

THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S CLIMATE AGENDA:
A BUDGET OVERVIEW BY THE SPECIAL
PRESIDENTIAL ENVOY FOR CLIMATE

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND
ACCOUNTABILITY

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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CONTENTS

| | Page |
|---|------|
| WITNESSES | |
| Kerry, John, Special Presidential Envoy for Climate | 9 |
| ADDITIONAL INFORMATION SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD | |
| Washington Examiner article, "John Kerry's family sold private jet after criticism over environmental impact" | 42 |
| Fox News article, "John Kerry slammed for 'shameful' shadow diplomacy after admitting to meetings with Iran" | 46 |
| APPENDIX | |
| Hearing Notice | 64 |
| Hearing Minutes | 65 |
| Hearing Attendance | 66 |
| RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD | |
| Responses to questions submitted for the record | 67 |

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PRESIDENTIAL ENVOY FOR CLIMATE
Thursday, July 13, 2023**

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND
ACCOUNTABILITY,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:02 a.m., in room 210, House Visitor Center, Hon. Brian Mast (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Mr. MAST. The Subcommittee on Oversight and Accountability will come to order. The purpose of this hearing is to examine the State Department's climate policy and the budget of the Special Presidential Envoy for Climate's Office. I now recognize myself for an opening statement.

As we examine the State Department's climate agenda and budget, we are joined today by former Secretary of State John Kerry. Thank you for being here today. First ever Special Presidential Envoy for Climate.

Mr. Kerry, you're sitting in a newly created position, but from all of the research that I've done, in 2 years you've largely managed to avoid any real oversight or accountability in that position. Now, my community cares about this as an issue. We sit on Florida's east coast. We've felt the consequences of environmental disaster. I'm a member of the Bipartisan Climate Solutions Caucus, a co-chair of the Roosevelt Conservation Caucus, and I believe that it's critical that we do work to defend our environment, clean air, clean water, public health. Protecting our environment is important.

I do not know a person literally in Congress that doesn't believe that protecting our environment is important. But as you and I have discussed, and I've said this to you before, you cannot worry about the efficiency of your home if you cannot make rent, if you cannot make your mortgage payment. You cannot worry about the emissions of your automobile if you cannot make the payment on your car.

You have to worry about the way America is electrified as we look to the future to make sure that our electric grid can support the policies that are being pushed. And it seems in many cases like you are hell-bent on enacting policies not by votes through the House of Representatives and the Senate, but by fiat.

Secretary Blinken has said that your leadership will be indispensable in weaving climate into the fabric of everything we do at

State Department. Personally, I do not believe that climate should be the focus of every part of diplomacy, which is the job of the State Department, and I believe that we probably disagree about that. But, regardless, it is clear to me that you, even having served as a long-time Senator, you are willing to push the envelope of what it means to live in a constitutional republic in order to get the agenda that the Administration sees enacted. And no matter how somebody watching this hearing feels about climate change, I believe that that should be of large concern to them.

This is my chief concern about your office. You're serving on the National Security Council, but you're not confirmed by the Senate. In your previous role as Secretary of State you unilaterally entered our Nation into some of the largest agreements, like the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, the Iran Nuclear Deal; unilaterally bound Americans to set standards that would dramatically increase their cost of living or affect their way of life in the Paris Climate Accords.

And I believe that speaks volumes about your overarching philosophy as it applies to governing, and what you're doing now as what some people have called the climate czar. Mr. Kerry, nobody voted for you in this body. It seems like, once again, the rules do not apply to the President's inner circle. He has called you his best buddy.

That brings me to my second concern that I want to speak about today, and it's just basic levels of transparency, the mechanisms of transparency in government that your office has not participated in to be accountable to the people. Every time you travel to a climate summit, or King Charles' coronation, or the wedding of the Crown Prince of Jordan, you're supposed to document the carbon emissions generated by your trip. Your office has failed to do so.

You are supposed to produce an organizational chart of your office. Your office only did so when there was a lawsuit filed, and filled in none of the names of the people that work in your office. You ignore most congressional requests for documents. You have ignored those from the House Foreign Affairs Committee and the House Oversight Committee for months. You're supposed to respond to FOIA requests, but claim that it would take years to produce basic budgetary information, in some cases not willing to release it until 2024. You're supposed to be clear about the work that you do on behalf of the American people, but you do not have a landing page on the State Department's website.

I do not believe this is how you fulfill the White House's promise to bring transparency and truth back to government. And it is my assessment that you are afraid of the American people knowing exactly what it is that you are up to at places like the climate change conferences that you attend.

You are headed off to COP 28 soon. You've been to COP 27 and other summits, and purporting to represent the United States of America. But you're not representing the United States of America's people, in my opinion. I believe that you are representing a far-left, radical agenda. Those are my beliefs. But the truth is, because of the lack of transparency, no one really knows exactly what it is that you are representing.

So, with that, I am going to turn it over to my colleague, Ranking Member Crow—or I do not know if you want to turn it over to Mr. Meeks first or not, but I will turn it over to you for an opening statement, my friend.

Mr. CROW. Thank you, Chairman Mast. And thank you to our witness, Secretary Kerry, for appearing here today. It is safe to say that I have a very different view of your work in this subject than my friend Chairman Mast. I represent a district in Colorado, a State that has been shaped dramatically every year by changes to our climate. Climate crisis is real; there is no doubt about that; my constituents know that.

As we sit here right now, millions of Americans are dealing with extreme weather events that are causing terrible, terrible disasters across vast swathes of our country. I agree that issues of helping our constituents pay their mortgage is important, but it's hard to pay your mortgage if your house is underwater. It's hard to pay your electric bill if it's 110 degrees for weeks and weeks on end. And that is the reality that so many of our constituents, and so many Americans are facing.

The climate crisis is going to have profound impacts on our water supply, on drought conditions that increase the risk of destructive wildfires, and limit agricultural yields, and on infrastructure that's being damaged by heavy rains and extreme disasters every day. The growing reality for so many in Colorado is one increasingly familiar to those across the Nation.

Whether it be poor air quality from wildfire smoke, extreme heat, or massive flooding, the ramifications of climate change are widely felt. A changing climate has and will drive mass migration. It will exacerbate food insecurity, it will worsen health indicators, and it will challenge every government on Earth to adapt to extreme stress and the goods and services they need to deliver for their citizens.

This global problem then requires global solutions. Just as we have sat in this room and discussed the need to work with partners to counter Russian aggression, to compete with the PRC, and to provide aid across the world to those who need it, addressing climate relies on multilateral efforts perhaps more so than any other. Securing more ambitious commitments from countries around the world is only one part of the puzzle.

Our climate policies must also include the onshoring of supply chains for critical technologies, and reducing our reliance on fossil fuels. As an added benefit, these policies will drive economic growth, strengthen industry, and create new jobs in the process. These solutions are necessary because climate change stresses not one system, but all of them.

As a former Army Ranger, and in my work in Congress through the Foreign Affairs and Armed Services Committee and the Intel Committee, I've directly wrestled with the national security impact of our changing climate. That national security impact may be the resiliency of our Nation's bases, on our existing infrastructure to withstand rising sea levels and extreme weather events. The question is: are we resilient in ensuring that we can sustainably defend our Nation without delay or obstruction?

The instability that climate change drives can also create new national security challenges beyond our borders. How will we respond to the millions of people across the world who lack sufficient food, clean water, shelter, medical care, functioning infrastructure, safety from conflict, and reliable good governance?

The diplomacy that we need to meet these challenges head on requires that we lead by example. The absence of our leadership would leave an open door for other nations, including China, to fill in our stead. I am very encouraged by this Administration's efforts to recommit the United States to environmental protection and to bold, multilateral engagement.

The placement of the SPEC role at the cabinet level is a clear indicator to all that we are serious about making demonstrable gains on climate policy. The Administration's re-entry into the Paris Climate Accord, various executive orders on climate change, and review of environmental rollbacks sought in recent years show that we are pursuing evidence based policymaking across the Federal Government at home and abroad.

So I look forward to our witness speaking to these critical concerns and answering our questions to the best of his knowledge and ability.

And with that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MAST. Thank you, Ranking Member Crow. We're pleased to have the Chairman and Ranking Member of the full committee with us, and so I will now recognize Chairman McCaul for an opening statement.

Mr. MCCAUL. Thank you, Chairman Mast, for today's hearing. And let me say first, before I get into my statement, that I am working on a project, International Conservation Act. We have about ten billionaires that want to provide, in a very generous manner, money to help us with conservation, both wildlife conservation, fisheries from China, and the rainforest, which are the lungs of the planet. And this would be a two-to-one match with the USG. Those are productive things.

I think these self-imposed mandates that China doesn't have to follow really makes no sense to me at all. But I want to thank you, Secretary, for being here today. I know it's not always pleasant appearing before Congress, but you were a member of this—well, on the Senate side, you were a member this distinguished body for quite some time.

Let me just start talking about China. And I know you're preparing for a trip to China, as I understand it, is that correct, sir?

Mr. KERRY. Yes, sir.

Mr. MCCAUL. And as you know, we are in a global balance of power, competition, great power and competition. They've increased their aggression in the Indo-Pacific, especially toward Taiwan. I just came back from Taiwan 2 months ago, and I was greeted by an armada of battleships surrounding the island, an aircraft carrier, and seventy fighter jets conducting live fire exercises.

And then I was sanctioned the last day I was there as we departed Taiwan, and I say that not that I want any sympathy for that, other than to say it's getting very aggressive. China is getting very hostile in the Pacific, and we need to take this issue extremely

seriously. I hope you will talk to them about their aggression in the region as you talk to them about climate change.

I believe that they're the greatest threat to our national security. I think countering China in their malign agenda should be the top priority of the State Department, and I'm concerned the Administration is prioritizing their own sort of political agenda over this national security issue. When you look at China also, it's disturbing, they're not an honest broker when it comes to addressing emission reduction as you know.

They are held to a different standard than we are under the Paris Agreement, yet they're the world's largest emitter of greenhouse gases, and have shown no sign of relenting. They fire a coal plant up pretty much every day, if not week. And in the last few years their greenhouse emissions have exceeded those of the United States and all developing nations combined.

They are the No. 1 offender of polluting the planet. In fact, in 2021, after pledging to show, quote, the highest possible ambition to address climate change, they added the equivalent, going back to the coal plants, of 100 coal powered plants to their grid. The same year, China had a record of increases in emissions. And under the Paris Climate Accords as you know, sir, it allows the CCP to actually increase their emissions until 2030, while the United States and other economic powers are forced to cut them. This should be an agreement that applies equally to all, and not favoring China. They should not have most-favored nation status.

And shockingly, because China classifies itself—this is one that really gets me, Secretary—they classify themselves as a developing nation, right? They're the second greatest economic empire in the world, yet by United Nations standards they're a developing nation. So, what does that mean? That means they're given differential treatment in other international climate treaties. China's the second largest economy in the world; they're not a developing nation.

And that also entitles them to World Bank loans at low interest or zero interest that they use then to fund their Belt and Road Initiative where they get countries in a debt trap, rape their rare earth minerals, bring in their own workers, and then when they go into bankruptcy, guess who bails them out? The IMF, at the American taxpayer's expense.

I do not know how you can negotiate with the CCP when they're knowingly abusing these global systems to avoid purposefully their emissions. And why does the Administration continue to funnel so much taxpayer money to our greatest adversary with things like the U.N. Green Climate Fund when it's clear they have no interest in reducing their emissions?

Moreover, China controls 80 to 85 percent of the rare earth minerals needed to produce batteries, solar panels, and semiconductors. As you testified before this committee previously, Uyghur Muslims and ethnic minorities are forced to produce components for solar panels in the Xinjiang region of China. The Biden Administration, rightfully so, has classified their actions against the Uyghurs as genocide. Genocide. Yet, sir, when I asked you a question the last time you appeared before this committee—and I'll wait

until you're done with your little sidebar conversation, because it's important for you to hear this.

The last time you were here I asked you about the impact this genocide would have on your climate change agenda. And you implied well, quote, life is full of choices. End of quote. Well, when it comes to ending genocide, there are no tough choices. And the fact that you think that it's just a tough choice, and we're just going to have to let them do what they do is incredibly concerning. The United States always chooses human rights, human dignity, and human life.

I'm deeply concerned the Administration continues to engage with the CCP with no real results, or anything to show for it. I agree you have to talk to them. I have talked to Secretary Blinken. I encouraged him to engage in diplomacy with China, we have to talk to them, but we do not have to make concessions before we even get to the table.

Do you know that we stopped enforcing our sanctions against human rights violations just to get a meeting with Chairman Xi? Do you know that we stopped enforcing our export controls going to Huawei from this country just to get a meeting with Chairman Xi? That is not a way to negotiate.

And I want to raise one last thing. There is a man named Mark Swidan, he is a Texan, he has been held captive by the CCP for over a decade. He is innocent; he did not do anything wrong. He has been charged with fabricated charges of drug possession, and now he is scheduled to be executed by the Chinese Communist Party for doing nothing wrong. He will be executed if we do nothing to stop this.

I would implore you, sir, as you talk about climate, that you also bring up human rights violations, and the fact that an American citizen sitting in a Chinese prison marked for death by the CCP who will be executed soon if you, sir, and your Administration does nothing to help him. It is a dire situation. His family, his mother Catherine, I have talked to them, they simply want their son back home, and I pray that you can help return this man to the United States.

And with that, I yield back.

Mr. MAST. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I now recognize the Ranking Member of the full committee, Mr. Meeks.

Mr. MEEKS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Ranking Member Crow. I believe the title of this subcommittee hearing is "A Budget Overview by the Special Presidential Envoy for Climate," which is tremendously important because there's only one planet that we have. And if we are not focused on saving this planet, all of us, no matter where we are on the planet, are in peril.

And that is why I thank you, Secretary Kerry, for joining us, and for you and your team's consistent engagement with Congress, ensuring that we are informed and consulted on your work as special envoy. You have consistently come back to talk to Congress and demonstrated the importance of your work, and the necessity of the United States leading in this area and talking about the needs and concerns.

Because at times when you talk about our values, you talk about our budget. And this hearing is focused on the budget and the

needs of what we need to do to help save the planet. Now, last Congress when I became chair of this committee, one of my priorities was to make sure that we consider the issue of climate change as part of our broader foreign policy thinking.

Climate change and its effects are a national security issue, and it touches upon all aspects of our economy and society. I was immensely pleased to see the Biden Administration appoint especially you as Special Envoy based upon your long work in this area, whether it was your work in the U.S. Senate or your work as Secretary of State of this great country.

You and your Administration's work is critical domestically and internationally. And I along with most of the world was relieved to see the United States back at the table not only in climate negotiations, but also in many other areas of diplomacy like we just saw yesterday in NATO. Not calling NATO irrelevant anymore, as others have, but showing the importance and significance of us working together in a diplomatic form, staying together.

That is how Ukraine has been able to survive this long. Unity, leading, and bringing us back. Because the lack of American leadership, and the consequences of an America-first, America-alone agenda hurts our international standing. Not only is the United States back as a responsible global actor, but we're also leading again, including in the international climate space.

From rallying allies to address urgent adaptability issues, leveraging the private sector response, or working with like-minded partners to make sure our common values are protected. The United States is again leading the world. Even when it comes to curbing the emissions of the world's largest emitter, China, there are areas where we can and must cooperate as we have seen, and as your mission will continue to do.

We know that climate change, CO2 emissions, wildfires, etcetera, they have no borders, it is global. And addressing these issues is a herculean task, but this global problem requires global solutions.

Finally, let me be clear that I see your role as Special Envoy as critical to protecting and promoting American national security interests in a fast changing world. Domestic policy is directly linked to international policy in the climate space. The Congress played an important role here too by passing the bipartisan infrastructure bill, and the Inflation Reduction Act, which makes the single largest investment in climate and energy in American history.

How we prepare for the transition to a green economy will have ramifications for all Americans whether you're rich, whether you are poor, whether you fall within the middle class, whether you live in the east, whether you live in the west, whether you live in the north, whether you live in the south, or whether you live in middle America. We see the effects of climate change affecting everyone, and it will affect future generations.

So the United States can lead the way. And I conclude by saying thank you, Mr. Secretary, for your service, and I look forward to continuing to work with you and your team on addressing this critical challenge to save this place that we call Earth. It is the only place for all of human beings, whether you like someone or do not, we share this planet. If we do not save it, if we do not do the things now, then God help us all.

Thank you for your work, and I yield back.

Mr. MAST. I ask unanimous consent that the gentleman from Texas, August Pfluger, be allowed to sit on the dais and participate in today's hearing. Without objection, so ordered.

Other members of the committee are reminded that opening statements may be submitted for the record. We are pleased to have, as we have mentioned already, a distinguished witness before us today on this topic.

The Honorable John Kerry is the Special Presidential Envoy for Climate. Prior to his current position, Secretary Kerry was the 68th United States Secretary of State, from 2013 to 2017, and a Senator from Massachusetts from 1985 until 2013. Thank you for being here today, your full statement will be made a part of the record.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Kerry follows:]

**Statement of the Honorable John F. Kerry
Special Presidential Envoy for Climate
U.S. Department of State
Before the House Foreign Affairs Committee,
Subcommittee on Oversight & Accountability
July 13, 2023**

Thank you, Chairman Mast, Ranking Member Crow, and members of the Committee for inviting me here today to discuss the Biden-Harris Administration's Budget and commitment to lead the global effort to address the climate crisis.

I want to share with the Chairman and Ranking Member: I learned from my years on the Hill, and from colleagues who were also veterans, that our service in uniform helped all of us do our jobs and understand the challenges facing the country. This Committee in particular, with its focus on global threats and the great enterprise of building a safer world, benefits from your experience.

At home and around the world, one of the most existential and growing threats that impacts all of us is the climate crisis. This issue has been in front of the Congress for decades – and while significant progress was made in the 117th Congress, we still haven't done enough to address the threat.

You all see it and feel it – lives lost and communities upended by drought in Iowa, hurricanes in Florida, extreme flooding in California, New York, and Vermont, and record-breaking extreme temperatures across much of the United States.

The climate crisis is without a doubt a threat to our national security, and our military leaders have repeatedly termed it a "threat multiplier." General Anthony Zinni, the former Commander-in-Chief of the United

States Central Command, once said that without leadership to reduce emissions, “we will pay the price later in military terms. And that will involve human lives. There will be a human toll.”

Climate disruptions exacerbate competition over resources, amplify drivers of displacement in vulnerable communities, and require our military to increasingly support humanitarian relief efforts in the wake of disasters, at home and abroad. The climate crisis also increasingly threatens the extinction of precious biodiversity and weakening of marine ecosystems, on which so many American livelihoods depend.

This is one of the reasons the President’s Budget includes more than \$3 billion to implement the President’s Emergency Plan for Adaptation and Resilience (PREPARE). It aims to help more than half a billion people in developing countries adapt to and manage climate impacts, so they do not result in long-term instability. PREPARE does what America has always done best: it helps lift people around the world out of poverty through greater climate resilience so they can be fully participating members of the global community. These initiatives also reflect the fact that a dollar invested in adaptation can result in \$4-10 or more in economic benefits and in minimizing conflict.

We also know that most people will first experience impacts of the climate crisis through water, either too much or too little, and that we must work toward a water secure *and* climate-resilient world. The U.S. Department of State, Department of Defense, and U.S. Agency for International Development are advancing our global security by building on the White House Action Plan on Global Water Security released last year. Two billion people worldwide lack access to safe drinking water, and four billion people experience water scarcity for at least one month of the year – issues that contribute to instability and are exacerbated by increasing floods, unpredictable rainfall, and droughts.

Here at home, governors, mayors, taxpayers, and insurance companies experience the climate crisis acutely in our economy and in our pocketbooks because every extreme weather event comes with a bill – adding up to more than a trillion dollars in the last decade. To that end, the Administration has begun the process of developing a National Climate Resilience Framework. This framework will present a cohesive vision of what it means to be a climate-resilient nation, helping align efforts to strengthen preparedness in communities across the country.

Let me also note that despite the devastation of this crisis there is also a unique opportunity. Just as the climate crisis is human-made, so too are many of its solutions. And the solutions to this challenge are a once-in-a-generation economic opportunity. Take the Inflation Reduction Act: in less than a year, it has created more than 100,000 clean energy jobs across the country.

The Inflation Reduction Act and Bipartisan Infrastructure Law are also spurring multi-billion-dollar private sector investments that support our energy security in states like Georgia and Nevada, where new facilities will produce and recycle the batteries that will power the booming clean energy economy. These clean energy technologies represent a multi-trillion global future market opportunity – and the decisions and investments we make now will determine whether that future is led by American companies, American technologies, and American workers – or those of our competitors.

And around the world, we have the benefit of not just the power of our example, but the push of our diplomacy and investments. The President's 2024 Budget would fund agencies, like the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation (DFC), that make strategic investments that open new markets for the private sector and support

U.S. policy objectives. As just one example, DFC is providing debt financing for an American company, First Solar, to manufacture “thin film” solar panels free of polysilicon in India – diversifying energy supply chains with a key partner in South Asia, as First Solar invests more than \$1 billion to expand its U.S. production.

These are critical investments, and one element of my job has been to pair them with diplomatic efforts – because we can’t solve the global climate crisis alone. President Biden initiated America’s return to a position of leadership to address this crisis beginning on Day One when he signed the instrument to rejoin the Paris Agreement and later when he announced a U.S. target of reducing our emissions by 50-52 percent from 2005 levels in 2030.

As a result of the United States contributing to limiting global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees C, we’ve enhanced our ability to engage countries around the world, both bilaterally and multilaterally, including through the revived Major Economies Forum, to raise global climate ambition – and press for all major emitting countries to do their part. These efforts have borne fruit. Countries representing two-thirds of global GDP have stepped up with targets aligned with keeping 1.5 degrees C within reach.

We have tapped into the power of private capital through the Agricultural Innovation Mission for Climate (AIM4C) and the First Movers Coalition (FMC), which are both helping position American companies to lead on agricultural innovation and clean steel, cement, and more. Through the FMC, we’re galvanizing more than \$15 billion in purchasing commitments from 81 companies to scale innovation and investment in clean technologies.

We're also working with countries representing almost half of the world's forests, including through the Forest and Climate Leaders' Partnership, to mobilize large-scale investment from governments, philanthropies, and private institutions to halt and reverse deforestation, preserve critical habitat and biodiversity, and support livelihoods related to sustainable forestry, agriculture, and sustainable infrastructure in countries like Brazil, Colombia, Indonesia, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

By partnering with Norway on the Green Shipping Challenge and engaging with the International Civil Aviation Organization and the International Maritime Organization, and elevating green maritime shipping through actions in the Administration's Ocean Climate Action Plan, we're accelerating decarbonization in two hard-to-abate sectors that are critical to global commerce and our way of life: shipping and aviation.

Additionally, the United States also launched the Ocean Conservation Pledge – an ambitious effort and critical step for conserving or protecting 30 percent of the global ocean by 2030 – with benefits for people, climate, and biodiversity.

The United States has also worked with the European Union (EU) to launch the Global Methane Pledge, with 150 countries now on board to slash methane emissions, which are 86 times more potent than carbon dioxide in the short term, by 30 percent by 2030. This is the fastest way to reduce near-term warming, and these activities also benefit food and energy security – including by capturing and putting to productive use up to 260 billion cubic meters of natural gas that is being wasted every year. That's enough to meet the EU's current gas imports from Russia three times over.

We are also building on the Abraham Accords by supporting projects that will underpin energy integration and resilience in the Middle East, including among Israel, Jordan, and the United Arab Emirates.

We have supported U.S. leadership on a new generation of nuclear energy in Europe and around the world – demonstrating how American companies can lead in the clean energy transition.

And finally, this weekend, I am traveling to The People's Republic of China (PRC) to engage with them on addressing the climate crisis, including with respect to increasing implementation and ambition and promoting a successful COP 28. The climate crisis is not a bilateral issue, but a global one. The fact is the PRC is the largest emitter in the world – and we must engage on enhancing climate action to help avoid the worst impacts of the climate crisis. As a matter of global climate arithmetic, we cannot keep a safer 1.5C future within reach unless the PRC acts faster to cut all its greenhouse gas emissions.

Every step forward has been taken to protect our national security, position the U.S. to lead the booming clean energy economy, and leave behind a safer planet for our kids and grandkids.

And every step forward still depends not on one country acting alone, but on all of us acting together.

It also depends on all of you – not as a matter of politics, but in a mission of meeting the moment in the best traditions of our country and our Congress.

Thank you, and I look forward to your questions.

Mr. MAST. I'll ask that you keep your spoken remarks to 5 minutes to allow for time for members' questions. And just to give a warning as we do move into questions after that, members will be recognized for 5 minutes. If you get a question in before those 5 minutes are up, I'll give you about an extra minute to answer that question if they squeeze one in at the end there.

I now recognize Secretary Kerry. I recognize you for your opening statement.

**STATEMENT OF JOHN KERRY, SPECIAL PRESIDENTIAL ENVOY
FOR CLIMATE**

Mr. KERRY. Well, Mr. Chairman, thank you very, very much. Thank you for inviting me, and I am very grateful to be here with all of you. I want to thank the committee for inviting me here today to discuss the Biden-Harris Administration budget, but obviously beyond the budget, issues of concern to all of you.

I would just, as a point of personal privilege, say that I want to thank the Chairman and Ranking Member Crow and anybody else who served our country in uniform for that service. And I think it is fair for me to say that I recognize how much the perspective that you bring to the challenges of public life can draw on that experience, and I thank you for being here in that way.

Chairman McCaul and Ranking Member Meeks, thank you both for being here and for your comments. And Mr. Chairman McCaul, let me just say to you very directly that Secretary Blinken forcefully argued when he was on his visit to China about detainees, plural, and I can absolutely promise you that I will raise Mark Swidan's case particularly with the highest level leaders that I meet with, and report back to you on what we can achieve or not achieve as the case may be.

Let me just share very quickly, because you all know what is going on internationally at this point, but the fact is, I mean, I've been following this issue since 1988 when Jim Hansen first testified to us in the Senate, I think it was a June day, and said that climate change is happening, it's here, 1988.

And in 1992 I went to Rio with a lot of other Senators, and with President George Herbert Walker Bush, Republican, who signed an agreement that was reached there to deal with the climate crisis. But it was voluntary, not much happened. So, we're now at COP 28, 28, and we face an even larger crisis.

It's clear from the science and the mounting evidence around the world that one of the most existential threats that we face, that impacts every single Member of Congress, every single family in our country, in the world, comes from the growing climate crisis. We're beyond just climate change, frankly. I do not refer to it as that anymore. It is only a massive crisis, and we can talk about that if you want to in the course of this morning.

But we are living it every day, our fellow Americans are living this every single day. Lives upended by heat domes in Florida and Texas. I just read that they've had 100 degree days for the last weeks in several locations. Ninety-five degrees water in Florida, the Florida Keys, 95, 96 reported, and extreme flooding in Cali-

fornia, Vermont in places, in the capital of Vermont, cars washed away, people getting on the roofs to survive.

So, I do not want to just belabor that point, you hear about it, you know it. But our military leaders have Stated that the climate crisis is, without doubt, a threat to our national security, and they have repeatedly termed it as a threat multiplier. And I was just in Vienna for the OSC, the Security for Europe, 57 different countries were there, all of whom defining this challenge as a security threat.

Climate disruptions obviously exacerbate the competition over resources. They require our military to increasingly support humanitarian efforts in various parts of the world, and here at home taxpayers are feeling this in a growing way in terms of the extreme weather event, because every single extreme weather event comes with a big bill that we pay. Not to invest in technology, not to advance new jobs in the sector, but just to clean up the mess. Just to reconnect people to their electricity, rebuild destroyed homes and buildings.

So, with the devastation of this crisis, honestly I will tell you as a veteran of 28 years here in the Congress, I really do not understand. I just frankly do not understand why the opportunity of this crisis is not being seized more readily by everybody. Because just as the climate crisis is manmade, it comes from emissions that we do not capture, that we do not do anything with.

It is from emissions, everybody knows this, it is scientific accepted fact around the world, and one hundred ninety countries are responding to that fact. But there is a massive opportunity, once in a generation opportunity economically, which the IRA that passed is already carving an enormous path to prove to everybody already the Inflation Reduction Act has created over 100,00 jobs in clean energy across the country.

And along with the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, these critical investments being paired with diplomacy now because the simple reason is no country can solve the climate crisis alone. This requires multilateralism automatically. If you didn't have an institution or some entity to make it happen, we'd have to invent it. Because if China doesn't, as you said, reduce its emissions, we are all in trouble.

Russia, India, Indonesia, Brazil, Mexico, countless countries all need to step up and be part of this solution. So, we have worked with the EU to launch the Global Methane Pledge, which has spurred 150-plus countries around the world to slash methane emissions. Methane being 20 to 80 times more destructive than CO2. We built on the Abraham Accords to support energy integration and resilience in the Middle East.

And finally we've supported U.S. leadership and American companies on a new generation of nuclear energy, with Westinghouse winning the bid, which we helped work on, in Poland for four new plants, in addition to Bulgaria where there's an additional plant being built. So, every step forward that this Administration has taken has been really to protect our national security, to strengthen our economy, and leave behind a safer planet for our kids and grandkids.

And also to recognize that all of us have to be part of this solution. Also every step we've taken is based on the best science that

we can understand and determine. It's a matter of mathematics and physics, not politics, not ideology. It is a response to the science. So, that's one of the reasons why I am headed to the People's Republic of China this weekend, to engage in candid conversations between the world's two largest economies, and because every step forward depends not on one country acting alone, but acting all together helping to push the rest of the world to do what we need to do to win this battle. It also depends on all of you, not as a matter of politics, but the mission, the special mission of meeting the moment in the best traditions of our country and our Congress.

Mr. MAST. Mr. Secretary, I'll give you about thirty more seconds.

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

Mr. MAST. Thank you. You didn't even need thirty more seconds. I'm going to defer and recognize the Chairman of the full committee for questions first.

So, Mr. McCaul, you are recognized for 5 minutes Chairman.

Mr. MCCAUL. Thank you, Chairman Mast. Let me say first I always like to start on a positive note. I think, you know, look, we all recognize we have a problem. We all want to save the planet; I think we just probably disagree on the way to get there, right?

And I do not like the idea of holding China to a different standard than the United States. And that, sir, will be a great challenge when you go to Beijing, is trying to hold them to the same standards of the United States. And I think that's what the American people want, and what the American people deserve. If I could go back to what I said in my opening statement, and this just continues to baffle me, that the second largest economy in the world is somehow treated as a developing nation for purposes of the United Nations charter.

And it's a self-designation; they self-designate that they're a developing nation. So, what does that mean? That means they're in the WTO, that means they're given preferential status when it comes to World Bank loans, sometimes low interest, sometimes zero interest loans that then they turn around and use for usurious rates to get truly developing nations into debt trap.

I think that's not only wrong, I think that's immoral. But then they extrapolate this argument, this logic to climate change. They say in their own words, they say China has said it's carbon emissions should peak by 2030, and I assume that's why you're holding them to this 2030 standard in the Paris Agreements. But then they say they decline with the goal of reaching neutrality by 2060. Not 2030, 2060.

And why do they say that? This is where it gets really amazing to me. I'm an attorney by trade, and words matter. The country, the world's largest carbon emitter has argued that it is still a developing economy and should not be held to the same standards as developed countries in reducing carbon emissions. My question, sir, is very simple and very straight forward, and I hope you will give me a good answer to this one.

How in the world can the second largest economy maintain to you and the rest of the world with a straight face that they are a developing nation? Giving them preferential treatment not only to fund their Belt and Road, but to get this special designation to not

comply with an agreement we have to comply with sooner, but in their interpretation, not until 2060.

And, sir, I'm not saying this to make anybody feel bad or be argumentative. But as you make your case to the American people, they do not understand this. If I talk to my constituents back home and say Secretary Kerry's going over there trying to save the world, it's great, but, hey, guess what? China doesn't have to comply until 2060 because they lie and say they're a developing nation, self-designated.

And guess what? The United States, we've got to comply almost immediately. The American people understand fairness, and honestly, sir, they do not see this as fair.

Mr. KERRY. I cannot disagree with that. They do not see it as fair because a lot of people are concerned about this differential in the designation. I'd just call your attention—let me just, first of all, I wanted to thank you for the Shark Fin Sales Elimination Act, which has really had an impact. I've been passionate about the oceans, for years we've had the ocean conferences, and that was one of the big issues that we had there, and that's a major step, so thank you. And also I greatly appreciate the U.S. Foundation for International Conservation Act, Senator Coons, Senator Graham, et cetera. I think these are important steps, and they show what we can do on a bipartisan basis.

With respect to this developing, it should confound anybody at this point in time, and it's one of the topics. I've raised this with my counterpart in China, and others. Now we are at a point in the process of the meetings, that are annual under the U.N. process, where there is going to be a revisiting to that within that process, I think it is next year. And we've already been talking with people, because we are going to need to find a way to put more money on the table, concessionary funding, in order to attract some of the private capital that is necessary.

Because, in the end, no government is going to solve this problem. This is going to be solved by the private sector, and the private sector is already massively engaged. We have a record amount of money moving into venture capital, we have a record amount of money that is targeted for investment but will not deploy without our ability to be able to reduce some of the risk, which is something my office, our office, has been working on very, very diligently.

Mr. MCCAUL. And I know my time, before the Chairman gavels me down; I do not like to be gaveled down, I'm a chairman. But let me say if you could walk away from this summit with just that one result, to take away their developing nation status, sir, I cannot tell you how significant that would be to the rest of the world for a lot of reasons. And you know it's not a fair designation, it's a self-designation, and—

Mr. KERRY. Correct, but let me—can I say to you, Mr. Chairman—

Mr. MCCAUL. If I could have your assurance you're going to bring it up.

Mr. KERRY. Yes, look, I understand that. Let me just be frank with you. That's not going to happen in this visit; it is just not a mechanism or a rationale—that's just not going to happen in this visit. But the Chinese government understands that this is a grow-

ing issue of concern. And I just respectfully would say to you this comes out of, I mentioned 28 COPs, and I've been to too many of them. And way back in 1997, when we had the COP in Kyoto, the Kyoto Agreement was reached, and it just couldn't work because it was mandatory, and a whole bunch of people said, with understandability, we're not going to do that if the Chinese aren't going to do that.

So, what has happened is we have been deadlocked until Paris. Paris, the breakthrough in Paris was, OK, let's not continue to do nothing because of this designation issue, let's at least get every country to agree to sign on to something. And what is happening is around the world this has had impact. And it is actually working better than you might think, but not yet addressing the question you have raised.

Mr. MAST. Thank you, Chairman.

I now recognize Ranking Member Crow, who I believe will recognize Ranking Member Meeks.

Mr. CROW. Yes, we are following the protocol. I recognize Ranking Member Meeks.

Mr. MAST. It sounds like "Spies Like Us" right? Doctor, doctor.

Mr. MEEKS. Again I thank the Chairman and the Ranking Member for allowing both Chairman McCaul and myself to ask our questions, and being able to make opening statements. And I think that where I wanted to go was right what you were talking about when you dealt with the Paris Agreement, I was at several COPs myself, and the last one in particular.

Because as I look at this, it is the United States, but it is also the rest of the world. So, I am interested in making sure, and I'm an admitted multilateralist, I feel that we have got to look at it and make sure that we are engaged with our allies and friends and even at times our adversaries to get things done and to accomplish things. So, I was curious to see what your answer would be now that the Biden Administration has re-entered into the Paris Agreement.

What kind of response have you gotten from our international partners that we are back into it? Because I think collectively we got a deal with China, collectively we got a deal with other emitters like ourselves. How have you been received, and what do you think that to the benefit of us re-entering?

Mr. KERRY. Well, Mr. Ranking Member, without patting ourselves on the back too much, I do want to say that President Biden's immediate re-entry on the day of his inauguration, and creation of this particular office, and the commitments he's made, the fight he has been fighting to get the Inflation Reduction Act passed, it is an historic piece of legislation.

Just today, before I came in here, ExxonMobil just announced the purchase, but also a focus on, you know, accelerating the capture of emissions. And he point blank said, this is happening partly because of the Inflation Reduction Act. So, the incentive that has been created now for massive transformation, we have seen more than 80 battery companies created that are now beginning to sort of address the supply chain issue.

So, I am not going to go through the whole list, but together with our European allies, with the E.U., and with friends around the

world, Australia, Japan, Korea, Canada, others, they have all come to the table. And there is now a really re-energized international effort to do what is necessary to try to meet the needs of this challenge. And I'm very proud, I think President Biden has really ignited a whole new round of activity that we hope is going to be different from what has come before.

Mr. MEEKS. So, over the last couple of days, particularly in regards to what just took place at the NATO summit, there was a question about the durability of the United States' commitments to Ukraine. I am wondering what, if any, the question that you have had with allies with reference to the durability of the United States' commitments to the issue of climate change. And I'm going to stop saying climate change.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. Ranking Member, that is a great question, and very, very relevant, because I hear it all over the world. And, in fact, the Chinese say to me, and have said to me, well, how do we know that you're not going to have a change in Administration, they are going to just leave it again, and we are out there working away but you are not? And we have yet to produce the \$100 billion that was promised for less developed countries to be able to make the transition; we believe, hopefully, that can happen this year.

And my answer to those people is not a political one. It's an answer that I think is based in the reality of the American marketplace, and the world's marketplace. CEOs of major companies that we're proud of in this country, Google, Apple, Microsoft, Salesforce, Boeing, FedEx, I can run a long list of Fortune 500 companies, all of whom are now in this transition. Changing their fleets to electric bus, to electric trucks, moving forward.

Ford Motor Company, General Motors have joined our First Movers Coalition, they are buying green steel where they can find it for the making of their cars in order to send the market a demand signal. And you also have, as I said, Ford and General Motors are transitioning so that by 2035 they hope 100 percent of the cars they are making in America will be electric.

That is happening not because the government mandated it, because they see that is the future. And oil and gas companies and others are changing into energy companies, and beginning to move now. That takes us down a path, maybe we'll talk about it later. But I just want to emphasize that people think this is now, you cannot reverse it, it is irreversible. I believe that personally.

I am convinced we are going to get globally to a low carbon, no carbon economy globally. What I am not convinced of, that we will do what the science says, which is get there in time to avoid the worst consequences of the crisis. And that is what they challenged us in 2018. They said you have 12 years within which to make decisions that will avoid the worst consequences.

That is what we are doing in our international diplomacy. Trying to accelerate those decisions, and accelerate the marketplace. We are not doing command and control. The Inflation Reduction Act is not a command and control act, it creates incentives. But businesses are making their own decision that that is worthwhile, and the market is going to be there, and they want to be there.

Mr. MAST. Thank you, Ranking Member Meeks.

I now recognize myself for 5 minutes. I just, again, I want to go back to my opening remarks. I want to talk about some of the lack of transparency, and just say secretary, No. 1, can you direct me to your website, your landing page, your about your office section, mission statement section of your website, State.gov, back slash whatever?

Mr. KERRY. I can direct you to the CN, the congressional notice, which had a very detailed chart that I have here, which lays out our office.

Mr. MAST. But every consular, every bureau, they have a website that tells about their mission statement, everything. Do you have that at State? Because, honestly, myself and my staff, we couldn't find that.

Mr. KERRY. Well, we certainly have the location.

Mr. MAST. If you all find it, get it to us, we would love to have it.

Mr. KERRY. We use the State Department website.

Mr. MAST. So you use the State's, but you do not have your own landing page on State that says, about you, your mission statement, you name it?

Mr. KERRY. We—

Mr. MAST. Check. I want to move onto some other levels of just what is going on with the hierarchy in your office. As I said, 2021 FOIA requests, your office replied that you would not get back to it until about 2024. It is 2023, we would like a few answers. Now, I am not going to ask for every one of these, but I would love to know the names of the individuals that actually answer to you. Who are the ones that directly answer to you, so that we can know a little bit about your office.

And then we will give this chart to somebody in your office, and maybe they can fill out the rest of the names while you are here answering questions for us, it would be very helpful. Who is your deputy envoy for climate?

Mr. KERRY. I have two deputies, and they are well known, they are very experienced people: Rick Duke and Sue Biniaz. But I'm not going to go through all the names here.

Mr. MAST. Rick Duke, and who?

Mr. KERRY. Mr. Chairman, Sue Biniaz is one of the most experienced negotiators in the world. Mr. Chairman, let me just say—

Mr. MAST. Is Sue your principal deputy?

Mr. KERRY. Mr. Chairman, I'm not going to fill them in here in this way, because that would be a violation of our process within the State Department.

Mr. MAST. You are not going to tell us who is working in your office?

Mr. KERRY. I am not going to go through them by name because that is not the required process of the State Department.

Mr. MAST. Who is the principal deputy for climate in your office?

Mr. KERRY. As I just said to you, Mr. Chairman—

Mr. MAST. Who is the chief of staff?

Mr. KERRY. I am going to go through the normal process. Now, an algorithm kicked out that date, the one you are referring to.

Mr. MAST. I am not going to argue about it, Mr. Kerry, Secretary Kerry, I am not going to argue about it. You said you are not going to answer, you are not going to answer; it is par for the course.

Mr. KERRY. No, I am going to answer it through the process.

Mr. MAST. Like I said, there was a FOIA request 2021, said it wasn't going to be answered until 2024. I am not going to spend my time arguing about it. You said you are not going to answer now. I will accept it.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. Chairman, do not just cut me off. What I am trying to do is tell you I am going to follow the process of the State Department which is normally followed. Where there are circumstances requiring that someone know who the person is, the State Department has complied and done that. There is not a requirement that they—

Mr. MAST. And every office, every consular, they have a hierarchy. You go into the military base, it says Joe Biden, it says the secretaries, there is a hierarchy. This is standard practice for government. I am not going to argue that it is not standard practice, you have done it long enough.

Mr. KERRY. We have presented with a congressional notification the creation of this office. We presented that answer.

Mr. MAST. I want to point another arrow on my chart here, Mr. Secretary. Can you just help us out? Do you answer to the Executive Office of the President or do you answer to Secretary Blinken? Because I have emails from—

Mr. KERRY. I respond directly to the President of the United States, but with—

Mr. MAST. Directly to the President?

Mr. KERRY. That is correct. But with Secretary Blinken completely informed and aware of everything that we are doing.

Mr. MAST. But you do not answer to Blinken. Thank you. It is good, we just need to know for basic levels of transparency and understanding how this works.

So, I want to go to a couple of questions on policy. It was said by my colleague, global problems require global commitments, and I want to go to some of the global commitments that you might be looking at in COP 28 that were looked at in COP 27. And I want to understand if you are committing the United States of America to these policies or not. I am going to just let you know, these are simple yes or no questions. I know you have researched them well, I have researched them well, we do not need an explanation of them here.

So, just No. 1, cross-border carbon trading. Are you planning at COP 28 to commit, this is the No. 1 issue there, along with climate reparations? Do you plan to commit America to cross-border carbon trading, as my colleague put it, in global commitments?

Mr. KERRY. There is no current proposal or plan that has been agreed to which would require us to do that.

Mr. MAST. Do you plan on working for cross-border carbon trading?

Mr. KERRY. We are exploring with a lot of countries what the various approaches might be. And President Biden has charged us to examine cross-border adjustment mechanisms in order to understand how we can deal with the question of very carbon-intensive

produced goods coming into our country where our folks are trying to reduce it.

Mr. MAST. I will put yes, but say it is a maybe, because you didn't answer completely affirmatively. I am going to ask one more question, though, in my time.

Mr. KERRY. Well, then you make this a game, if you are turning that into yes when I didn't say yes. You are playing games, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. MAST. You said it is a maybe; you didn't say no.

Mr. KERRY. Well, why do not you create a maybe and put it up there?

Mr. MAST. Well, next time I will create a maybe. We will put it in yellow. We will put the yes in green, and the no in red, and we will put a maybe in yellow. Next time we will do that. I do want to get to one last question, and I will give you a little extra time, Ranking Member. And that is on this one, because I know it is another major priority for COP. And that is are you planning to commit America to climate reparations?

That is to say we have to pay some other country because they had a flood, or they had a hurricane, or a typhoon, or other—

Mr. KERRY. No, under no circumstances.

Mr. MAST. Very good, I am glad to hear you say that. I do have a no, I will put it up there.

Mr. KERRY. Why do not you create an exclamation point beside it, too, so you can get—

Mr. MAST. I will write in an exclamation point for you, and I am glad that we have agreement on that. I do not know if my black pen will work, we will see. There we go, there is your exclamation point.

Ranking Member Crow, I yield you 5 minutes.

Mr. CROW. Thank you, Chairman. Secretary Kerry, I am not planning to game show this. I do not have a board, because that is good theater, but it is not good legislating, and it is not necessary oversight in my view. Nor am I going to ask any member of this committee who their scheduler is, who their comms director is, who their staff assistant is, because that is not how this works, and we all know that. actually.

And before you were cutoff, I believe you were about to say, and I will give you an opportunity to actually complete what you were going to say, that you are going to follow the regular process and respond to the Chairman's questions, is that accurate?

Mr. KERRY. Yes. Not only are we going to follow it, I believe that about 600 pages were delivered yesterday, or the day before yesterday in answer. Look, there are a lot of requests that come in, there is a massive amount of requests, and a very small office. And we have, there are two tracks that we address. One is the oversight, we have Oversight Committee, oversight personnel, they are the ones who are responsible for that.

I do not literally touch that, it goes directly to that office. The second track is through the FOIA track, where there is a formal process with an office in the State Department for FOIAs, and they are responded to as fast as they can be. So, I think our staff budgets were cut last year, not to mention, if we could get additional funding we can have people speed it up.

Mr. CROW. Yes, I appreciate that. And I for one have found you and your office to be nothing but transparent, and forthcoming, and cooperative. And there is no doubt in my mind that you will continue to do that. But this is serious stuff, putting aside the graphics, and the back and forth here, and there's very serious strategic competition at play.

Because the People's Republic of China is moving extremely aggressively in areas of the global south, South America in particular, engaging with countries, and trying to move them into their sphere of influence on the issues of climate, on the issues of resiliency. I have had a lot of discussions with leaders in South America who said we would love to partner with you on this, but you are not coming to us as aggressively as China is in some instances.

So, could you just speak to the importance of the United States in leading on this, and continuing to double down on this issue from a strategic competition perspective?

Mr. KERRY. Well, this opportunity to transition to clean energy is without doubt the largest economic opportunity the world has seen since the industrial revolution. Bigger by far, even, not necessarily in impact—well, I am not even sure I can say that. With respect to the technology revolution, because technology is going to be a critical component of what is happening.

You have got huge investments taking place in green hydrogen. Huge investments taking place in direct air carbon capture. A major company, Occidental energy company is pursuing that all in on direct air carbon capture. Others are trying to do other forms of capture, and utilization, and storage. Batteries have made remarkable process, that is going to continue.

The cost of solar and wind is now almost literally negative. I mean it has come down so far that it is almost the go to initial effort.

Mr. CROW. So, it is safe to say there is incredible economic opportunity that is there for the taking if we are able to engage strategically and take advantage of it, and we are competing against China and others for that?

Mr. KERRY. We are competing, but everybody has their own approach, which is one of the exciting things here. We are not going to know what the winner is going to be necessarily, but there are going to be big winners here, and I think that we are seeing that transformation already taking place.

Mr. CROW. And in the limited time, I want to push back on this fallacy as I believe it, that it is a sign of toughness, some people will think that it is a sign of toughness and strength to walk away, to quit talking, to quit engaging even if we have areas of mutual interest with some countries. Of which we have very real concerns and skin in the game so to speak.

So, can you just very briefly tell me why it is important to still engage with China and others, even if we have conflict, and real disagreements in other areas?

Mr. KERRY. Well, the Administration is determined to try to stabilize what has been, particularly recently, a very unstable situation. And the President is obviously concerned, as I think most people are, about the potential for mistake. The potential for some-

thing to inadvertently drag us into an open hot conflict where up until now it has been sort of in a more reserved fashion.

I think that those who are involved in that side of the fence, and I am not, I am dealing only with the climate, and President Biden, and President Xi specifically determined at the beginning of the Administration that they were going to try to separate climate. Because it is not a bilateral issue, it is a global, universal issue, which threatens everybody on the planet.

And we do not want it to become the hostage of some of these other tensions, all of which are real. There isn't one iota of diminishing of the reality of those other challenges through our office or anyone else. So, we have been trying very hard to operate in a way that can maximize our output notwithstanding those other tensions.

Mr. CROW. Thank you for that, my time is expired. Thank you for the additional time, Mr. Chairman.

I yield back.

Mr. MAST. You are welcome, and I thank you for your questions. I will set the record straight that it is common practice for every one of our offices that it be open source who works in our offices, and that every consular in State Department have a website, which is basic transparency. And that on that website, they do put up the hierarchy of who works. But you do not have a website, and so you do not have that level of transparency.

I will now recognize Mr. Mills for 5 minutes.

Mr. MILLS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And yes, we actually even have websites like LegiStorm and others that tell exactly who is in our offices, so it is kind of funny that the appointee does not. Secretary Kerry, thank you so much for coming here, I hope it wasn't too problematic for your operational team and your private jet to get here.

But I will start with the fact that in an interview in September 2021 when asked about the importing of solar panels that were built with Uyghur slave labor, slave labor, that the tradeoff between climate and human rights, you said life is full of tough choices. Do you believe the question of whether to import solar panels built on the backs of Uyghur slaves is such a tough choice?

Mr. KERRY. No, of course not. Not only do I not believe it, but I've raised it in my meetings over the years, raised it consistently as Secretary of State, as senator.

Mr. MILLS. So, you didn't—

Mr. KERRY. I do not even know, I do not know what the context is of the conversation you're referring to—

Mr. MILLS. Interesting.

Mr. KERRY. But I'm making it crystal clear that—

Mr. MILLS. Got it. Secretary Kerry, you have prioritized rapid deployment of PRC solar panels above the human rights of enslaved Uyghurs, the interest of American manufacturers, and the integrity of the Department of Commerce's investigations. What is the benefit of that?

Mr. KERRY. I'm not sure, can you repeat that?

Mr. MILLS. Sure. I said in my statement that you have prioritized rapid deployment of PRC, which is China's solar panels above the human rights of enslaved Uyghurs, the interest of Amer-

ican manufacturing, and the integrity of the Department of Commerce's investigations. Can you explain the benefits?

Mr. KERRY. No, I have never, ever prioritized bringing in any solar panel that violates the Uyghur Enforcement Act.

Mr. MILLS. Can you tell me exactly where solar panels and the raw material sourcing comes from?

Mr. KERRY. Which panels?

Mr. MILLS. Name them.

Mr. KERRY. Well, there are three major companies that were bringing in companies at one point in time, but most of those panels, the ones that—

Mr. MILLS. Can you say where those companies are from?

Mr. KERRY. One, I think a couple were from China, one might have been Vietnam. But it's my understanding Congressman—

Mr. MILLS. So, but none were American is what you just basically pointed out, right? So, it was China, and it was Vietnam. Meaning that we are prioritizing the idea of ceasing American energy, and going after American energy to prioritize what we already know is an adversarial nation. And I'm tired of hearing this idea—

Mr. KERRY. No, no, no, actually it's the opposite—

Mr. MILLS. Sir, I'm talking please. Sensory strategic competition, I'm sorry, if we are talking about strategic competition, we are talking about the fact that American economy, American industrial base, American raw material and supply chain capability and capacity, our own ability to put Americans to work, our own ability to try and drive down inflation. We are actually in a direct economic, and resource, and cyber warfare with China, and have been for 20 plus years, it has been ignored.

While China has advanced their Belt and Road Initiative, while they have expanded the Eurasian border, tried to dominate Africa, taken over Oceania, blocking off internationally recommended transit corridors for Horn of Africa, Mediterranean, Red Sea, Black Sea, Persian Gulf so they can choke off western hemisphere supply chain.

And meanwhile we know that the threat is going on with Taiwan, we know that China has continued to violate international treaties like the one country two system framework of Hong Kong that they have exhibited. We know that Chairman Xi wants to basically go ahead and save face for his father's name that was corrupted during the Mao dynasty.

So, my whole point is, is that if we know all these things, and that they are an adversarial nation, why on earth would we try to go ahead and build them economically, and not try to go ahead and try and decouple as we should be in an effort to go ahead and build American manufacturers, and American jobs, and American workers, and American economy?

Mr. KERRY. Well, we are not trying to build them economically, I can assure you of that.

Mr. MILLS. Who is their largest trade partner?

Mr. KERRY. Let me just finish.

Mr. MILLS. America.

Mr. KERRY. Yes, but most economists, most investors, most people who have studied this issue very carefully do not believe it is possible to totally decouple from China.

Mr. MILLS. It absolutely is, sir. And I can tell you that if we would utilize things like sea bed harvesting for our raw materials, or if we would look at the understanding of what we can do from LNG, from fracking, from our oil and gas manufacturing—

Mr. KERRY. We are doing all those things.

Mr. MILLS. I can tell you the biggest thing is that we are not going to get away, and start having tanks that are EV that we can go ahead and plant on the battlefield our chargers for Tesla prior to us deploying into war. But I will just finish with this. This solar emergency that we keep talking about, and the preemptively directed commerce to suspend tariffs on solar imports from four southeast Asian countries, Malaysia, Cambodia, Vietnam, and Thailand for the last 2 years.

This is in spite of the fact that the Biden Administration's own investigation found PRC companies to be transshipping through these very countries in a sophisticated effort to evade tariffs. We have done nothing to actually try and combat that, and instead we have actually gone ahead and increased our trade. This is a China first, America last agenda that you are pushing.

I do not agree with the fact that we are not allowing more manufacturing in America to continue, and that we are not encouraging that more than trying to continue to trade with what is known not as a competitor, sir, but as an adversary.

And with that, I yield back.

Mr. KERRY. So, can I respond, Mr. Chair, a little bit? There was nothing in President Biden's policy that is geared to try to assist China in its development, what it has been doing in a number of different ways, some of them in violation of the WTO, some of them not. But the fact is that we had a solar industry, Germany had a solar industry, and China dumped, for a number of years, and we lost those industries.

Now President Biden is trying to get them back. That is the entire purpose of the Inflation Reduction Act, and it is working. It is creating a new supply chain here in our country. In addition to that, the Uyghur Act is being enforced, it is being enforced, and there are countless panels not coming into our country because the border and customs folks have been enforcing that act.

So, I just do not agree with your facts, which began with a presentation of one of the most outrageously persistent lies that I hear, which is this private jet. We do not own a private jet, I do not own a private jet. I personally have never owned a private jet, and obviously it is pretty stupid to talk about coming in a private jet from the State Department up here. Just honestly, if that is where you want to go, go there.

Believe me, let me tell you, inflation is down—

Mr. MAST. The chair now recognizes Mr. Kim for 5 minutes. The chair now recognizes Mr. Kim.

Mr. KIM. OK, thank you, Mr. Chair. Secretary Kerry, thanks for coming on over here. And I know you have been peppered with a lot of different questions about China on a range of different issues. I guess I just want to ask you what is your agenda? You know,

with regards to this trip coming up in a couple days, I think it would be helpful for this committee to just hear directly from you, not just about all these other issues, but what are you trying to achieve, what are you trying to raise, what are you hoping to focus on?

Mr. KERRY. Well, because we have been interrupted several times over the course of the last year, we haven't had as much engagement as we did in the last 6 months anyway. But what we are trying to achieve now is really to establish some stability if we can, in the relationship, without conceding anything. There is no concession. I'm not going over with any concessions.

What we are trying to do is find ways we can cooperate to actually address the crisis. Because China, as the world's second largest economy, and as the world's largest emitter, is critical to our being able to solve this problem. It would be malpractice of the worst order, diplomatic, and political, and common sense.

Mr. KIM. Are there certain issues that you feel like right now can be places where that conversation can buildup?

Mr. KERRY. That's a good question, Congressman, thank you. We hope that we can make some progress on a number of areas, methane is particularly important for our cooperation. China agreed to have a methane action plan out of our prior talks in Glasgow, and again in Sharm El-Sheikh. We hope that that is something we can make progress on. We hope we can make progress on the transition away from coal.

Coal is the dirtiest fuel in the world, and emissions that are not captured from coal are the worst cause of the warming of the ocean, and the torrential downpours that we see now that come because more moisture rises because of the heating of the ocean. Ninety percent of the warming of the earth goes into the ocean, and now we are seeing exactly what happens with these floods as a result of that increased moisture.

I mean there is a clear scientific tracking of relationship here. What we want to do is find ways to see if China and the United States can advance the cause together for the rest of the world by accelerating rates of doing things, by increasing the deployment of renewables, by improving grid management. There are a host of things that we think are really worthy of conversation.

And if we can make some progress on that, we think we can tamp down this edgy sense of competition, which could lead to a mistake, which takes you to a place you didn't mean to go to.

Mr. KIM. You talked about methane a couple times, we have also talked about COP 28 coming up later this year. I guess I just want to get a sense for you, what would success look like at COP 28, what are you hoping to see come out of that.

Mr. KERRY. I think that there are a number of things. First of all, COP 28 already requires a global stock take. That is a valuation of how the world is doing with respect to the promises that have already been made. Second there will be an adaptation report, which will help to make a judgment about how we can accelerate adaptation for places that are really in jeopardy.

Island States, vulnerable nations, they are the ones suffering the most, but they do not contribute to the problem. But they are suffering the most as a result of the problem. And then in addition

to that, there is the finalization of the fund that was created, the so called Loss and Damage Fund, which is simply a recognition, it does not have any liability in it.

We specifically put phrases in that negate any possibility of liability. But it is there to try to help some of these vulnerable less developed areas from the problems that they are facing. Now, in addition to that we want to see global raising of ambition. Everybody has to try to reduce emissions faster. We have set a very ambitious goal under President Biden's leadership where fifty to fifty-two percent reduction in emissions, hopefully.

We believe we are on track to be able to do that, even though they have gone up slightly in this past year. What is happening right now in terms of new technologies coming online, in terms of the reduction of coal, in terms of the capture of emissions and so forth, we are at least able to turn the corner and begin to reduce, rather than increase. And we think we can meet the targets that we have set, which can help keep 1.5 degrees as the limit of the warming of the planet.

Mr. KIM. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chair, I yield back.

Mr. MAST. Thank you.

And I will now yield to Mr. Moran for 5 minutes.

Mr. MORAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Secretary, you said earlier, this is a quote I wrote down when you were answering a question from one of my colleagues, we have 12 years within which to make decisions to avoid the worst consequences of climate change. In regards to that quote then, my question would be what is the U.S. doing to force China to reduce its CO2 emissions?

Mr. KERRY. Well, the 12 years, first of all, was set by the scientists, not my number, it is their number, they say that is the framework.

Mr. MORAN. Regardless, you adopted that as truth today before the committee.

Mr. KERRY. I adopted the best science in the world as a good guidepost for good governance, and I think that is what we need to excise. Now, I can answer your question—

Mr. MORAN. If you are the special envoy on behalf of the President working on climate issues, and you take the position that we have 12 years within which to make decisions to avoid the quote worst consequences, then what are you doing to force China to reduce its CO2 emissions?

Mr. KERRY. Well, I am going there to start with, but I am not sure that that presence alone is enough to force them.

Mr. MORAN. I agree with that. Which, it is a reasonable question. I mean you have been asked to do this, I didn't ask you to do it. The President asked you to go abroad, and to have this conversation with China. And so, I want to know, what are we going to do to twist their arm—

Mr. KERRY. It is the use of the word force, I think that it is important to have a dialog about how you can both reach agreement to do things that are sensible.

Mr. MORAN. Replace the word force with influence. What are you going to do to influence China to reduce its CO2 emissions?

Mr. KERRY. Well, we have had very successful rounds of meetings with them, and have moved significantly. China, let me give you an idea of what China is doing now in response to some of the pressure that I think has been evident. They are——

Mr. MORAN. But I want to get real specific about actions you are going to ask them to do. What actions are you going to go to the table with like we need you to do this?

Mr. KERRY. Well, we are looking at the CBAM. I told you, we are looking very closely at the CBAM, as is Europe, and other countries. We are looking at other ways to be able to try. But our preference is to have China say, yes, that makes sense. Let's see——

Mr. MORAN. But China hasn't. Because in the past decade, as you know, we have reduced emissions here in the United States, but in the same timeframe China's emissions have increased. All the while they continue to say we are working on it. And all the while you continue to go over there and ask them to work on it. But we have not seen real deliberate action on their part to match the U.S.'s efforts in this regard, is that correct?

Mr. KERRY. We have actually seen some action, which isn't evident to everybody, because people, they do not advertise it, but I will tell you what is happening. Let me just answer your question. China is manufacturing and deploying more renewable energy than all the rest of the world put together. That is what they are doing. China right now has about somewhere in the vicinity of a couple thousand gigawatts, but they are now going up. And by 2030, our judgment is China may well be around 2,200, 2,400 gigawatts of renewable.

Mr. MORAN. The pollution that is coming out of China by the sea——

Mr. KERRY. Correct, that is exactly why we are working at what we are doing, because——

Mr. MORAN. And you said yourself earlier, quote this is a global universal issues, and we do not want it to become captive to other issues. But I am curious when you say that if you are ignoring these other issues like my colleague brought up here, human rights issues. Would you agree that human rights issues are also global universal issues?

Mr. KERRY. Absolutely.

Mr. MORAN. But you want to keep them separate when you are talking to China is what you said earlier, is that true?

Mr. KERRY. What I said is well, no, we do not keep them separate in terms of our priorities. I go there——

Mr. MORAN. No, that is exactly what you said. You said President Xi, and President Biden agreed at the outset to separate out the climate issue——

Mr. KERRY. Correct.

Mr. MORAN. So it would not get caught up in these other issues.

Mr. KERRY. Correct.

Mr. MORAN. So, were you correct then——

Mr. KERRY. That doesn't mean you do not talk about them. But it means that they are not going to become show stoppers so that they are playing one off against the other. I will give you an example. We do not trade any component of any of those other issues for what we are trying to do on the climate front. On the climate

front we have agreed we will deal with that, and we have to find a pathway forward.

And there are others, the Assistant Secretary of State, the Secretary of State, the NSC who deal directly on those other issues. But what we are trying to do——

Mr. MORAN. OK, and I presume that you are——

Mr. KERRY. You know what we are trying to do? We are trying to make sure that you do not have to worry that John Kerry is going to give away some right on human rights in order to get what he is trying to get from China.

Mr. MORAN. So, I get that, and I presume that you are going to have conferences with your counterparts that are having those discussions on those other issues, and that President Biden has said to you, and those others, which one is more priority over the others. So, my question would be is human rights the bigger issue? Is the slave labor coming out of the Uyghur people a bigger issue, or is it climate change?

Mr. KERRY. Congressman, this Administration is capable of keeping all its priorities on the table, and treating all of them simultaneously. But we do not have to wrap them up so one becomes hostage to the other, or you do not make progress. You have got to——

Mr. MORAN. Do you plan to hold China accountable if they do not follow through with the activities that you are going to suggest and reduce their emissions? Because they are able to get ahead of our economy by producing many more emissions, and having less regulatory action on their businesses than we are here in the U.S.

Mr. KERRY. And we do not want that to happen. That is precisely why——

Mr. MORAN. Then how are you going to hold them accountable?

Mr. KERRY. Because that is exactly why President Biden has asked us to examine the countervailing efforts——

Mr. MORAN. I have never seen an examination hold anybody accountable. We need action to hold them accountable.

Mr. KERRY. Well, that is exactly what is happening, and you have got several senators, you have some in the House. I believe there are a number of House members who are looking at the border adjustment mechanism. I know Senator Coons, and some others, Senator Whitehouse have different plans for how to do that. This is gaining, I think some steam legislatively because people are frustrated by what is happening.

So, you first have got to come up with the legislation, and somehow it has got to pass the U.S. Congress at large. So, hopefully we can get there.

Mr. MORAN. We do not legislate China, but we need to hold them accountable.

Mr. KERRY. No, but you can legislate a CBAM.

Mr. MAST. The Chair now recognizes Ms. Dean for 5 minutes.

Ms. DEAN. Thank you, Chairman Mast, Ranking Member Crow. Thank you, Secretary Kerry, for being here, and for your decades of varied and rich service to our country. As you point out, and as the world knows, the climate crisis is a global problem requiring global solutions, international cooperation. So, you are extraordinarily well suited from your passion for this subject, for your passion for this country, and our world to be in the role you are in.

We are lucky to have you, and I thank the Administration for on day one returning to the Paris Climate Accord which the former President in June 2017 walked away from. What a shame for our country that that happened. And I really speak to you today not just as a legislator, but as a mom and a grandmom.

[Inaudible] climate change with extraordinary storms, smoke filling the atmosphere and hurting our eyes.

In August 2021 a crazy Hurricane Ida came up right through suburban Philadelphia, the five-county area. Massive flooding, tornadoes, unprecedented for our area, suburban Philadelphia, and extraordinary loss and damage. I want to just draw a contrast, because I absolutely share your opening thoughts about the opportunity in this moment, the absolute challenge of it, the crisis in front of us on so many fronts, but today we are talking about climate.

But the unbelievable opportunity. I have the honor of serving on the Regional Leadership Council, we are working directly with the Administration for the Invest in America bills, to bring these investments to every single one of our communities. You pointed out the investments, the historic transformational investments through IRA and infrastructure. Could you give us a little more detail?

The Inflation Reduction Act dollars, those transformational dollars, as well as the bipartisan infrastructure bill, and what this massive investment, and I contrast this with the last Administration, never got any of these things done, never dealt with climate, just pulls out of the Accords, we got massive legislation passed to make a difference for my grandchildren, and their children. Can you emphasize some of those investments we need to make?

Mr. KERRY. Well, the investments we need to make, happily, thank you, Congresswoman, appreciate the question. The investments that need to be made are being made as a consequence of the Inflation Reduction Act. And there is a certain irony in it, the estimates are right now that about 338 billion dollars of the targets of that act are being distributed in what are called red States, and there is about 180 billion that is going to what are called blue States.

So, the vest largest benefit is going to parts of the country where you have skilled workers who were in other forms of energy production, who can readily be available, and transition into the new technologies, whatever they are going to be. Whether it is direct carbon capture, or building out a storage capacity. I mean, frankly, what one of the beauties I think of that particular legislation is there is no one winner, it doesn't pick a winner.

What it is doing is creating incentives so that people can go out and make their own decision about where they think the best opportunity is going to be. So, a lot is happening right now. We have about two thousand gigawatts of renewable power that is just queued up waiting for approval. And what we need to do is find a way to bust that out, get it through the queue, and approved.

Because that is going to generate even that much more energy, and clean energy for the country. So, that is one example of what is happening with it.

Ms. DEAN. I want to pick up on that irony, it is not lost on any of us where these investments will go. They will go out with equity,

not going out following the votes, or the lack of votes that came for these massive transformational, generational changes. I want to just take you to some of the opening statements, and I wonder what your reaction was, I think at some point someone called you, that you were carrying a far left radical agenda.

I have to admit to you, if anybody thinks it is radical to care about the protection of this planet for future generations, sign me up. It reminds me of Martin Luther King in the letter from Birmingham Jail when he was called a radical, and an extremist. He said wasn't Jesus a radical for love? So, I embrace the term radical whenever I am attacked that way when I am focused on something so worthy. What are your thoughts, are you embracing some far left radical agenda?

Mr. KERRY. Well, thank you for the opportunity to hang myself. I think I am pursuing common sense for political right, political left, republican, democrat, because as I said, what we are looking at is something that is human created. The problem we face right now comes from the way we inadvertently, it is the way the world developed starting in the middle of the 1800's with the industrial revolution, and we have all benefited from it.

Americans particularly have had the richest lives on the planet because we had the best healthcare, we have had so many different pluses that have come with the development we were able to create. Now we have learned as of 1988, alarm bell, problem, what you have been doing and taking for granted is actually destroying a lot of things on the planet.

We lose about 8 million people a year to the quality of air, lack of quality actually, air pollution. Greenhouse gases are pollution, and that pollution is having an impact on the lives of our fellow Americans, negative impact. We are now seeing, because of the warming that comes with the emissions piling up in this level of the atmosphere above the Earth, it prevents the cooling from normally taking place.

And so this warming is now totally documented, everybody knows it is happening, humans creating it from the way we propel our cars, light our rooms and factories, heat our homes, that is what it is. It is the emissions. And if we can figure out, you know, so you have sort of got a simple choice here. You either stop making those emissions, or you can do something with them that is useful, and doesn't harm things.

And there is no proof to this date that we have the ability to be able to do that.

Ms. DEAN. I thank you.

Mr. MAST. The chair now recognizes Mr. Perry for 5 minutes.

Mr. PERRY. Thank you, Chairman, thank you, Secretary. In an attempt to get to net zero by 2050, do you support the Administration's goal of cutting U.S. emissions in half by 2030?

Mr. KERRY. Yes, I do.

Mr. PERRY. Secretary, in 1997 the Senate voted ninety-five to zero, including you, and then Senator Biden in favor of the Byrd-Hagel Resolution, which resolved that the U.S. shouldn't cut emissions until China, Mexico, India, Brazil, South Korea, and other so called developing nations cut emissions as well. Do you remember that?

Mr. KERRY. I do, very, very well, because I was managing it on the floor of the Senate.

Mr. PERRY. And since 1997 have emissions from China, India, and Mexico all increased?

Mr. KERRY. Yes, as they have from the United States.

Mr. PERRY. And global emissions have continued to increase as well, right?

Mr. KERRY. Yes.

Mr. PERRY. Have any of those countries submitted a credible plan to get to net zero emissions by 2050?

Mr. KERRY. Which countries?

Mr. PERRY. Let's just go with China, India, or Mexico.

Mr. KERRY. No.

Mr. PERRY. It seems that, have you abandoned your position that those other nations would cut emissions before Americans would have to make choices between the groceries on their table and paying for these policies?

Mr. KERRY. I think the reality is that the world changed in that period of time. Let me explain to you—

Mr. PERRY. OK, so you voted that way, but you changed—

Mr. KERRY. But let me explain to you the vote, because I did manage this on the floor, and I know exactly what happened, because I am the one who said to our colleagues I think everybody ought to vote for this. And the reason was that it fundamentally had the message that it is not fair. The one we were talking about earlier with the Chairman, it is not fair for us to be reducing.

And China, which was producing three times more emissions than us, and then producing goods that come into our country from that dirty power, and we have a problem. So, we wanted to address that, but we knew not every aspect of that piece of legislation, it is what we all call a message, it was a message vote, and the vote was clear. We wanted other people to join us in the effort to reduce emissions.

Mr. PERRY. OK, fair enough.

Mr. KERRY. That hasn't happened sufficiently.

Mr. PERRY. It hasn't happened sufficiently now. Secretary, in 2015 at the Paris Climate Conference, you said that if all industrial nations go to zero emissions, it would not be enough. And then at the White House's Climate Day in January 2021, you said almost ninety percent of the planet's emissions come from outside the U.S. We could go to zero tomorrow, and the problem isn't solved.

And in April 2021 you told the Washington Post that even the U.S. and China going to zero emissions tomorrow will not solve the climate's problem. Then in April 2021 you said that global net zero is not enough, and that CO₂ must be removed from the atmosphere. How much is the correct amount of CO₂?

Mr. KERRY. Let me explain to you, if I can, so you understand exactly what I said. It is close, but it is not quite exactly what I was saying. What I am saying—

Mr. PERRY. Can you just tell me what the correct amount is?

Mr. KERRY. Let me tell you what I am saying, I am going to tell you what the correct—here is how it works. Because we have put, I forget the exact number of tons, millions of tons of CO₂, and other greenhouse gases are now in the atmosphere, they are there,

and every day we are adding more. And so every day the heat is going up, and we have to figure out how we are going to tame the monster here.

The only way to do that is to reduce emissions on an ongoing basis to get control on the current level of emissions that we have created, and then to actually suck——

Mr. PERRY. Sir, with all due respect, you have been through this before. What is the correct amount? I do not want to spend a bunch of time about a history lesson about things that people do not care about.

Mr. KERRY. Well, it changes every day, I cannot tell you exactly what it is.

Mr. PERRY. The correct amount changes?

Mr. KERRY. Yes, it does. So——

Mr. PERRY. So, Secretary, you probably know that for approximately 200 million years, what is the parts per million now? About four hundred, right? Can we agree on that?

Mr. KERRY. It is over four hundred, it is about four twenty.

Mr. PERRY. All right, for about 200 million years, two thousand parts per million. Did mother nature get it wrong for 200 million years?

Mr. KERRY. Here is the difference, Congressman. The difference is yes, there were periods which all scientists, all the scientists who deal with climate acknowledge that there have been moments on the planet, which is billions of years old, in which there were greater heat, and there was greater carbon dioxide——

Mr. PERRY. Tell me the difference quickly, I have got a limited amount of time.

Mr. KERRY. The difference is human beings are creating this, that is the difference, we are creating this.

Mr. PERRY. So, human beings are about three hundred thousand years old, but during these periods of time where it was two thousand parts per million life existed. As a matter of fact, we are in one of the lowest periods.

Mr. KERRY. Not people, not human beings walking around, no.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Secretary, we are in one of the lowest periods of carbon in the atmosphere in not only recorded history, in the history of life existing on the planet. In December 2022 you told the Washington Post we need to remove 1.6 trillion tons of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere via direct air capture. The cost for that is about one thousand dollars per ton, or 1.6 quadrillion dollars.

Now, you said you didn't know, but since 2015, since the last El Nino, about 500 billion tons have been emitted into the atmosphere. During that same period of time, 2015, if you look at the temperature graph, this is from NOAA, the temperature has gone down. Show the next slide. This is from NASA satellite data, temperature has gone down.

You want to have the American taxpayers, my constituents that are having a hard time afford their groceries, pay for a car, buy a new home, spend 1.6 quadrillion dollars to fix a problem that A, doesn't exist, and as a matter of fact, you might be exacerbating. Because it is unknown, it is unknown at this time the low level of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere that might actually destroy life.

Because plant life all depends, as you know Secretary, plant life all depends on CO₂. And when we kill it, then we are done too.

I yield the balance.

Mr. KERRY. Congressman, let me just say that I do not agree with what you are saying out there for any number of reasons. I do not have time to go into all of them now, but I will just tell you point blank that the difference between the periods you are looking at in terms of heat, et cetera, and human input is night and day, No. 1. No. 2, why do you think one hundred ninety-five countries in the world, their prime ministers, their presidents—

Mr. PERRY. Because they are grifting, like you are, sir.

Mr. KERRY. That is a pretty shocking statement. That you believe that all the scientists in the world are grifters. Honestly.

Mr. PERRY. Not all scientists agree with you, Mr. Secretary.

Mr. KERRY. Ninety-eight percent of all the scientists in the world agree—

Mr. PERRY. Science isn't about agreement, it is not about consensus, you know that.

Mr. KERRY. Well—

Mr. MAST. The chair now recognizes Mrs. Cherfilus-McCormick for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CHERFILUS-McCORMICK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wanted to start off by saying representing Ft. Lauderdale, who just experienced over a thousand years of flooding that we have never seen before, that we most certainly know that climate change is real, and we are feeling the effects, and we understand that the work that you are doing, Secretary, is very important, and we thank you for being here.

My first question is earlier this year I had the privilege of accompanying Vice President Harris to build on the commitments made during the U.S. Africa Leadership Summit last December. During her travels, the Vice President announced over 7 billion in private sector and U.S. Government commitments to promote climate resilience adaptation, and mitigation across Africa.

Last month, Beijing announced a major grant to offer South Africa with solar panels and generators. To what extent is it essential to improve our climate support of Africa to compete with China?

Mr. KERRY. Personally—I'm going to speak personally on this. I do not think that the choice we make with respect to Africa ought to be just based on what China is doing. It ought to be based on what we ought to be doing, and what all of us ought to be doing. Africa, I mean there are 48 Sub-Saharan African countries, 48, that equals 0.55 percent of emissions. They are not causing this problem. But 17 of the top 20 impacted nations by climate are in Africa.

Now, if we do not stop and think about that in terms of global responsibility, and global politics, we are really missing something. And right now, I find the tensions between global north and global south are growing. And food production in Africa is threatened, water is threatened in south central Asia, in Africa in various places.

And this is why the Congressman who was speaking earlier about showing on his charts, there is only one group of people in the world that I know of who are busy trying to tell people that

this is not happening, and it is fake, and that somehow we are missing something. Only one group of people, and they are here in Washington, and some of them spread around the country.

The fact is that, all around the world, smart people, people who lead countries, who are responsible for the lives of millions of people just like you are, and we are, are responding to the clearly defined crisis of climate. So, I think we have to look at this beyond the China. I think we have to look at this in the context of what is our responsibility to the future, and what is our responsibility to our fellow human beings.

And how do we deal with a crisis that has been brilliantly described over these last thirty years or more where everything predicted is happening, only it is happening faster and bigger than it was predicted.

Mrs. CHERFILUS-McCORMICK. My second question is, according to the Biden-Harris Administration national security strategy, no region impacts the United States more directly than the western hemisphere. In June, Haiti experienced intense flash flooding, rock slides, and landslides that destroyed thousands of homes and killed over fifty people combined with the ongoing humanitarian crisis and substantial gang violence, many Haitians are looking to flee the country.

Secretary Kerry, as the Biden Administration focuses on the root cause of migration, can you describe how taking action on climate crisis can help bring civility to our nations, and other nations where their citizens are looking to migrate?

Mr. KERRY. Thank you so much for that thoughtful question, and it is really a major, major problem, because there are now climate refugees already today, who are moving across borders, and looking for different places to live. Some of the people, not all of them, but some of the folks coming from Central America, and South America fit into that category.

There are folks who used to farm, who now find they cannot find the products, the goods that they were farming, and so they are migrating. And one of the things that we learned during the course of the war in Syria was a million people moved into Damascus, which greatly complicated the war.

But then they began to migrate, and became a political tool actually, and were sort of pushed to migrate into Europe, and had a profound impact, a negative one, on the politics of Europe as a result. So, this is a major issue, and it is one we really have to pay attention to.

Mrs. CHERFILUS-McCORMICK. Secretary, I wanted to ask you one question before we end, which is imperative. In April, Ft. Lauderdale, which is in my district, witnessed unprecedented flash flood caused by the highest record rainfall in one single day. The flooding resulted in significant property damage, the closure of the airport, and shortages of gas all across south Florida.

Recently ocean temperatures in Florida Keys soared to ninety-six degrees, highlighting the impact of the rising temperatures on the region's marine ecosystem. Can you explain to us why this is happening, and what is causing the increased weather, and extreme weather, since there are people who do not believe in climate change?

Mr. KERRY. Well, thank you, again. I just might point out that I just saw this article this morning that Farmers Insurance has pulled out of Florida, affecting 100,00 policyholders. And the reason the insurance company has pulled out is because this unprecedented change in weather patterns, et cetera, has affected their ability to be able to make policies, and for people to be able to afford those policies under the current circumstances.

This has been a predicted happening. I mean, everybody has been talking about the potential impact on insurance, and now it is happening in various parts of the world. So, I mean, the reason, as I said earlier, 90 percent of the heating of the planet, which is documented, goes into the ocean, and that warming of the ocean then increases the moisture that rises from the ocean, and travels around the planet with the planetary winds. And when it decides to fall in rainfall, it is in much larger amounts than ever before because of the increase of the moisture. It has changed wind patterns, and weather patterns, and the heating has other ancillary effects.

Mr. MAST. The chair now recognizes Mr. Issa for 5 minutes.

Mr. ISSA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Secretary, it is a pleasure seeing you, it is a pleasure knowing that you are in this Administration, and I mean that quite sincerely. I am often disappointed in this Administration, I am not necessarily in lock step with all of your opinions, but you and I go back a long way of trying to do the right thing.

First of all I wanted to get a figure you gave that I may have miswritten. You predicted, you didn't give the amount they have today, but you predicted twenty-two hundred gigawatts in China by 2030, is that accurate?

Mr. KERRY. That is what our current estimates are showing, this comes from a number of different sources. But it could be more, it could be less.

Mr. ISSA. But today how many gigs do they have, roughly?

Mr. KERRY. Let me get back to you. I was actually talking with folks about that yesterday, and I couldn't get it pinned down, but I will come back to you with a number.

Mr. ISSA. OK, that would be good for me to have that, because that is a lofty goal that as you and I both know, you go to China, you see a lot of amazing cranes. But then when you go back, you see the cranes in the same position, so it doesn't always mean that they are doing what they say they are going to do. In 2021 you told this committee that trusting China in climate change promises would be stupid, and malpractice.

Without directly using that quote again, would you generally agree that it still would be malpractice?

Mr. KERRY. I think trusting a lot of the players who have been involved in this, government, and also private sector, is not the smartest thing in the world, because we have been burned.

Mr. ISSA. Now, China is a country that buys all of the above, no question at all. They buy a massive amount of ours, and the rest of the world's coal. They are increasing their coal, they are buying natural gas, they are putting in nuclear, and as you said, they are doing some considerable work in the photovoltaic that they

produce. But India has a tendency to continue burning both dung and coal.

You are going to China, but we had the head of India here for a joint session just recently, and he said a lot of great things, but he didn't say we are going to buy natural gas, or do other incremental things to reduce the carbon footprint. Are we dealing with two problems, a China that it is malpractice to believe that they will do what they say they will do, and an India that constantly seems to say they are too poor to do what they should do to do any part of climate change reduction?

Mr. KERRY. Well, interestingly, Congressman, and thank you for your comments, we have enjoyed working together on a number of things. India has set a very lofty goal of trying to deploy five hundred gigawatts of renewable energy by 2030, that is their goal. And if India could succeed in doing that, India would be in compliance with the effort to keep—that would be a 1.5 degree plan, that would be really possible.

Mr. ISSA. And I understand that, Mr. Secretary. But if for example, if India had simply switched its coal production to natural gas, they would have reduced more than that amount, and they would have done so at a lower cost. So, isn't it fair to say that India sets lofty goals like China, but actions speak louder than words, so far their actions—

Mr. KERRY. Well, India is deploying. They are deploying, their hope is to deploy, and their hope is to close coal. Now, they cannot afford, they do not have LNG, and they—

Mr. ISSA. Well, they do not have LNG because they haven't built the plants, or signed the contract.

Mr. KERRY. Well, that is true, but on the other hand, they cannot afford to do that on their own, they were not able to at that point in time. India is growing now, its economy is growing. The visit here produced some significant joint initiatives going forward. I am actually going to India before the end of this month to followup on conversations we had with both the prime minister being here, but also before that with some of his other teams.

Mr. ISSA. OK. And if I could squeeze in one more quick question, you are going to meet in China with a number of leaders, but the President called Xi Jinping, called him a dictator. Do you believe he wields the power of a dictator today in China? Meaning is his ability similar to Putin's ability to affect what he says he will do, such that if he makes a promise he can keep it?

Mr. KERRY. There is no question at all that President Xi is the major decider of the direction, and of the policies of China.

Mr. ISSA. Is he in fact effectively a dictator?

Mr. KERRY. Well, I do not think it is useful to get into—I am not going to get into—

Mr. ISSA. But he does wield the power of a dictator—

Mr. KERRY. He wields enormous power as the leader of China, absolutely, and everybody understands that. But I do not—

Mr. ISSA. Do you wish the President had used another word?

Mr. KERRY. No, I do not even—frankly, all of that is sort of like water off the duck's back, and I do not think we ought to get tangled up in labels, and names, and whatever. What we ought to do look at the heart of what we are trying to do. President Biden actu-

ally has a very good relationship with President Xi, and President Xi vice versa, he honors the relationship he has with President Biden.

And I think in Secretary Blinken's visit to China, and subsequently in Janet Yellen's visit with China, where you saw in her own statements publicly, and assessments, there was frank conversation. But the effort is well underway now to try to stabilize, and avoid conflict by virtue of unforeseen consequences or mistakes.

Mr. MAST. The chair now recognizes—

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Chairman, can I just ask one follow, it doesn't require—but would you commit, when you have had those meetings with India, and China, to in writing, or in some other way report back to us so we have an update?

Mr. KERRY. Sure, I would be happy to.

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

Mr. MAST. Thank you, Mr. Issa.

The chair now recognizes Ms. Titus for 5 minutes.

Mr. TITUS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When you go toward the end there are not many questions left to ask, but you have the luxury of having heard everything gone before and kind of reached some conclusions. One thing I heard was my colleague on the other side call the secretary, most of the scientists in the world, and the heads of 195 countries who belong to the U.N. Climate Agreement grifters.

Now, that's something that should be taken down, but since he's gone in his typical hit and run fashion, it would not be much point. Now, the arguments that I've heard from both sides, on the other side of the aisle we hear you cannot make China do anything. You cannot force China to do anything, you cannot impose any restrictions on China, therefore we shouldn't be doing anything in the United States.

On the other hand, when you are getting ready to go to China, and try to negotiate something, or make some points, or try to influence their decision, they do not want you to go, they think that's not a good idea. Also we hear that you have a pro-China, not a pro-American approach, and you are not helping U.S. business and workers.

On the other hand, these people who are saying this voted against the Inflation Reduction Act, which made a big investment in manufacturing, and workers, and solar energy panels that we do not have to get from the Uyghurs, but can be made here. Speaking of the Uyghurs, there's a real, now sudden interest in human rights of the Uyghurs, but it doesn't bother them too much to deal with Saudi Arabia when it comes to these issues.

Also we know that this is a world issue, climate change affects everything from demographics, to politics, and economics, and yet we are not looking at the rest of the world, it is as though only the U.S. and China exist on the globe. So, I would ask you, Mr. Secretary, because climate change, and energy policy is so pervasive in everything we do, it is not just about dealing with the next storm, or the next wildfire.

It has so much of an impact on peacekeeping, on development of foreign countries, on our role internationally. Is what you are hear-

ing from the other side diminishing our influence? Hurting our role as we try to kind of move back into being international leaders, kind of upsetting some of our NATO relations because of what Europe is doing, and what we are not?

Are the cuts in the budget going to make a difference because we cannot now invest what the President would like to see us do to help the rest of the world with these global problems? Would you just address that sort of thing for us?

Mr. KERRY. Well, Congresswoman, thank you very much. Let me just say I got the figures delivered to me here, if I take 15 seconds on this. China, according to the International Energy Agency by 2030, China will have somewhere between three thousand and four thousand gigawatts of renewable energy. That's by fathoms larger than any other country on the planet.

And so, they are moving very aggressively in that regard. With respect to—look, people really do count on America for a lot of things in the world, and I think everyone should be extraordinarily proud of our history of doing things. We are the largest humanitarian donor in the world, and you look at what we have done with AIDS in Africa, or Ebola, through various counter terrorism efforts, other things.

But we also, for a long period of time, projected, and this is sort of the soft power projection, but we also helped people develop, we helped people do more. That has been retreating in the last years. We are now giving less than a lot of other countries are doing in order to help particularly on climate. And I think it does have an impact. I think that people ask questions, I certainly hear these questions.

Why aren't you doing this, why aren't you more present, look at who is giving us help here, and so forth. So, I think that you cannot just sit there anywhere and wish that things are going to be as they have been historically. You have to invest in it. You have to actually proactively have people on the ground. You have to build relationships, you have to do things that people see you doing not just on an economic competitive basis, but because it is the right thing to do.

And I think we have fallen a little behind on that. I know President Biden feels very strongly about living up to our commitments, and our values.

Mr. TITUS. Thank you very much.

I yield back.

Mr. MAST. Thank you, Ms. Titus.

The chair now recognizes Mr. Waltz for 5 minutes.

Mr. WALTZ. Mr. Secretary, in exchange with Mr. Mills, you just testified under oath that you never owned a private jet. Mr. Chairman, I'd like to enter into the record an article here from February 15th of 2023 that the John Kerry family private jet was sold shortly after accusations of climate hypocrisy.

[The information referred to follows:]



JOHN KERRY

John Kerry's family sold private jet after criticism over environmental impact

by Julia Johnson, Politics Reporter February 15, 2023 02:10 PM

Special Presidential Envoy for Climate [John Kerry's](#) family has sold its private jet following criticism regarding the aircraft's [environmental impact](#).

Kerry's [State Department](#) spokeswoman Whitney Smith told the *Washington Examiner*, "I can confirm the plane previously owned by his wife's family was sold last summer."

[WATCH: WHOOP! GOLDBERG WONDERS WHY THERE IS 'BANNING OF TRANS PEOPLE' BUT NOT GUNS](#)

She explained that "Secretary Kerry travels commercially in his role as special presidential envoy for climate."

[Fox News](#) reported that Kerry's family had owned a Gulfstream GIV-SP through its charter firm, Flying Squirrel.

The jet is now owned by AV Aviation, which is a firm based at Waterbury-Oxford Airport in Connecticut, according to the report. The firm is reportedly a subsidiary of New York City hedge fund AC Investment Management. The hedge fund is focused on renewable energy and energy efficiency, per its [website](#).

After the aircraft's transfer of ownership, it was requested on Aug. 22 that a Limiting Aircraft Data Display be placed on it. This would block the jet from being tracked publicly. Asked if Kerry had anything to do with this, Smith said "no."

Smith also said that Kerry did not have any connection to AC Investment Management, whose subsidiary AV Aviation now owns the jet.

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE FROM THE WASHINGTON EXAMINER](#)

Last year, Kerry [emphasized](#) that energy transitions need to happen much faster in order to save the planet from climate change.

"So, everything has to accelerate and by vast amounts," he explained. "We have to be deploying renewables six times faster than we are today. We have to be deploying electric vehicles 20 times faster than we are today if you're going to keep the Earth's temperatures at 1.5 degrees [Celsius] of increase."

Mr. MAST. Without objection.

Mr. Secretary, do you stand by that testimony that you have never owned, or your family, by your family—

Mr. KERRY. I personally, yes, my wife owned a plane, and sold the plane, but that's been—

Mr. WALTZ. And you flew on that plane?

Mr. KERRY. Not in a number of years, but I have flown on it, sure.

Mr. WALTZ. And this article is not then, inaccurate, that your family owned a plane, you flew on a plane?

Mr. KERRY. My wife owned a plane.

Mr. WALTZ. Mr. Secretary, here is the issue. This isn't some kind of partisan gotcha. When we are asking Americans to make serious sacrifices as we transition for the common good, and your family, and or your self are flying around on private jets, that smacks of hypocrisy, it actually hurts your cause, Mr. Secretary. But I just wanted to know from a records standpoint—

Mr. KERRY. Afford me the right, at least to set the record straight here. I do not fly on a private jet, I fly commercially on all of my responsibilities—

Mr. WALTZ. Have you flown on a private jet since you have taken this position?

Mr. KERRY. Let me just finish. I have flown five times in the last two and a half years on MILAIR, which you also fly on, or some of you travel fly on. Five times. Otherwise, all of my trips are commercial airlines.

Mr. WALTZ. Have you flown on a private jet in a personal or official capacity since you have taken this position?

Mr. KERRY. Possibly once. I think—I'm trying to think of a date.

Mr. WALTZ. I think you need to take the broader point of how this appears to the American people as we are asking them to take that—

Mr. KERRY. But no, it shouldn't get there, and let me tell you why—

Mr. WALTZ. You know these testimoneys—

Mr. KERRY. We are not asking Americans not to fly, you are trying to create an unequal thing—

Mr. WALTZ. No, we are asking you to lead by example, Mr. Secretary.

Mr. KERRY. We are not saying do not fly, which is why I fly commercially.

Mr. WALTZ. You, your family, and others to lead by example. In that vein, does your office, or the State Department keep a record of your official travel, and scheduled meetings?

Mr. KERRY. Of course.

Mr. WALTZ. Does that include the individuals you are scheduled to meet with? Can you provide those records to Congress? Will you provide those records to Congress?

Mr. KERRY. Of who I have met with?

Mr. WALTZ. Your official travel, taxpayer funded, while in this position.

Mr. KERRY. Sure, happy to do so.

Mr. WALTZ. Thank you, I appreciate that commitment. Switching topics here to some of the other diplomacy you have conduct. In a

2018 interview you admitted to speaking with Iranian Foreign Minister Zarif quote three or four times from the start of the previous Administration. How many times did you speak with the Iranian Foreign Minister Zarif during the last Administration? And I'll enter into the record, Mr. Chairman——

Mr. MAST. Without objection.

[The information referred to follows:]

11/20/23, 12:05 PM

John Kerry slammed for 'shameful' shadow diplomacy after admitting to meetings with Iran


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John Kerry slammed for 'shameful' shadow diplomacy after admitting to meetings with Iran

Published September 13, 2018

Fox News

Former Secretary of State John Kerry is being slammed for conducting shadow diplomacy with Iran after admitting to multiple meetings with Iranian officials behind the backs of Trump administration officials – including over the scrapped nuclear deal.

An administration official on Thursday told Fox News Kerry's meetings are "shameful," pointing out what Iranian-backed militias are doing to kill and injure people in Syria, Iraq and Yemen.

Other Republicans suggested it may not even be legal.

"John Kerry is out giving advice to Iran about how to maneuver around what Donald Trump is doing; it's insidious," Ari Fleischer, the former White House press secretary for George W. Bush, said Wednesday on Fox News' "Special Report." "I don't know if it's legal or illegal, I don't care about that side of it. It's wrong."

Kerry, the former Massachusetts senator who worked as the nation's top diplomat in the Obama administration, made the comments about his interactions with Iran as he promotes his new book, "Every Day is Extra."

During an appearance on Hugh Hewitt's radio show on Wednesday, Kerry acknowledged meeting with Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif "three or four times" since leaving office, admitting to discussing the scrapped nuclear deal and other issues.

"What I have done is tried to elicit from him what Iran might be willing to do in order to change the dynamic in the Middle East for the better," Kerry said.

Later Wednesday, during an appearance on Fox News' "The Daily Briefing with Dana Perino," Kerry did not deny the suggestion he's telling the Iranians to wait out Trump until there is a Democratic president again.

"I think everybody in the world is talking about waiting out President Trump," said Kerry, who ran unsuccessfully for president in 2004 and who has not ruled out a 2020 bid.

It was first reported in May that Kerry met Zarif as he worked to preserve the deal, as part of what the Boston Globe called an "aggressive yet stealthy" mission to put pressure on the Trump administration to keep the deal in some form. Kerry was part of the team that negotiated the deal for the Obama administration.

Trump in May, though, announced plans to leave the Iran nuclear deal, declaring the pact has failed to halt the country's nuclear ambitions. Last month, the Treasury Department restored sanctions against Iran.

It has been suggested before that Kerry's meetings with high-profile foreign leaders could violate the Logan Act — which prohibits private citizens from negotiating on behalf of the U.S. government without authorization. No one has ever been successfully prosecuted under the law, however.

"This is the question: What was John Kerry doing?" Fleischer asked Wednesday on "Special Report." "What was he saying, what were the specifics? I don't think it was general, I think he was giving Iran advice about how to wait out President Trump."

Others suggested hypocrisy was at play, given the suggestions then-Trump national security adviser Mike Flynn violated the Logan Act for his meetings with the ambassador to Russia during the transition. Flynn was not charged with violating the act.

Fox News security analyst Walid Phares referred to Flynn's situation, pointing out the media considered it a "scandal" when Flynn met with "a diplomat of a country that has an embassy in D.C." But, he said, they consider it "normal" when Kerry conducts "parallel diplomacy" with "a regime on the U.S. terror list."

Arkansas Republican Sen. Tom Cotton also knocked Democrats and the media for their "hypocrisy" over not raising the alarm about

<https://www.foxnews.com/politics/john-kerry-slammed-for-shameful-shadow-diplomacy-after-admitting-to-meetings-with-iran.print>

1/2

11/20/23, 12:05 PM John Kerry slammed for 'shameful' shadow diplomacy after admitting to meetings with Iran
Kerry's comments, though he called the Logan Act "a stupid, dead-letter law."

When the reports of Kerry's contacts first surfaced this year, Trump blasted Kerry for what he called "possibly illegal Shadow Diplomacy."

"The United States does not need John Kerry's possibly illegal Shadow Diplomacy on the very badly negotiated Iran Deal. He was the one that created this MESS in the first place!" Trump tweeted Monday.

Kerry, though, speaking to Perino on Wednesday, denied his conversations were inappropriate.

"Every secretary of state, former secretary of state continues to meet with foreign leaders, goes to security conferences, goes around the world," Kerry said. "We all do that. And we all have conversations (about) the state of affairs with the world in order to understand them."

Fox News' Brooke Singman contributed to this report.

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Mr. WALTZ. That three or four times, let's take that at face value. Did you communicate with him using Signal, WhatsApp, Telegram, any other?

Mr. KERRY. I do not recall how I communicated with him. I met him formally in the course of international—specifically, I think it was at UNGA in New York. I saw him in Munich, at the Munich Security Conference, which he was invited to. I saw him—

Mr. WALTZ. According to leaked audio provided by the New York Times, Zarif said you told him that Israel attacked Iranian assets in Syria, quote, at least 200 times, and Zarif was surprised you would reveal such sensitive information. Now, that was according to leaked audio. Now, under oath, do you stand by your previous denial that that ever happened?

Mr. KERRY. I absolutely stand. On the day that that report came out we made it crystal clear, in a release that we put out, that that never took place. It was at a time when there was public discussion of those attacks. It was in public circulation. I do not know what he is confusing, or what he did, but I can tell you that I never had that conversation. And I can tell you that in 5 years running one of the largest prosecutor's offices in America, in 2 years lieutenant Governor, in 28 years in the Senate, as a member of the Intelligence Committee, as a Secretary of State, nobody ever questioned—

Mr. WALTZ. I only have a few seconds left, Mr. Secretary. This is why I am raising that issue. Would you find it appropriate if a former Trump Administration official traveled around and talked to the same officials you are, and said, you do not have to abide by these agreements; hold fast until 2024, a new regime, or a new Administration may be coming in; and therefore undermining current Administration diplomacy. Would you find that appropriate?

Mr. KERRY. I am not going to speak to any hypotheticals, but I can tell you I never engaged in that kind—

Mr. WALTZ. Shadow diplomacy undermines American goals.

Mr. KERRY. Depending on what it involves, shadow diplomacy has also saved us from a war. If you look at 1963 with the Cuban Missile Crisis, it was behind the scenes, back-channel conversation.

Mr. WALTZ. Mr. Secretary, I would posture that your shadow diplomacy now has us on the verge of Iran having a nuclear weapon.

Mr. KERRY. I wasn't conducting shadow diplomacy. I was at a security conference.

Mr. WALTZ. That is now exploding as they race toward full enrichment, from 20 percent to sixty percent, on the verge of having a nuclear weapon in a nuclear arms race in the Middle East. As Americans we do not undermine other Administrations.

Mr. KERRY. The reason that happened, my friend, is because Donald Trump pulled out of that agreement. There was no way they could have had a nuclear weapon under the agreement that existed. And even in Israel, the security establishment of Israel believed that agreement had done the job. President Trump just pulled out, gave it away.

Mr. MAST. The chair now recognizes Mr. Schneider for 5 minutes.

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Thank you. And Special Envoy Secretary Kerry, thank you for your time today. Earlier we had an exchange that

I guess you can only describe as childish, but I thought I would engage a little bit on the science. How old is the Earth?

Mr. KERRY. I do not remember how many billions, but billions.

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Four and a half. I'll answer, it's four and a half billion years. Or, in another way of looking at it, 4,500,000 millennia. And I used to, with my kids, walk through an exercise, if the Earth was a year old, where things place. And just some of the numbers on that, if the Earth was a year old and formed on January 1st, it would be mid-February when life arose on Earth. It would be sometime in mid-November when the fish started swimming in the oceans. The dinosaurs would have gone extinct around Christmas. And all of human existence would have been captured in the last hour of the last day of the year. So, this idea of comparing numbers from long ago, human existence is a relatively very short period of Earth's existence.

The other thing in this, Mr. Secretary, just to State the obvious, is there a difference between life existing on Earth and civilization thriving on Earth?

Mr. KERRY. Sure.

Mr. SCHNEIDER. And is what we are talking about, addressing climate change, making sure we are doing everything we can to ensure that civilization, society, America continues to thrive on Earth?

Mr. KERRY. Indeed.

Mr. SCHNEIDER. OK. Just another statistic I'll point out, 40 percent of all people on Earth live within 100 kilometers, or 62 miles, of a coast. In United States, that number is 50 percent of all Americans live within 50 miles of the coasts. And in some of the notes in preparing for this last night, I read that the first experience of climate change is oftentimes with water, whether it is too much, or too little.

I think that is one of the key things we face. It is our biggest threat to our Nation, climate change is, to our way of life, to the world, to civilization, and halting the displacement, instability, and myriad of other consequences I think is the greatest challenge, or one of the greatest challenges we face. So, thank you for your leadership in addressing this.

And I know in Congress, last Congress, we passed the Bipartisan Infrastructure and Jobs Act. We passed the Inflation Reduction Act, which is being accorded as the greatest to date investment. And one of the pieces of that that I am very proud of was the work we are doing on sustainable aviation fuel. We have to eliminate, or reduce greenhouse emissions every way we can, we can electrify our ground fleet, our air fleet will be something different.

Secretary, can you talk about how we are working with our friends, as well as our adversaries, or competitors to ensure that we are doing everything we can to reduce greenhouse emissions for the long term?

Mr. KERRY. Well, Congressman, thank you. I mean, obviously the entire U.N. process is geared to bring people together around a common goal. And that goal is to try to keep the Earth's temperature increase limited to 1.5 degrees. Why 1.5 degrees? Because again, the scientists have—running all the models, a myriad of

models by the way, which show what the damage is to Earth at certain levels of temperature. And so that is our goal.

And the only way to achieve that goal is by coming together in a multinational basis in order to negotiate some common sense approach as to how we are going to deal with this. Now, 20 countries, the 20 largest economies on the planet equal shy of eighty percent of all the emissions. Twenty countries are the principal cause of what is happening today.

Ten of those countries or so have all agreed to plans to try to reduce emissions to keep the 1.5. We are still working with other countries to empower them to be able to do that. If a country is entirely dependent on coal today, they are not going to shut their economy down overnight. So, we have got to try to find a way in common enterprise for all of our lives, for life on the planet to help some of those countries to be able to make that transition.

And we are getting a little stuck there because some people just do not want to do that.

Mr. SCHNEIDER. And I just want to reclaim my time to make two last points. One, the United States cannot solve this problem alone, we have to work with the world——

Mr. KERRY. Correct.

Mr. SCHNEIDER. But the world cannot do it without the United States. But to my colleagues on the other side, we are talking about the sacrifices people are being asked to make to address climate change. I would argue that the cost we are putting on people by not addressing are far greater. Food will cost more, as you touched on already, insurance either costs more, or is completely unavailable for people living in some states.

Cleaning up after major, extreme weather events. From hurricanes, tornadoes, fires, droughts, every one of these is putting an economic burden on communities across the Nation, and across the world. And if we do not act now, if we do not lead, it is only going to get worse.

I yield back.

Mr. MAST. The gentleman yields back.

The chair now recognizes Mr. Burchett for 5 minutes.

Mr. BURCHETT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary Kerry, thanks for being here. Sir, you are unelected, and you are a non-Senate-confirmed bureaucrat, basically. Can you tell me what the cost of some of these climate agreements that you have gotten the American taxpayer in, how much it is going to cost them?

Mr. KERRY. Well, Congressman——

Mr. BURCHETT. Just in dollars.

Mr. KERRY. The last thing, I think, I ever wanted to be in life was called a bureaucrat. But——

Mr. BURCHETT. Well, we are. All are, so, you know.

Mr. KERRY. Well, speak for yourself.

Mr. BURCHETT. I do not trust government; I am the government, so——

Mr. KERRY. Let me just say that the cost, you know, we all committed, internationally, the world committed to put \$100 billion into a fund that would help these other less developed countries be able to transition. We've never actually met that full \$100. We've

made some commitments. I mean, I cannot run through them all. There were a lot of different bits and pieces to it. But, by in large, we're seeing many of those things repay themselves many times over because of the transformation of our economy.

And, but—

Mr. BURCHETT. But can you just tell me how much we—how much is it going to cost us? Is there surely some economic effects of policy?

Mr. KERRY. Well, the U.N. Finance—you're right. And, sir, the U.N. Finance Analysis suggests that it will cost trillions of dollars. Maybe \$2.5 to \$4.5 trillion a year between now and 2050, to actually affect the full transition to a clean energy economy.

But that's not spending. Most of that is calculating private sector funding that will invest in these new technologies and in these new economic opportunities.

For instance, we have to build out a grid, a competent grid, with a smart grid, so we can balance the distribution of energy in certain places.

Mr. BURCHETT. Yes, sir. But you understand, though, when they invest, I mean, it just—this money just doesn't appear.

Mr. KERRY. No. You're absolutely correct.

Mr. BURCHETT. And they're going to charge us—you know, I was always in the State legislature, and somebody said, well, let's just put another nickel on a can of beer. And I was like, well, you know, they're just going to pass that onto every—to your constituents. So, I mean, I hope you understand that.

Let me move on a little bit. Can you explain why you and other members of the U.S. delegation to the United Nations Climate Conference in 2021 and 2022 did not follow the President's direction to track your carbon emissions?

Mr. KERRY. Yes. It's unfortunate, but there is—they ran into problems, apparently, in how it could get measured and how it gets accrued. It should be done, and we're trying to get people to sort of bear down.

Mr. BURCHETT. Some of those bureaucrats?

Mr. KERRY. Yes, I guess.

Mr. BURCHETT. Yes. All right. You've also agreed that countries need to pay poor and developing countries for loss and damage due to climate change. Why do the good folks in East Tennessee, that work very hard for their dollars, need to pay for a flood in Africa or South Asia?

Mr. KERRY. Well, we're not specifically paying for a flood in South Africa. Though, sometimes, money may go to something like that. But the United States, as I said, is proudly the largest humanitarian donor in the world. And Republican and Democrat Administrations alike have historically—I mean, look at what, you know, President George W. Bush put a significant amount of money into the AIDS program in Africa. Ronald Reagan put significant amounts of money into denuclearizing and other things.

I mean, we try to help the world. And you all, as the elected officials, have to balance to what degree, what is that amount going to be, and for what it's specifically going to go. But I think our country is enriched and that our civilization is better for the fact

that we do try to help people out in other places when they're in trouble.

Pakistan, when 30 million were dislocated last year in an unprecedented flood, we put, I think, you know, a few million dollars, \$100 million, I think it was, ultimately, to help them recover under this.

Mr. BURCHETT. Let me get onto something else, Mr. Secretary. I apologize to you.

Mr. KERRY. That's all right.

Mr. BURCHETT. But we've said here that China is considered a developing country, and that can be left for later debate, but how many American tax dollars do you intend to pay the Chinese Communist Party for climate change?

Mr. KERRY. None. We're not paying them for that. And I do not think there's been one bilateral disbursement of money to China since 2018, when President Trump was President of the United States.

Mr. BURCHETT. Right.

Mr. KERRY. But the Biden Administration has put zero into that.

Mr. BURCHETT. Zero. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. MAST. Thank you, Mr. Burchett. The Chair now recognizes Mr. Keating for 5 minutes.

Mr. KEATING. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you for allowing me to waive onto this subcommittee on this important hearing today.

Thank you, Secretary Kerry, for being here. Your experience is well-known. You've been in the executive branch at the State government level, you've been in the Senate and the legislative sector for 28 years, and Secretary of State. And I think, perhaps, in this morning's testimony, what we heard is a reflection of that, to an extent, that the questions posed to you in your official capacity really are in the province of the Secretary of State of the United States. Or some of the solutions are found in the legislative side in the House or the Senate.

And you're here as the envoy. You're here because there's an important new position that was created, because if you look at the importance of climate change right now, it's clear, it touches everything. If you were doing it in legislative committees, you could easily be testifying in front of the Armed Services Committee, or the Intel Committee, or Agricultural Committee, or Energy and Commerce, or Homeland, or Appropriations.

If you were dealing with Cabinet responsibility, you could go through the whole specter of the President's Cabinet and find how climate change is a directly affected and important piece of their function.

So, I think, given your background, our government is well-served by having you in this role of envoy. Bringing together all these fragments into one important position. And I thank you for that. But I want to give you the opportunity this morning, and as I'm at the last of the queue here, mercifully, you might be thinking. But, as I'm last in the queue or pretty close, I'll say this, I just want to give you the chance. We've talked about what the past has been. Some people are going back to creation. We've talked about

the near-term effects of what we're doing, the current effects of what we're doing.

But, you know, given the importance of dealing with this issue existentially, given the fact that scarcity of water creates wars, famine creates migration, everything that we have and the immanence of things getting worse, could you take a few moments and just share some of the discussions you've had and the knowledge you've had, on what the future is going to look like more concretely?

Not just deadlines for dates, but this is real stuff. This is a real, there's a real urgency to this analysis. And can you take a few minutes on those matters of how this is going to affect the lives of everyone on this planet, how it's going to affect all those areas. And just share with us some of the things you have learned talking with others around the world.

Mr. KERRY. Well, thank you, Congressman. Obviously, we're already seeing ways in which it's going to affect people. We've had increasing, every year, increasing storm intensity, storm damage.

We're spending billions—literally, actually, trillions. We had a trillion in damages, I think, it was over the last 10 years. And that's money thrown away, in a sense. No, not that it's inappropriate; we should be helping people afterwards. But would not it make a lot more sense if we were avoiding that damage in the first place, or minimizing it?

And you asked the question, what's it going to look like? That depends on what we decide to do. It's very obvious that there are huge threats here. Literally, food production for an entire continent could implode. Water is already diminishing. Last year, the Rhine River was down to inches. They had to stop navigation on the river because of it. You're seeing glaciers that are now absolutely predictable as to when they will be completely gone. And at the rate the ice is melting in the north and south of Antarctica and Arctic, there are dire predictions now about how that's moved forward by about 30 years at the pace of which it is vanishing.

And parts of the earth are warming much faster than other parts of the earth. The Arctic, for instance, is warming four times faster than the rest of the earth, other places are. We're hitting heat levels in places that have never been lived by human beings on a regular basis.

So, you know, what is life going to look like in the future? I'm an optimist. I'm genuinely an optimist about this. I'm watching what is now happening because of the Inflation Reduction Act. I'm seeing new processes, new seriousness of purpose among people who up until now never thought they had to be serious.

So, I have a sense that if we could come together and continue to accelerate the reduction of these emissions, we have an incredibly bright energy future staring us in the face. We can have clean energy. We can have energy that if not renewable, is still clean in nuclear, whichever.

You know, I look at the U.S. Navy, we've had ships that are nuclear, a small nuclear plant that have never had a sailor killed or lost or an accident. Never had a spill. We know how to do this. We are just not choosing to do many of the things that are available to us to be able to do.

So, I think there is a huge, exciting set of possibilities for what will happen in this new economy that is going to develop. And it is going to develop, because I see the most serious of our entrepreneurs, the most successful of our entrepreneurs, the best of our financiers, all of them are now seized by this issue and they're out there trying to push new processes, new technologies, new possibilities.

And if we do what historically we humans have done, we are going to hopefully adapt and make the right choices.

Mr. MAST. The Chair now recognizes—

Mr. KEATING. With that optimistic thought, I yield back.

Mr. MAST. Thank you. The Chair now recognizes Mr. Smith.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much, Mr. Secretary. Welcome. It is great to see you again. Let me just say at the outset how grateful I was when you were Secretary of State. And legislation that I had introduced to help end the practice of child abduction. The bill passed twice. I named it after Sean and David Goldman. Sean was a young man who was abducted to Brazil.

You changed the policy of the Obama Administration, because before that they were against it. It sat in the Senate for 5 years, having sent it over several times. And I want to thank you for that. I had an oversight hearing on it just the other day in my committee, the Human Rights Committee. And we are mitigating the number of child abductions that are occurring and helping to bring people back.

So, thank you so much. It was your change of heart, not you, but the change within the Administration that made that happen. So, I'm very, very grateful.

I would like to ask you if you could—you know, I had a hearing last July. I've chaired 79 congressional hearings on human rights abuse in China. My most recent was yesterday. I chair the China Commission. We had Enes Freedom, who use to play for the Celtics, was fired because he wore Free the Uyghurs on his shoes. He was fired because of that.

And, as a result, the NBA, and I think in a cowardly way, has told everybody in the NBA, just shut up, say nothing about human rights in China. And his testimony yesterday was absolutely compelling. And we're going to do a followup. We've invited, or are inviting, the NBA to come to that hearing.

But, last July, I chaired a hearing on the Lantos Commission, because we were out of power, it was Republican. So, Lantos, we could call hearings. It was on the exploitation of children and adults in the Democratic Republic of Congo who are mining cobalt and soon will be mining lithium.

We found out, and I've raised this issue before, but the hearing just was, you know, a catalyst for, we need to do more on this. Something on the order of 40,000 children are in these artisanal mines. They're dying. They're getting sick. There is cave-ins. They're inhaling all kinds of debris without proper.

Now, who runs it all? The Chinese Communist Party. They own just about every mine there. All of the finished product—well, not finished, but the mined product of cobalt is sent to China for processing. Then it goes into EVs by way of the batteries.

An, it seems to me that no matter where anybody comes down on the advisability of having more electric vehicles, it should not be on the backs of African children, be they in DR Congo or anywhere else. And 70 percent of all the cobalt, as you know, does come from the DR Congo.

I introduced a bill, H.R. 4443, that would look to enforce the Tariff Act Section 307 and require an all-out effort to try to protect those children and those adults from this egregious human rights practice by the Chinese Communist Party.

I did meet with our Ambassador, and it was a very good meeting, Lucy Tamlyn, a couple of weeks ago, to the DR Congo. And I had known that they're talking about an MOU, but the problem with the MOU is it's just aspirational. It's like Sense of the Congress or Sense of the Senate language. There's no teeth in it.

And I'm asking you today, you know, I know you are very much in favor, as is the Administration, of electric vehicles. But they should not be—the supply chain should not be contingent on whether or not we get it from the DR Congo by way of the Chinese Communist Party.

Please take a look at the bill. You know, we've got to protect those kids and those adults. They are dying. We had people talk about the lung diseases that they're getting. And these kids have no healthcare, so they just die. And there's beatings that are occurring by Chinese Communist Party soldiers who are deployed there. And, unfortunately, the DR Congo leadership just basically looks the other way, because they're getting perhaps even paid off.

If you could speak to the issue of the cobalt, and soon the lithium, that will also be coming out of the DR Congo.

Mr. KERRY. Well, Congressman Smith, thank you very much for your persistent, over the years, work on all of this. You've been really tenacious and super-focused on it. It was a pleasure to work with you on it before.

Let me just say to you that we have an MOU with the DRC and Zambia on advancing critical minerals now and to add processing capacity there. So, we're focused on it. And I will convey your thoughts to the appropriate bureau in the Department out of this. But we thank you for that.

Mr. SMITH. I would appreciate that. And again, the MOU is a good idea, but it doesn't go far enough. It is all aspirational. And, again, when the Chinese Communist Party is paying people, high government officials, and there's suggestions that that is happening.

Mr. KERRY. Yes.

Mr. SMITH. You know, I would love for the DR Congo to own it all and to spread the wealth that is gleaned from that to their own people.

Mr. KERRY. Yes, it's not.

Mr. SMITH. Instead of it all going and being processed by the PRC, where another slave-labor-type process takes place once it gets to China.

Mr. KERRY. Thank you.

Mr. SMITH. So, please take a look at the bill. And I hope you can support it.

Mr. KERRY. You got it. Thanks.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you.

Mr. MAST. The Chair now recognizes Mr. Huizenga for 5 minutes.

Mr. HUIZENGA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Secretary Kerry. I appreciate the opportunity to ask you a couple of questions.

I'm going to, before I get into the Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment and some other projects, I do want to touch base on nuclear energy that has been somewhat controversial. Obviously, ensuring a way of sufficient baseload generation is significant.

I served in the Michigan Legislature on, spent 6 years on the Energy and Technology Committee. I serve on the Financial Services Committee and do a lot of work with the development banks and have over my tenure here.

And I have in my district one of the—potentially one of the first projects. It's called the Palisades Power Plant in Covert, Michigan, that may be restarted. It's a program that is new. It was on the brink of decommissioning and could come back.

You know, obviously, the United States is working to assert itself, reassert itself as a global energy leader. I think it's wise, as we saw with what was happening in Europe, that we break our own as well as our allies' dependence on energy resources of global bad actors.

So, I'm curious, do you believe that projects like Palisades and other that potentially are on there, would it help us achieve these goals and reduce CO₂ emissions? What's your view on restarting some of these nuclear power plants?

Mr. KERRY. The Biden Administration is very proactive on the nuclear front. We believe that nuclear—that you cannot really reach the targets that have been set without some nuclear.

Mr. HUIZENGA. OK. All right. I want to—I think I've got about 3 minutes here. So, I'm going to try and move quickly.

At COP 26, you and Romanian President Klaus Iohannis pledged that Romania would build a small modular nuclear reactor project in which the Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment invested \$14 million. Are there any concerns that your policy and willingness to, or potential willingness to, forgo financial viability of projects to satisfy the environmental side?

I mean, are you looking at the business model as you are involved in these?

Mr. KERRY. Of course. It's imperative.

Mr. HUIZENGA. OK. All right. I want to move to a question regarding sort of your scope and authority. I think this is a new position. Very new to a lot of people, including those of us that are constitutionally obligated to have oversight of those things.

And I'm curious, does your funding, just making sure I understand, does your funding to fund your 45 full-time equivalent CFTs, as well as your salary and your travel, does that all come out of the State Department?

Mr. KERRY. Yes.

Mr. HUIZENGA. OK. And yet you do not report to Secretary Blinken, correct?

Mr. KERRY. Well, sure I do. I mean, I report, he's a friend of mine.

Mr. HUIZENGA. But, I mean, I'm not trying to create a trap.

Mr. KERRY. No, no, no. I know you're not.

Mr. HUIZENGA. I'm just trying to understand.

Mr. KERRY. I know you're not. I'm just trying to say, formally, in terms of strict legal accountability, I report to the President of the United States.

Mr. HUIZENGA. OK. That's great.

Mr. KERRY. But, informally, obviously, I keep the Secretary completely—there's only one Secretary.

Mr. HUIZENGA. That's informed. Yes.

Mr. KERRY. I keep him fully informed.

Mr. HUIZENGA. And you've served in that position.

Mr. KERRY. I consult with him. And——

Mr. HUIZENGA. Reclaiming my time on this.

Mr. KERRY. Sure. Go ahead.

Mr. HUIZENGA. You certainly—you served in that position. In that position you had the authority and the ability to negotiate on behalf of the United States, and had the ability to bind it or speak on behalf of the President.

What are the scopes of your duties with this? And under what authority are you able to go in and be able to, for all intents and purposes, negotiate on behalf of the United States?

Mr. KERRY. Well, I'm negotiating, formally charged by the President of the United States and his executive authority, and the appropriate congressional notification and approval, an executive order, et cetera, that created the job.

Mr. HUIZENGA. OK.

Mr. KERRY. So, we have had special envoys for years and years and years. And we've used envoys in——

Mr. HUIZENGA. I do not think anything with quite this scope.

Mr. KERRY. Well, that may be.

Mr. HUIZENGA. OK.

Mr. KERRY. Because of the scope of the problem.

Mr. HUIZENGA. Sure. All right. I need to hit one last thing here. In March 9, 2022, an email from the SPEC's Office, Senior Director of Climate Finance, the official wrote that a call or a meeting should be held with you soon saying quote, I would also suggest a call or meeting soon with JK to update him on Fiscal Year and 1923, focusing on all the elements we cannot put on paper.

What are those elements that couldn't be put on paper?

Mr. KERRY. I have no idea.

Mr. HUIZENGA. So, it sounds like we need to pull him in to ask that question?

Mr. KERRY. Well, I do not know.

Mr. HUIZENGA. Or, are you willing to go ask and find out and come back later with the answer?

Mr. KERRY. I would personally absolutely. I'm not sure what it is that couldn't be put on paper.

Mr. HUIZENGA. All right. And I know my time is expiring here. But, it's my understanding that there is a FOIA request for Fiscal 2022 that the State Department has said they will not be able to fulfil until 2025, April 2025.

Does that sound right to you?

Mr. KERRY. I spoke—yes, no. It doesn't sound right. But, it sounds accurate.

Mr. HUIZENGA. Would that be acceptable?

Mr. KERRY. I spoke——

Mr. HUIZENGA. You and your Senatorial——

Mr. KERRY. No, that's not acceptable. And I believe it was an algorithm that kicked that out kind of crazily. Maybe that's a metaphor for other kinds of challenges.

But, no. I'm confident that I cannot imagine any FOIA that would take that long.

Mr. HUIZENGA. So, you'll pledge to work with us on expediting that?

Mr. KERRY. Well, we will communicate to the office that you're asking and that it's important to try to get to it as soon as possible.

Mr. MAST. Mr. Secretary, I know you have travel. And we have one more member to ask questions.

Mr. KERRY. Sure.

Mr. MAST. The Chair now recognizes Mr. Pfluger for 5 minutes.

Mr. PFLUGER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you for allowing me to waive onto this Committee. Mr. Secretary, good to see you.

I want to followup on a couple of things. Before I get to that, I know you're traveling to China. I hope that that will include touting American energy.

China has rapidly produced coal plants over the past couple of years. They are concerned about baseload capacity. They are concerned about reality.

And yet, we have Administration officials who are touting the Chinese Communist Party as the leader around the world in combating climate change. Which is just incredulous in its nonsense.

So, I hope that on your trip there that you'll tout American LNG. If we were to replace the coal plants that China has, we could reduce the CO2 footprint immediately overnight by about 50 percent.

So, following up on my colleague here, in your position as Special Envoy, you made it clear that you do negotiate, you know, on behalf of the President. But, let me ask you this.

Do you have the authority to bind agreements?

Mr. KERRY. No.

Mr. PFLUGER. OK.

Mr. KERRY. No.

Mr. PFLUGER. So, you're negotiating and those binding agreements are the responsibility——

Mr. KERRY. They're not binding. They do not become a binding agreement unless they're ratified by the Congress and by the Senate.

And it's not a treaty that binds you. It's an executive agreement. So, it's binding between that Administration, but not beyond that.

Mr. PFLUGER. OK.

Mr. KERRY. And it doesn't have the force of law in international law.

Mr. PFLUGER. In this position, do you advise President Biden on energy policy?

Mr. KERRY. In terms of global challenges and U.S. interests, yes.

Mr. PFLUGER. Did you advise the President in recent months to travel to Riyadh and to ask OPEC to increase production of oil and gas?

Mr. KERRY. No, I did not.

Mr. PFLUGER. So, Secretary Granholm testified before me on my primary committee, in Energy and Commerce, and was a little wiggly on whether or not she was the primary advisor on energy policy for this Administration.

Mr. KERRY. Well, she is, in regard to, writ large, the energy policy. Sure, she is the primary.

Mr. PFLUGER. I'm glad to hear that answer. And I'm trying to figure out who advised the President to go to Riyadh and ask for an increase in production of oil and gas.

Let me ask you this. In previous times where we've had the opportunity to have you before this Committee, I've asked the question, do the renewable sources of energy, like wind and solar, let's just be, let's just limit it to those, do they have the ability to provide baseload capacity in this country?

Mr. KERRY. Back-up baseload, no. But, some primary they could be part of it. But, can they on their own guarantee that when the wind isn't blowing and the sun ain't shining, no.

Mr. PFLUGER. No.

Mr. KERRY. That we all know.

Mr. PFLUGER. Well, I think that's good. And I'm glad to hear that, because that's really the fight that we're in.

Mr. KERRY. But, we could with battery. We could with—there's ways to make that work. Germany is heading to a very high percentage of renewable, others are.

Mr. PFLUGER. I'm glad you brought up Germany. I'm actually very concerned about the path the German government has taken.

Mr. KERRY. So, are we.

Mr. PFLUGER. Because this repower plan is completely ignoring nuclear. And instead of having Russian natural gas, which does provide baseload capacity, they're moving in a direction that could put them in a very, a very bad spot with regards to baseload capacity.

When we look at the Administration's desire, specifically of the EPA, to have a mandate for EVs in this country, and there's a couple of different timelines. How much electricity does the United States use on an annual basis right now?

Mr. KERRY. I do not know exactly where we are right now.

Mr. PFLUGER. OK.

Mr. KERRY. I do not think it's—

Mr. PFLUGER. It's 4,000 terawatts. How much additional demand would we need if we got to, let's just call it 50 percent EV mandate, 287 million cars on the road?

Mr. KERRY. Probably double.

Mr. PFLUGER. OK.

Mr. KERRY. I'm not sure.

Mr. PFLUGER. That's actually what the Secretary of Energy said. I think it's less than that. But, here's my point. Is that I've questioned the EPA Director Regan, Secretary Granholm, Mr. Goffman, other high ranking officials in the Administration, and I do not believe anybody has done the math on this.

And so, there's multiple balls in the air here when we're talking about energy.

Mr. KERRY. Yes.

Mr. PFLUGER. And I do not think anybody in the Administration has actually done—I do not think, I know nobody has done the math on this, because we cannot get a straight answer.

And so, when you go to China and talk to the Chinese about baseload capacity and the power that's required there, I think they're doing the math on it and they're building coal plants to meet that demand.

Mr. KERRY. Actually, I do not, with all due respect, because I know you represent a district that has tremendous wind in the Permian Basin and so forth, and so you have a lot of knowledge of this.

But, I think there was a recent article showing that it was, in fact, renewables that kind of helped Texas through the hurdle of this heat, because of its reliability and where the energy comes from.

But, let me just say to you that I think the math, I know the math has been done. And I know that there's a clarity that as the number of electric vehicles go up, as you electrify the country in various ways, you're going to need a lot more power.

And that's precisely why the Administration is trying to move on the permitting for many of the transmission lines that are essential to being able to get that power out there.

So, we have about 2,000 gigawatts now of potential power in the queue that is not able to be deployed. So, if we can deploy more rapidly, we will fill the void, we will meet the need.

Mr. PFLUGER. Mr. Chairman, I need 10 seconds. We are going to enter into a crisis in this country if we do not use the resources that are primary sources of energy.

I am not an all of the above fan anymore. I am a best of the above fan. And, Mr. Secretary, please advocate for the best of the above in this country, which starts with primary sources like liquefied natural gas that comes out of the Permian Basin that I represent.

And it's critical that we lead in the world, or we will be cold, dark and——

Mr. KERRY. Do you also believe it's critical that they capture the emissions if they're going to make them?

Mr. PFLUGER. These companies are doing just that. We've reduced emissions, harmful emissions, ones that are listed in the Clean Air Act.

Mr. KERRY. And you believe that can be brought to scale?

Mr. PFLUGER. We have scaled it——

Mr. KERRY. And be affordable?

Mr. PFLUGER. We have scaled it in the Permian Basin. We've gone from one million barrels a day, just 12 or 13 years ago, to five and a half million barrels a day, 43 percent of the total production in the United States. And, in doing that, we have also reduced harmful emissions by over 40 percent.

Mr. KERRY. Well, that's great. And, look, I'm—and I've had conversation with many of the CEOs of our biggest companies asking

them, and trying to get fully knowledgeable about what's doable and what isn't here.

The key is, folks, we've got to meet the target of the reduction of emissions that we know will help us avoid the consequences of what's happening. That's the key.

And I'm not picking which way it's going to happen. I want to see it happen, and we'll go from there.

Mr. PFLUGER. Let's use the best of the above. Mr. Chairman, thank you for letting me waive on. I yield back.

Mr. MAST. Thank you, Mr. Pfluger. Thank you, Mr. Secretary for your time today. Thank you for your answers on this Committee. We do not approve of engaging in personalities with the witnesses. Though it is not a rule, it's not something that we approve of. So, you have our Committee—

Mr. KERRY. Can I just mention one thing though, Mr. Chairman?

Mr. MAST. Absolutely.

Mr. KERRY. And thank you for your stewardship of this hearing, which I really appreciate. Because I didn't get a chance to answer it, Congressman Waltz, I think it was, whoever was asking about the airplanes.

Mr. MAST. You have a couple of minutes. As long as you have time, you have a couple of minutes.

Mr. KERRY. No, because it's trivial in my mind. But I want to make it clear because it keeps resurfacing. We are not, I have not, President Biden has not, we are not saying to people, you should not fly. That's not the message.

The message is, let's find a way to be able to make sure when we fly, we're not leaving emissions that we cannot capture or we aren't capturing them, we aren't avoiding them in the first place by creating sustainable aviation fuel.

So, we're looking to technology to help us. And when somebody says, well, we're asking—you're asking people to sacrifice this and that. No. We do not believe that this transition actually requires sacrifice.

We think it will wind up making life better, cleaner, healthier, more secure. Our country will be strengthened. With clean energy and some of our supply that avoids many of these other problems.

So, you know, this battle over the airplane or whatever, is kind of ridiculous, and not relevant to what we're really trying to achieve here. You know, we're not saying to people you shouldn't fly. You should fly. But let's find a way to make sure that's not contributing emissions, just as when you drive we do not want to be contributing emissions.

Or when you have a building. Buildings are a big source of emissions. We have to build them in a way that they're not contributing pollution, which is in effect what it is, in ways that hurt people.

So, that's our hope. That we can get onto a sort of more serious, how do we solve this problem? Which I think is self-evident to anybody whose eyes are open and whose mind is open at the same time.

Mr. MAST. I appreciate your closing thoughts.

Mr. KERRY. Thank you, sir.

Mr. MAST. Just to wrap up a few thoughts for myself. I would say this, I started with some questions myself. I did not get all the answers that I wanted.

But, it is important that your office, every office, every congressional office, that they have transparency. It's important that we know what your mission statement is, what you're trying to do on behalf of the American people, whether every American agrees with you or not.

It's important for us to know those that are working in your office, what backgrounds they come from. The ways in which individuals are vetted.

For me personally, you know, there's various kinds of power that we see the United States of America wielding. When it's hard power, I think it's important that we put the fear of God into those that challenge us.

When it's soft power, I think it's important that we look at every way in which that soft power may help Americans thrive, or may help our adversaries, our enemies, or those that wish to rise up against us to potentially thrive, and take that accordingly into account.

And I hope that you do that. In that, I would just say this. I wish you well on your travels. I wish you safety on your travels. I thank you for your testimony.

Other members of the Subcommittee may have some additional questions for the witness, and we would ask that you do respond to those in writing.

And I will now recognize my colleague here, Mr. Crow, for 5 minutes of closing remarks if he has any.

Mr. CROW. Thank you, Chairman. And thank you, Secretary Kerry, for your testimony and your time here today.

First of all, I just want to rebut a couple of themes that were prevalent throughout the hearing. It is wrong to say that your office, and the State Department, and folks that work with you and for you, have been nothing but transparent. Just yesterday you produced 700 pages of material in response to requests from this Committee.

And you have been, in my view, nothing but transparent and open, and including today, spending well over 2 hours answering everybody's questions. Staying until the very end and ensuring that everybody had their opportunity. And I thank you for that.

It is also wrong to say that engagement with the world, including with our adversaries and those who we do not have, you know, common ground in all areas, is in any way a show of weakness. You know, it is actually a show of strength to engage with the world. And to do so from a position of confidence. Right.

We do not have to have his crisis of confidence where we shy away from tough conversations and tough situations. And you have shown that very clearly. And I applaud your effort, including today. Going to have very hard conversations with people that we have very deep seated disagreements with, because that's in the best interest of the American people.

And it is also wrong to be the subject of personal attacks. And I'm grateful to the Chairman for actually calling out that that is

not the course and conduct of this Committee to engage in personalities.

So, thank you, Chairman, for mentioning that. Because you have been a public servant to this Nation in a variety of capacities for your adult life, including your own military service as well, of which we find common faith and fidelity in. And I am grateful for that.

So, you know, there is this saying in politics, of when you cannot attack the message, when you have nothing to say, you attack the messenger. And, unfortunately, you are at the brunt end of that today.

So, you know, we will respond accordingly. But thank you for being calm and for staying focused on the important issues. But these are substantive issues. And the American people deserve a full and robust discussion about it. And you have adequately outlined for the Committee and for the American people that this is in our best economic interest.

The economic future of this country relies on us making this transition. There will be more jobs, a stronger economy, a more resilient economy. That our safety relies on us making this transition in reducing the risk of flood, to wildfire, to pandemic, to crop collapse, and so many other major crisis that our world and our country face.

And it's in our national security interest that we make this transition. That we will be a safer and more prosperous country if we engage globally. If we win the strategic competition around the world and we address these national security issues.

So, thank you for making that strong case. And I join the Chairman in wishing you well on your travels. And I yield back the balance of my time. Thank you.

Mr. MAST. Pursuant to Committee rules, all members may have 5 days to submit statements, questions, extraneous materials for the record, subject to the length limitations.

Without objection, the Committee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:54 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

APPENDIX



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

**Subcommittee on Oversight and Accountability
Brian Mast (R-FL), Chairman**

July 6, 2023

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 by the Subcommittee on Oversight and Accountability at 10:00 a.m. in room 210 of the House Visitor Center. The hearing is available by live webcast on the Committee website at <https://foreignaffairs.house.gov/>.

DATE: Thursday, July 13, 2023
TIME: 10:00 a.m.
LOCATION: HVC-210
SUBJECT: The State Department's Climate Agenda: A Budget Overview by the Special Presidential Envoy for Climate
WITNESSES: The Honorable John Kerry
Special Presidential Envoy for Climate
U.S. Department of State

*NOTE: Witnesses may be added.

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 202-226-8467 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 13 Date July Room HVC 210

Starting Time 10:02 AM Ending Time 12:45 PM

Recesses ☐ (____ to ____) (____ to ____) (____ to ____) (____ to ____) (____ to ____) (____ to ____)

Presiding Member(s)

Chairman Mast

Check all of the following that apply:

Open Session ☒

Electronically Recorded (taped) ☒

Executive (closed) Session ☐

Stenographic Record ☒

Televised ☒

TITLE OF HEARING:

The State Department's Climate Agenda: A Budget Overview by the Special Presidential Envoy for Climate

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Chairman Mast, Mr. Perry, Mr. Issa, Mr. Burchett, Mr. Waltz, Mr. Mills, Mr. Moran, Chairman McCaul, Mr. Self, Mr. Smith, Mr. Huizenga, Ranking Member Crow, Ms. Titus, Mr. Kim, Mrs. Chertoff-McCormick, Ms. Dean, Ranking Member Meeks, Mr. Keating, Mr. Schneider

NON-COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. Pfluger

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.)*

TIME SCHEDULED TO RECONVENE _____

or

TIME ADJOURNED 12:45

Meg Wagner
Full Committee Hearing Coordinator

Oversight and Accountability Subcommittee on Foreign Affairs

118th Congress

ATTENDANCE

Meeting on: The State Department's Climate Agenda: A Budget Overview by the Special Presidential Envoy for Climate
Date: July 13, 2023

Convened: 10:02 AM
Adjourned: 12:45 PM

[illegible]

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

**Questions for the Record Submitted to
Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry by
Representative Cory Mills (No. 1. to No. 3)
House Foreign Affairs Committee
Subcommittee on Oversight and Accountability
July 13, 2023**

Question 1:

The vast majority of polysilicates, one of the raw materials critical to the production of solar panels, are produced by China, and Xinjiang accounts for 40 percent of the world's supply. Currently, several Chinese companies are importing solar panels into the United States, including LONGi, Trina, JinkoSolar, JA Solar, and Canadian Solar. Numerous U.S. government reports have reinforced that the Chinese government's genocide and crimes against humanity are integrally connected to forced labor in the region, including in the production of solar panels. However, during the hearing, you claimed that no solar panels imported to the United States are connected to these atrocities.

Please explain how you can be so confident that these supply chains are devoid of any connections to the human rights atrocities taking place in Xinjiang.

Answer 1:

The United States has made significant progress in preventing goods made with forced labor from entering the country through increased enforcement and investigation by U.S. Customs and Border Patrol and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Homeland Security Investigations. The rebuttable presumption in the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act

(UFLPA) that goods produced in Xinjiang or by entities on the UFLPA Entity List are prohibited from importation into the United States has been effective in preventing such goods from entering the country.

The United States also continues to work with allies and partners to take concrete measures to promote accountability with respect to human rights abuses and violations in Xinjiang, including by implementing targeted sanctions, visa restrictions, export controls, and import restrictions. Moreover, the clean energy manufacturing capacity investments being made by the United States, along with our partners and allies, are a further step toward ensuring reliable, sustainable, and secure clean energy supply chains.

**Questions for the Record Submitted to
Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry by
Representative Cory Mills (No. 1. to No. 3)
House Foreign Affairs Committee
Subcommittee on Oversight and Accountability
July 13, 2023**

Question 2:

For years, Germany was overly reliant on Russia for its energy supply. That dependency inflicted severe economic pain on the country when Russia invaded Ukraine. Their poor energy policies have been repeatedly cited as a textbook example of the dangers of trading off security concerns for smooth economic and energy relationships. Despite this, you have aggressively advocated within the Biden administration to deepen the U.S.' green energy partnerships with China. Without delving into the debate about whether the U.S. can or should decouple this sector from China, few support the notion of deepening our dependency on China for energy resources.

Do you believe the U.S. should follow in Germany's footsteps by exchanging smooth relations with an adversarial nation with increasing energy vulnerabilities to it?

Answer 2:

The United States is taking and must continue to take steps to ensure our energy security and build our clean energy economy, including by increasing investments in sustainable, secure, and reliable clean energy value chains. Domestically, investments spurred by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the CHIPS and Science Act, and the Inflation Reduction

Act are helping us scale manufacturing of clean energy technologies and critical materials. Internationally, we're working with partners to diversify and strengthen supply chains to help reduce and avoid undue dependency arising from geographically concentrated clean energy supply chains through initiatives such as the Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment (PGII) and the Minerals Security Partnership (MSP).

Our work to support the clean energy transition in major emitting countries also has real benefits for global energy security and reducing reliance on the PRC. With India, for example, President Biden made cooperation on clean energy supply chains and coordination on renewable energy deployment key aspects of Prime Minister Modi's visit to the United States in June. Through PGII, we have also made investments through a joint U.S.-Indonesia partnership to support small modular reactor (SMR) deployment in Indonesia, using safe and secure American technology to deliver clean energy supply chains in the ASEAN market.

Like the European Union and Germany, the United States is advocating de-risking from the PRC, not de-coupling. Germany's new China Strategy

seeks to incorporate the lessons learned from energy dependence on one country. The United States will continue to cooperate closely with Germany on de-risking to ensure that our economies are not overly dependent on the PRC for our energy needs.

**Questions for the Record Submitted to
Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry by
Representative Cory Mills (No. 1. to No. 3)
House Foreign Affairs Committee
Subcommittee on Oversight and Accountability
July 13, 2023**

Question 3:

You believe that progressive climate policy promotes American national security. However, it should be uncontroversial to claim that there is a hierarchy within the concept of a nation's security in which physical defense is preeminent.

Where on the scale of national security do you place climate policy in relation to national defense, human rights, and economic security? Please provide a fulsome explanation of your rationale.

Answer 3:

Addressing the climate crisis, which military leaders have repeatedly termed a "threat multiplier," is an important component of advancing our national defense and economic security and promoting human rights globally – it's not in competition with these goals. Climate disruptions exacerbate competition over resources and amplify drivers of displacement in vulnerable communities, increasing the risk of conflict and threatening human rights.

On the economic security front, extreme weather events have cost the U.S. economy more than a trillion dollars in the last decade. It's imperative that we take actions to ensure the resilience of our communities and infrastructure to storms, droughts, extreme heat, sea-level rise, and other climate-related risks.

Clean energy technologies that help address the climate crisis also represent a multi-trillion dollar global future market opportunity. The decisions and investments we make now will determine whether that future is led by American companies, technologies, and workers – or those of our competitors.

