

Statement of Joshua Harris
Nominee to be U.S. Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to
Malaysia
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
September 16, 2026

Chairman Risch, Ranking Member Shaheen, distinguished Committee Members, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today as President Trump's nominee to serve as U.S. Ambassador to Malaysia. I am deeply grateful for the confidence President Trump and Secretary Rubio have entrusted in me. If confirmed, I would consult closely with this Committee, and Congress more broadly, to advance U.S. interests in Malaysia and ensure the U.S.-Malaysia partnership delivers tangible value for the American people.

I am joined today by my wife, Cheryl, a fellow Foreign Service Officer, and our sons, Toby and Gabe. Together, we have shared the profound gift of representing our great country, alongside American families serving across the nation and around the globe. I am here because of their love and support, including during my unaccompanied tour this past year leading the U.S. Mission in Baghdad, Iraq.

Representing the goodness and generosity of the United States over 23 years in the Foreign Service has been an incredible privilege. Together with colleagues leveraging all instruments of U.S. power to advance our priorities, I have promoted new commercial deals putting U.S. technology at the center of Iraq's energy future, secured justice for American victims of the Pan Am 103 terrorist attack, and empowered U.S. partners to defend their sovereignty free from foreign interference. If confirmed, I would be guided by these experiences to advance U.S. priorities in Malaysia.

President Trump joined Prime Minister Anwar last year in Kuala Lumpur to elevate the U.S.-Malaysia relationship to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, a historic advancement in our strong and mutually beneficial ties as we approach the 70th anniversary of this diplomatic partnership. Leveraging Malaysia's leadership as then Chair of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and decisive U.S. diplomacy, the two leaders announced the Kuala Lumpur Peace Accords, which ended border tensions and fostered mutual trust between Thailand and Cambodia.

U.S. goals in Malaysia are clear: strengthening forward-looking economic collaboration vital for continued U.S. technological dominance, reinforcing a free

and open Indo-Pacific aligned with our national security interests, and combatting transnational crime that threatens both Americans and Malaysians.

Our economic partnership is driving innovation on artificial intelligence and next-generation technologies, building more resilient global supply chains, and underwriting thousands of American jobs. Malaysia hosts U.S. companies assembling, testing, and packaging chips as a major hub in global semiconductor supply chains. Malaysia has committed to purchase U.S. semiconductors, aerospace components, and data center equipment worth an estimated \$150 billion, reflecting commercial cooperation delivering tangible value for Americans and Malaysians alike.

If confirmed, I would prioritize ensuring the United States remains Malaysia's most trusted economic partner to drive U.S. innovation and growth amid transformational technological developments.

The United States and Malaysia share a vision for a free and open Indo-Pacific reflected in a defense partnership forged over four decades. The 14 bilateral and multilateral military exercises Malaysia conducts with the United States, U.S. training programs for hundreds of Malaysian officials, and frequent ship visits testify to strong security cooperation aligned with U.S. interests. If confirmed, I would strive to reinforce this defense partnership, with particular focus on bolstering Malaysia's maritime domain awareness in the South China Sea.

I would also, if confirmed, prioritize countering transnational scam syndicates operating in Malaysia, which have stolen billions from vulnerable Americans. A Counter-Scams Contact Group, of which both the United States and Malaysia are members, is building the diplomatic architecture for closer alignment on law enforcement action, asset seizures, financial sanctions, diplomatic pressure, and information-sharing about the shared threat of criminal scam networks.

My highest priority would be the safety and well-being of Americans in Malaysia, including the colleagues at U.S. Embassy Kuala Lumpur that I would be honored to lead, if confirmed.

Chairman, Ranking Member, Committee Members, I appreciate the privilege to appear today, welcome the opportunity to earn your confidence, and look forward to your questions.