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Remarks Prepared for Delivery
Secretary Rubio State Department Budget Hearing, May 20, 2025

Thank you, Chairman Risch. Secretary Rubio, welcome back. Four months ago, you sat in that chair and said China is “...the most potent and dangerous near-peer adversary this nation has ever confronted.” You called China “...an industrial competitor, an economic competitor, a geopolitical competitor, a scientific competitor...” You were right, and yet, this Administration has eviscerated six decades of American foreign policy investments, undercutting our ability to compete with adversaries like China.

And Beijing is not just sitting back. As Elon Musk took a chainsaw to USAID and you proposed cutting 83% of foreign programs, China has proposed increasing its diplomatic budget by 8.4%. As we move to reduce our diplomatic workforce and discuss closing U.S. embassies, China has more diplomatic missions than any other nation on Earth. As the U.S. canceled PEPFAR, our most successful program fighting HIV/AIDS, China has been happy to replace our global health efforts across Africa and Asia. As this Administration distracts from serious national security issues with threats against Panama and Greenland, Xi Jinping has welcomed Brazil’s President and other Latin American leaders, pledging more than \$9 billion dollars in investments. As the U.S. has shuttered Voice of America and Radio Free Asia and crippled the State Department’s ability to counter foreign propaganda, China pours billions into propaganda, spreading lies and eroding trust in the U.S. As this Administration imposes tariffs on our closest allies, China is courting them in Europe, in Asia and in our own hemisphere.

Beijing is making the case that they are a more reliable, supportive partner than the United States. And it’s not just our allies. Xi has deepened ties with Putin, shielding the Russian economy from sanctions. Because of that—and because President Trump has given away our leverage—Putin doesn’t feel pressure to agree to a ceasefire in Ukraine. And for what? For all the Administration’s talk, for all Elon Musk’s promises, I don’t think DOGE has saved a dime. CBS News reports that “The federal government has spent \$200 billion more in its first 100 days than last year.” According to the Partnership for Public Service, DOGE’s cuts might cost American taxpayers \$135 billion dollars this year. This is in addition to the costs to American families and businesses stemming from the President’s trade war.

I recently met with New Hampshire Ball Bearings—a company that contributes to our national defense and strengthens U.S. military readiness. Their lead time for the steel they use has gone from 20 weeks to two and half years. And according to the Yale Budget Lab, consumers face an overall tariff rate of 17.8%, the highest since 1934. That’s \$2,800 dollars per household each year. These tariffs amount to the largest tax increase during peacetime in U.S. history.

Four months ago you said we were going to be safer, stronger, and more prosperous. But whether it is President Trump’s deals with the Sinaloa Cartel to let Cartel members into the U.S or watching masked agents abduct a Tufts college student, I don’t feel safer. With Canadians canceling summer trips to New Hampshire and hurting our tourism industry, I don’t feel more prosperous. After traveling to Ukraine and

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visiting the graves of people massacred on the orders of a Russian President this Administration has bent over backwards to please, I don't feel more secure.

To your credit Mr. Secretary, your trip and the statement from President Trump that he will be lifting sanctions on Syria was welcome news. And you have worked to restart some programs, and grant waivers to others. But contrary to what you've said, lifesaving health and humanitarian aid is not flowing. My staff was just in Africa and we have the photos of the empty shelves and closed down clinics.

Mr. Secretary, I urge you to stand up to the extremists in this Administration. We were promised a golden age for America. Instead, our disease surveillance programs are down, our counterterror programs are in chaos, the ceasefire in Gaza has ended and fighting has begun again and we have unilaterally disarmed against some of our most dangerous adversaries.

One of the things that I'll never forget from these last four months is this: On my trip to Ukraine we stopped in Poland, one of the most pro-American countries in the world. Because of the cuts and the stop-work orders, one man told us, "My trust in America is broken." They were even told to remove all American flags. Remove all American flags—a sad commentary on the foreign assistance legacy for this Administration. American flags... coming down around the world.