

Opening Statement
Chairman Richard G. Lugar
Nomination Hearing
June 14, 2004

This afternoon, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee meets to consider nominees to four key leadership positions in the Administration. President Bush has nominated Ralph Boyce, Jr., to be Ambassador to Thailand; James Kunder to be Assistant Administrator of the Bureau for Asia and the Far East at USAID; Charles Fingar to be Assistant Secretary of the Bureau of Intelligence and Research at the Department of State; and Suzanne Hale to be Ambassador to the Federated States of Micronesia. We welcome these four distinguished nominees and look forward to our discussions with them.

Ambassador Boyce currently is U.S. Ambassador to Indonesia, where he has an outstanding record of service to our nation. Indonesia is the fourth most populous country in the world and contains the largest Muslim population. Ambassador Boyce deserves special recognition for his efforts to strengthen the U.S.-Indonesia relationship. If confirmed as our Ambassador to Thailand, Ambassador Boyce will continue to employ his extensive knowledge of Southeast Asia. His expertise on Thailand is particularly impressive. He has served as Deputy Chief of Mission and as Political Counselor at our embassy in Bangkok, and he speaks Thai.

Significant opportunities and challenges confront Thailand, a long-time friend and ally of the United States. Among the issues with which Ambassador Boyce would be dealing are the emergence of violence in Islamic southern Thailand, an inconsistent policy regarding the repatriation of internally displaced persons from Thailand back to Burma, and reports of extrajudicial killings in Thailand. In addition, the United States and Thailand have agreed to enter into negotiations on a Free Trade Agreement. Ambassador Boyce's experience would be put to excellent use in overseeing our strategic relationship with Thailand.

Our second nominee, Mr. James Kunder would bring a wealth of public and private experience to the position of Assistant Administrator of the Bureau for Asia and the Near East at USAID. He has previously served as the Director of USAID's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance and as Deputy Assistant Administrator for External Affairs. In the private sector, he has worked extensively in the areas of international humanitarian assistance, post-conflict reconstruction, and peacekeeping.

The Asia and Near East Bureau's area of responsibility spans the globe from Morocco to Mongolia and includes the key countries of Iraq and Afghanistan. These nations are undergoing unprecedented political, economic, and social transitions that have placed unique demands on our existing aid mechanisms. Mr. Kunder is familiar with these issues, having opened the USAID mission in Afghanistan in January 2002 and having served as USAID's first mission director for that new program. From May 2002 until the present, he has been serving as Deputy Assistant Administrator for the Asia and Near East Bureau.

Our third nominee, Dr. Tom Fingar, is in his nineteenth year of service to the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research, where he would take over as Assistant Secretary. Dr. Fingar was originally recruited by INR after establishing an international reputation as an Asia specialist during his career at Stanford University. While at Stanford, he performed analysis for several U.S. government agencies, including the Department of State, the CIA, and congressional committees. He is still considered

one of our top Asia specialists, but his portfolio has expanded. Since 1994, he has supervised State Department analytical work on 192 countries. Dr. Fingar has a well-deserved reputation as a hands-on manager and is highly respected throughout the Intelligence Community. He has twice served with distinction as Acting Assistant Secretary of the Bureau of Intelligence and Research.

Suzanne Hale, nominated to serve as Ambassador to Micronesia, has more than 25 years of experience with the Foreign Agricultural Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. This includes extended periods as director of the department's two largest overseas offices, in China and Japan. She played a key role in supporting the United States' multi-billion dollar agricultural export sector as head of the Foreign Agriculture Service's AgExport Services Division. In these positions she has dealt with complex and sometimes contentious issues including WTO accession, food safety, and agricultural tariffs.

The United States will invest more than \$2 billion during the next 20 years in the economic development of the Federated States of Micronesia in accordance with the recently amended Compact of Free Association. Micronesia occupies thousands of square miles in the strategic Central Pacific, and the Compact of Free Association gives the United States the pivotal role in its security. While managing these close security ties, the United States should continue to work with the Micronesians to improve economic development opportunities.

I congratulate each of you on your nominations. I ask that you deliver your statements in the order that you were introduced. If you are summarizing a statement, the text of your entire presentation will be included in the hearing record. Also, please introduce family and friends that may have accompanied you on this important occasion.

###