

So, there are major challenges going forward as the world's climate changes, and where we can produce and what we produce also shifts with it.

There are other potential conflicts. We saw in Syria about a million people come out of the desert into the Damascus area because there was a drought of several years. And that had a profound impact on the politics of the region. And it became part of the dynamics of what went on with Assad and Daesh and the exploitation of people as a consequence of their shifted locale and lack of integration to that particular new locale.

On the subject of methane, methane is 20 to 80-plus times more damaging than CO₂.

Chairman MEEKS. The gentleman's time has expired.

I now recognize Representative Darrell Issa of California for 5 minutes.

Mr. ISSA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Good to have you back, Mr. Secretary.

During the 2-years that I was out of Congress and, similarly, you were not currently in government, I was involved with the Trade Development Agency which is established to basically export, if you will, infrastructure around the world. It has a mandate that includes virtually all of Africa, much of South America, and much of Asia.

That organization competes directly with the Belt and Road Initiative of the Chinese, but with less than 2 percent as much money as they operate on. Isn't it fair to say that if what we want to do is enable developing nations, including those in Africa, to reduce their carbon footprint as they grow their economy, we are going to have to be the country that delivers that type of infrastructure, because China certainly is not doing that today?

Mr. KERRY. China is not delivering that kind of infrastructure today. We need to, I think, be in the game, and we need to help deliver it. But not alone. There are plenty of countries that know how to do it and will do it well that are engaged.

Mr. ISSA. And we do partner with Japan and other countries.

Mr. KERRY. Correct.

Mr. ISSA. And I am glad to see us doing that because we are, of course, delivering a smaller footprint.

You mentioned that China produces 73 percent of, if you will, the renewable assets, wind and solar. If they had used it themselves rather than building those coal-fired plants, would they have gone up or down likely in their CO₂ emissions?

Mr. KERRY. They actually are using it themselves, Congressman. They are the largest—they have the largest deployment of renewable as anybody else in the world.

Mr. ISSA. But they also use twice as much coal as we do,—

Mr. KERRY. That is correct.

Mr. ISSA [continuing]. And continue to grow.

Mr. KERRY. That is correct.

Mr. ISSA. As we look at a number of countries, I want to quickly go to India.

During the last Administration, India negotiated numerous times to acquire LNG capability and convert some of their coal-fired plants, future coal-fired plants to natural gas. At the end of the day, they renege and did not buy anything.

Isn't it true that part of the challenge you face with India and China is the attitude we cannot afford to be clean, and that that is one of the reasons both of those countries will continue to peak up in CO2 emissions while the United States has been dropping for more than a decade?

Mr. KERRY. I would say to you, sir, with all respect that there is an attitude, but that is not it. The attitude is we are less developed countries, and we have to still develop. And according to the original Paris standard, there is a thing called common but differentiated responsibility. So—

Mr. ISSA. I appreciate that, Mr. Secretary, and I think you are exactly right. There are two different ways to say the same thing: we are not developed enough; we are not rich enough. But, at the end of the day they believe they have a right to continue producing more CO2 in order to catch up with our economy—

Mr. KERRY. They do.

Mr. ISSA [continuing]. While we do it down.

So, domestically for a moment, isn't it true that we are going to have to find ways to reduce our carbon footprint while in fact not putting ourselves at a competitive disadvantage to our competitors around the world who are using lower cost energy, lower currently than most renewables?

Mr. KERRY. Yes.

Mr. ISSA. So, if we are to do that, wouldn't the Biden Administration have to continue a trajectory that began with the Bush Administration and continued through the last two Administrations, which is to convert from coal to natural gas, to increase efficiencies, to use all of the above, and to ladder our way down in the consumption—or the production of CO2, rather than a draconian one?

And I want to followup with one quick question. You said—you quoted, I think, the LA Times, and you said that California had 95 percent renewable at one point on 1 day. Oddly enough, my district in Southern California has had repeated blackouts as a result of having not enough energy because on a hot afternoon when the sun starts going down we run out of power.

So, isn't all of the above and a blended solution what the United States should do, while at the same time laddering down our CO2 emissions?

Mr. KERRY. Well, the key, I think, Congressman, is to do it in a way that is integrated so that you cannot have any of those challenges.

Now, this was 1 day. And I think they were pushing the curve to try to find out what happened. It is obviously not a long-term situation.

Mr. ISSA. But the blackouts were many days.

Mr. KERRY. No, I get it.

But, but that is why we need to have a smart approach that is integrated. At the same time, gas is a challenge.

Chairman MEEKS. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. KERRY. Naturally. Maybe we will have more time so we can followup.

Mr. ISSA. Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

Chairman MEEKS. The gentleman's time has expired.

I now acknowledge Representative Joaquin Castro of Texas, who is the Chair of the Subcommittee on International Development, International Organizations, and Global Corporation Social Impact, for 5 minutes.

Mr. CASTRO. Secretary Kerry, great to see you again. Thank you for joining us today.

Climate change is an existential threat that the United States must lead on. And your appointment is a welcome sign.

Most of the work on the Paris Agreement and our efforts to strengthen the agreement focus on controlling carbon emissions. And this is critical. But I want to ask you what we are also doing to address the effects of climate change which are already occurring.

Current laws on refugees and international migration are not well-suited to address the needs of people displaced by climate. And the effects of climate change on crops and livelihoods have contributed to migration in Central America, the Middle East, and West Africa.

And I know in response to Mr. Cicilline's question you touched upon this. But I wanted to ask you, does the United States and other countries that have disproportionate emitted carbon have a responsibility to take in those displaced by climate change?

Mr. KERRY. I think, commensurate with our overall innovation goals and targets, they have to be included. It is not an automatic license that you are going to be able to take everybody, obviously. But within our appropriate limits, we have to.

But I think the more important thing, frankly, Congressman, is, you know, rather than wait for these effects to hit us the way we do, I mean, for the spending, for instance, of the \$265 billion I talked about, I talked in my opening comments about 22 separate events last year, a record, all of which required a billion dollars of expenditure.

If we do not start to think ahead and apply some vision to our making of policy, we are going to wind up paying, paying, paying, and not getting any real consequence for it. We have got to start investing in the future now.

And that is the theory of what President Biden has put on the table: invest. It is not just an expenditure, it is an investment. And if we do that, then we have an ability to get to the root causes, the root challenge for why people are moving and why this pressure is growing, otherwise it is going to be a, you know, like a firehose actually coming at you.

Mr. CASTRO. And just to followup to that, two questions that I will put together.

What will the Biden Administration do to update and strengthen international rules for resettling people displaced by climate change?

And, do you support amending U.S. law and conventions at the United Nations to include climate refugees?

Mr. KERRY. I do believe we have to have formal acceptance of the concept of climate refugees. Yes, I do.

I do not have an answer to the first part of your question. I would have to get that from those folks in the Administration working on that.

Mr. CASTRO. Yes. Thank you very much.

I yield back, Chairman.

Chairman MEEKS. The gentleman yields back.

I now recognize Representative Ann Wagner of Missouri, who is the Vice Ranking Member of the full committee, for 5 minutes.

Ms. WAGNER. I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary Kerry, on April 25th, the New York Times published Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif claimed that you, as Secretary of State, revealed classified information regarding Israel's covert attacks on Iranian interests in Syria. These allegations are extremely disturbing.

Iran poses an existential threat to Israel, a key U.S. ally. And it has repeatedly demonstrated its willingness to attack Israel directly, both through proxy and from its position in Syria.

Given the gravity of the security threat Iran poses to the U.S. and allied interests, I believe the report should be investigated in full. If true, Javad Zarif's claims raise serious questions regarding your ability, sir, to unreservedly protect U.S. interests as Special Presidential Envoy for Climate. The degree and the nature of U.S. participation in international climate change agreements must, and I underscore must, be informed by our national security interests.

An overly narrow focus on left wing action items like the deeply flawed Paris Agreement, and the Iran Nuclear Deal, cannot blind us to the malign intentions of adversaries like Iran, Russia, and the People's Republic of China.

On April 28th I sent a letter, this letter, to the Acting Inspector General of the Department of State, and to the Secretary of State, requesting an investigation into your relationship with Iran's foreign minister. Are you aware of this letter, sir?

Mr. KERRY. No, I am not.

Ms. WAGNER. I will make sure you have a copy.

Mr. KERRY. Well, obviously I am aware of it now.

Ms. WAGNER. The letter also requested a response to several very specific questions by today, May 12th. As I have not received answers—and, Mr. Chairman, I would like this entered into the record.

Chairman MEEKS. Without objection.

[The information referred to follows:]

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April 28, 2021

VICE RANKING MEMBER
COMMITTEE ON
FINANCIAL SERVICES
RANKING MEMBER
SUBCOMMITTEE ON DIVERSITY AND
INCLUSION
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INVESTOR PROTECTION,
ENTREPRENEURSHIP,
AND CAPITAL MARKETS
VICE RANKING MEMBER
COMMITTEE ON
FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON EUROPE, EURASIA,
ENERGY, AND THE ENVIRONMENT
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ASIA, THE PACIFIC,
AND NONPROLIFERATION

The Honorable Diana R. Shaw
Acting Inspector General
United States Department of State
SA-39
1700 North Moore Street
Arlington, Virginia 22209

Dear Acting Inspector General Shaw:

We write to draw your attention to recent allegations surrounding United States Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry. We are appalled by Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif's claim that Special Envoy Kerry, as Secretary of State, revealed Israel's covert attacks on Iranian interests in Syria. Iran poses an existential threat to Israel, the United States' key ally in the Middle East, and it has repeatedly demonstrated its willingness to attack Israel directly, both through proxies and from its positions in Syria. Given the gravity of the security threat Iran poses to U.S. and Israeli interests, we respectfully ask that you fully investigate these allegations.

On April 25, 2021, the *New York Times* reported that former Secretary of State John Kerry informed Mr. Zarif, "to his astonishment," that Israel had attacked Iranian interests in Syria at least 200 times. Special Envoy Kerry has also admitted that he secretly met with Mr. Zarif twice during the previous Administration to undermine President Trump while his Administration planned to withdraw from the deeply flawed Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and restore the United States' ability to deter Iranian aggression. President Biden's Administration has committed to improving the JCPOA to better address Iran's malign activity; we believe that Special Envoy Kerry's relationship with Mr. Zarif and indiscretion on matters of importance to the U.S.-Israel security relationship may negatively impact the Biden Administration's ability to prevent a nuclear-armed Iran.

Iran is a serious threat to Israel, a bulwark of democracy and stability in the Middle East. It is in our national security interest to stand by our strategic ally—not sell it out to our adversaries. As United States Special Presidential Envoy for Climate, Mr. Kerry is a member of the National Security Council and has a responsibility to safeguard the interests of the United States and its closest allies. We ask that your office investigate Special Envoy Kerry's relationship with Iranian Foreign Minister Zarif and determine whether his security clearance should be revoked or not.

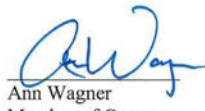
In particular, we request responses to the below questions by May 12, 2021:

1. Was the Department of State aware of these allegations before they were reported by the *New York Times*?

2. What is the status of Special Envoy Kerry's security clearance?
3. What were the circumstances surrounding the alleged leak of information from Special Envoy Kerry to Mr. Zarif, including the timing of the alleged conversation?
4. What role has Special Envoy Kerry had in the formulation of the Biden Administration's policy on reentering the JCPOA?
5. Are you aware of any follow-on attacks made by Iranian proxies against Israel or its forces after Special Envoy Kerry's alleged conversation with Foreign Minister Zarif?

We look forward to your response and thank you for your attention to this concerning matter.

Sincerely,



Ann Wagner
Member of Congress



Andy Barr
Member of Congress



Lee Zeldin
Member of Congress

CC: The Honorable Antony Blinken
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

Ms. WAGNER. I would like to ask you now, what were the circumstances surrounding your alleged leak of information to Javad Zarif, including the timing of this conversation; what role have you had in formulating U.S. policy on re-entering the Iran Nuclear Deal, sir?

Mr. KERRY. Well, I think the premise is incorrect. The story did not allege that I transferred classified information, it did not even characterize it as classified. It simply said that on a tape Javad was overheard in a long, long lamentation about how he was out of the loop in Iran and in the policy, and how he had learned this and learned that from somebody. And then popped in saying—

Ms. WAGNER. He said he learned it from you, sir, and it is over 200 instances.

Mr. CASTRO. He said he learned one thing from me. And I have already answered that question. I never said that. I do not know how he came up with that. Don't know where it came from.

And it was not, there was no—nothing stated in there about my having released anything on classified information. And in 28 years in the U.S. Senate, and in 6 years on the Intel Committee, and as Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, and as Secretary of State in 4 years, never has anybody suggested I did not protect classified—

Ms. WAGNER. Well, I would like a full investigation. And I would like my questions answered. I will see that you have a copy.

The Biden Administration seems to be copying the same climate rhetoric and policies as California. Like, California has some of the highest electricity prices in the country, is the largest importer of energy, and rolling blackouts are not uncommon. In fact, the State has been sued by civil rights groups for the impact of their climate policies on low income and communities of color.

And to top it off, according to the Department of Energy, California performance since 2010 in reducing energy-related carbon emissions ranks 43d among all States.

What is your opinion of the California approach? And do you think it is a model for the rest of the country, sir?

Mr. KERRY. I think California has done an incredible job. It is pushing the curve. It is try—

Ms. WAGNER. Forty-third. Ranked 43d in the country.

Mr. KERRY. In? Forty-third in what?

Ms. WAGNER. Among all States in reducing energy-related carbon emissions. And they are doing a great job?

Chairman MEEKS. The gentlelady's time has expired.

I now recognize Representative Dina Titus of Nevada for 5 minutes.

Ms. TITUS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Secretary Kerry, for being with us today. We certainly appreciate your efforts in this area, and commend you for the work that you are doing.

We have heard a lot about the major focus of COP21 and the Paris Agreement being on reducing global emissions. And that sounds great. But it seems to put us in a position of working from behind.

Could you address some of the things that we need to do to be proactive around the world so we can meet long-term gains, not just cleanup the mess that exists but make the future better.

Mr. KERRY. Well, I think the single most important thing that we need to do, we are doing, which is the United States of America under President Biden has put forward an extremely thoughtful, achievable, and aggressive reductions level so that we are leading by example, which the President has talked about a great deal.

So, we are, we are going to be striving for over the next 10 years a 50 to 52 percent reduction in our emissions. I will tell you that that has really helped us to come back to the table with credibility on an international basis.

Now, I emphasize, no one nation can solve this problem. I mean, we can sit here and lament. We can, you know, be talking about America's preeminence in one sector or another, but the truth is that there are 89 percent of the global emissions coming from other countries, and 20 countries are responsible for 73 percent of all emissions.

So, 20 countries, this was the theory of our summit, it brought those 20 countries together. The majority of them have stepped up and are stepping up with new reduction targets. But we need other countries to do that.

But what the United States is trying to do now under President Biden's leadership is to reach out to those countries and work with them. We have a working group that is literally sitting with these nations and trying to articulate to them in a thoughtful and respectful way how they might be able to transition faster off of some coal, or how they may be able to implement and deploy more renewables faster. And it is only by that kind of help from the developed world that we have a prayer of winning this battle.

So, the key here is for the U.S. to be on target.

The second thing we need to do—which is exciting—I mean, we are looking at the biggest transitional opportunity since the Industrial Revolution. The United States of America does not even have a grid yet, folks. We do not have a grid. We can go to the moon, but we cannot send an electron from one part of the country to another.

We have got to build the transmission capacity. We have got to use AI, quantum computing, be able to instantaneously—and the Congresswoman talked about where California sits—we could send California clean energy, windmill, wind power, or solar, or Nevada or any other place somewhere else in the country at a given time, with our time difference of 3 hours, and with battery storage at utility scale that already gets 4 hours, you could begin to really manage a system as you wait for daylight and as you wait for the wind.

So, this could be managed. And artificial intelligence and quantum computing give us a huge advantage in our ability to do that.

So, that is the way we can help lead the world. We should be leading on all of these technologies. Historically, that is what has made America so strong. Now we have to get back into that race. And I think we are looking at huge opportunities of providing hydrogen, and storage, and perhaps even on this other front, fourth

generation next modular nuclear. Who knows what it is going to be.

I am for an all-of-the-above effort because we do not know which of the best of these technologies is yet going to work until we have to do it.

One last word. Even if we get to net-zero by 2050, we are still going to have to suck carbon monoxide out of the atmosphere. A lot of people do not stop to think of that. We still need the technology that is going to enable us to do it.

So, I think there are great possibilities here for discovery. We are creating more jobs in this sector already in America. And as I mentioned in the beginning, there are already more people working in this new, clean energy sector than there are working in fossil fuel or in many other sectors.

Chairman MEEKS. The gentlelady's time has expired.

Ms. TITUS. Thank you.

Chairman MEEKS. I now acknowledge Representative Brian Mast of Florida for 5 minutes.

Mr. MAST. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, you just quite literally contradicted yourself. You said you are for all of the above, but you are not. We spoke earlier, Representative Issa asked a question about the Keystone Pipeline. You are fundamentally in disagreement with delivering that fuel into the United States of America. It would beg the question, did the hack on the Colonial Pipeline save you the trouble of having to shut that one down?

Mr. KERRY. Well, Congressman, I appreciate your question. And may I, as a matter of personal privilege, just say how much I admire your personal service to our country.

Mr. MAST. Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

Mr. KERRY. I would say to you this: I do not think it is a contradiction. Yes, we are going to use gas for some period of time. And I am not one of those that comes in and says you have to shut down today, tomorrow. We cannot do that.

What we can do is begin to take steps that reduce reliance, even as we keep alive the ability to have sufficient gas for the purposes we need.

Mr. MAST. It is a fair point, Mr. Secretary. But to the point that you made to my friend, Mr. Issa, to quote it, "That is true. The pipelines are more carbon delivery efficient than rails and trucks. They deliver the fuel by using less carbon in order to deliver that fuel—"

Mr. KERRY. But, Congressman, here—

Mr. MAST. Let me finish the quote.

Mr. KERRY [continuing]. Here is the challenge.

Mr. MAST. Let me finish the quote and I will let you respond.

Mr. KERRY. Yes.

Mr. MAST. "—but it does not mean that you want to be adding another line, another one of these more efficient routes. There are alternatives. But, yes, pipeline is better than trains and trucks."

Mr. KERRY. So, let me tell you why we can do better in meeting our goal of reducing our emissions.

All the gas we burn, first of all gas is 87-point-some percent methane. Gas leaks. If you—in the Permian Basin, for instance, we

have a leakage, you have it around 2.7 percent. Scientists say that can be more damaging than CO₂.

Our leakage is at about 5 percent or 10 percent in some places in America. Now, if that is the leakage in America, think what it is in other places.

Because of the melting of permafrost and the melting of the tundra, the thawing of the tundra, we are now seeing methane being released around the world that isn't tapped, it isn't used. President Biden has put an effort into his legislation to start capping open wells and open mines that are giving off methane in the United States.

Mr. MAST. Mr. Secretary, could I summarize your——

Mr. KERRY. Here is the challenge——

Mr. MAST. Could I summarize your position by saying you want no crude or petrol use. Would that be an accurate summary?

Mr. KERRY. For what?

Mr. MAST. You want no crude, no petrol used in the future. Would that be an accurate summary?

Mr. KERRY. Well, it depends what you mean by the future. We are going to be doing that. We are going to be using crude. We are going to be using crude, we're going—well, crude, first of all, is used for lots of other things than fuel and power. So, we are going to use crude well into the future.

Mr. MAST. Not delivered by pipeline though?

Mr. KERRY. Well, no, it could well be delivered by pipeline. Already we are doing that. But our source of power, President Biden has already made this decision, and the utilities are already accepting it.

Mr. MAST. I want to ask one more question because I——

Mr. KERRY. By 2035——

Mr. MAST [continuing]. I want to yield some time to one of my friends here who may not be able to ask you some questions.

Mr. KERRY. By 2035, though, President Biden has determined we will be carbon free in our power production.

Mr. MAST. You are talking about not allowing these new avenues to deliver them, even though they are more efficient, like the Keystone Pipeline. Would there also be an effort to not promote other forms of delivery, that is to say, not permit a new railcar that is being used to deliver that because Colonial is down right now? Not permitting a new truck to go over the road, which is what is being used to deliver those, those fuels right now, would that also be a part of the——

Mr. KERRY. No.

Mr. MAST [continuing]. Program?

Mr. KERRY. No. No, I do not—I really think we are talking much more reasonably, Congressman, in a way that we have to try to accelerate the transition to clean fuels. That is what we have to try to accelerate. It is not going to happen overnight. So, we are going to need—now, I would rather see gas used rather than coal anywhere in the world. And I think there are ways to try to assist in doing that.

But even gas——

Mr. MAST. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. I am going to yield my time to Mr. Pfluger for a moment.

Mr. KERRY. Thank you.

Mr. PFLUGER. Thank you for yielding.

Mr. Secretary, for the first time in 70 years our country is energy independent. It is a lever of power, it is national security. Energy security is national security. And so you have mentioned that we need to take steps. We have taken steps, as you have clearly highlighted today, from being 15 percent down to 11 percent. That is huge.

Do you believe that wind and solar can provide baseload capacity for this country?

Mr. KERRY. Not alone.

Mr. PFLUGER. No. That is absolutely right.

Mr. KERRY. Not yet. Not yet.

Mr. PFLUGER. We saw it in Texas windstorms, and we have seen it in California.

Mr. KERRY. I should amend that by saying, Congressman, not yet alone. If we break through on storage,——

Chairman MEEKS. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. KERRY [continuing]. The answer is yes.

Chairman MEEKS. I now recognize Representative Susan Wild of Pennsylvania for 5 minutes.

Ms. WILD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And, Secretary Kerry, thank you for your lifelong service to our country and for appearing before our committee today.

I want to switch gears a little bit and talk about the Amazon rainforest which has often been referred to as the lungs of Earth because of its crucial role in sustaining human life and biodiversity across the globe. But, unfortunately, under the Bolsonaro Government in Brazil, as I am sure you are aware, deforestation has surged to record highs as the Government has rolled back environmental protection mechanisms and emboldened those who are engaged in illegal logging and mining.

We saw the culmination of these actions in the catastrophic mass-scale fires in the Brazilian Amazon in 2019, just as we see unchecked deforestation contributing to the climate crisis for our entire planet today.

President Biden has expressed interest in attempting to negotiate an agreement to protect the Brazilian Amazon, clearly an imperative for combating climate change. And I was wondering if you could update us on the status of those negotiations and address the issue of verification mechanisms?

Mr. KERRY. Well, we are in the midst of that negotiation now. We have just started it really a few weeks ago.

We have had some positive conversations, and we are hopeful that we can translate intent into action that will wind up being effective and verifiable. Obviously, there have been challenges in that, and we are very aware of those challenges.

The fact, as I mentioned earlier, that the Amazon was doing relatively well up until I think around 2012, and then suddenly took a surge in the amount of cutting that took place, and the land grabbing that took place. We have got to create—the imperative here is to create a verifiable enforcement structure that everybody has confidence in. That is the goal. And that is what we are work-

ing toward. And if we can get there, you know, it may be possible to have an agreement that works for everybody.

I mean, the truth is there is a value in the Amazon that a country, Brazil, looks at and says, well, maybe we do not accept the theory of this, we want to do it this way. And there are assets within there, not to mention the great asset of indigenous people who live there and who need to be significantly taken into account with regard to their future.

Ms. WILD. I am going to ask you——

Mr. KERRY. All of those are the equities.

Ms. WILD. I am going to ask you to stop right there because you just touched on something that I wanted to ask about, and that is the role of the indigenous communities in the negotiations and any subsequent agreement.

Can we assume that they will be included? Has the Administration been consulting with local indigenous leaders at all?

Mr. KERRY. We are certainly consulting with representatives thereof. None of us have been down there or have any personal meetings at this point in time. But the answer is their concerns are paramount. And they have a huge voice in this and they need to be heard.

Ms. WILD. And you agree then that protection of indigenous communities has to be one of the paramount concerns?

Mr. KERRY. Everywhere. Wherever we are engaged in this President Biden is super-focused and targeted on justice, on fairness, and on a process that is sensitive, where sometimes in the past it has not been.

Ms. WILD. So, let me just switch gears with just over a minute left.

The EU has approved the principle of imposing basically a carbon tariff on imports from countries that do not price for taxed carbon, and is expected to design a directive to attempt to implement this policy. You know, those of us in districts like mine with a very intensive manufacturing sector as part of our local economy are strongly committed to protecting the interests of our workers and businesses as well.

But my question is just to comment that this policy should be a last resort, could you update us on the status of this issue with the Europeans.

Mr. KERRY. The status. I did not hear the original piece. Of which issue?

Ms. WILD. Of the carbon tariff that the EU is intending to propose.

Mr. KERRY. Sure. Well, they are calling it a border adjustment mechanism.

Ms. WILD. Uh-huh.

Mr. KERRY. They are looking right now at exactly how it would work in order not to be disruptive, but at the same time to be effective.

I honestly do not have an answer to that at this point in time. We are looking at it. President Biden has instructed us to understand it and to thoroughly vet whatever the impacts might be. That is what we are going to do.

Chairman MEEKS. The gentlelady's time has expired.

Ms. WILD. Thank you very much. Thank you.

Chairman MEEKS. I now recognize Representative Brian Fitzpatrick of Pennsylvania, who is the Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Europe, Energy, the Environment and Cyber, for 5 minutes.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Secretary Kerry, thank you for being here with us today.

According to a recent report by the Rhodium Group, China emits close to 30 percent of global emissions. China's share of global emissions has grown more than all of the OECD nations combined. In fact, today, by comparison, the United States' emissions are a billion tons less than they were in 2005, and our trajectory is going down, while Chinese emissions are well over 4 billion tons higher than they were in 2005, and their trajectory is going up.

So, a couple questions.

First, is this dramatic increase in emissions consistent with China's Paris Accord pledge?

And, No. 2, what are the effective accountability mechanisms in place to certify that countries like the PRC follow through on their climate commitments?

Mr. KERRY. I did not hear the very last part of that. But the simple answer is no, no, the current level rate of reduction is not consistent with the pledge. As it is not, I might add, for quite a few countries.

There just are too many countries not yet in compliance. And that will be one of the major—that is why we, President Biden summoned the Climate Summit he held is precisely to get people focused on a raising of ambition. And that will be our goal over the course of these next 5 months.

We cannot look at where we are today, we have got to look at it as where we could be in the next, you know, beginning this September, October and head to Glasgow.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Understood, sir. But, obviously, China is in the center of a lot of different issues from the intelligence standpoint, the foreign affairs standpoint, economic.

Mr. KERRY. For sure. No question.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. And there has been a lot of comments coming out of the PRC regarding their plans to basically exploit the parameters of Paris by amping up rather than reducing as we approach that date, amping up their coal production, their carbon emissions, almost making a mockery out of the whole intent of Paris.

So, I was just curious as to what your thoughts are, specific as it pertains to China and their good faith as far as good faith commitments and the level of good faith commitments to Paris?

Mr. KERRY. Well, let me speak to that this way:

I have said to you I agree that there are big challenges, there are major issues that we have with China. My focus is, obviously, to deal with the China crisis and to get us, hopefully, in a place where it is constructive and we are moving in the right direction.

So, with respect to that we need, obviously, to get greater cooperation from China. We are talking about that now. That is on the table as a critical component.

Now, China believes that they are doing a certain amount. I know they know that they are seized by the issue of having to do

greater reductions. We are hopeful we can get China in a place where we respect the common but differentiated, so that China is doing not exactly what we are doing, but China is doing enough that it is clear they are seriously reducing, and they are making their best effort to hold to 1.5 degrees.

And if we can get into a place where that is actually happening and we have the ability to know it is happening and trace it, then we will have advanced this ball. We are not there yet, and we have a lot of work to do to try to get there.

One other thing I will say to you is, one of the new benefits of technology is that we have an ability through space and satellite tracking to now measure quite precisely what a particular company is doing, or whether its food, its supply chain is behaving the way they promised. And we can look even at governments and whole countries and have almost realtime readout on exactly what is happening with respect to their emissions.

So, the planet will have much greater transparency and accountability than it has ever had as a result of technology's assist in here.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. One last question, sir.

What should the consequences be to China if they are proceeding in bad faith and we determine that to be the case?

Mr. KERRY. Well, I mean, one of them obviously already raised by several Members is the challenge of the border adjustment mechanism and the possibility of some kind of tariff. That is out there.

And, you know, and China is not the only country affected. By the way, every country would be subject to that. So we, too, would have to make sure we are in alignment and subject to it.

So, we are examining exactly how it might work, how it could be fair. For the moment, we would like to not—

Chairman MEEKS. The gentleman's time has expired.

And I will recognize Representative Dean Phillips of Minnesota for 5 minutes.

Mr. PHILLIPS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And as a Gold Star son who lost his father in Vietnam, I want to thank you, Mr. Secretary, for your sacrifices there and for your service as a Senator and Secretary of State and, of course, now in this capacity. And I have to say I am saddened that some of my colleagues would seemingly put their faith in the word of the Iranian foreign minister over that of yours. I am sorry for that. The irony is not lost on me.

My questions are about climate change. And you are aware of President Biden's interest in what he calls foreign policy for the middle class. And with that in mind, I would love it if you would speak for a few moments about how you and the Administration are approaching decarbonization of our economy while also mitigating the incremental costs to American families that might result from that transition?

Mr. KERRY. That is a great question, Congressman. And thank you for your personal comments. I appreciate it. And, you know, obviously wish life had been otherwise for you.

With respect to decarbonization and the foreign policy for families, the President—and I think this is where this gets exciting—is

convinced, as I am, that the opportunities here are so much greater than any deficit in this transformation. We have transitioned historically many times. The industrial revolution was a transition. When the steam engine came along, and the cotton gin, and life changed and great communities were built.

Bill Keating, Representative Keating and I understand how Massachusetts was changed by that, and Rhode Island, and other States, the textile industry, the shoe industry. So, and then it moved. But other things came and replaced it. Our economy still remains strong in America, despite these transitions. And we grow stronger, and we build out a larger middle class.

I think that is going to happen here in amazing ways. I mean, already it seems there is a prediction by the Labor Bureau statistics that there are three jobs that are going to grow more than 50 percent this next year. One, the No. 1 is wind turbine technician. That is at 62 percent growth.

The second job is nurse practitioner. And we all know why that is growing, unfortunately.

The third is solar panel installer, which is going to grow at about 51 percent.

Now, what we see is, and in vehicles, I just talked the other day with the Senator from South Carolina, we were talking about the transition in South Carolina and how, you know, folks who are making the internal combustion engine car now are going to not only be making an electric vehicle, but they are going to be growing, the number of plants that are there and the job opportunities are going to grow.

I think if you look at what is already happening in the early clean tech markets of solar wind, battery, there are dozens of emerging clean tech markets here in the United States that are going to enlarge economic opportunities for people. And people are earning, without a high school degree, in some of these early jobs, 24 bucks an hour which, as we know, is more than double the minimum wage, so.

Mr. PHILLIPS. Yes. Sir, and I would like to reclaim some time. I just want to, I do want to call attention to those effects and ensure that we do look after those who will suffer from incremental costs.

I want to talk about pipelines, too. As you well know, the State Department manages Presidential permits for cross-border pipelines. In my home State of Minnesota, Enbridge is currently replacing over 330 miles of its Line 3 crude oil pipeline that runs from Alberta across the border all the way to Wisconsin. It is a pipeline that is older than me, first used in 1968 before the National Environmental Policy Act was enacted in 1970.

So, there are serious concerns about the lack of environmental reviews on the project. In fact, when Enbridge sought to replace Line 3 in 2014, the State Department determined that it did not require a new permit, as you are probably aware.

So, how are you and the Biden Administration approaching decisions on cross-border pipeline construction, replacement, and upgrades? And have you spoken with Minister——

Mr. KERRY. I confess to you I have not had that conversation at this point in time.

Mr. PHILLIPS. Okay.

Mr. KERRY. And so I would rather get you an answer but have it be informed.

Mr. PHILLIPS. All right. Well, I see my time is unfortunately—

Mr. KERRY. What we will do is we will come back to you with that.

Mr. PHILLIPS. I welcome that. Thank you very much.

Mr. KERRY. All right.

Mr. PHILLIPS. Thank you.

Chairman MEEKS. The last questions will be from Representative Tim Burchett of Tennessee. You are now recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BURCHETT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Before we go into this I wanted to ask, call your attention to some legislation. My colleague Bruce Westerman from Arkansas—he is an Ivy Leaguer like you, but he sounds more country than me; he is from Arkansas—he has some legislation called The Trillion Trees Initiative. And that is the ultimate sequester of carbon. And I would appreciate you looking at that after you finish with your notes. I would appreciate that, brother, if you would, if you could have one of your staffers if they would, it is truly a good piece of legislation.

How do we trust the Chinese Communist Party to do anything they say they are going to do with their increased coal power capacity and everything else that they are doing, and their violations of human rights in the world?

Mr. KERRY. Congressman, we will take a look at that legislation.

And, second, as I have said several times here, it is not a matter of taking things by trust. We have to have a mechanism where we are both measuring, where we are accountable to each other, where we are actually able to know what is happening. And it would be stupid and malpractice if we just sort of set up a China trust thing.

Mr. BURCHETT. Okay. I know that we did that, you know, we did that with Iran. And I do not want to dig you, but it seems like we kind of got it handed to us on that deal. And I would just hope that we could follow through with that. Also—

Mr. KERRY. Well, even, in all fairness, we did not pull out of that deal. I mean—

Mr. BURCHETT. I mean, you cannot trust them to do anything. They are the leading proponents of terrorism in the world.

Mr. KERRY. No, and we, by the way—

Mr. BURCHETT. I mean, they got more American blood on their hands than anybody in the last 20 years probably.

Mr. KERRY. I understand all of that. Which is why we put in place the most severe, most extensive, singularly most accountable verification system ever put into any nuclear agreement.

Mr. BURCHETT. Okay.

Mr. KERRY. And that was there until the former President pulled out.

Mr. BURCHETT. And I appreciate that. I am not trying to dig you, but I want to know a straight answer.

Mr. KERRY. Yes.

Mr. BURCHETT. Why does your office position even exist, given that the State Department already has an entire bureau devoted to oceans, and international environment, and scientific affairs; an-

other devoted to energy resources, and that has ensured that the climate policy will be a priority in every bureau, office, and post?

Mr. KERRY. That is a very fair question. And the answer is because we are in such a crisis globally, and because President Biden wanted to find somebody who was experienced and had credibility within this arena to try to raise the profile of his efforts and accelerate movement.

We, President Biden came in on January 20th. We have probably one of the most important negotiations we have ever engaged in globally on November 1st of this year.

Mr. BURCHETT. Okay. Thank you, brother.

Mr. KERRY. And we wanted to accelerate it.

Mr. BURCHETT. And I want to appreciate you on your Purple Heart. My dad said that is the only medal he was glad he never got in the Pacific. So, thank you, brother.

And I want to yield 2 minutes to my good friend Andy Barr, if that is possible, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman MEEKS. The gentleman yields.

Mr. BURCHETT. Thank you for being here.

Mr. BARR. I thank my friend from Tennessee.

Envoy Kerry, in your current role you said that your goal is to “change the allocation of capital with respect to fossil energy.” Press reports suggest you pressured major U.S. financial institutions to align their lending practices with the Administration’s climate goals.

In your response to my letter on this issue you said there was no pressure.

I am the Ranking Member of the Financial Services oversight and Investigations Subcommittee. The CEOs of the six largest U.S. banks will be testifying in my committee on May 27th. I plan to ask them about this. Of those six banks, my understanding is that three have joined your efforts, and three did not.

Did any of these bank CEOs or their representatives receive a term sheet for the commitments required to be part of the Net-Zero Banking Alliance? And did you provide them with a term sheet?

Mr. KERRY. I did not. I did not create the Net-Zero Alliance. That was created—

Mr. BURCHETT. No, I understand. But the press report—

Mr. KERRY. So I do not know what their—that is Mark Carney, who is a former Governor of the Bank of England. And he, he has put the Alliance together, together with some other people.

These other banks joined it.

Mr. BURCHETT. Yes.

Mr. KERRY. They joined it without any discussion.

Mr. BURCHETT. Reclaiming my time, though. After the Alliance, and regardless of what the Bank of England did, your office, either you or any representative of your office, did you in your efforts to promote the climate finance agenda of the Administration provide a term sheet to any of the banks?

Mr. KERRY. No.

Mr. BURCHETT. If not, if the banks are changing their allocational—allocation of capital on a voluntary basis, why are you even engaging with these institutions?

Mr. KERRY. Well, we were—what happened is, just to get at it directly, one of the banks actually reached out to me. They came to me and said, we believe it would be a great public thing if we were to allocate a certain amount of funding—and they had a very significant amount—to climate-related investment.

And I said, whoa, that is fantastic. I think it is great.

And other banks who I knew were already engaged in some of this—

Mr. BURCHETT. My time has expired. But the fact is simply—

Chairman MEEKS. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. BURCHETT [continuing]. If they have felt pressure from your office.

Chairman MEEKS. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. KERRY. All we did, all we did—

Chairman MEEKS. The gentleman's time has expired.

Let me thank all. That concludes all of the questioning for today as we hit our stopping point.

Mr. STEUBE. Mr. Chairman.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. Chairman, I am happy to take some questions for the record if people wanted to put some in. I could do that.

Mr. STEUBE. Mr. Chairman, I have a point of parliamentary inquiry.

Chairman MEEKS. Go ahead.

Mr. STEUBE. We have a 5-minute rule on this committee and in Congress. And Mr. Levin, Ms. Houlahan, Mr. Malinowski, Ms. Jacobs, Manning, Costa, Vargas are all Democrats who were denied their ability under the 5-minute rule to ask questions today.

On the Republic side, Mr. Green, Mr. Barr got yielded time but did not get his full 5 minutes, myself, Mr. Meuser, Ms. Tenney, Mr. Pfluger got yielded a minute but was denied otherwise his 5 minutes, Ms. Malliotakis, Mrs. Meijer—Mr. Meijer, Jackson and Kim were all denied their ability under the 5-minute rule to question former Secretary, the Envoy.

Also, we were also cutoff under Secretary Blinken. By the time they got to me we only had 3 minutes. This committee has subpoena authority. So, my question and my inquiry would be when we are bringing Members from the Administration, all of those Members that I just named all got denied their ability to represent their districts and ask Mr. Kerry questions because he has to leave and do other things.

So, I do not understand why Members of the Administration do not feel like it is appropriate to schedule their time when they request—you have requested them to come, and come to this hearing and give opportunity to only, I do not know what the number is, but half of the Members of this committee to ask questions.

What I would ask moving forward, is it the Chair's intention to, one, when we bring Members of the Administration here that they are going to be here for ample time, to not be denied the 5-minute rule under the rules of this committee and this Congress to have their ability to ask questions.

Chairman MEEKS. Yes. It has been the tradition of this committee, and we will continue. We have this Administration here, under any Administration, whether it was this Administration, the prior Administration, since the time that I have been here that

Members from the Administration come and give us and accept the time limits which we have, generally we have. Sometimes there is unlimited time. Other times, as today, we knew that there was a hard stop at 12:30.

Mr. STEUBE. Was that—

Chairman MEEKS. Part of the reasons why I was strict with the time was to get as many Members to testify, to ask their questions as possible.

Mr. STEUBE. Well, we weren't told, as a member of this committee we weren't told ahead of time that he was leaving at 12:30.

Chairman MEEKS. Well, it had to be. It happened with past Administrations.

Mr. KERRY. Congressman, I will be happy to make an appointment with you to come up and have a chat with you for more than 5 minutes. If you want to have a talk, I am happy to do it.

Mr. STEUBE. Well, I think it is important to do it in front of the American people so that they get to hear your responses to the questions made.

Chairman MEEKS. And let me just to that, and I am sure that the Secretary will have ample opportunity to come back at a time, and maybe we will start then from the bottom of the row and come up. So, and trying to be in all fairness for another time.

So, I understand your frustration, particularly all of us used to be down at the bottom of the line at one point. That is now taking place, so that is the tradition that is happening in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Thirty seconds to close. I know he has got to go.

Go ahead.

Mr. MCCAUL. Well, Secretary, thanks for being here. And just let me say I think, Chairman, we heard from my side and your side that China is going to be paramount in the success of your negotiations.

And good luck catching your flight, sir.

Chairman MEEKS. Let me thank the witness. I know he has to catch a commercial flight headed over to Europe.

But I want to close the record by saying that climate change is no longer a crisis on the horizon, it is an existential threat that will displace populations, imperil economies, fuel conflict, and forever change our planet. America cannot singlehandedly overcome climate change alone, but we can, however, lead the international community into collective action.

My first trip as a Member of Congress 23 years ago was not anywhere abroad, but far away to Alaska. And me, a boy from Queens more accustomed to riding the subways of New York, took three flights on even smaller planes to learn about the environment, energy, the Arctic, and our beautiful country. It changed my life and connected issues in Queens to Anchorage while showing me what that will cost our children and our grandchildren—and I have two—if we do not act.

We have a duty to be responsible stewards of our environment and which is God's gift to us. And I say this as Chairman of this committee, I am immensely proud of the seriousness with which the new Administration has approached this challenge.

And I want to thank Special Envoy Kerry for his expert testimony today on the path ahead. We are in good hands with his leadership and the leadership of President Joe Biden.

And I also want to thank Ranking Member McCaul for his partnership with me, as always, on conducting in the manner we have moved this hearing and this committee together. I really thank you and appreciate you for your service, sir.

Mr. MCCAUL. Thank you very much.

Chairman MEEKS. I want to thank all of the Members of the Foreign Affairs Committee for their participation today.

And with that, this hearing is now adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:39 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

APPENDIX

**FULL COMMITTEE HEARING NOTICE
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6128**

Gregory W. Meeks (D-NY), Chair

May 12, 2021

TO: MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

You are respectfully requested to attend an OPEN hearing of the Committee on Foreign Affairs to be held in Room 2172 of the Rayburn House Office Building. Pursuant to H. Res. 8, Members who wish to participate remotely may do so via Cisco WebEx. The hearing is available by live webcast on the Committee website at <https://foreignaffairs.house.gov/>.

DATE: Wednesday, May 12, 2021
TIME: 10:00 a.m., EDT
LOCATION: 2172 Rayburn House Office Building
SUBJECT: Driving a Global, Whole-of-Society Response to Climate Action
WITNESS: The Honorable John Kerry
Special Presidential Envoy for Climate
U.S. Department of State

By Direction of the Chair

The Committee on Foreign Affairs seeks to make its facilities accessible to persons with disabilities. If you are in need of special accommodations, please call 202/225-5021 at least four business days in advance of the event, whenever practicable. Questions with regard to special accommodations in general (including availability of Committee materials in alternative formats and assistive listening devices) may be directed to the Committee.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
MINUTES OF FULL COMMITTEE HEARING

Day Wednesday Date 05/12/2021 Room 2172 RHOB

Starting Time 10:03 a.m. Ending Time 12:39 p.m.

Recesses 0 (to) (to) (to) (to) (to) (to)

Presiding Member(s)

Chairman Gregory W. Meeks

Check all of the following that apply:

Open Session ☒

Electronically Recorded (taped) ☒

Executive (closed) Session ☐

Stenographic Record ☒

Televised ☒

TITLE OF HEARING:

Driving a Global, Whole-of-Society Response to Climate Action

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

See attached.

NON-COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

HEARING WITNESSES: Same as meeting notice attached? Yes ☒ No

(If "no", please list below and include title, agency, department, or organization.)

STATEMENTS FOR THE RECORD: *(List any statements submitted for the record.)*

SFR - Connolly

IFR - Wagner

QFR - Meeks, Steube, Sires, Jackson, Titus, Y. Kim, Houlahan

TIME SCHEDULED TO RECONVENE _____

or

TIME ADJOURNED 12:39 p.m.


Full Committee Hearing Coordinator

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

FULL COMMITTEE ATTENDANCE

<i>PRESENT</i>	<i>MEMBER</i>
X	Gregory W. Meeks, NY
X	Brad Sherman, CA
X	Albio Sires, NJ
X	Gerald E. Connolly, VA
X	Theodore E. Deutch, FL
X	Karen Bass, CA
X	William Keating, MA
X	David Cicilline, RI
X	Ami Bera, CA
X	Joaquin Castro, TX
X	Dina Titus, NV
X	Ted Lieu, CA
X	Susan Wild, PA
X	Dean Phillips, MN
X	Ilhan Omar, MN
X	Colin Allred, TX
X	Andy Levin, MI
X	Abigail Spanberger, VA
X	Chrissy Houlahan, PA
X	Tom Malinowski, NJ
X	Andy Kim, NJ
X	Sara Jacobs, CA
X	Kathy Manning, NC
X	Jim Costa, CA
X	Juan Vargas, CA
X	Vicente Gonzalez, TX
X	Brad Schneider, IL

<i>PRESENT</i>	<i>MEMBER</i>
X	Michael T. McCaul, TX
X	Christopher H. Smith, NJ
X	Steve Chabot, OH
X	Joe Wilson, SC
X	Scott Perry, PA
X	Darrell Issa, CA
X	Adam Kinzinger, IL
X	Lee Zeldin, NY
X	Ann Wagner, MO
X	Brian J. Mast, FL
X	Brian K. Fitzpatrick, PA
X	Ken Buck, CO
X	Tim Burchett, TN
X	Mark Green, TN
X	Andy Barr, KY
X	Greg Steube, FL
X	Dan Meuser, PA
X	Claudia Tenney, NY
X	August Pfluger, TX
X	Nicole Malliotakis, NY
X	Peter Meijer, MI
X	Ronny Jackson, TX
X	Young Kim, CA
X	Maria Elvira Salazar, FL

STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD FROM REPRESENTATIVE CONNOLLY

Statement for the Record from Representative Gerald E. Connolly
"Driving a Global, Whole-of-Society Response to Climate Action"
House Foreign Affairs Committee
Wednesday, May 12, 2021

Across our country and around the globe, communities face an environmental crisis from climate change due to sea level rise, increased extreme weather incidents, and growing public health consequences. 10 percent of the world's population lives in low-lying coastal cities vulnerable to sea level rise. 44 countries, home to one third of the world's population, face high levels of water scarcity. Countries without sufficient access to clean water are at an increased risk of conflict over limited resources, face significant challenges in providing enough food for their population, and are unable to provide adequate sanitation services which can prompt the rapid spread of diseases like cholera, typhoid, and polio.

Climate change is already here. The global surface temperature continues to increase. 19 out of the 20 warmest years on record have occurred since 2000, with 2016 and 2020 tied as the warmest. Every decade we are losing 13 percent of Arctic ice. When I traveled to the Arctic, I saw firsthand the glaciers retreating, the associated impact on wildlife and talked to the scientists in Ny-Ålesund studying the devastating impacts of climate change on the Arctic. Climate experts have been sounding the alarm for years, warning of drastic consequences for billions of people if we don't act.

While sadly some still debate the existence of man-made climate change, the Department of Defense (DoD) has acknowledged the reality of its impact on our military posture and made sizeable investments to mitigate its harmful effects. According to a January 2019 DoD report, "the effects of a changing climate are a national security issue with potential impacts to DoD missions, operational plans, and installations." Of the 79 installations addressed in the report, two-thirds are vulnerable to recurrent flooding, more than one-half are vulnerable to drought, and about one-half are vulnerable to wildfires. Flooding linked to rising sea levels and changing tides is already impacting the Naval Station in Norfolk, Virginia where it floods even when it doesn't rain.

In response to these vulnerabilities, DoD incorporated climate resilience as a cross-cutting consideration in its planning and decision-making processes. Secretary Lloyd Austin established a high-level climate change working group and said that DoD will incorporate climate change into military planning and war-gaming. As President of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, I welcomed NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg signaling that climate change will be a major focus of our military alliance's planning.

On day one of his administration, President Biden got us back in the Paris Climate Agreement and to help restore our international leadership he named Secretary John Kerry as our nation's first Special Presidential Envoy for Climate and the first-ever Principal to sit on the National Security Council entirely dedicated to climate change. In this role, Secretary Kerry will seek to build international consensus around global climate action and restore U.S. leadership after four years of retreat and science denial. In April, the President convened a Leaders Summit on Climate with 40 world leaders where the U.S. set our new emissions target under the Paris Agreement, or nationally determined contribution (NDC), at a 50 to 52 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions below 2005 levels by 2030.

This goal is bold, but feasible with congressional action. Democrats have long agreed that we need bold action on climate but have continued to face obstruction. Meeting our new NDCs will require Congress to pass meaningful legislation like the American Jobs Plan to reinvest in sustainable infrastructure, create three million family-sustaining, union jobs, and get us to a carbon free energy supply by 2035. As co-chair of the Sustainable Energy and Environment Coalition (SEEC), I have been calling for a sustainable infrastructure plan and am pleased that the American Jobs Plan includes many of our priorities including a long-term extension of clean energy tax credits, a clean electricity standard, investments in clean energy research and development, and investments in home and commercial efficiency through the Weatherization Assistance Program. SEEC has also

fought for support for the U.S. offshore wind energy industry and we applaud the Biden administration's plan to catalyze this nascent industry.

But as the United States is responsible for 15 percent of global emissions, the work outside of our borders remains critical to combatting climate change. Ahead of the annual UN climate conference, the twenty-sixth Conference of the Parties (COP26), in Glasgow later this year, Secretary Kerry will continue working with our allies and adversaries to raise global climate ambition.

Most recently, the President signed an Executive Order to help staff our U.S. climate diplomacy efforts and operationalize the administration's commitment to address the global climate crisis. Congress must ensure that we are fully funding international energy, environment, and conservation programs so that we can help other countries and developing nations transition towards green energy.

The Biden administration has incorporated consideration of the climate crisis into its every decision. From creating the first ever Principal entirely dedicated to climate change to sit on the National Security Council to establishing a National Climate Task Force and a White House Office of Domestic Climate Policy, led by National Climate Advisor Gina McCarthy, to mobilize a whole-of-government approach to tackling the climate crisis, mitigating climate change has been a top priority since he took office. Furthermore, he has instructed the EPA to restore the Obama administration's Clean Car standards and halted new Federal oil and gas leases on public lands and waters, among other actions.

This year, carbon emissions are on track to increase by the second highest rate in history, but in just nine years from now we are supposed to be meeting our Paris goals. It is long past time that we kick into a higher gear. We have a small window of opportunity to implement legislative solutions to combat climate change and establish American dominance in clean energy technology. The Leaders' Summit on Climate and our new NDCs demonstrate this administration's commitment to American leadership on climate action, but Glasgow will be a moment of truth. It is time that the world start behaving like we are facing a global, existential threat, and I look forward to hearing from Secretary Kerry on how we are going to do that.

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

**Questions for the Record from Chairman Gregory W. Meeks
 “Driving a Global, Whole-of-Society Response to Climate Action”
 House Foreign Affairs Committee
 Wednesday, May 12, 2021**

Question:

“The Biden Administration has announced an ambitious climate agenda to galvanize international support for ratcheting up nationally-determined commitments on emissions targets in advance of COP-26 at Glasgow. How are G7 partners working together to get China, Russia, India, and other large emitters to play by the same rules and set equally ambitious targets that are measurable and meaningful? What opportunities are you pursuing in cooperation with the EU? What are the EU’s principal strategies to support the competitiveness of clean energy and other technologies?”

Answer:

SPE Kerry: The Biden Administration is working with all countries, especially major emitters, to increase climate ambition in advance of COP26. This includes engagement with the UK, as President of the COP, our G7 partners, and intensive bilateral discussions with major economies, including Brazil, China, India, and Indonesia. I engage regularly with relevant EU counterparts with respect to climate diplomacy issues, including with respect to galvanizing support for increasing climate action during the 2020s, as well as setting long-term net zero and other goals. The EU-U.S. Energy Council will continue to lead coordination on strategic energy issues, including decarbonization of the energy sector, energy security, and clean energy supply chains. The United States and EU plan to deepen cooperation on clean energy policies and revamp research collaboration, including through Mission Innovation and the Clean Energy Ministerial. The EU has been a leader in supporting policies and measures that have reduced costs for clean energy technologies and supporting sustainable finance mobilization for the global clean tech industry. With respect to transparency, it should be noted that the Paris Agreement provides a strong framework that covers all Parties; they must report, and be reviewed, using rigorous standards set out in the so-called Modalities, Procedures and Guidelines. This will allow us to clearly understand the progress of each Party in reducing its greenhouse gas emissions and in implementing/achieving its nationally determined contribution.

Question:

“Vulnerable communities across the world are already facing the severe adverse impacts of climate change through draught, crop failures, severe weather events, rising seas, and even a changing ocean chemistry. Historically marginalized communities will likely face the brunt of the impact in the coming years. What is your plan for ensuring that global efforts to combat climate change are equitable and inclusive as we transition to a green economy so that we do not leave these people behind?”

Answer:

SPE Kerry: Protecting especially vulnerable communities from the impacts of the climate crisis is foundational to our climate strategy. President Biden announced that the Administration will double U.S. funding for climate change and triple finance for climate adaptation from its peak levels in the Obama years by 2024. The State Department has launched a series of cooperative efforts through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the Department of Energy to support vulnerable island economies with energy self-sufficiency, early warning systems, and coastal resilience and will also support and bolster the Local2030 Islands Network. The Local2030 Network will connect U.S. island territories to island countries and territories around the world to exchange culturally relevant, island-specific solutions to the unique challenges faced by these countries.

The United States is integrating climate change, including work to increase adaptive capacity and responding to climate impacts, into all of our overseas diplomatic and development programs. For example, we supported strong G7 commitments on climate resilience, resulting in pledges to increase international finance dedicated to disaster risk insurance for vulnerable countries and support programs designed to help countries plan for and respond to climate impacts.

Question:

“Where can the business community best plug into climate change impacts so that disadvantaged communities are not left behind? Are there lessons learned on corporate social impact and climate change? Is the Administration looking to create a formal private sector track to further its efforts on climate?”

Answer:

SPE Kerry: A fair and inclusive framework for workers and communities around the world was included as part of the 2015 Paris Agreement and protecting disadvantaged communities from the impacts of the climate crisis is foundational to our climate strategy. The transition to a net zero economy must include a path to prosperity and resilience for all communities. The business community is integral to making this happen--creating jobs and training workers, incorporating climate risk into investment strategies and disclosures, and funding the innovative technology that will help us all adapt to the new realities climate change brings.

The Biden Administration actively engages companies and investors in the United States and around the world to address the economic and social impact of the movement to a green economy. I recently met CEOs and business leaders on the sidelines of the G7 to call for ambitious action ahead of COP26, and welcomed the news that over 400 investors called on governments on June 10 to develop plans for affected workers and communities. We have a team dedicated to working with the private sector to advance these efforts.

And, my office works closely with the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation (DFC) to coordinate support for the President's Climate Strategy. DFC is committed to striking

an important balance in its net zero plan to ensure that the U.S. Government can still support highly-developmental or strategic projects that would have a significant impact on livelihoods in some of the poorest and most remote places in the world. DFC has also recently invested in a number of loan portfolio guaranty funds that focus on the production of sustainable food products, sustainable land-use practices that generate carbon emission reductions, and clean energy.

Question:

“How do we mobilize sufficient international public and private financing for this effort, and what should the role of the United States be? What should be the balance between public and private sector funding for international climate finance? To what extent should public funding be based on finance mechanisms versus grants?”

Answer:

SPE Kerry: The Administration is embracing ambitious but attainable goals regarding the quantity of public climate finance provided by the United States, recognizing the urgency of the climate crisis and given the sharp drop in U.S. international climate finance during the FY 2018-2021 period. Understanding the need to re-establish U.S. leadership in international climate diplomacy, the United States intends to double, by 2024, our annual public climate financing for developing countries relative to what we were providing during the second half of the Obama-Biden Administration. Given the diverse needs in this space, grants, loans, equities, guarantees, and other tools will be deployed by U.S. agencies as needed – with the aim of leveraging substantial additional funding from partner governments, international agencies, and the private sector.

As the United States scales up its international climate finance, we must ensure greater impact through enhanced coordination among the various departments and agencies involved in providing or mobilizing this finance. Achieving greater impact will require a more strategic and coordinated use of the wide range of bilateral and multilateral channels, tools, and instruments available to the United States.

Question:

“What should be the role of debt swaps in addressing climate change? Should the United States encourage and support debt swaps as a means of promoting investment in clean energy, green technologies, adaptation, and resilience-building by developing countries?”

Answer:

SPE Kerry: Debt swaps have played a role in advancing environmental goals, including swaps under the U.S. Tropical Forest Conservation Act. Together with the Treasury Department, we are exploring whether debt swap mechanisms could help advance climate goals. We will continue to engage our international partners on this issue and will explore alternative options if standard debt-for-climate swaps prove impractical.

Question:

“The BUILD Act, which authorized the International Development Finance Corporation (DFC), prohibits providing development assistance to so-called high income countries. Given that many of these countries are also highly vulnerable to climate change, natural disasters, extreme weather events, and economic shocks—such as The Bahamas and other Caribbean countries that are now excluded from DFC funding—does the Administration support changing this restriction? Are we setting the right example when these countries say they are now left with only China for help?”

Answer:

SPE Kerry: The Development Finance Corporation (DFC) is focused on carrying out its Congressional mandate as laid out under the Better Utilization of Investments Leader to Development (BUILD) Act of 2018 to prioritize investment in low and lower middle-income countries. DFC investment in upper middle-income countries is restricted, with some limited exceptions, including for highly developmental projects that benefit the most poor and marginalized communities within those countries. In limited circumstances, as specifically authorized by Congress under the European Energy Security and Diversification Act of 2019, DFC can consider projects in high-income countries. Projects in high-income countries are otherwise prohibited. DFC is currently reviewing its policies for investments in upper middle-income countries to ensure alignment with the development mandate of the BUILD Act.

The Caribbean is particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, both in terms of sea level rise and hurricane intensity, and therefore is ripe for further investment in climate adaptation and resilience projects. Thirty percent of DFC’s portfolio is presently at work in Latin America and the Caribbean. DFC has engaged with stakeholders on the ground in the region – including in a recent town hall in Haiti. DFC has also recently sponsored a number of loan portfolio guarantees that focus on the production of sustainable food products, and that provide loans for sustainable land-use practices, including for those that generate carbon emission reductions.

Question:

“What is our policy at multinational development banks for supporting concessionary financing options to upper middle income and high-income countries that are vulnerable to climate change and extreme weather events? Many of these countries, including small island developing states, will need access to affordable financing options in order to adapt to, mitigate against, and build resilience to climate change? Should the United States support a flexible, risk-informed approach to international financing that looks to country vulnerability measures instead of income criteria only?”

Answer:

SPE Kerry: The Department of the Treasury, the Department of State, and other agencies are working with multilateral development banks to identify steps to enhance access to public and

private finance for climate mitigation and adaptation. This will include consideration of the impact that institutional policies have on accessibility and ensuring that policies and procedures are fit-for-purpose and do not pose an unnecessary burden. For example, The Island Led Resilience 2030 program will increase the capacity of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in the Pacific and Caribbean regions to better integrate climate data in resilience and sustainable development planning. President Biden's Interim National Security Strategic Guidance affirmed that the United States will help its partners around the world adapt to the effects of climate change, and, SIDS have identified climate change and natural disasters as the greatest threat to their national security, sovereignty, and prosperity.

Question:

"To address climate change quickly and limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius, the Biden Administration has announced an ambitious net zero emissions reduction target by 2050. What is the Administration's position on the role of existing nuclear power plants, new nuclear power plants, and advanced nuclear power, including small modular reactors, in order to achieve United States and global clean energy objectives? What should the role of the United States be in helping other countries pursue nuclear power? What are the Administration's plans for international nuclear energy cooperation, including in promoting safe and secure use of this technology?"

Answer:

SPE Kerry: The Biden-Harris Administration supports nuclear energy – whether existing, new or advanced technologies – as a key tool for meeting emissions reduction targets. In the American Jobs Plan, President Biden has outlined a plan to establish the United States as a leader in climate science, innovation, and R&D. This includes a request for \$15 billion to be used for demonstration projects for climate R&D priorities, including advanced nuclear energy technologies. Furthermore, President Biden aims to use the purchasing power of the federal government to drive innovation and clean energy production in critical clean energy technologies, such as advanced nuclear reactors, to create high-paying jobs and reinvigorate local economies.

As part of the Leaders' Summit on Climate, the Administration launched the Foundational Infrastructure for the Responsible Use of Small Modular Reactor Technology (FIRST) Program with an initial \$5.3 million investment. This program will support capacity-building efforts in partner countries to enable them to benefit from advanced nuclear technologies and achieve their clean energy goals under the highest standards of nuclear security, safety, and nonproliferation.

Further, the International Energy Agency (IEA) tells us that we will need to innovate and commercialize many new clean energy technologies to achieve our 2050 goals. Nuclear energy can play a critical role in decarbonizing hard-to-abate sectors beyond electricity – for example, by producing cost-competitive, low-carbon hydrogen, industrial process heat, and water desalination to meet decarbonization goals, air quality standards, and clean water needs. The Biden administration remains committed to advancing nuclear energy as a solution to the climate crisis at home and abroad.

We know that many countries are identifying nuclear energy – whether expanding existing generation or building new nuclear energy programs – in developing ambitious climate plans. The United States stands ready to support those efforts in partnership with like-minded countries and the IEA as we head toward COP26 in Glasgow and beyond.

Question for the Record from Representative Greg Steube
“Driving a Global, Whole-of-Society Response to Climate Action”
House Foreign Affairs Committee
Wednesday, May 12, 2021

Question:

“Several reputable media outlets revealed a three-hour audio tape on April 25 that it obtained from Iran, in which Iranian Foreign Minister Javid Zarif mentions that you have been passing classified information regarding Israeli military activity, specifically regarding 200 Israeli airstrikes in Syria, and that he was astonished you shared this information.

I signed on to a letter to President Biden raising this concern and to order Attorney General Merrick Garland to open an investigation into this allegation – before more classified information with more adversaries like China or Russia is shared.

- In response to Mr. Zeldin’s questions, you stated that you had met with Iranian Foreign Minister Javid Zarif 4 (four) times during the Trump administration. What were those meetings regarding?
- Where did those meetings take place? Who else was present at these meetings?
- Did you or anyone in your family receive any compensation or expect to receive any compensation from any party for your meeting with Zarif? If so, please detail the terms of the compensation.
- Did you or anyone in your family receive any personal financial benefit or expect to receive any personal financial benefit from your meetings with Zarif? If so, please describe in detail.
- Did you discuss any corporation or entity in which you have a financial interest with Zarif? If so, please detail.
- During the period of 2017-2021, were you ever compensated by any entity to lobby or influence foreign governments?
- Outside of expected or received compensation or financial benefits, what were your motivations for meeting with Zarif?
- Do you believe your meeting with Zarif resulted in a strengthened relationship between the United States and Israel? If so, please detail including specific examples.
- Do you believe your meeting with Zarif resulted in a strengthened relationship between the United States and Iran? If so, please detail including specific examples.
- What other foreign leaders did you meet with during the Trump administration and when did those occur and what was discussed?
- Is it appropriate for a former Secretary of State to meet with the foreign minister of the leading state sponsor of terrorism?
- Would you like it if Pompeo went and talked to China in the middle of your negotiations with them?
- Did you ever discuss President Trump’s maximum pressure campaign with Zarif? Did you ever imply that if a Democrat was elected president that you would reenter the JCPOA, thus weakening the Trump maximum pressure campaign?
- This inappropriateness in your communications with Zarif was sabotaging the Trump/Pompeo diplomacy. Why do you have any credibility in negotiating with our adversaries or representing the U.S. interests?”

Answer:

SPE Kerry: As I noted during my appearance before the committee, the suggestion by Minister Zarif – that I shared information with him about Israeli military operations in Syria – is unequivocally false. Such a conversation never took place, either during my time as Secretary of State or subsequently. I have always protected and promoted U.S. national security interests. Over the course of 4 years as a Naval Officer, 28 years in the Senate, 6 years on the Intelligence Committee, 4 years as Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and 4 years as Secretary of State, no one ever raised any issues about my handling of classified information. I am proud of my record of support for Israel and its citizens, and I have great appreciation for the importance and sanctity of classified information.

The handful of meetings I had with Minister Zarif after I left office occurred on the margins of international gatherings, including the Munich Security Conference and the Oslo Peace Forum. During those meetings, I encouraged Minister Zarif to continue to abide by the terms of the JCPOA, which, at the time, was consistent with U.S. policy. My conversations with Minister Zarif took place when the U.S. was still a party to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), and prior to U.S. withdrawal from it in May 2018.

I received no compensation or any other financial benefit from any of these meetings; nor did my family; nor did I discuss any personal financial interests. The topics of the meetings were confined to foreign policy matters, given that the meetings took place at public foreign policy events. Such interactions are routine at conferences of this type and wholly within the bounds of the law.

Questions for the Record from Representative Albio Sires
“Driving a Global, Whole-of-Society Response to Climate Action”
House Foreign Affairs Committee
Wednesday, May 12, 2021

Question:

“The Caribbean has been extremely vulnerable to extreme weather events such as hurricanes. The U.S. Agency for International Development is already helping to strengthen climate resilience across the region, but early predictions for this year’s hurricane season forecast above average storm activity in the Atlantic.”

Answer:

SPE Kerry: USAID is developing a new regional Caribbean Resilience Initiative (CRI) with the purpose of enhancing island disaster recovery and resilience and to assist the Caribbean region in adapting to, and mitigating the effects of, climate change. The State Department leads the U.S.-Caribbean Resilience Partnership (USCRP), an interagency program to support disaster preparedness, aid climate adaptation, and enhance resilience regionally. USAID is part of this interagency program. The Caribbean Resilience Initiative complements USAID’s current bilateral and regional work on building resilience to climate change, as well as the work done by other agencies, donors and governments. The Department and USAID are working with Caribbean Islands’ consortium of higher education institutions and other regional stakeholders to design and determine the opportunities for the largest impact on reliance for this new initiative.

USAID is also helping Caribbean nations build back better from natural disasters by working to bolster the resilience of the energy sector through the five-year \$25 million Caribbean Energy Initiative. USAID supports building disaster resilience by supporting the capacities for preparation for, and recovery from, natural disasters in the Caribbean region including for the Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology and the Caribbean Disaster Risk Reduction Program. In support of disaster risk financing, USAID is collaborating with Jamaica and other donors to launch financial instruments that mitigate or transfer the costs of responding to and recovering from natural disasters. USAID and the World Bank are now supporting the establishment of a catastrophe bond to help defray the public costs of natural disasters. Additionally, USAID/Jamaica recently launched a \$4 million Global Development Alliance with U.S. and Jamaican firms that will strengthen energy sector resilience.

Question:

“How will you work with the DFC on the selection of climate-focused investment projects, especially in Latin America and the Caribbean, where climate change poses serious risks?”

Answer:

SPE Kerry: The Office of the Special Presidential Envoy for Climate has frequent contact with the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation (DFC) and looks forward to continuing

further coordination to support the President's Climate Strategy. Roughly thirty percent of DFC's portfolio is presently at work in Latin America and the Caribbean. The Caribbean is particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, both in terms of sea level rise and hurricane intensity, and therefore is ripe for further investment in climate adaptation and resilience projects. DFC is engaging with stakeholders on the ground – including in a recent town hall in Haiti. DFC has also recently invested in a number of loan portfolio guaranty funds that focus on the production of sustainable food products, sustainable land-use practices that generate carbon emission reductions, and clean energy.

Question:

“Many Caribbean countries are excluded from DFC funding due to their relatively high income levels, but some of these countries have specifically requested DFC funding to help build climate resilience. Can this restriction be reconsidered for some of our allies in the Caribbean and South America?”

Answer:

SPE Kerry: DFC is focused on carrying out its Congressional mandate as laid out under the Better Utilization of Investments Leader to Development (BUILD) Act of 2018 to prioritize investment in low and lower middle-income countries. DFC investment in upper middle-income countries is restricted to highly developmental projects that benefit the most poor and marginalized communities within those countries. DFC is currently reviewing its policies for investments in upper middle-income countries to ensure alignment with the development mandate of the BUILD Act.

The Caribbean is particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Roughly thirty percent of DFC's portfolio is presently at work in Latin America and the Caribbean. DFC is engaging with stakeholders on the ground – including in a recent town hall in Haiti. DFC has recently sponsored a number of loan portfolio guarantees that focus on the production sustainable food products, and that provide loans for sustainable land-use practices, including for those that generate carbon emission reductions.

Questions for the Record from Representative Ronny Jackson
“Driving a Global, Whole-of-Society Response to Climate Action”
House Foreign Affairs Committee
Wednesday, May 12, 2021

Question:

“It seems to me that quite a bit of hypocrisy exists in the Biden Administration’s climate change policy so far. The Paris Accords will cause American’s energy costs to spike, while China and Russia can continue as they wish with more lenient and unenforceable standards.

Furthermore, President Biden canceled the Keystone XL Pipeline, immediately causing tens of thousands of American citizens to lose their jobs. Meanwhile, President Biden is not working to combat Russian malign intentions with their Nord Stream 2 Pipeline project.

Special Envoy Kerry, what is the Biden Administration’s justification for canceling the Keystone XL pipeline, which creates jobs for Americans, but refusing to implement all required sanctions on the Nord Stream 2 pipeline to prevent its completion?”

Answer:

SPE Kerry: The world faces a climate crisis that must be met with action on a scale and at a speed to avoid setting the world on a dangerous, potentially catastrophic, climate trajectory. Leaving the Keystone XL pipeline permit in place would not be consistent with the Administration’s economic and climate imperatives.

The Administration intends to combat the climate crisis with an ambitious plan to build back better, designed to both reduce harmful emissions and create good clean energy jobs.

Addressing climate change is also an economic opportunity and the Administration intends to position the United States to capitalize on that opportunity. As countries around the world make increasingly ambitious commitments to address climate change, they will need to invest heavily in the clean energy technologies that will enable the necessary reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. By investing in R&D and the manufacturing sector at home, the United States can foster the production of these technologies at home, which can help advance our domestic climate goals and those of countries around the world. Additionally, this investment and growth in clean energy technologies will serve as a significant job creator within the United States.

The United States continues to oppose the Nord Stream 2 pipeline project. NS2 is a Kremlin geopolitical project that threatens European and Ukrainian energy security and is a bad deal for Germany, Ukraine, and Europe more broadly. Unfortunately, financing, planning, and building of NS2 was near completion prior to President Biden’s inauguration.

The Administration’s support for European energy security and the security of Ukraine, frontline Central and Eastern European countries, and NATO Allies and EU partners is unwavering.

Our May 19 actions imposed sanctions on several entities under the Protecting Europe's Energy Security Act (PEESA), as amended, and identified a number of NS2-related vessels for sanctions. This is the largest action taken against the Nord Stream 2 project to date and demonstrates our strong commitment to opposing this pipeline. The Department continues to examine potentially sanctionable activities and to make clear that entities risk sanctions if they are involved in Nord Stream 2.

Question:

"I am also concerned about the lack of accountability measures when it comes to the Paris Accords or other international agreements. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) continues to blatantly violate its bilateral commitments to the U.S., its World Trade Organization obligations, international maritime law, U.N. sanctions on North Korea, and countless other international commitments. Can you cite any evidence or prior examples to support the argument that the CCP is interested in keeping its international commitments, or that it is capable of doing so?"

Answer:

SPE Kerry: China's failure to uphold certain past international commitments is a factor in how we develop our approach to China. We are clear-eyed and will keep this in mind as we deal with Beijing going forward. We will conduct results-oriented diplomacy with China on shared challenges, such as climate change.

As is known, the climate crisis does not get successfully addressed without significant additional action by China. The PRC has taken some steps in the right direction but its actions to date are insufficient to keep a 1.5 degree C limit on global temperature increase within reach, and it remains on an emissions trajectory that is not plausible with respect to its own 2060 carbon neutrality goal.

I concluded a joint statement with my Chinese counterpart in April that reflects, among other things, a work plan that includes addressing these issues. We will continue to press Beijing, pursuant to that joint statement and otherwise, to significantly raise its climate ambition during this critical decade.

**Questions for the Record from Representative Dina Titus
 “Driving a Global, Whole-of-Society Response to Climate Action”
 House Foreign Affairs Committee
 Wednesday, May 12, 2021**

Question:

“There are many topics that the Parties may address at COP26—for example, Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to abate greenhouse gas emissions, transparency requirements, adaptation, and climate finance. If you had to choose, what do you believe would be the greatest accomplishment coming out of conference that would make the meetings a success and please explain why that topic is so critical in the fight against climate change?”

Answer:

SPE Kerry: On the road to COP26 in Glasgow, beyond working with other Parties to complete the so-called Paris Agreement “rulebook” (i.e., implementing guidelines under various articles of the Agreement), we are focusing on making as much progress as possible in raising global climate ambition so as to keep a 1.5 degree C limit on global average temperature rise within reach. Increases in ambition can be reflected in numerous ways, including net zero strategies with respect to the mid-century timeframe, strengthened nationally determined contributions with respect to 2030, and implementing other actions and decarbonization-related initiatives. At the same time, national governments cannot address the crisis alone. We are also engaging with other partners – from the private sector to subnational governments to non-governmental organizations – to stand up the types of multi-stakeholder initiatives we need to advance climate action in critical sectors.

Question:

“Some nations are falling short or actively fighting compliance with international agreements that commit nations from all corners of the globe to fight climate change. These holdouts are potentially limiting the global efforts to reduce the most harmful climate change effects. What role should the United States play in incentivizing nations that may not be in full compliance of multinational agreements on climate to step up their commitment? What diplomatic tools does the United States have at its disposal?”

Answer:

SPE Kerry: This Administration has been extremely focused on working with other countries, including major economies, to strengthen their implementation of the Paris Agreement through enhancing the ambition of the nationally determined contributions, taking on net zero goals, and engaging in other actions and initiatives aimed at keeping a 1.5 degree C temperature limit within reach. These discussions encompass all levels of government, from engagement between technical teams to President Biden’s Leaders Summit on Climate. Our engagement is not limited to actions under the Paris Agreement. Rather, we are also pursuing enhanced ambition under other multilateral fora (including the International Maritime Organization, the International Civil Aviation Organization, and the Arctic Council), as well as promoting the importance of the

nexus between climate change and ocean-based solutions. We have also worked with partners to consider how sectoral targets, for example around renewable energy or deforestation, can contribute to enhanced mitigation. Our teams are looking at the finance and investment needs associated with these goals, and how collectively we might help meet these needs – through bilateral support, multilateral development banks, and private sector investments.

Question for the Record from Representative Young Kim
“Driving a Global, Whole-of-Society Response to Climate Action”
House Foreign Affairs Committee
Wednesday, May 12, 2021

Question:

“I believe the United States and other developed nations should also play an active role in helping developing nations move towards reducing emissions. The Development Finance Corporation in particular has taken the lead in setting new benchmarks for climate investment and committed to achieve a net zero investment portfolio by 2040, and to make at least one-third of all its new investments have a climate nexus beginning in 2023.

Another way in which we can assist developing nations is by exchanging our technology and expertise in the nuclear and LNG sectors and sponsoring projects seeking investment abroad.

Secretary Kerry, will you work with the DFC to coordinate and finance projects like these abroad and leverage new energy investments to help developing nations secure a more sustainable energy future?”

Answer:

SPE Kerry: The Office of the Special Presidential Envoy for Climate is working closely with the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation (DFC) and looks forward to continuing further coordination to support the President’s Climate Strategy. DFC is committed to striking an important balance in its net zero plan to ensure that the U.S. Government can still support highly-developmental or strategic projects that would have a significant impact on livelihoods in some of the poorest and most remote places in the world.

Question for the Record from Representative Chrissy Houlahan
“Driving a Global, Whole-of-Society Response to Climate Action”
House Foreign Affairs Committee
Wednesday, May 12, 2021

Question:

“As you know, climate change has a disparate impact on women and other vulnerable populations. How does the Biden Administration’s strategy for addressing climate change incorporate gender analysis and consider the needs of women and girls? How are other countries thinking about gender as it relates to climate change?”

Answer:

SPE Kerry: The Biden Administration recognizes that the climate crisis and gender equality are inextricably linked. Women and girls are more likely to be endangered in the event of a climate-related disaster and experience an increased risk of gender-based violence, loss of educational opportunities, and reduced access to health care as a result of or in response to climate impacts. Simultaneously, evidence increasingly demonstrates that empowering women politically, economically, and socially to address climate change is one of the most effective means to ensuring long-term solutions for sustainable growth and climate-positive policies that benefit women, girls, and their communities.

Women and girls are often the leaders of community and grassroots efforts to combat climate change and environmental degradation. The Biden-Harris Administration promotes inclusive access to leadership opportunities, which will increase women's access to finance and resources, and build their capacities to meaningfully participate in decision-making in the public and private sectors. Empowering women and girls to respond to the climate crisis will ensure that the design and implementation of climate change solutions will be more effective, benefit more people, and increase global resilience to environmental shocks. In addition, it enables them to be better positioned to seize economic opportunities in the green economy through entrepreneurship and job creation.

The Biden Administration is working to continue to empower women and girls, including those from marginalized communities, to build community resilience and deploy innovative climate solutions, such as in climate-adjacent sectors like agriculture, energy, and technology. In coordination with the State Department and other U.S. government agencies, the White House Gender Policy Council is leading efforts to advance gender equality across U.S. policy and programs, including through climate policy.