

Nick Burns: [00:04](#) Good morning everybody. Good morning. Another beautiful day in Aspen. Good morning everyone. Thank you all for being here so early in on time we appreciate it. We're gonna have I think a spectacular day and I just wanted to give you a couple of program notes on what we're trying to do yesterday as you'll remember we had a big focus on Russia and China the Trump administration I think correctly has said they're the big rivals now of the United States. Today we shift our focus in the morning towards the Middle East. You'll see that the United States shot down an Iranian drone yesterday that the Iranians apparently have taken a Emirati frigate and are holding it. And so there are renewed tensions in the Middle East. And I want to thank Senator Chris Murphy of Connecticut for being here. You're going to hear from him and Sam Vinogradov CNN in a minute.

Nick Burns: [01:02](#) Senator Murphy I think is one of the leaders now in the Congress on foreign and defense policy. Remarkably well-informed has traveled widely and I think you're all going to appreciate hearing from Senator Chris Murphy. We're also going to have a big panel on the future of our relationship with Iran. I just say one thing. Yesterday we talked about the importance I think every speaker said this The United States is stronger when we work with our allies and our partners Nato magnifies American power. Admiral Davidson and Greenwald tent yesterday. How can we succeed without Japan and Australia and South Korea in the Far East. We're limited right now on Iran because the Trump administration has walked away from Britain France and the US and Britain Britain France and Germany on the Iran nuclear deal. And we no longer have this P five plus one group with Russia and China all working against the Iranians.

Nick Burns: [01:59](#) So when you think about the crisis in the Middle East suddenly the United States is without our normal partners and allies backing us up we can have another conversation with General Robert Ashley an incredibly impressive person director of the Defense Intelligence Agency. You'll hear from him later in the day. A big panel on the Afghan war we have the Afghan ambassador to the United States and General Doug Lute our former coordinator of the war in Afghanistan. Should we bring that war to a close is now a big subject in Washington the president's thinking about that. And there are negotiations underway at the end of the day. We'll hear from I think one of the finest American diplomats of the last 30 years Ambassador Jim Jeffrey is President Trump's envoy to the Syrian war still 12 million homeless in Syria and a Russian Iranian Hezbollah

offensive in Idlib province that could bring more refugees more violence to that country.

Nick Burns:

[03:00](#)

And we end today talking about the future it's the future of the United States in space and what an appropriate time to do that as we reflect on the magnificent achievement. Fifty years ago this week of Apollo 11 its safe return to Earth after having landed on the moon. We've got a remarkable day. I want to thank all of you for being here. And I want to pay tribute to a close friend and I want to call her up and I want to ask her to say a few words. We as you know have a series of corporate sponsors and we love them all. We love NBC and MSNBC. That relationship allows this forum to be broadcast not only throughout the United States but to the world at large. And Andrea Mitchell in my view and the press is so important to our democracy and freedom of the press and the press as a fundamental part of American democracy is so important. There could not be a better example of that than Andrea Mitchell and you may not know that she was it was just announced that in September she's going to receive the lifetime achievement award from the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences. No one is more deserving than Andrea Mitchell. Please take the stage.

Andrea Mitchell:

[04:32](#)

Well it is really humbled to be first of all introduced by Nick Burns and to look out to see you know Madeleine Albright people who are icons to me. Jim Jeffrey so many foreign policy experts. Senator Murphy we look forward to hearing from and to be here in Aspen in this glorious surrounding on behalf of NBC News and MSNBC. We are so proud to be returning to the Aspen Security Forum as we saw last year. What is discussed here in Aspen reaches a population far beyond this beautiful Meadows campus and has an impact on the critical security issues impacting our nation and our world. And I want to thank our partners here at the Aspen Institute. Huge thanks to Dan Porterfield and to Nick Burns of course. We really value this partnership. Our team looks forward to attending this forum every July. We know that the discussions that happen here are so critically important to our reporting our understanding of the issues around the world in the coming year and beyond.

Andrea Mitchell:

[05:43](#)

And our thanks to Deb Cunningham and to John Hogan who worked so closely with our team on planning every one of these sessions. Months and months in advance over the past three years these discussions have provided tremendous value to our reporting teams. We're proud to have nine of those NBC News correspondents here the best of our teams as well as 11 NBC News and MSNBC as contributors five of whom are participating

in panels this week across the platforms of NBC News and MSNBC. We're providing coverage of this event across 12 programs NBC News.com is live streaming panels our social team is providing real time updates and our new streaming platform NBC News now is providing live coverage throughout the day. And we of course have our new global partners Sky News around the world. So we are really proud proud broadcasts and social media partner for all of you.

- Andrea Mitchell: [06:47](#) I'm looking forward to my conversation today with former National Security Adviser Susan Rice and I have to give a special thanks to my friend Nick Burns who went to extraordinary lengths to our partners here at Aspen to make her visit possible today to say that this partnership is important for NBC News and MSNBC is really an understatement. Every year we watch as this forum grows in importance. We look forward to strengthening this partnership in the years to come. I have to say personally it is just such an honor and privilege to be here with all of you. Thanks so much.
- Speaker 3: [07:24](#) And I look forward to Senator Murphy.
- Samantha V: [07:46](#) Good morning everybody. I'm Samantha Vinogradov and I am joined by Senator Chris Murphy from the great state of Connecticut. He is now serving in his second term and is a ranking member of the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee where he is the top Democrat on subcommittee the subcommittee focusing on the Middle East and counterterrorism.
- Samantha V: [08:05](#) Senator Murphy you and I have talked about every issue under the sun when it comes to the Middle East from Yemen to Saudi Arabia and obviously Iran I always like to lead with intelligence and I assume that most of the work that you're doing is driven by intelligence that you're receiving from the administration to a large degree. What rules intelligence. Playing for the Senate right now and for the SFR in particular.
- Chris Murphy: [08:30](#) Well Sam great to be here with you. Thank you to the Aspen Institute for inviting me. This is my first time here at this incredibly important forum. Thank you to Nick for the invitation. Secretary Albright and to many others in the audience. It's wonderful to be here with you. I think it is important to start a conversation about what's happening today in the Middle East centered around a conversation on intelligence I'll maybe make one broad point salmon and then drill down into some of the more events specific details. First as a member the Foreign Relations Committee we have limited access to intelligence. And

let's just make that clear. We are the committee that is primarily responsible for setting American foreign policy. We are the committee that would debate any war authorization with Iran or any other country around the world.

Chris Murphy: [09:16](#) And yet there is more and more military activity happening around the world today that is done in a clandestine manner. The information and the outcome in the analysis is not shared. The Foreign Relations Committee. I remember when we were being asked during the Obama administration to authorize a overt Defense Department run training program for Syrian rebels. Well we had been running a clandestine program for a long time. I know that because of open source reporting but we couldn't get the information on how well or how badly that had gone because it was outside of our purview. And so as you have this massive shift of kinetic activity to the intelligence agencies you hamstring the ability of Congress to weigh in when there actually is a public policy decision that we need to make a decision on on what's happening today. I'm concerned about how the administration has handled intelligence in two ways.

Chris Murphy: [10:09](#) One they have made the deliberate decision to parcel out intelligence at crisis moments to their friends first. And that has happened in particular with the escalatory cycle on Iran when moments happen and there is a claim that they have intel they're acting on they will make calls to Republican friends in the Senate and often the briefing for the rest of us is delayed by days if not weeks. Second there have been some moments where the intelligence I think has been misconstrued. Right now one of the things I worry greatly about maybe we'll talk about it a little bit later Sam is the withdrawal of our diplomats from Baghdad. I think this is a massive own goal.

Chris Murphy: [10:59](#) The fact that we were reportedly down to maybe only 15 staffers in that embassy is a gift to ISIS and Iran and it is because of some claim which has I think some merit to it has real merit to it that there are threats against U.S. personnel there from Shia Iran affiliated militias. But I will say to you I have seen no intelligence to suggest that that threat is any greater than what it was during a period of time during the 2000s when we were able to defend a very large diplomatic presence there.

Chris Murphy: [11:34](#) And so I think there is a withholding of intelligence and then at times a overhyping of intelligence that could lead to some very bad decisions being made.

Samantha V: [11:45](#) Well we've seen the politicization of intelligence in the past now. And if that's what you're describing. You mentioned Iran.

So let's start there it's in the headlines today. We have a drone for drone tanker for tanker eye for an eye escalatory cycle going on right now. Iran has restarted some of their band activities. Softball question for you Senator. What would you do on Iran.

Chris Murphy: [12:06](#) Let's fix it right here we have it right here in my heart right. We'll take it. We'll take care of it.

Chris Murphy: [12:10](#) So I think Nick put it very well what what is what is so concerning is that in a two year period of time we went from an alignment in which the United States Europe Russia China and India were on one side of the ledger and Iran was on the other. Today it is the United States on one side of the ledger and all of those nations on the other side trying to work with the Iranians to hold together the remnants of the nuclear agreement. And you see this most recently in the discussion in the last few days about the U.S. request to up activity in and around Iran with respect to protections for oil tankers maritime security. You can't get our allies to work with us on it something that you might think would be a no brainer given the actual real provocations that the Iranians have engaged in with respect to the transit of energy resources.

Chris Murphy: [13:01](#) And yet because we now have this new alignment in which we're on one side and everybody else is on the other we have a hard time getting them to the table on it. So that is worrying because that may be a permanent state of affairs that hampers not only our military to do something with Iran on the nuclear program but on ballistic missiles and support for terrorist organizations. I would love for the administration to get to the table. I think Zarif is sincere about his interest in doing so. Who knows whether he has the support of the hardliners who have been empowered over the last several years his substantial offer on simply ratifying the Additional Protocols is not much of a substantial offer but it really shows that they're trying. There are a couple other things though we could do right now to strengthen our hand with Iran and to limit their influence in the region. I mentioned one getting our diplomats back into Baghdad every day that we have no presence in Baghdad is another day that Iran can up the presence and the political impact of the Shia militias right. We are waiting for the day in which this technocratic government in Baghdad is forced out because of the Shia militias increasing political power.

Samantha V: [14:13](#) And if I can just jump in to protect those diplomats and we're generally in the region would you be prepared to see the

deployment of more military assets to the region again for force protection or diplomatic protection.

Chris Murphy: [14:23](#) I would I would listen. I think in Iraq we have to have a longer term commitment. Right now we're doing appropriations and troop level commitments on a year to year basis. I was I'm a hardened opponent of the Iraq war thought it was a mistake. But I think we have a moral commitment to help that country rebuild especially after what we asked them to do with ISIS. So I would certainly support additional forces there if they are for diplomatic protection. And then let me just Sam mention one other thing getting out of the Yemen war you know right now is the moment as the NORAD are pulling out their forces the Saudis have no ability to really push forward militarily without the Emirati is there. I think the WHO these are falling further and further into the Iranian camp every single day that war persists we can cut off an increasing source of Iranian influence if we force a negotiation and right now I think only the United States can get a negotiation done in Yemen. I as much as I love our U.N. envoy there. I think the United States needs to be the interlocutor well when it comes to Iran more generally.

Samantha V: [15:25](#) Ambassador Burns and you senator have mentioned your allies in the distance. Is there any role for Russia and China to play when it comes to getting around the negotiating table in any of these issues.

Chris Murphy: [15:34](#) Well there is and I think this is where I think we generally worry about the administration's diplomatic bandwidth. It seems as if we have the ability to litigate one or maybe one and a half issues with China at any one time with with Russia perhaps the same. And so the Obama administration was able to walk and chew gum at the same time with with China. You did a decent job at working them on climate issues well bringing them in to the table on the Iranian nuclear negotiation. I just simply think the administration does have the capacity to do that. Theoretically of course they could try to help broker a return to the negotiating table. But I simply don't think this administration has the personnel with which to do all that.

Samantha V: [16:21](#) You mentioned Yemen and you've been quite outspoken on human rights abuses in Yemen quite outspoken on Saudi Arabia's human rights abuses. Is there a way for the United States to look at its alliances in the region with countries there the UAE Saudi Egypt and to stay allies but to hold them to greater account when it comes to what they're doing domestically and in other countries in the region as well from a human rights perspective.

- Chris Murphy: [16:43](#) So this has been our historic position in the region. We have always said to our allies that we are willing to be with you when our interests align and sometimes even when they may depart partially but when there is a substantial difference between your interests and ours we can't walk down these roads with you and that the sort of unconditional commitment that we've made to the Saudis the idea that because we are allies with the Saudis anything they ask from the United States must be responded with an affirmative answer is a betrayal of U.S. national security interests. But I also think a misunderstanding of our historic positioning in the region. And so I understand this this concern perhaps mythology that if the United States tells the Saudis we're not going to go down this road in Yemen with you that the alliance will fall apart.
- Chris Murphy: [17:34](#) But I think it is that mythology I think the Saudis are certainly making overtures to the Russians as they always have now to the Chinese on different weapons systems. But the United States as an ally is irreplaceable they are never going to turn their backs on us. But right now they are abusing us. They are taking us for granted. They have become the dominant partner in this relationship. And this war in Yemen is a national security nightmare for the United States. AQAP ISIS getting stronger a famine a cholera epidemic all blamed on the United States. This is the moment for the United States to step in. And I actually think this is the moment for the United States to say to the Saudis and the Emirati is we want to be partners with you and so we want to help get you to the negotiating table something that this administration has been unwilling to do.
- Chris Murphy: [18:20](#) And I don't understand that I don't understand why this administration refuses to play a mediating role in the Yemen conflict. Why they have outsourced this to a U.N. which thus far has proved largely incapable of landing this plane.
- Samantha V: [18:36](#) What leverage do we have our foreign assistance posture has changed dramatically whether it comes to Syria negotiating some kind of solution there. Yemen similar story. What leverage do we have over the Saudis over the Emirates over there who these or any of the parties in Yemen at this at this point.
- Chris Murphy: [18:50](#) Well I mean some of this is natural leverage. I mean there there is a tiring of this conflict. I spent a lot of time talking to all sides of this war and this is a moment where I think people want to get an agreement. The battle lines are largely stagnant. The Emirati is as I mentioned have essentially pulled out leaving the Saudis friendless. So there just isn't a moment in time that would allow for the United States to come in. But we've given

away our leverage with the Saudis. I mean by telegraphing to them that you know after the perpetuation of possible war crimes in Yemen with U.S. assistance the kidnapping and dismemberment of a U.S. resident you get rewarded for that. You get a deeper defense partnership you get a deeper nuclear civil nuclear partnership you get a visit from the secretary of state. The Saudis don't feel like they have much to fear from us if they really thought that we were willing to change the nature of our security relationship if they didn't come to the negotiating table on Yemen they would. Right now they think that they have this administration in a stranglehold.

- Samantha V: [20:04](#) Would you cut out Mohammed bin Salman from negotiations would you advise the president not to meet with him would that be your approach.
- Chris Murphy: [20:09](#) No I don't think you can cut him out of negotiations. You know I might recommend to work around the current Yemeni government. I think there is a tiring of the Hadi administration that is that is a roadblock. But I think you ultimately have to deal with the principal players and all of those countries and within within the Coalition.
- Samantha V: [20:29](#) Final question for you. Before we open it up to the audience Syria is another topic that Ambassador Burns mentioned proxy war was going on there we withdrew the Syrian people are still being terrorized by Assad. Is there anything else that we should be doing right now in light of the withdrawal of U.S. troops.
- Chris Murphy: [20:45](#) Well you know again I am in the position of having opposed the imported U.S. troops into the region. I just thought it was a size deployment that ultimately was not going to be dispositive. But once you've made that commitment you need to follow through on it. And the the literal weekly prevarication on the disposition of U.S. forces in the region has weakened a diplomatic hand that was already as weak as it could be. So I think we should provide some certainty as to our military commitment there. I think we should be back at the negotiating table having largely under this administration outsourced to those talks to the Turks the Iranians and the Russians. And then I think we should start to unlock our humanitarian dollars. Remember this administration has essentially frozen those dollars has refused to participate in the refugee crisis in the region. We have taken a number of steps to essentially telegraph that we have no interest in being a partner.
- Chris Murphy: [21:44](#) We're not going to give you certainty on military numbers. We're not going to send diplomats to be part of negotiations



we're not going to help you with your refugee program. We're not going to put humanitarian dollars on the ground. We wonder why we have no leverage in Syria. It's because we've taken a series of steps to communicate that we are uninterested and if we were to reverse course on at least those four grounds I'm not saying that we would win out on all of our requests but we ought to at least get ourselves back into the conversation.

- Speaker 13: [22:11](#) And I ask you one more just that we end on a high note opening it up. What how are we going to end on a high note. SIMON To put that back land well I'm just asking the questions. What's a bright spot for Middle East policy right now.
- Chris Murphy: [22:25](#) Well I mean listen there are you know there are there are still relative success stories in that region. You know Senator Romney and I were there a month ago and is working as Iraq is you know Iraq is is still in many ways a success story.
- Chris Murphy: [22:43](#) Not only that we beat ISIS in the sense that we took away its territory that we still have them on the run but we have a multi-ethnic multi extended sectarian government that still enjoys legitimacy. Jordan Lebanon continue to be an oasis of stability in the region. So I think that there are still places that you can point to as you try to build stability in other as models that work. It's hard to find good news there but it absolutely exists and the defeat of ISIS at least when it comes to a territory their territorial claim is really no small feat. The fact that we were able to turn around their advance to deal legitimize them in putting in the public opinion inside Iraq is something that we shouldn't. We shouldn't shirk from.
- Samantha V: [23:40](#) Thank you Senator and now we'll take maybe two or three questions all at once and then let the senator answer in the back.
- Speaker 14: [23:47](#) Yes Senator thank you very much.
- Audience Member: [23:51](#) Do you think we need a U. A new M F. And if so what would you like to see in it.
- Speaker 14: [24:01](#) Else Senator you take that.
- Chris Murphy: [24:03](#) Sure. Yeah. It was an absolutely. And Sam we didn't get to talk about this question of authorization but let me take a moment to express my disgust at how Congress has abdicated its responsibility to be a coequal branch on the setting of foreign

policy with this with the article to branch. We have given up on authorizing military force largely because it's a lot harder than it used to be. Right. We don't have armies marching against each other we don't have peace treaties that wrap up hostilities. It's harder to define your enemies. It's much harder to define what victory looks like. And we just stopped doing it. We didn't do it on Libya. And we should have. We didn't do it when we went to war with ISIS.

Chris Murphy:

[24:49](#)

And we should have. And now we have an administration that is looking to pervert the two thousand and one a U M F which was an authorization to go to war essentially against al-Qaeda as a means to start war in Iran against a Shiite government that has very little if anything to do with with al-Qaeda. And so I just think we have to get back into this business and put a authorization of military force on the floor of the United States Senate and debate it. See if we can come to a conclusion. We tried that back at the very end of Democratic control of the Senate. We actually got an ISIS authorization passed through the Foreign Relations Committee. So it's a way to show that it isn't impossible but it is also incumbent upon the administration to show restraint as well. The Obama administration rightly showed restraint in deciding not to bomb Syria without coming to Congress.

Chris Murphy:

[25:47](#)

And there was all sorts of smart people in Washington who said that was such a political and national security mistake that the president showed weakness in waiting to come to Congress he should have known that he couldn't get authorization he should've just gone and done it himself. Well because you can't get authorization is not an excuse to violate the Constitution. The American people are smarter than you think they are. They are very wary of committing U.S. military resources in the Middle East. And so they deliberately make it really hard on Congress to authorize war especially in that part of the world. Congress was not going to authorize a military strike against Syria. That's because the American people didn't support it. And that in and of itself is a reason not to do it. That's what the Founding Fathers said. And so it is incumbent on Congress to get back in this game but it is also incumbent upon the executive. And I would argue the next Democratic president to make a commitment that they are not going to engage in any unauthorized military activity without coming to Congress first even if it looks like an emergency even if it looks like Congress is not going to give you that authority let's do over there and then over there are we can you're near the mikes we'll start there.

Samantha V:

[26:55](#)

Thank you.

- Audience Member: [26:57](#) Thank you Senator for talking to us. The one thing very interesting through myself and I'm sure other people here. Here we have the first conversation about the Middle East is the first time we've had a conversation. The word Israel never came up once. Is this part of the strategy is this a Democratic thing. No working for Benjamin said something. What. Why is this not an important thing in your discussion.
- Chris Murphy: [27:27](#) Yeah I don't necessarily know what you what you mean with that question.
- Chris Murphy: [27:31](#) So I want to address some of the words you use but I think I think that as we list the success stories of region of course the United States partnership with Israel and our ability to protect their security against countries in their periphery who want them wiped off the face of the earth is ultimately a story of success in U.S. foreign policy and success in the partnership. When Senator Romney and I were there a few months ago there was I think very low expectations for the administration's supposed peace plan. I think it is likely going to rely completely on economic support for the Palestinian state and not offer any real political offers to the Palestinians. I think it will be greeted with immediate opposition from the Palestinian Authority. And ultimately I think the United States is much better off when we position ourselves as an honest broker between the Israelis and the Palestinian Authority something that this administration is unwilling to do. And so obviously this is a very very important central aspect of American foreign policy in the region. There are very low expectations for the peace plan but I think there is still lots of people on the ground here who hope that in the next administration they will give it another go.
- Samantha V: [28:57](#) Senator you visited Israel recently with Senator Romney. All right.
- Chris Murphy: [29:00](#) It did. And again we were there just as there was expectation of this plan emerging and we we talked with the prime minister. We met with the new prime minister in the Palestinian Authority. Again you know I just ultimately think that this this plan that's emerging has very very little chance of success. And listen I I have expressed to you know both Prime Minister Netanyahu and to my Republican friends in Congress about my dire worry about the politicization of support for Israel in the American political debate the latest series of tweets from the president in which he is you know more overtly than ever before seeking to use irresponsibly Israel as a wedge issue between Republicans and Democrats the way in which Republicans have intentionally put legislation on the floor of the

Senate before the Foreign Relations Committee that divides Republicans and Democrats on the issue of Israel one with a few tweaks to that legislation.

Chris Murphy: [30:10](#) You could have gotten 80 to 90 members of the Senate supporting it I think is a really dangerous prescription for this debate and dialogue going forward. Israel when I got to the Congress in two thousand and seven was one of the few issues where you went out of your way to try to build consensus. And that has fundamentally changed in the 10 years that I've been in Congress. Now Republicans look at Israel as a goldmine of opportunity to try to divide Republicans from Democrats and I think that's a really horrible national security and political mistake. We have one we're in the back.

Speaker 18: [30:51](#) Thank you very much. Hey Chris can you comment on the Turkish conundrum both tactically in the short run and strategically in the longer.

Chris Murphy: [31:01](#) I mean listen I think the issue is simple here. There has to be a consequence for a NATO ally running to Russia for a defense system that could ultimately compromise United States national security period stop. I understand the risk of splitting a important NATO ally from the coalition. But if you don't make clear that part of being inside this coalition is not arranging your defense assets in a way that could also ultimately compromise some of our most sensitive systems. Now I'm not sure what the point of the alliance is. And so I think this is ultimately a failure of the Trump administration to not be able to ultimately split the baby with the Turks and find a way for them to get a win out of this without importing the entirety of the Russian missile system. But I also believe that we have to send a strong message here and tell them that you can't get American planes if you are going to be partnering with the Russians on their system that ultimately might be pointing at at those planes and of course from the very beginning the way in which this administration has approached the Turks has been as bizarre as the way in which they approach so many other allies.

Chris Murphy: [32:17](#) The hot and cold nature of the president's public statements has just been an invitation for this crisis ultimately and you know we we sometimes think that the president's Twitter feed is public statements are divorced from reality. How many times is Mike Pompeo come before our committee in the Foreign Relations Committee and told us not to pay attention to what the president says just pay attention to what the State Department does.

- Chris Murphy: [32:41](#) That's a really convenient way to try to excuse the president's recklessness. But this is an example where the Turks paid attention to the scorn that the president heaped on Erdogan and his lieutenants early in his administration and that mistake that that that social media mistake that we all like to write off is just bluster.
- Chris Murphy: [33:04](#) It is coming home to roost for this administration right now. And so just yet another example of how that the recklessness of the way that the president talks has real ramifications for U.S. national security around the world. Well I think you know what's happening inside Turkey today is fascinating where we're gonna have to watch the politics of the developing opposition to Erdogan and his party. There has been no viable opposition there for almost a decade and of course he has done a wonderful job of controlling the media and locking up political opponents as a means to consolidate his power. But you have seen these early grass shoots in the mayoral election and other regional political battles of of a of a potential popular resistance mounting and I think it's hard to answer which way Turkey goes without understanding what his political opposition looks like whether it can achieve maturation what we do know is that their economy is is hemorrhaging is hurting and that for a long time they had receive rightfully so the bounty of this perception globally that Turkey was aligning itself with the West and aligning itself with the European Union.
- Chris Murphy: [34:28](#) They stood in this nether world for about a decade in which they had stopped moving closer to the European Union it was pretty clear they weren't going to come in but people still thought of them as a country that you could really do business with. And so they are seeing the consequences of this turn away from the EU and Europe this turn away from NATO and perhaps as they understand that the only way to build a growing economy for their people is to turn back. We may see a future a future for Turkey that is Western oriented in the way that I think we may be took for granted its future was going to be 15 to 20 years ago. So watch the political debate play out watch the continued atrophy of their economy. I think those are the signals that you can look to as we try to hope. And I think they're an incredibly important ally. I desperately want them to be a full complete partner in NATO. I root for them to make a decision to re-engage with the European Union.
- Chris Murphy: [35:25](#) And I think their domestic profile over the next few years will tell us a lot about whether that's going to come to fruition.
- Samantha V: [35:33](#) Senator thank you. Thank you for being here.

