I thank the chairwoman. Good morning. So far it

is good morning.

I don’t know if my colleague and friend, Mr. Deutch, prefaced his

statements and questions, but we both just got back from Russia.

And four points that I would like to bring out—and I would like

each of you to respond, knowing that we only have 5 minutes.

First of all, it was very clear when we visited Moscow and sat

down with Duma members, simply saying that—and the one individual,

I think he was a part of the Socialist Party that formed a

larger majority, simply stated that as long as the existing President

of Georgia is not only in that position, but has any influence,

Russia does not want to have any communications whatsoever and

there are no deals on the table. So it is a personal issue that it appeared

to me, or at least I inferred from the comments.

The second issue, the same member of the Duma stated that—

well, tried to chastise us a little bit, that why are we picking on

Iran, because we thought Iran was a very friendly country. What

are we doing in Afghanistan, et cetera. I politely said to him, I will

take you to task on that when we have the time. They chose to

have no response, but then turned around to say that not only the

world but Russia is looking at the United States to get its economic

affairs in order because we have an impact on the international

economy, and we still should be able to help Russia. Now, criticizing

us and then turn around and say, we need your money.

The next issue is that the Russians have an ability to politely—

politely agree with an issue that we raised, and then history has

proven over the years that they do nothing about it. In fact, they

almost ignore it.

And the last issue is the corruption taking place in Russia, and

the emphasis was put on the wealth that Putin has accumulated

so rapidly, the wealth to the extent—from several individuals saying

he is probably one, if not the richest man in the world.

Would you care to address those issues and comment on those,

please, Doctor?

Dr. Cohen.