

**Opening Statement for Ms. Mora Namdarkhan
Nominee for Assistant Secretary of State for Consular Affairs
Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
October 23, 2025**

Chairman Risch, Ranking Member Shaheen, and distinguished Members of this Committee. I am honored to appear before you today as President Trump's nominee to serve as Assistant Secretary of State for Consular Affairs. I am grateful to the President and Secretary Rubio for their confidence in me.

I would like to thank my family for their constant support. As the daughter of Iranian immigrants and a proud native of Texas, my commitment to public service is rooted in the opportunities this country has afforded my family. I am deeply honored to be in a position to give back. I want to say "thank you" to the American people for this great opportunity.

I have founded and led businesses, practiced law in both Texas and the District of Columbia, and dedicated much of my academic and professional life to national security and human rights—areas that lie central to the work of the State Department.

If confirmed, I will lead the Bureau of Consular Affairs (CA) with a mission rooted in national interest. As Secretary Rubio has articulated, every policy we pursue must answer three key questions:

Does it make America safer?

Does it make America stronger?

Does it make America more prosperous?

CA the heart of that mission. If confirmed, I will focus on three strategic priorities:

First – One of the most solemn responsibilities of the Bureau of Consular Affairs is the safety and security of American citizens overseas. If confirmed,

I will prioritize ensuring that no American is left behind. Whether it's a passport lost in a remote city, or a loved one wrongfully detained by a hostile regime, every American abroad deserves the full support and attention of their government.

Under President Trump's leadership, we have seen the safe return of dozens of Americans overseas; wrongfully detained individuals like Ksenia Karelina, Marc Fogel, Keith Siegel, and George Glezmman, whose freedom was secured through a decisive and unapologetic defense of American citizens. That legacy must continue. I will work closely with our Special Presidential Envoy for Hostage Affairs, the National Security Council, and our embassies worldwide to bring wrongfully and illegally detained Americans home and prevent future cases through diplomacy, deterrence, and enhanced consular support. Americans must know that their government will never forget them, never stop fighting for them, and never negotiate from a position of weakness when their freedom is at stake. That is the standard we must meet.

While the world has become safer under President Trump's leadership, crises and conflicts continue to arise, demanding vigilance and swift action. Throughout the recent conflict in the Middle East, the dedicated men and women of the State Department, and particularly the Bureau of Consular Affairs, worked tirelessly around the clock to assist impacted American citizens depart safely. State Department safety and security messaging reached tens of thousands of Americans, providing critical updates and guidance. They remain ready to assist American citizens and their loved ones whenever and wherever the next global crisis occurs. If confirmed, I will also work to ensure that American citizens receive clear, timely, and reliable information about every country in the world, empowering them to make informed decisions before traveling.

Second – Upholding and improving the integrity of our immigration system is a critical national security priority. Every visa adjudication is a critical decision impacting national security and public safety. It is essential that our consular officers are equipped with the resources and support necessary to

perform their duties effectively. As Secretary Rubio has emphasized, “Consular officers have the responsibility to ensure that visas are issued only to individuals who meet the criteria and do not pose a threat to U.S. interests. If someone violates the terms of their visa or engages in activities that undermine our foreign policy, consular officers have the authority to revoke their visa.”

Under President Trump’s leadership, the border is the most secure it has ever been. CA, in collaboration with the Department of Homeland Security and law enforcement officials, works tirelessly both domestically and internationally to uphold the President’s commitment to a safer and more secure homeland. I remain steadfast in supporting our operations at home and abroad to ensure that the privilege of a U.S. visa is granted only to those who meet the qualifications, that visa holders adhere to the terms of their visas, and that individuals who violate these terms or disregard U.S. laws will lose the privilege of holding a U.S. visa.

Visa decisions not only make America safer and stronger, but they also make America more prosperous. If confirmed, I will work to achieve President Trump’s priority of making the 2026 FIFA World Cup the greatest sporting event in history. The Bureau of Consular Affairs is already supporting visa issuances for the official FIFA teams and spectators.

Third – Efficiency in our operations. Innovating CA not only enhances the safety of Americans but also improves service to the American people, more than 51 percent of whom now hold a U.S. passport. In FY25, CA issued a record 27 million passports. A prime example of these efficiency improvements is the introduction of online passport renewal, which allows American citizens to save both time and money by applying for passports from the comfort of their own homes. Passport specialists and agencies across the country are diligently processing applications, and many Americans can now renew their passports entirely online—eliminating the need for in-person appointments, mailing envelopes, writing checks, or even paying for passport photos. The timely and efficient operation of passport services exemplify the CA’s continued commitment to security, efficiency,

and exceptional customer service for the American people. While routine passport renewals are officially processed within 4-6 weeks, some private citizens have reported turnaround times as short as two weeks.

Innovation plays a critical role in strengthening national security. If confirmed, I will ensure that CA has all available tools to consider information when reviewing applications for possible ineligibilities and to enhance screening and vetting processes for visa applicants. We must continuously develop its capabilities to meet new demands and emerging challenges while upholding the highest standards of security in a rapidly changing global environment.

Additionally, I am committed to ensuring that CA fulfills its congressional mandate to process immigrant visa applications in as timely a manner as possible. Our dedicated professionals, both domestically and abroad, are working to improve immigrant visa processing, including strengthening security.

Finally, I recognize that the success of the bureau depends not only on sound policy and capable execution, but also on a strong and transparent partnership with Congress. Whether it involves a constituent's passport emergency, an adoption case, a child abduction matter, or the detention of an American overseas, I understand the urgency and human stakes behind each inquiry that reaches the bureau. If confirmed, I will ensure that your inquiries are met with transparency, responsiveness, and a spirit of shared service to the American people. I look forward to your questions.