

**Opening Statement of Elizabeth Bagley**  
**Nominee for U.S. Ambassador to the Federative Republic of Brazil**  
**Senate Committee on Foreign Relations**  
**May 18, 2022**

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, Members of the Committee - It is my distinct honor to appear before you today as the nominee to serve as the U.S. Ambassador to the Federative Republic of Brazil. I am deeply grateful that President Biden and Secretary Blinken placed their trust in me to take on this important role.

I want to thank my daughter, Vaughan, her husband Ben, and my son Conor for their love and unwavering support. Twenty-eight years ago in June 1994, I came before this Committee as then President Clinton's nominee to be U.S. Ambassador to Portugal, and it was the highest privilege of my life to represent my country there. My children were then four years old and 10 months old, so we have all come a long way since then, and I know my beloved husband and parents are smiling down from above. In fact, today would have marked the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday of my father who, with my mother, taught me and my 7 brothers and sisters that to whom much is given, much is expected as they themselves led a life of purpose: my father as a lawyer and judge for 50 years and my mother as a social worker.

If given the opportunity, serving as the U.S. Ambassador to Brazil would be the capstone of my career in public service, diplomacy, and law, which spans over four decades. I have learned from and advised Secretaries of State John Kerry, Hillary Clinton, and the late Madeleine Albright over more than 20 years of service at the Department of State. I was deeply honored to serve as the U.S. Ambassador to Portugal from 1994 to 1997, a period in which we made great strides in our bilateral relationship as well as with NATO.

I am cognizant of the importance of our deep and historic relationship with Brazil, which has the largest population, economy, territory, and military in Latin America. This year marks the 200th anniversary of Brazil's independence – and of the United States becoming the first country to recognize Brazil's independence. Today, we are building on our long history of cooperation to take on shared challenges and priorities. A country with strong democratic institutions, an open economy, and a regional and multilateral leadership role, Brazil is a strategic partner and if confirmed, I plan to build on that partnership to further enhance our bilateral ties.

If confirmed, my first priority would be to ensure the continued safety and security of the approximately 200,000 U.S. citizens who reside in or travel to Brazil each year. I would also work to protect the interests of the more than 1,400 American and Brazilian professionals who comprise the U.S. Mission in Brazil.

Our relationship with Brazil is grounded in shared commitments to democracy and human rights, economic prosperity, security, and the rule of law. The United States engages Brazil through the United Nations Security Council, Human Rights Council, and many regular bilateral dialogues on a full range of issues, highlighted by the U.S.-Brazil High-Level Dialogue held in Brasilia on April 25 and co-chaired by Under Secretaries of State Nuland and Fernández. If confirmed, I will work to further strengthen this wide-ranging dialogue.

If confirmed, I will affirm our confidence in Brazil's democratic institutions and electoral system and the importance of maintaining public trust in that system ahead of Brazil's October national elections. Our support for Brazil as it combats threats from transnational criminal organizations should be based on a foundation of respect for human rights for all Brazilians. I will reinforce the U.S. commitment to strengthening democracy, human rights, and the rule of law in Brazil and throughout the hemisphere.

Our bilateral trade has rebounded from the pandemic, demonstrating the enormous potential of our commercial relationship. Brazil represents a vital market for a range of U.S. industries. We are Brazil's largest foreign investor and its second-largest trading partner and if confirmed, I intend to broaden these economic ties and expand our bilateral trade. The steps Brazil has taken to join and align with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development signal its commitment to sustainable economic growth and financial stability.

Brazil is home to 30 percent of the world's tropical rainforests, including 60 percent of the Amazon, the largest and most biodiverse tropical rainforest in the world. If confirmed, one of my top priorities will be to encourage efforts to increase climate ambition, dramatically reduce deforestation, protect forest defenders, and prosecute environmental crimes and related acts of violence.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and Committee Members, if confirmed, it would be my honor to represent the people of the United States of America to the government and people of Brazil. I would look forward to collaborating with this committee and your professional staff to further U.S. interests in Brazil.

I thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today and welcome your questions.