

Statement of Brent Christensen
Nominee for U.S. Ambassador to the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
October 23, 2025

Chairman Risch, Ranking Member Shaheen, and distinguished Members of this committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today as President Trump's nominee to be the United States Ambassador to the People's Republic of Bangladesh.

I am honored by this nomination and grateful to President Trump and Secretary Rubio for the trust and confidence they have shown in me. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with you to advance U.S. foreign policy interests in Bangladesh.

Thank you to my wife Deanne, who is here with me today. For the past two decades, she has joined me around the world, from San Salvador to Dhaka to Omaha, and I am grateful for her sacrifice and support across my diplomatic career.

Bangladesh, the eighth most populous country in the world, often does not receive the attention it deserves, as it is overshadowed by its even larger neighbors. With my over twenty years of experience working on U.S. policy toward Bangladesh across my Foreign Service career, including a prior tour in Dhaka, I understand well its importance and the significant U.S. interests there. Bangladesh's strategic location makes it an important participant in an open, secure, and prosperous Indo-Pacific region.

Bangladesh is also at a pivotal point. Student-led protests in August 2024 brought down a government that had been in power for 15 years. The people of Bangladesh will go to the polls early next year – the country's most consequential election in decades – to choose a new government and a new path forward. The United States supports Bangladesh in its journey toward a bright and democratic future. If confirmed, I look forward to leading the Embassy Dhaka team to build strong ties with both the current

Interim Government and its democratically elected successor to advance the U.S.-Bangladesh relationship.

Often referred to as one of the new Asian tigers, Bangladesh shows significant economic potential. Having overcome tremendous challenges, Bangladesh is now on the cusp of graduation from least developed country status, a true tribute to the resilience and perseverance of the Bangladeshi people. If confirmed, I will work to promote opportunities for U.S. business, reduce trade barriers and the trade deficit, and strengthen U.S.-Bangladesh economic ties.

For over eight years now, Bangladesh has hosted one of the largest refugee populations in the world. Nearly 1.3 million Rohingya currently live in the Cox's Bazar area of Bangladesh, after fleeing their homes in Burma's Rakhine state. Bangladesh and the international community, led by the United States, have done a remarkable job supporting the Rohingya people since 2017. I have been to the Rohingya camps, seen this work for myself, and spoken to the Rohingya people. The disproportionate effort by the United States to fund the response, however, is not sustainable. We need more countries to increase financial support to ease the burden on us. It will also be important to work through the UN and other partners to streamline operations, reduce duplication of effort, and deliver aid more efficiently. If confirmed, I will work with the government of Bangladesh, the international community, and colleagues across the U.S. government, including this committee, on a viable and enduring way forward.

If confirmed, it would be an honor to return to Bangladesh as Ambassador to lead the talented men and women of U.S. Embassy Dhaka and advance the U.S.-Bangladesh partnership. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today and I look forward to your questions.