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**Welcome:**

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**The Value of international engagement for local progress: Dallas**

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**The Value of Subnational Diplomacy for U.S. Foreign Policy**

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**Closing Remarks:**

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## P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. PIPA: Welcome and good morning. I'm Tony Pipa, senior fellow in the Center for Sustainable Development at the Brookings Institution. And on behalf of the center and Brookings, I'm really pleased to welcome here to today's event to examine the relationship between the global affairs of cities and states and U.S. foreign policy. And in particular, we're going to explore how setting up an office of subnational diplomacy at the State Department might leverage the global leadership of U.S. mayors and governors to advance our national interests but also play an important role in strengthening U.S. diplomacy for the 21st century.

So this is an idea that's been supported and advanced by several experts and former state officials and one that myself and Max Bouchet presented as part of the Brookings series earlier this year called "Blueprints for American Renewal and Prosperity." And I have to say, I feel like this idea could not be more of the moment.

Among other things, the COVID-19 pandemic really has demonstrated just how important local leaders are to solving a global crisis. And it's not global health crises. You've seen mayors and governors on the front lines of taking decisive action on many different issues that cross borders. Like climate change and migration and a host of other issues.

So the premise of an office subnational diplomacy is a simple one. Use the skills of the State Department to strengthen the ability of U.S. cities and states to conduct their international activities. And in return, enable the federal government to leverage the experience and the leadership of these local leaders for U.S. national, diplomatic, and security interests.

And by providing foreign service officers on details to cities and states through a fellowship program, could also be an additional breeding ground to groom the next generation of diplomatic leaders. And bring the value of U.S. foreign policy home. Which is something really top of mind as the Biden Harris administration pursues what they're calling a foreign policy for the middle class.

So we're privileged to have a collection of distinguished perspectives today from local leaders, seasoned diplomats and national security experts and a member of Congress to examine the potential for this idea. And we're going to start with a conversation focused on Dallas to get the local perspective.

And so to kick us off, I'm going to turn to Liz Schrayner who is CEO of the U.S. Global Leadership Coalition. An organization that brings together more than 500 businesses and non-profits across the country that believe deeply in the value of diplomacy and the importance of U.S. leadership on global challenges.

Liz, you've been hosting conversations in towns and cities across the U.S. for years that explore how U.S. global engagement really benefits local citizens. So we're really grateful to have you here today and to help us get the view from Dallas in a conversation with Mayor Eric Johnson and Ambassador Jeanne Phillips. So Liz, I'm going to turn it over to you. Thanks for being here.

MS. SCHRAYER: Well, thank you Tony and thank you to your leadership and that of Brookings for convening this important conversation. And I have to say that U.S. GLC is so honored to help kick off this event because our coalition is grounded in local advocacy that has literally across the country brought people together. Rotarians and veterans and small businesses who truly believe in the intersection that leading globally matters locally.

And at the center of our network is over 200 mayors, former mayors who have been active in our state advisory councils from coast to coast. In fact, our national co-chair is Mayor Steve Benjamin from Columbia, South Carolina. So we're all in when it comes to the title of this program, "Strengthening U.S. Foreign Policy Through Subnational Diplomacy."

So my two guests that I get to interview are fabulous to take a look at Dallas as an example of this. So welcome to on Zoom right and left here are our panelists. Mayor Eric Johnson, the 60th mayor of Dallas who is a longtime public servant. You are going to soon here how he is truly making his mark. Welcome, Mayor Johnson.

And welcome Ambassador Jeanne Phillips who was appointed by President George W. Bush to be a really important position for our country. The U.S. ambassador to Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. Some of you may know it by its acronym, the OECD. And today is here representative as the chair of Mayor Johnson's International Advisory Council. So welcome to you both.

MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you for having us.

MS. SCHRAYER: All right, let's get started. We only have 22, 25 minutes to have a great conversation. Mayor Johnson, I'm going to start with your story that illustrates that power of cities and global engagement. You recently wrote this great op-ed of how and I loved what you said. You said Dallas and Fort Worth is a region that already is a global player.

You have almost 8 million people that makes you one of the top 25 economies in the world. And when you became mayor in June 2019, which look at the date, is just a few months before the pandemic hit. You had some big plans of how Dallas was going to go to the next level as a major international player in destination for business and tourism. So start the conversation and explain how important it is to Dallas and frankly other cities to engage globally and what those benefits are. Mayor.

MR. JOHNSON: Well first of all, thank you, Liz and thank you to Brookings for hosing this and having us today. I think we need to set the stage a little bit just to understand, you know, why subnational diplomacy has risen to the top of my agenda for our city.

Dallas is the economic engine of a region that is home to 8 million people. It's the fourth largest metro area in the United States. That region is home to 24 fortune 500 companies. It's the home to the 10th busiest airport in the world and that has risen to number four. DFW airport is the fourth busiest airport in the world right now.

We have an economy, as you mentioned, that puts us in the top 25. If we were a standalone nation, we'd be ranked right below Sweden. We'd be ahead of Argentina, we'd be ahead of Austria, we'd be ahead of Israel, we'd be ahead of Norway, we beat out Singapore. Our economy in terms of gross metropolitan product which is the equivalent of gross domestic product for a country would have us be a major world player.

So if you think about it that way, no one would ever ask a country that fit that description that had an airport that busy, that had an economy that large, that had that many people, are you going to engage internationally or not. Are you going to engage the rest of the world or not. It would be inconceivable that you wouldn't. And that's true for us as well.

But the difference is that in the United States, we are not really set up to leverage and harness that power. I think it has to do with the fact that at one point, our country was more rural than it is now. But now 82% of Americans live in a city, 82% of Americans live in a city.

And so, what we're really trying to do now with the subnational diplomacy effort is to just align the State Department and then structure with reality. The reality is mayors and governors are out there every single day interfacing with the rest of the world and we'd love to have the State Department's help.

MS. SCHRAYER: That's fabulous. I'm going to come back to you for a little more specifics but let me get the Ambassador in on this conversation. So you're chairing the mayor's international advisory council. Five former ambassadors that all live in Dallas.

And I have noticed that a Democratic mayor has reached out to a Republican to chair the council. And let's just say the fact that maybe policymakers in Washington should listen to our cities. But the truth is, I'm not surprised because U.S. GLC actually sees this bipartisan focus all over the country that when it comes to diplomacy, when it comes to development and global health this is a bipartisan area.

And what I'd love to hear you is where in your diplomatic expertise is why you think it's important to the mayor, to the citizens of Dallas. That this council can actually make a difference and why you think it passes a bipartisan arena that this is important. Ambassador Phillips.

MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Liz and thanks for having us. Well first of all, I think we've all said for years, those of us involved in diplomacy that, you know, our differences are supposed to end at the water's edge and we're supposed to be united. And I commend Mayor Johnson for his devotion to the international cause, especially for the DFW region and specifically Dallas.

We now have added Kaye Hutchison who just came home from NATO and she's going to be a huge addition. I think that what happens is those of us who've been in the diplomatic arena understand the talent in the State Department. We understand the need for the connectivity between these huge population centers and Washington. And I think that the experience of the ambassadors on this council will really help the mayor move things forward more quickly.

We still have contacts in state, in Washington and an understanding of what should be happening on this great two way street. We have a lot of wonderful relationships already between international cities and many countries. Bilateral relationships between Dallas and these countries. And so, bringing state into the mix will give everybody a lot of resources.

And I think the council brings focus. We're all volunteer. We have one wonderful person inside City Hall, our chief of protocol and we have the mayor. And so, we're a small little team but I think of us as special forces. We're going to do a lot of heavy lifting in the next two years.

And Dallas really is on the international stage, it's just not as connected with the resources of state and state is not as connected with us. So it should be a fantastic partnership.

MS. SCHRAYER: So let's get more specific for our audience of how, Mayor, Ambassador, this is going to move to the next level. So Mayor Johnson, I know you're partnering with other mayors around the country. You've been talking to Mayor Garcetti from Los Angeles and others.

And so one of the things I was struck by your op-ed is as you got to talking about the importance of the subnational office at the State Department, you started talking about why it's so important. And I'm quoting you from your op-ed and you said it would help strengthen U.S. alliance, reinvigorate diplomacy, build a culture of cooperation in this fast changing world.

And I'm pleased that there's now bipartisan legislation that is moving in Congress. So I'm interested to hear a little more about your vision of what you think will make -- what's going to make a difference? What is going to happen when the federal government, particularly the State Department can do to help cities that is not happening now so that you can move your international platform to the next level. Help our audience understand because you're ready to go. I can hear it in both of you. What do you need that the State Department can offer you to help you bring that business and that tourism back and prove to Dallas?

MR. JOHNSON: Well, I think Ambassador Phillips actually said it really well. What I'm hoping will happen in Dallas and would happen if we had the subnational diplomacy offices within the State Department all over the country. Is that what is being done with the exception of places like Los Angeles and New York. What's being largely by very small teams or even volunteers could be professionalized.

We could really benefit from the expertise of the folks at the State Department who really understand the complexity of some of these relationships. You know, mayors are often asked to meet with delegations of foreign dignitaries at City Hall and we're happy to do that.

But the truth is, we don't have the expertise in house to really dig in very deeply into the economic

ties. What's going on, on the ground and those countries and what we need to know. Not just to avoid an international incident so to speak of an etiquette nature or protocol nature but really to understand where there really is alignment economically. What are the opportunities presented by say, you know, a post-Brexit United Kingdom for the city of Dallas.

Those are complex ideas and you need people who understand that. So cities would clearly benefit from having that relationship with state. But state benefits too and here's how they benefit. Mayors are known and have earned their reputation for years for just being able to dig into a problem and get stuff done. GSD as we say, get stuff done.

That's an attitude that I think our foreign service and our State Department could also learn from us about. So, you know, I think there's a two way street for sure there. And so, if we had the ability to have State Department officials embedded within our city governments and have folks on a fellowship, a Pearson fellowship type of experience with our cities, we could learn a lot from them about the actual international affairs aspect of things. They could learn from us in terms of how we just typically jump in and start working on solving a problem. Much like we had to do throughout the coronavirus response.

MS. SCHRAYER: You're raising such a good point because truly mayors are at the front line and you certainly have been more than, you know, just about anyone else in dealing with the last year and a half. Ambassador Phillips, you have such an interesting perspective on this question to make it specific, wearing two hats. First, your international perspective of living in Paris as our ambassador to the OECD. But also returning now as a business executive.

And I'm interested in the same question about how can the State Department be a link to help our local communities build this bridge to the world in both directions. And what expertise do you have? You were in and out of the State Department and from the business community's perspective. How does this work? How will this work in practicality make a difference?

MS. PHILLIPS: Well one thing is right now it's all ad hoc. So we've done business on every continent except Antarctica. And one of my primary responsibilities is to make sure that we have good relationships with the officers at state who are desk officers with the embassies in Washington, with our consulates in Texas.

So it's all ad hoc. And I think having the subnational diplomacy office would lend some structure and process so that all companies, including small and medium sized companies. And that's where I think this is going to really have the most impact.

Huge companies like Hunt can afford to spend a lot of money and a lot of time on their international relationships. But to President Biden's point about the foreign policy for the middle class. These small businesses and entrepreneurs that are really the backbone of American industry don't have a chance to find to about the trading partnerships they could have, the opportunities they could have.

I just learned about a month ago that one of our grocery store chains in Texas is a major partner with United Kingdom. And when the new ambassador came from Washington to Dallas, that was the person she wanted to meet. She met all the other big, huge corporations too but she wanted to have that personal relationship.

And so, I think it personalizes things much more for the person at stake. It lets them really understand and tie what's the local economy has going for it to the countries that it might be able to connect with. And I also think it's just a really great thing to institutionalize the idea in today's world that everything doesn't happen at Foggy Bottom and everything doesn't happen in Washington.

And I think this is a brilliant opportunity to take these major cities with the mayors who have been through the roughest part a mayor could ever go through in my opinion is the last year. And so, now they've come out of it and they understand a lot more about relationship building with Washington and how important it is. So I'm all in and I think that the specifics will go to the small and medium sized business and also the institutionalization of these relationships.

MS. SCHRAYER: That's a fascinating point and I'm sure mayor, that's an important reason that you're all in as well. Which leads me to question about the citizen experience around this and how the citizen engagement is going to be connected to this effort.

You know, we're talking about the opportunities and the possibilities for the citizens to engage with the State Department and how we bring this connectivity. And I've been thinking a lot about the global pandemic as one of the most powerful reminders of how interconnected the world is.

And these really are kitchen table issues about how the health, safety and economic interest truly are impacting us every day. And so, my question is how do you make the case when it



comes to the subnational diplomacy effort in the State Department to the citizens of Dallas and therefore to all over the country. And how do you talk about it?

So for the ambassador, you know, embassies and the consulates, this is going to make a difference from the business community but beyond about how investing makes a difference from trade and from global health security. And how would a new State Department office help to just talking with our citizens? Ambassador, why don't I let you start on this question.

MS. PHILLIPS: Well, I think the people in the State Department are amazing and hugely talented. So the average citizen never gets to know that. They see it as one big giant agency in the United States government with usually the secretary of state who's not available to average citizens.

So I think having a face in the communities will be critical. And I can already think of a list of 10,000 things they could help on. National days for countries, bicentennials where diasporas are celebrating in a city. And it could connect them to Washington in a way that has not been done before.

I think that resources could be available. That for the State Department locally, where they get to see front line government at work and how it interfaces with international communities. And I think that would be a fascinating experience for someone who has been on a mostly international tract at Foggy Bottom. So I'm very convinced that the connectivity is the most important thing because it will educate both parties, both the state and the local community. And citizens will have a chance to see how really great our diplomats are and how important the relationships around the world are for us.

MS. SCHRAYER: Lovely. Mayor, how would a new State Department office connect to the citizens of Dallas where you have large diaspora community in your region. But what's your thoughts on this?

MR. JOHNSON: We do. Dallas is actually a city where 25% of our residents are foreign born. I mean, that's a very, we have a large diaspora community here in our city. And so, it's so clear to me and Ambassador Phillips did a great job of explaining this. I mean it's so clear to me that you could have so much better understanding and alignment between American foreign policy and American citizens if they understood better exactly how foreign policy benefits them.

I think to a certain extent, foreign policy feels a little bit elite to some people. It feels like, you know, you have to have gone to Johns Hopkins and have a Ph.D. and you have to, you know, it's a

Washington, D.C. thing that we've got to have but I'm not sure exactly how it affects my pocket book or me putting food on the table or taking care of my kids.

This would be a major step forward for the United States and actually aligning our foreign policy, not in terms of shaping the foreign policy itself but making sure you had better buy in from the American citizenry to that foreign policy by bringing in essence the State Department to Main Street.

And so, there are an infinite number of opportunities between working with our local schools, our K-12 schools, our universities creating better connectivity. We've got good connectivity but we could always do better in connecting with the diaspora related chambers of commerce. So we just in the past week, we've worked with our Korean American chamber of commerce, our Indian American CEO council, our Taiwanese chamber.

These relationships could be elevated, they could be even more robust. But we need resources and we need assistance with that. So again, we're back to the same thing, the Subnational Diplomacy Office would be a wonderful addition to the infrastructure of almost every major American city that doesn't already have it to help us assist the American government and its foreign policy aims.

MS. SCHRAYER: So one last question in our time remaining which is how we'll know this is successful. And I think you've all said it but I'll give you one last chance. This is so exciting that we're trying to get this to happen but let's say we push at this energy that we have on this Zoom call, you all helped make it happen.

And if we at Brookings is nice enough to invite the three of us back here to talk, let's give it two years. And we said wow, it happened and it worked. How will we know it's successful, what will we see? Mayor Johnson, what will see not just in Dallas but hopefully across the country. Mayor Johnson, what will we see?

MR. JOHNSON: Well, Ambassador Phillips knows I think big. And so, you know, what I'd like to see is kind of, you know, a transformative idea. I'd like to see the applications for foreign service and for young people who want to go into foreign affairs explode as a result of this effort. I'd like to see tangible increases both in kids who, and I want to policy school and I remember being one of the few people of color who chose the international relations track. Almost everyone was attracted to domestic policy.

Again, I think there is some perceptions about foreign service and about international relations that have a bit of an elite feel to it. But I would think we have been successful if we start getting more applications from kids from the southern part of Dallas or from southside Chicago. Or from, you know, rural parts of our country who foreign policy and foreign service never crossed their mind.

For them to have access to a diplomat, someone to come speak to a town hall at their high school and say, you know what, you could have a job where your job is to travel the world and meet different people, speak different languages and advance the interest of the country that you love. I think kids would go, that's a job and people get paid to do that? I'd love to do that and that's what could happen if we could implement something like the subnational diplomacy office.

MS. SCHRAYER: Here, here. Ambassador Phillips, what's it going to look like two years from now?

MS. PHILLIPS: I agree with that. I also think that there will be increased trade between countries and cities. You know, I know where I was posted in France, all the cities have enormous resources in the trade area and they are constantly thinking about that. So I think that will be another measure is how we brought in new partnerships. And I think also we will see an increase in local support for foreign policy.

And I think that's going to be really having that dialogue at the kitchen table where all Americans have an opportunity to feel a little bit closer to what we're doing with our neighbors around the world. I think it promotes understanding, it promotes success for our country especially and for others as well. And I think it will be really a great addition to states. And it's very exciting and I applaud you and Brookings for putting this on today and letting us have a chance to make our case for get those offices open in the big cities. Let's get going, that's what I say.

MS. SCHRAYER: Well, I know I'm really excited to come back and visit Dallas even more now more than ever. And certainly in two years, we're going to meet with all those young wanna-be foreign service students, young people, and watch all the trade happening in Dallas and around the world. So thank you, thank you, what a fantastic conversation. Thank you for joining us and Tony, back to you.

MR. PIPA: Thanks very much. Thanks Liz, thank you Mayor Johnson, thank you Ambassador Phillips. That was really inspiring and I loved the vision of Mayor Johnson talking about

what it could feel like to have just that array of kids and people really interested in becoming diplomats and representing the interests of the U.S. And how it can make really foreign policy real at the local level.

So it's been really instructive to hear how Dallas approached its global engagement, the benefits it sees from local leadership and also the bipartisan nature of this proposal and how it sort of really cuts across political lines.

So we're going to turn now to get the diplomatic and national security perspective. And for this discussion, I'm honored and privileged to have three people who are very familiar and very experienced in conducting U.S. foreign policy. Ambassador Tom Shannon who is currently the senior international policy advisor at Arnold & Porter. After more than three decades of diplomatic and government service where among other things, he served as ambassador to Brazil and most recently served as under secretary of state for political affairs in Washington. So thanks very much for being with us today, Tom.

MR. SHANNON: Thank you.

MR. PIPA: Ambassador Nina Hachigian who is the first person ever to hold the position of deputy mayor of international affairs in the city of Los Angeles and also served at the State Department. She was the U.S. ambassador to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations or better known as ASEAN. Thanks for being with us today, Nina.

And Heather Hurlburt who is the director of the New Models of Policy Change at New America's Political Reform program. Previously ran the national security network and she's also helped senior positions both in the White House and at the State Department. So as you can hear just from that brief introduction, they have a lot of familiarity with how the U.S. conducts foreign policy and you can find their full bios through the event page.

And so what we really want to explore and investigate now is we heard a lot of the benefits from the local perspective from Mayor Johnson and Ambassador Phillips. But let's think about what the value proposition is potentially for the State Department and for U.S. foreign policy at large.

So Ambassador Shannon, let me start with you. So during your time at the State Department and especially during your tenure as ambassador to Brazil, what was your experience engaging with cities and states? And how would you see that connecting back to the conduct of what you were doing on the

ground and also through political affairs at the State Department?

MR. SHANNON: Well, thank you very much, Tony, it's a real pleasure to be here and what a fantastic panel and the previous discussion I think went a long way to describing how important this idea of subnational diplomacy is. When I served in Brazil during the Obama administration, the United States and Brazil negotiated a subnational agreement that permitted the Foreign Ministry of Brazil and U.S. State Department to facilitate contacts between municipalities and states and it was a huge plus for both sides.

This was in the run up to the World Cup and the run up to the Olympics and Brazil was looking for experiences that had both municipal and the state level on how to organize these large international events. But especially how to take advantage of the commercial development that happens in these events and how we ensure that that commercial development is diversified. In minority owned businesses and women owned businesses could be important players in these larger global events.

And from the experience of Los Angeles, from the experience of Atlanta and Fulton County and other municipalities, we were able to bring people into Brazil who had that keen experience. And it opened for the embassy and for the U.S. government, a whole new level of engagement with a whole new level of political leadership all of which was ambitious and all of which was determined to move beyond whatever they were at that moment. Whether it was as a mayor or as a governor. In other words, people with presidential ambitions and large legislative ambitions.

So in short, it expanded dramatically who we could reach out to and engage with. It expanded the level of popular understanding of what the U.S. government could help provide a country as it faced these kinds of events. But also, it gave us access to a whole new realm of political leadership what was very helpful.

MR. PIPA: So I think that's interesting, that idea of like access to a whole new realm of political leadership. I think it's important for us to also be aware and remember that in many countries, even in this country, you know, people begin their political career sometimes at the local level but that continues to grow throughout their time. And they might be on the national stage either in parliament or in the executive branch as well of their particular countries.

Nina, so let me turn to you. And, in fact, Los Angeles as Tom just mentioned, you know,

you have both experience with the Olympics and are also looking forward to hosting your own Olympics. And one of the things he was talking about was how that connection between cities was really helpful in Brazil.

You were ambassador to ASEAN and now you're the only deputy mayor for international affairs in a U.S. city. So describe a bit of that shift for us and give us a taste of what are the diplomatic relations that you're now pursuing at the city level. And from your perspective, how that is similar or different and how could a more formal relationship with the State Department sort of help what you're doing at the local level?

MS. HACHIGIAN: Thanks, Tony and thanks to Brookings for leading the charge in this field and I'm really honored to be with these great panelists. I think what's most new for me and different is just the life of a city and seeing how my incredibly talented colleagues tackle such intense life and death issues every day.

You know, I realize like cities, we just have to deal with whatever manifests on our streets and no matter, you know, no matter what. If there's any emergency or problem within our geographic bounds, you know, we have to react. And I think that is a little bit different from the life of an average diplomat although of course there are some exceptions.

But in my roll, there's a lot of day to day work with similar kinds of people as I dealt with out in Jakarta at ASEAN. Just a couple of examples from the last, you know, week or so. Like the Danish government wants to discuss water collaboration. A Vietnamese mobility company wants to open its headquarters in LA. We had a meeting with the secretary general of the U.N. and a bunch of global cities to discuss climate change.

There's a, you know, Myanmar diplomat who worked at the consulate here in L.A. and she lost her job because came out against the Junta and now she has no passport and no work. So just discussing with her, you know, what comes next and the temporary protected status that she might get.

We had like American AAPI heritage month and we had cleanups which we pulled the consulate core into and a Filipino town, Thai town, Korea town, Tokyo et cetera. But some of our bigger initiatives are to send community college students on their first trips overseas. For many of them, it's their first time on an airplane. That obviously ended with COVID but we instead did a big series of career,

international career options for all the Black and Brown students among all the colleges in LA.

We started a gender equity network with London and Tokyo and Mexico City and Freetown because it turns out that cities have a lot of power over lots of women, something I hadn't really thought about before. But we're sharing lessons about that. And then we're working a lot on like the legacy of equity that should come after the 2028 Olympics in Los Angeles, Olympics and para Olympics.

And then we've had a lot of connectivity on recognizing the Armenian genocide. We have a large Armenian diaspora. A lot of diasporas in general but a very big Armenian diaspora here.

In terms of a more formal structure, I think just, you know, having there be a point of entry for cities would be great. You know, I'm lucky to have some friends that I can call but that's unusual. So, you know, when a delegation wants to come visit, you know, what should I be thinking about, should I be worried about. And, you know, we could really use FSOs, Foreign Service Officers, you know, to give us that experience.

And I would say, you know, in terms of just in general, you know, mayors aren't yet thought of as national security actors although I think there should be in the experience of COVID and climate make me think that. But I think mayors tend to be, unlike Mayor Johnson is the exception to the rule, and they are concerned that their citizens won't think that they're doing what they should be doing, fixing the potholes et cetera, if they are devoting their time to foreign policy.

And I think that needs to change because the fact is, you know, we're doing it anyway and the question is whether we're, you know, doing it to the maximum benefit of the city or not. But having FSOs detailed would really help the capacity of cities to do better of what many of them are already doing.

MR. PIPA: That's really helpful. And it's interesting to hear you also describe it was interesting to hear Ambassador Shannon talk about the connections between those cities and the lead up as a way to think about sort of more business, the different gender or communities of color.

And you just talked about a gender equity network that you've actually launched with other cities and sort of this global cooperation of cities and states is something that seems to happen, is happening more and more and increasingly on issues that are just really important to us here at home. But which are also taking on sort of this global prominence. And I would hope that an office like this could leverage

some of that activity as well. Leverage those relationships that you're building abroad.

And so Heather, let me turn to you because you're actually, you know, you have a lot of experience working on national security issues and your current focus is even just on how, you know, what the future of international affairs looks like. And how it intersects with domestic political and even the kind of the polarization that we're experiencing domestically.

So to Nina's point, so what are some of the challenging global issues where a closer relationship between local governments and the State Department would be beneficial and why is that? How do you think we should be leveraging all of this?

MS. HURLBURT: Thanks Tony and thank you so much for having me to join this terrific group. And indeed, I want to pick up right where Nina left off. Because so much of the time when we talk about subnational diplomacy, we're maybe thinking primarily about the economic component and then maybe we're thinking about a cultural component or in recent years, of course, climate change.

But in fact there's really interesting intracity cooperation happening on, you know, what we would consider hard security issues or security issues broadly defined the way the mayor talked about them in that what the people of the city expect their mayors to be doing for them. So that you have now intracity networks founded that are looking at terrorism, that are looking at extremism, that are looking to the points that were made.

You know, not just at climate in the kind of international negotiations way but to the very pragmatic as Houston and Dallas and L.A. know only too well. How do you deal with drought and fire and flood and all of these consequences that both relate back to kind of high international politics but are also security in the most basic sense for our citizens.

And also, frankly, help us get over the problem that the Mayor referred to that we also hear frequently from Americans. I think of something that the newly or just about to be confirmed, Under Secretary of State for Arm Control, Bonnie Jenkins, talks about talking to a diverse audience about national security and have people in the audience say national security is something for white people.

And we can't sustain a security strategy and any kind of national sense of coherence as long as that's the feeling. So what's interesting is that you see mayors in the U.S. and around the world building these networks, as I said, on a very gritty and difficult security issues.



The other thing that's really interesting that I think poses both a challenge and opportunity to the subnational diplomacy project is that these efforts aren't at all divorced from national level foreign policy thinking. So, for example, the strong cities network which was focused to work on counterterrorism and counter and violent extremism is also sponsored by the State Department. The same State Department that we are trying to lobby to work with cities in the more structured way that we're talking about.

There's another network called Peace in Our Cities that looks at urban violence more broadly defined that is sponsored by the UK. You have many, as was noted earlier, European governments and the Nordics in particular looking really intensely at city based cooperation on safety and security issues. And the UN and efforts around the sustainable development goals, you know, there was an interesting convening recently around women mayor's role in security which kind of neatly, I think, Nina, intersects with all the interests that have mentioned by everyone on the panel.

So one of the challenges that I think we face is making sure that an office of subnational diplomacy breaks down silos rather than replicating the silos that we've all struggled. And I can only imagine Ambassador Shannon, what you had to go through to make the agreement you were talking about in Brazil happen.

So and this means, you know, if we're going to be effective breaking down silos, I think we need to acknowledge what that also means is that subnational diplomacy is not going to be easily controlled and it's not going to be kind of a pliant arm of the State Department. Cities are going to have minds of their own. Cities are also, of course, very important actors in American politics.

And I'll just maybe say as a final provocation, Tony, that it was touching on the previous panel to listen to the conversation about the bipartisan nature of this initiative. But in the highly polarized environment we're sitting in, city diplomacy is very likely to be more polarizing rather than depolarizing because American, large cities in particular, represent such a particular space in our badly fractured politics right now. So we are going to have to keep in mind how we deal with that.

MR. PIPA: So that's an interesting provocation and you just made two important points. One is that the goal of an office wouldn't necessarily be to control the international activities or policy of cities and states. And cities and states may also be more forward leading on particular issues or have a

particular mindset that's potentially, you know, in front of where the State Department might be.

I don't know, Nina, it would be interesting to get your perspective participating in the kind of cooperation that Heather just talked about actually. Just to get your perspective of what's your -- how does that line up with, you know, U.S. foreign policy? And I want to go to Ambassador Shannon because we even had a question from audience sort of around the Logan Act and the responsibility that the State Department and the mandate that the State Department has for setting U.S. foreign policy.

MS. HACHIGIAN: Well Heather is always provocative which is excellent. One of the many excellent things about her. And I think that she has a point. But if we're talking about how to further U.S. foreign policy, we can think about the last four years where our agenda was very different from what was happening in Washington. But we felt like we were actually kind of some of the only official messages back to our counterparts that we still really wanted international collaboration. And we really still believed in democracy and in an open press and all the you know, all the things that the headlines might suggest had disappeared from the United States for a time.

And so, we I felt were what was furthering, you know, bipartisan foreign policy, you know, since World War II at a time when, you know, our national government, you know, was sending different kinds of messages. So, for example, we set up a cooperation with the Mexican Foreign Ministry which was very interested in having conversations about our relationship at a time when it wasn't going well at the national level.

And for L.A., that's jobs, that's tourists, that's family members. I think it's really important to us. So I think at a local level, it is actually bipartisan because who doesn't want a job and who doesn't want to be able to see their family easily and who doesn't want to go to a, you know, a museum where there's some, you know, interesting free cultural event. Or go to a street fair where there's, you know, wonderful food from another country.

I mean I think or have a chance to travel when they've never had a chance to travel before. You know, at the very local level, it's just stuff people like. Or, you know, who doesn't want to have their streets paved differently because of something we learned from a different city that's doing, you know, has found a better way of paving streets that, you know, reflects the light or whatever. You know, there's a lot of just very practical stuff of just doing things that cities do better and we're learning

how to do that from other countries and they're learning from us.

MR. PIPA: So I think that's a really key point. Because the international engagement that you have is all about bringing it back home to better serving your citizens and Mayor Johnson touched on that a bit as well. I mean, that's sort of the (inaudible) if you will of why to even do it in the first place. Learn how to do things in a better way, develop relationships that might be beneficial whether it be economically or culturally or otherwise.

But at the end of the day, you're going to be held at the standard of this makes things better in our city, this makes things better for the people who elected you and it's not necessarily you representing the United States as much as it is what do we need to do to be able to deliver services better to our constituents.

Ambassador Shannon, let me turn to you. Because the question has been raised, you know, we hear this often when we talk about this idea. Like how does an office like this, does it uncut the mandate in some way of the State Department to conduct U.S. foreign policy? How do we not run the risk of violating the Logan Act and what's the relationship just in terms of the positions vis a vie the national government and what that might be, what the State Department might be promoting globally around that. And what cities or states feel like is really beneficial for them as they undertake their international activities. How do we avoid pitfalls there? You're on mute, sorry.

MR. SHANNON: That's a good set of questions. But I don't think that subnational diplomacy either undercuts or lessens what the Department of State or the U.S. national government does. Quite the contrary. I think it actually enhances it and expands it in an important way.

And it's important to recognize it in the 21st century given the extraordinary changes that are taking place in the world and especially the connectivity that's being driven by technology. The reality is that increasingly the direction and the tone of relationships between governments is being set not by the governments themselves but by societies and by peoples and how they relate to each other.

And this relationship is taking place independent of what national governments are doing. And so, in many ways, by giving it a bit more structure and by giving in the case of the United States the federal government and the Department of State, some degree of insight and participation in it, it actually expands the field of vision of the federal government and the field of vision of the Department of State.

And it allows it to understand and recognize just the depth and the profundity of the relationships that are taking place around the world.

I mean the nation state remains the fundamental building block of the international order. And the Westphalia system that reflects that is still dominant. But in many ways, we're returning also to what I would call Athenian diplomacy, kind of city state diplomacy. Which you're going to have several layers of engagement and it's important to recognize this and to try to take advantage of it.

And at the end of the day, Los Angeles is not going to negotiate an arms control agreement with the Russians. And Dallas is not going to negotiate a free trade agreement with China. That's just not going to happen so I don't think we have to worry about the Logan Act.

But the idea that we're going to use this engagement, first of all to present the United States as an open country, one that's prepared to engage on issues that are immediately important for people. Because as Nina noted, this is all about things that are an impact on peoples' lives on a daily basis and are hugely important. And turning foreign policy into something that's immediate and not somehow distance and foreboding is important. And I think it opens up a whole new way for people to understand the world.

But also in some ways, it also acts as a buffer as the United States in a world defined by great power competition and where there's going to be a lot of sharp edges. If you can build linkages between cities, for instance or states that are all dealing with similar problems, I mean there's a lot of similarity between what L.A. is facing and what Shanghai is facing. Between what Dallas is facing and what Lagos is facing.

And the extent to which you build relationships and build some degree of cooperation and collaboration around these issues, it actually helps national governments address larger issues with, you know, these competing powers.

MR. PIPA: So let me just stay with you for a second and I want to pick up on that theme you just talked about sort of around great power competition as we move. But let me actually go back to the thing you said that the very beginning around the tone being set by all of society. And the opportunity, from my perspective, that's a real opportunity also for say a young or mid-career foreign service officer to sort of feel that and experience that on the ground.

And for that to be part of how they're thinking about what they're going to do on behalf of the United States as they move and go to postings internationally throughout their career. I would love to hear your perspective, you know, as someone very familiar obviously with the diplomatic core and how people move through that at the State Department. It would be great to hear your perspective on the opportunity that presents but also how to make that, how to provide incentives for that to be something that is attractive to foreign services officers or something that they might see some value in.

MR. SHANNON: Well first of all, the Department has recognized for some time that detailing people outside of the State Department either to the U.S. Congress or to other agencies of the federal government or to the private sector is a useful way of expanding people's horizons and educating them about a larger world. And we have done this with some cities but having a more structured program and putting foreign service officers into that kind of environment I think number one would be very attractive to the officers themselves because it helps reconnect them to the country that they're representing when they go abroad.

Because typically, we bounce back and forth between Washington and whatever country we're serving in. So suddenly to find ourselves in Kansas City or Milwaukee or Seattle or Phoenix would be a wonderful thing. Because it would help us reconnect and understand our own country which is important at the end of the day.

And the system itself, you know, as officers begin to participate in this, the system itself will adapt and begin to value it and understand it. And so, I really think in many ways, it's up to the Department and the officers just to say this is something we're going to do and then we'll fix the internal dynamics. There are promotion incentives later as we build this out. But I think the importance of this is self-evident so that wouldn't worry me too much.

MR. PIPA: Okay that's interesting. Well Heather, let me go back to what the Ambassador had started to talk about just with particular kinds of sensitivities and countries and sort of the era that we're in and thinking about countries like China and Russia. What are the potential benefits and even potential pitfalls vis a vie those kinds of relationships that a subnational office might be helpful to cities and states but also that cities and states should be sensitive as they are engaging globally as well.

MS. HURLBURT: Let me start answering that by actually picking up on the last thing that Ambassador Shannon said. That, you know, I think it's going to be worth thinking about making sure this goes both ways and how can we bring city government employees into the State Department. Which is going to be educational going both directions is also potentially you could image it over time opening up another stream of mid-career recruitment at state. Although I shouldn't say, "Oh hi city government," because what we really want to do is steal all your best people and bring them to Washington. I shouldn't say the quiet part out loud.

But, you know, that has, I think that has several purposes. It adds to, you know, for all the places where people don't have the opportunity to work for Nina, it adds to the desirability of, you know, why should I work on international affairs as opposed to something that's going to more immediately further my career.

And for all the folks, for all the FSOs that we can't convince to go take a tour in Houston or Dallas or Denver, it then gives them, a creates some mutual exposure. So I just would encourage that we add that two-way street to our thinking.

This is going, I mean, as Nina can tell you, this is hugely fraught and challenging. Because on the one hand, I mean, American cities have long histories of really positive relationships with cities in countries where the national governments had more fraught relationships going back even to the late Soviet and immediate post-Soviet period and obviously very extensively with China.

But this is going to be difficult and it's going to be difficult in part because both sides at the national level are going to be tempted to weaponize these relationships. And it's also going to be challenging because on the one hand, American foreign policy has for better and worse been democratized over the last 40, 50 years. And every organized interest group in American life has as much right as every other organized interest group to try to work it.

And for every example that produces some really positive outcomes like the ones that Nina mentioned about L.A. and that were mentioned about Houston and Dallas in the previous panel, there's also going to be negative ones where, you know, you're trying to get the city council to pass a resolution on something that's happening somewhere.

And that frankly, by the way, is where I think you're going to have the bigger problem with

the Logan Act. You know, not so much, I mean no, no one is going to try to write their own treaties but people are going to try to implement sanctions of various kind, boycotts of various kinds.

And that's going to happen whether there's a subnational diplomacy office or not. So I come back actually to a point that Ambassador Shannon made which is that, you know, we are living in a polarized, democratized and energized era where everybody in American life is going to try to control that national message that we're sending as Ambassador Shannon very right said.

And if we tell ourselves that we can get control of that out of Washington, out of Foggy Bottom, we're going to fail, we're going to fail badly and we're going to risk driving the State Department into irrelevance. But instead, if we think that we can have a better understanding, better visibility and also frankly prepare ourselves. You know, imagine you're a mayor and you've got some powerful local interest group that wants to do a boycott of something.

Right now, you get a call from, you know, say Ambassador Shannon in his old job and you're like who are you and I don't care, you have no relevance to me here. Whereas if we have ongoing relationships and ability to say look, this is going to matter to you in this way, then frankly main state is going to have a better chance at turning off things that are deeply problematic at a national level.

MR. PIPA: So Ambassador Hachigian, can you just expand about this a little bit from your own perspective at the local level. Because you're actually having these kinds of interactions as well. But what I hear Heather saying is, you know, some of this is going to happen whether there's an office or not, right. Like they are going to be views that local leaders have and they may even use their jurisdictional authority to try to do somethings.

So what I hear, one of the benefits is that just even this open channel of communication and having relationships that you can depend upon could be really useful. What else would go into this? How would we make sure this is as constructive as possible?

MS. HACHIGIAN: Yeah, just to pick up on a couple points that Heather and Tom made. I love Athenian, I love that reference to Athenian democracy. I'm going to take that. And let's talk about China and Russia. It was actually someone in our State Department who actually asked us, you know, a couple years ago maybe to do a smart city cooperation with Russia. And I just said no, we're just not going to do that.

But I do think and let's go to China. You know, on the one hand you have the FBI signaling very loudly that China is interested at influence at the local level and they shut down that Houston consulate a couple years ago. And on the other hand, yesterday on a call with Secretary Kerry, Governor Newsome, Governor Brown, Mayor Garcetti and their counterparts in China, we were talking about how do we clean up our ports and can Shanghai and L.A. have a cooperation over reducing emissions at ports.

So everyone wants their emissions reduced at their ports. That's just something very practical that we can cooperate on. Shanghai is the biggest port in the world. Like that just helps everybody and it's pretty apolitical. And so there's that kind of cooperation that we can do. While at the same time, and, you know, everything having to do with China is always complex. At the same time, you know, making sure that we're not leaning into relationships that would ultimately not be helpful for the U.S. national interest.

But, you know, even for seasoned China hands, this is complicated. So, you know, we need, cities need and states need to be able to call somebody at the State Department to say okay, is this on the kosher end of what we should be doing or not or should we really just say no.

So I think and the other thing I wanted to say actually is that our counterparts around the world are doing this to a much larger degree than we're doing it. Cities in Asia, cities in Europe, cities in Latin America, cities in Africa have big staffs and they're out there, you know, as often funded by their national governments hosting conferences, you know, getting the word out about what they're doing in their cities. And we're just really playing catch up.

So it's another way for the U.S. as Tom was saying to present itself as a useful and, you know, beneficent actor in the world. And I think we can trust cities and states to be in general carrying the messages about our values and about our can do spirit and all that because that's just who we are as a country. And I would say, you know, err on the side of letting us do that and helping us to do that well rather than not.

MR. PIPA: Wonderful, thank you. Well, we're coming toward the end of the time that we have set aside for this discussion. But Tom, let me just turn to you because Nina just said something around sort of the practical pragmatic things that every city is looking to do. And you even mentioned it



when you answered your first question.

You know, it seems to provide a platform for cooperation even in an environment where politically, there's sensitivities, sometimes tensions. And I'm just wondering how that work, that cooperation city to city or state to state. How does that help inform or can that inform or help shape just sort of our national foreign policy in some way. And the open communication that the subnational diplomacy office would offer. How could that channel be sort of two ways, I guess?

MR. SHANNON: Great question. And I guess I would respond in the following fashion. First, in a competitive world, the United States has to show that we're relevant to other people's success. You know, the world is not going to be divided ideologically, it's going to be divided in terms of capability and efficiency and increasingly legitimacy is going to be determined by outcome.

And the extent to which we can show that we can help other people be successful, they will want to work with us. And that will carry us a long way towards the kinds of relationships that we're going to need if we're going to be successful in the 21st century.

But also, you know, we have a model of engagement with the world which had been based on embassies and outposts all around the world that report back into the United States and report back into Washington. And what we need to be doing is building networks that reflect the 21st century. And what's interesting about a subnational office is that we'd be connecting to a whole constellation of American cities and states that are connected themselves.

And so you don't only have the hub and spoke embassy model, you really have a much more networked approach to the world. And this allows you to pull in all kinds of information and attitudes and understandings. And it gives you a much sharper perception of what the world looks like and how it's engaging with the United States. But also, a much sharper perception on how Americans understand the world. Because if you think that sitting here in Washington is going to help you understand how the rest of the United States sees the world, you're wrong.

MR. PIPA: Well that is a wonderful note to end on and actually quite, I think a compelling vision for what diplomacy can look like in the 21st century on behalf of U.S. interest sort of pulling in all of American society into that. So this has been a really a rich conversation. I've really appreciated also how we've talked about some of the challenges of potential pitfalls as well as the benefits and really gave this

a fair and comprehensive exploration. So thanks to all of you for your time and your reflections today, it's really been a rich conversation and provided us with a lot of food for thought.

So to close our event for today and our program, I'd like to turn to Representative Ted Lieu to give us a congressional perspective. Representative Lieu represents California's 33rd District. He's a former city council member of his home town and a former state legislature. So he understands the imperatives and workings of local and state government as we've been talking about. He's cosponsored bipartisan legislation on this idea. And so, Representative Lieu, welcome, it's wonderful to have you hear and love to hear your thoughts about the ideas that we've been discussing today.

MR. LIEU: Thank you so much Tony, and let me first of all thank you and Max for your work on highlighting subnational diplomacy. I want to thank Brookings for having this wonderful event with so many distinguished speakers. So I thought I'd talk a little bit about my experience with some national diplomacy, why I think this bill was important and where it is right now.

I was, as you mentioned, a former member of the Torrance City Council and I remember we would always have exchanges with other cities. We had a sister city in Kashiwa, Japan. We welcomed chambers of commerce delegations from other countries. We also happened to have been the headquarters of Honda North America so we had a fair amount of Japanese delegations come over.

And then I remembered what ended up happening is as more and more of these exchanges would happen, all of the sudden a hotel was built that catered to folks from Japan. And then all of the sudden, we started to get tourists groups from Japan that would stay at this hotel because they realized oh, we could stay at Torrance for half the rate of staying at a more expensive city and still go to Disney Land.

So there are lots of benefits for cities when you have more exchanges and more connections with foreign cities and foreign governments. And this is happening whether or not the federal government pays attention to it. Subnational diplomacy has been occurring, it going to continue to occur.

My view is we could ignore it at the federal level or we can assist it and it makes so much more sense to help it along. And this benefits both the federal government as well as local jurisdictions. I served previously on active duty in the military and numbers mattered. What I mean by numbers is sheer numbers of personnel.

So now instead of having a State Department with a limited number of foreign service officers, you can now leverage that with their hundreds and thousands of very energetic, smart, local elected officials who are engaging with foreign states and foreign cities and foreign governments. And let's put everybody on the same page or at least try to so we're all going in the same direction. And that's the way to help the State Department leverage its own goals and what's accomplished with foreign countries.

In addition, we know the State Department has a diversity problem. There is legislation right now, for example, to get a mid-career lateral program going at the State Department that's going to be more useful, more effective.

Well perhaps when the State Department is engaging with all these amazing mayors and members of their country supervisors and so on, maybe one of them will go hey, the State Department looks sort of interesting. Maybe I'll do a lateral transfer and think about joining the foreign service. So that's another opportunity to expose people to the State Department.

And in addition, the State Department is not going to be controlling these cities but can provide guidance and there could be cities, for example, that are less sophisticated than the city of L.A. which is doing an amazing job with foreign countries and foreign delegations.

But there could be a small city of let's say only 100,000 people who just want to try this for the first time and now you've got the State Department that can offer resources and guidance on best practices and what to do and what not to do. In addition, the State Department can tell these cities what the experience is of other cities and other jurisdictions with these foreign governments.

And it's been said earlier during this conference that look, you're not going to have a city negotiate an arms control agreement with a foreign country. But what we do have happening, for example, is the state of California previously negotiating agreements on water technology with a foreign country. You've got local cities negotiating all sorts of different agreements with foreign cities or foreign delegations or foreign states.

And so, you do have a lot of agreements, in fact, that are happening at the subnational level and it's good for the State Department to have more awareness of this as well the State Department to assist cities to try and get this done.

I also want to note that it is true. It does seem like we've all become much more partisan. But again, local cities are non-partisan. When people run for elected positions in cities, they're not running as the Democrat or Republican. My service on the local city council was actually very non-partisan. I happened to have been one of two Democrats on a seven member council with five other Republicans but partisan issues almost never came up. We were just dealing with issues of how do we help our local constituents. And there's no such thing, for example, as Republican water technology or Democratic water technology.

So there are lots of ways for cities to engage with foreign countries and the people of the foreign countries to have all these exchanges and all this people to people contact that in the long run, I think benefits America. Because I still believe that democracies are still the best form of government and for the world to continue to see what America can do, especially at the local city level.

And then I want to take a step back and just sort of explain how do most people interact with government. Most folks, right, don't really interact with the president of the United States or with the secretary of state. We're not dealing with high level issues like arms control. Most folks don't engage in that.

But many of them do, in fact, engage in businesses who might benefit from having either a foreign delegation come over or going to another country to see if you can invest in that country with your business. And it's sort of this people to people contact, I think, can be very valuable for this Office of National Diplomacy to encourage. And we can get a lot of cities and not start thinking about it.

Some of the big cities, Dallas and L.A. and others again are doing a fantastic job. They have the resources, they're sophisticated. They can certainly benefit from this Office of National Diplomacy. But when we're talking about a city of let's say 120,000 folks, they might have not even thought about this at all.

And once we have this office set up, if we can get all of these cities, at least start thinking about engaging subnational diplomacy, I think that another way not only to help the local city but really to help America export a lot of our very good ideas to the globe and to receive input from the globe back to us.

So with that, let me talk about where the bill is. Last term, I was pleased to have authored it on a bipartisan basis with South Carolina Republican Joe Wilson. We got it to pass the

House. Unfortunately, the former administration didn't seem all that excited about the bill and really didn't want it so the Republican controlled Senate did not send it to the administration.

This term, we made some technical changes because of the new administration. The bill is pretty much set to go. We're going to be introducing it in the next couple of weeks. Again, it will be bipartisan and this time we have high hopes of getting it not only through the House but also through the Senate and hopefully we can get it signed into law.

And anything that any of you can do to help, that would be greatly appreciated. Any contacts you may have with U.S. senators, with administration would be extremely helpful. And thank you again for highlighting this issue and really appreciate you asking me to speak.

MR. PIPA: Well, thanks for spending some time and your thoughts with us today. And interesting as you said, this kind of subnational diplomacy is happening so we can either ignore it or we can assist it and benefit from it. So thanks very much for spending your time and your thoughts with us today and that concludes our program.

A lot of food for thought and as we've seen though as you say, mayors and governors are increasingly proving themselves indispensable on the front lines of lots of issues. And so, a way for us to think about how that can inform U.S. foreign policy and also how an open channel in communication between the State Department and the affairs that happen at the city and state level can be beneficial to both.

Thanks very much all of you for watching. We look forward to your continued feedback, suggestions and questions on this idea. And we will continue to -- we'll continue to take those under advisement and continue to refine this proposal going forward. Thanks very much.

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