

Statement of Lewis M. Eisenberg
Nominee to be U.S. Ambassador to Italy and San Marino
Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
July 20, 2017

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, Members of the Committee:

It is with sincere humility that I appear before you today. I am most grateful to be President Trump's Nominee for the position of Ambassador to the Italian Republic and the Republic of San Marino. I would also like to express my thanks to Secretary Tillerson for his support and confidence. I am humbled by the opportunity to be of service to our country, should my nomination be confirmed.

I would also like to introduce those most dear to my heart and sitting behind me: My wife, Judy, we recently celebrated our 52nd anniversary; and two of my daughters, Lisa Goodwyn and Laura Barr; my sons-in-law, Rick Goodwyn and Dr. Kyle Barr; and 3 of our 10 grandchildren, Henry Goodwyn, Chase Goodwyn, and Jack Balestro. Unfortunately, my daughter Stacy Lyle, my son-in-law Paul, and their three children could not be here. Judy's parents, Lois Lee and Leonard Bierman, and my parents, Estelle and Seymour Eisenberg, all have passed away, but have given us the gift of enduring love, hard work and guidance, for which we will always be grateful.

Judy and I met in college in 1962 and were married in 1965. Judy worked. I studied. I graduated with an MBA in 1966 and joined Goldman Sachs in the summer of that year. It was the beginning of a fifty-year career in the world of finance; becoming a partner and co-head of the equity division at Goldman Sachs, co-founding Granite Capital International Group, becoming a senior advisor at KKR and establishing Ironhill Investments LLC. In addition to business, I have always had an intense interest and involvement in politics, government service, and philanthropy.

There are certain events, that like shifting Tectonic plates, significantly alter the course of one's life.

In 1994 Governor Christine Todd Whitman appointed me to serve as commissioner to the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, and in 1995 the Board of Commissioners elected me Chairman.

As Chairman, I led policy decisions that deepened our ports; refurbished our bridges and tunnels; initiated trains running to and from our airports; and witnessed

a police force of 1,500 reduce crime in our region and protect our transportation assets. The agency ran on budget with excellent bond ratings, and included a team of 7,200 professionals. My leadership role of this bi-state agency allowed me to regularly negotiate with unions, cities, towns and, of course, between the states of New York and New Jersey. I have never worked with a more dedicated or professional organization.

In the late summer of 2001, under the direction of Governor George Pataki of New York, I led the agency's successful negotiations for the sale of the World Trade Center. At the time, the \$3 billion plus real estate transaction was the largest in New York history. I was due to leave that position on September 12, 2001. On September 10th, my office on the 67th floor of Tower One was arranged for a goodbye celebration the following morning.

On the morning of September 11, 2001, I made an unexpected stop to meet someone for a quick cup of coffee in midtown Manhattan. As I left my meeting, I was greeted by Port Authority police officers who informed me that the World Trade Center Towers had been struck by not one, but two commercial airliners. I immediately knew we had "been attacked." The buildings would come down and, of course, I learned the Pentagon had been hit and of the crash of United #93 in Shanksville, Pennsylvania.

The shock of the loss of thousands of lives and the nature and extent of these tragedies was hard—very hard—to comprehend. More than 3,000 lost. Our homeland was hit. The world forever changed.

For the next ninety days, I led an agency so deeply wounded by events, attending many funerals, sometimes three a day, and reacting to daily crises.

Many days I commuted from our Jersey City headquarters to Ground Zero—referred to by many in those harrowing weeks as "the pile"—where I was but a spectator amidst heroes. We worked and we grieved. We lost 84 dedicated colleagues, including our executive director, Neil Levin, the secretary of the agency, Danny Bergstein and our superintendent of police, Fred Morrone.

In January of 2002, New York Governor George Pataki appointed me as a founding board member of the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation (LMDC) and Chairman of the 9/11 Families and Transportation Advisory Councils—the most demanding and heart-wrenching challenge I ever had.

In departing the LMDC in 2003, I pledged to the people of the Port Authority, the grieving families and to my wife, children and grandchildren that I would, at every opportunity, dedicate myself to the service of our country.

Today, as I sit before you, my commitment remains. U.S. cooperation with Italy is at an all-time high, as demonstrated in May when President Trump made his visit to Rome a centerpiece of his first trip abroad. We are also working with Italy as G-7 President and a member of the UN Security Council to advance our shared priorities.

As a top global partner, Italy has been a leader in the NATO-led missions in Afghanistan and in the fight against ISIS in Iraq. In both countries, Italy has committed the most troops of any U.S. ally. Italy also hosts nearly 30,000 U.S. service members, DoD officials, and family members at bases that allow us to operate effectively and efficiently across the Mediterranean, the Middle East, and Africa.

If confirmed, I look forward to further strengthening our security cooperation, and working with Italy to continue increasing its defense spending consistent with NATO leaders' commitment.

Italy is also a vital economic partner for the United States. U.S. exports to Italy and Italian investment in the United States together support over a quarter-million American jobs. If confirmed, I will work to increase opportunities for U.S. businesses in Italy.

Of course, it is the lasting bonds between our peoples that form the bedrock of the U.S.-Italy friendship. In addition to the 20 million Americans who trace their ancestry to Italy, over a million Italians continue to visit the United States each year, and more than four million Americans travel to Italy—including over 35,000 U.S. students.

If confirmed, I will work to sustain our countries' historic ties and expand these meaningful connections. I will also dedicate myself to continue our cooperation with the Republic of San Marino, whose friendship with the United States dates back to 1861, when San Marino's heads of state bestowed honorary citizenship on President Abraham Lincoln. Today, our two countries are working together on critical challenges like combatting money laundering and terrorist financing.

The staff of the U.S. Mission to Italy—across our embassy and three consulates general—works tirelessly to serve American citizens, promote

American business, and advance our cooperation on the full range of top global challenges. If confirmed, I look forward to leading this extraordinary team.

I have had the opportunity to visit Italy over the years on business and pleasure, with my wife, enjoying the beauty of the country. Italy has always occupied a place in our hearts and memories. The warmth and spirit of the Italian people, as in America, is founded on faith in God, love of country, and an abiding love in family. If confirmed, I will strive to continue our cooperative relationships with Italy and San Marino, strengthen our economic, security, history, and friendship. It would be one of the greatest honors of my life. Thank you for your consideration.