

**Statement of Robin Dunnigan
Nominee for U.S. Ambassador to Georgia
U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee
March 30, 2023**

Thank you for that kind introduction, Senator Sullivan. And thank you for your tremendous service to the United States, as a Senator, a Marine, and an Assistant Secretary of State, among other positions. I would also like to thank you and Senator Van Hollen for your strong support for the Foreign Service, including as co-founders of the bipartisan Senate Foreign Service Caucus.

Chairman Van Hollen, Ranking Member Ricketts, and distinguished members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I am deeply honored to be President Biden's nominee to serve as U.S. Ambassador to Georgia, and I am grateful for the confidence the President and Secretary Blinken have placed in me. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with this Committee, all members of Congress, and your teams to advance the interests of the United States in Georgia.

It has been a privilege to represent the United States as a career Foreign Service Officer for more than thirty years. I have promoted U.S. interests across the globe, working to protect American citizens, expand our economic prosperity, and promote and defend the democratic values at the heart of who we are as a country.

If confirmed, I will focus on four priorities. First, my highest duty will be to ensure the safety and security of the team working at the U.S. Embassy and of all Americans in Georgia. Having worked over the last 18 months to help keep our Embassy team in Kyiv safe in a very challenging environment, I know this responsibility is sacred.

Second, if confirmed, I will work with the Georgian government and Georgian people to help them realize their desire to further integrate with the EU, NATO, and the West, and to further their democratic future. Not only will Euro-Atlantic integration benefit the citizens of Georgia, I deeply believe it is in the U.S.

national interest. We want a democratic Georgia firmly integrated with the West, capable of defending its borders and able to withstand the pressure of Russian malign activities, including Russian disinformation. Georgia has made remarkable progress over the last 30 years, but some concerning developments show more remains to be done. The European Union provided Georgia with a roadmap of reforms it should complete to achieve its aim of EU candidate status this year. If confirmed, I look forward to supporting Georgia as it pursues these reforms.

Third, I will strengthen bilateral trade and investment, including by increasing opportunities for U.S. companies in Georgia and for Georgian investment in the United States. I will vigorously promote U.S. exports and encourage reforms to foster a fair and transparent business environment. I will also work with the Georgian government to defend against potential coercive economic practices, including from Russia and the People's Republic of China.

Russia's brutal war against Ukraine violates the UN Charter's most fundamental principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity. Georgians know this Russian playbook all too well, because they saw it happen in their own country in 2008 and experience it every day, as Russia still occupies approximately 20 percent of Georgian territory. My final priority will be to advocate for Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity. I will commit to work with Georgia and our international partners to hold Russia to its obligations and commitments under the 2008 ceasefire agreement and the UN Charter.

Our partnership over the past 30 years has benefitted both the people of Georgia and the United States. Georgia has been a steadfast NATO Partner for Peace since 1994 and was the largest non-NATO contributor of forces to Afghanistan, standing side-by-side with American troops. We have tremendous people-to-people ties, with thousands of exchanges over the decades. If confirmed, I hope to build on this strong legacy of partnership and cooperation.

Finally, I would like to thank and introduce my family, who are with me here today. My husband of 30 years, Harry Kamian, who is also a Foreign Service Officer, and our children Andrew and Anna. As our careers carried us around the world, Andrew and Anna weathered multiple moves, adapting to new schools and

new friends with remarkable humor and resilience. I am so incredibly proud of the young adults they have become. I would not be here today without the love and support of Harry, Andrew and Anna, and my extended family. My dad, who was a small business owner, and my mom, who was a teacher, taught my siblings and me the value of integrity, honesty, hard work and kindness, principles I try to live by every day.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, thank you again for this opportunity and I look forward to your questions.