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UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
BEFORE THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE  
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Chairman Corker, Ranking Member Cardin, and Distinguished Members of the Committee,

I am honored to appear before you today as the nominee for Assistant Administrator for the Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance (DCHA) at the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). I am grateful for the trust and confidence President Obama, Secretary Kerry, and Administrator Smith have in my leadership for a bureau so central to the United States' humanitarian, development, and foreign policy agenda. If confirmed, I will work to achieve USAID's mission of ending extreme poverty and promoting resilient democratic societies.

I look forward to working alongside the nearly 900 men and women who are leading DCHA programs in approximately 115 countries across five continents. I want to thank these colleagues for their unparalleled commitment, passion, and service. I also particularly want to acknowledge Tom Staal for his leadership of DCHA for the last 14 months. Tom has lived a storied life and career — he has also been a friend, mentor, and colleague as we worked together in Beirut, Baghdad, and Washington. USAID is stronger — and the world is better — because of Tom's service.

I would also like to thank my mother and father — who are here today. They taught me to work hard and follow my dreams and then gave me the opportunities to do so.

My own family is watching this hearing from afar — Sharon from the U.S. Embassy in Tel Aviv, Tyler at a tech start up incubator in San Francisco, Ryan from the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado, and Waverly from Bowdoin College in Maine.

We are a Foreign Service family, like thousands of other families who represent America in some of the toughest places on earth. In 1999, Sharon and I packed up our preschoolers and moved to Dhaka, Bangladesh. We have been overseas since. The entire family has represented America for many years — in the hallways of the international schools, at gymnastic competitions, and on the streets and in the markets of South Asia, the former Soviet Union, and the Middle East. Street children in Dhaka, orphans in Almaty, and the children of war in Israel and Gaza have seen a compassionate America, because in the Foreign Service the whole family serves as diplomats abroad.

And yet there are unique challenges. Sharon and I worried about our young family living far from home on 9-11 when America was attacked. We have battled dengue, typhoid salmonella — and the innumerable childhood accidents that become near crises in lesser-developed countries. We gave Waverly a gas mask during the early days of the Syrian war, and explained

to Tyler and Ryan's school that they should still fly back home to our family despite Tel Aviv being rocketed. During the 2014 war between Israel and Hamas, our family went to the bomb shelter more times in a single month than I did during my 17 months in Iraq. Foreign Service families face these types of challenges every day.

I appear before you today only because my family was willing to make the sacrifice of public service and accept the challenge of living abroad for close to two decades. To Sharon, I am forever grateful for her partnership on this extraordinary journey.

My family's firsthand experience living in crisis zones has forged my understanding of the complex challenges the world faces today and the importance of U.S. engagement abroad. From my perspective, USAID's DCHA Bureau represents the best of America's enduring leadership and goodwill. DCHA's Offices of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance and Food for Peace are the first responders to global crises — whether an earthquake in Nepal, typhoon in the Philippines, Ebola in West Africa, or war in Syria, South Sudan, or Yemen. They feed the hungry, give water to the thirsty, comfort the sick, and shelter the displaced. There is no more powerful and iconic symbol of America abroad than when USAID sends a Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) into the heart of an emergency. Recall the images in 2014 of USAID and U.S. military personnel deploying to stem the Ebola outbreak in West Africa and of USAID coordinating with the U.S. military to deliver food and water by air to Yazidis trapped by ISIL on Iraq's Sinjar Mountain. Today, USAID has DARTs coordinating the U.S. humanitarian responses alongside State Department and other agencies in Syria, Iraq, and South Sudan — all massive complex crises that have been going on for years. Just last week, Administrator Smith announced the deployment of a DART to Ethiopia to avert a humanitarian crisis arising from an El Niño-triggered drought and to protect development gains.

DCHA also assists nations with the difficult task of post-crisis political and social transition and works to address the root causes of instability before conflicts become humanitarian emergencies. The Office of Transition Initiatives, for instance, has programs in Burma, Lebanon, Libya, Nigeria, Pakistan, and Somalia, where they work with national and local leaders to provide basic services and give a voice to people in marginalized communities. The Conflict Management and Mitigation office assesses the prospects of conflict and works with local and international organizations to reduce the risks of violence by supporting grassroots demands for peace. Teams from across DCHA continually analyze risk, whether of famine, mass atrocities, communicable disease, or flooding, to build resilience in our partner nations. To fulfill the UN's initiatives on Women, Peace, and Security, DCHA teams also provide protection to women and girls in conflict settings and promote the participation of women in peacebuilding. By so doing, they directly mitigate the prospect of collapse, instability, and political vacuum — catastrophic events that undermine global development gains and challenge American interests abroad.

The Center of Excellence on Democracy, Human Rights and Governance helps nations build effective institutions and robust civil societies so they have better potential to provide security and justice, economic opportunity, and political freedom for their people. The crises we see today so often reflect a lack of democratic foundations, effective governing institutions, and respect for human rights. The Office of American Schools and Hospitals Abroad (ASHA)

directly supports some of the leading global education and health facilities — facilities that provide world-class services and promote American ideas and values. For instance, ASHA supports schools, like the Abaarso School of Science and Technology in Somalia, which shape tomorrow's global leaders who share our vision of peace and prosperity.

DCHA demonstrates extraordinary global reach and impact — it is also often the face of a generous America abroad when nations and people are at their most vulnerable.

If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with Congress, the interagency, and the international community on four key areas.

First, I will ensure that DCHA is at peak operational capacity. As it stands, DCHA is a highly functional and effective organization. And yet we know the world will see new crises — whether rapid onset natural disasters or greater suffering from expanding wars. To achieve peak capacity, we must be prepared for the crises ahead — both known and unknown. Working with our Offices of Programs, Policy, and Management and Crises Surge Support, we will continue to prioritize staffing and facilities alignment, budget flexibility, coordinated analytical functions, and cross team integration. Through our Office of Civilian-Military Cooperation, I will deepen DCHA's already strong partnership with the military combatant commands. I will also expand its communications capabilities — both at home and abroad. I am acutely aware that the integrity and accountability of our assistance is of the highest concern and something I have championed in the West Bank, Gaza, Iraq, and Libya.

Second, I look forward to working with this Committee to ensure our international food assistance remains cutting-edge and reaches the most people in need. The United States has a proud history of feeding the world's most hungry people. The complex emergencies we face today and in the future will require us to continue to adapt to meet growing demands and challenges most effectively and cost-efficiently. We will continue to harness our analytical tools, technology, and resources to determine the appropriate mix of U.S. commodities, local and regional food purchases, and market-based assistance to get the right food to the right people at the right time.

Third, I look forward to working with this Committee to expand funding for democracy, human rights, and governance. The crises we face today are in large part a result of failed governance and undemocratic institutions. Extreme poverty is increasingly concentrated in fragile states. Sound governing structures must underpin everything we do in development. Additionally, strong civil societies help give voice to the disenfranchised; champion human rights; fight modern slavery; counter violent extremism; bolster anti-corruption efforts; and promote better responsiveness to citizen concerns. I will also tighten the analytical link between our work in democracy, human rights, and governance and its causal impact on political freedom, economic opportunity, and social inclusion. Democracies are more resilient to disasters and typically do not go to war with each other. Democracy, human rights, and governance must be at the center of our development agenda if we are to get ahead of crises and end extreme poverty.

Finally, I look forward to working with my State Department and other interagency colleagues and the international community to envision our world in 2025, particularly as it relates to

regional instability in the Middle East, and fragility and resilience in sub-Saharan Africa. We must anticipate and prepare for future crisis drivers and consider how to better leverage emerging technology, big data, and the private sector into our responses. I have been impressed with the foresight of my predecessors — how they deepened our analytical capabilities, strengthened our relationships with the military, and integrated resilience planning. I would like to leave the same legacy for the next generation of DCHA leaders — envisioning and preparing for tomorrow’s highly complex and connected world.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Cardin, members of the Committee, I am honored to be considered as Assistant Administrator for the Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance. I am also humbled by the challenges and responsibility ahead. If confirmed, I will lead with integrity, work tirelessly for results, and be strictly accountable for U.S. taxpayer dollars. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today and I look forward to answering your questions.