

Statement of Christopher Anderson
Nominee to be U.S. Ambassador to Cambodia
Senate Foreign relations Committee
July 16, 2026

Chairman McCormick, Ranking Member, and distinguished Members of the Committee, it is an honor to appear before you today. I am grateful to President Trump and Secretary Rubio for their trust in nominating me to serve as United States Ambassador to the Kingdom of Cambodia.

I need to start off with a big thank you to my wife, Jennifer. I wouldn't be here today without her support. She is joined today by our 1-year-old daughter, Charlotte. I also need to thank my parents, Craig and Ruth Anderson. Their support, investment, and encouragement has been a foundation for my personal development.

It's tough to put into words how it feels to be on this side of the hearing today. As everyone in this room is very aware, I usually spend my time back against the wall, trying not to be noticed. The opportunity of this nomination, and to simply testify before you today are not something that I thought I would ever be afforded. I grew up the son of a tractor salesman and a music teacher, so at no point did I ever see an ambassador nomination in my future. Though on the heels of our nation's 250th birthday it does remind me how lucky I am to be an American.

Over the last 17 years I have worked for three Senators, President Trump's first administration, and served in the Army. I have always worked to protect America's interests, both at home and abroad, and if confirmed I pledge to continue to pursue U.S. foreign relations and national security with the devotion that you know me for. Throughout my tenure with this institution, I have worked with most if not all of your offices. I have always prided myself on free-flowing and sometimes frank communication, management of equities, and my ability to advance the mission without fanfare or publicity.

If confirmed, I plan on employing all these virtues in service of the United States. I will advance the Administration's core priorities in Cambodia with unwavering commitment and vigor: protecting American citizens, expanding U.S. economic opportunity, and ensuring our engagement in Southeast Asia serves the American people first.

The U.S.-Cambodia relationship is in a fundamentally stronger place than it was just a few years ago — and the momentum is real. President Trump's leadership in facilitating a ceasefire between Cambodia and Thailand opened a new chapter with the Hun Manet administration. The Trump Administration is building on that opening.

The United States is Cambodia's largest export market, representing over 40 percent of its total exports. The United States' bilateral Agreement on Reciprocal Trade with Cambodia will unlock new opportunities for American companies, products, and services. In January 2026, the USS Cincinnati made the first U.S. ship visit to Ream Naval Base, marking a significant milestone in renewed military-to-military cooperation. In April, the Trump Administration signed a five-year, \$36.1 million health memorandum of understanding under the America First Global Health Strategy — targeting infectious disease while building Cambodia's long-term health independence. These are meaningful wins, and I intend to build on every one of them.

That said, I will not shy away from the challenges that remain. Continued progress in the bilateral relationship depends on Cambodia taking concrete action on several fronts.

Dismantling online scams and the criminal networks behind them will be my top priority. These operations have stolen tens of billions of dollars from American citizens and exploited hundreds of thousands in forced criminality, a form of human trafficking. This is both a law enforcement imperative and a humanitarian one. If confirmed, I will work urgently with Cambodian counterparts and regional partners to deliver results.

The United States also remains concerned about human rights in Cambodia — including politically motivated trials and the suppression of free expression and assembly. I will press the Cambodian government to meet its obligations to its own citizens, clearly and consistently.

More broadly, Cambodia is a critical node in our wider Southeast Asia strategy. As Cambodia is the current U.S.-ASEAN Country Coordinator, I will work closely with Cambodia to advance Administration priorities through ASEAN and beyond. ASEAN cohesion and a free and open Indo-Pacific are not abstract ideals — they are the foundation of American security and prosperity. If confirmed, I will work every day to ensure Cambodia is a strong partner in that vision, not a vulnerability within it. I am ready to serve. I look forward to your questions.