

**Opening Statement for Ambassador Daniel Rosenblum
Nominee to be U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Kazakhstan
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
July 27, 2022**

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Ranking Member, and Members of this Committee, I am honored to be here today as the President's nominee for U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Kazakhstan.

The journey that led me here started in the Cleveland suburb of Middleburg Heights, Ohio. My mother was a teacher who modeled the values of respect, empathy, and tolerance. My father worked for 30 years as a NASA scientist, while, in his spare time, advocating for the rights of Soviet Jews. My parents' example inspired me to pursue a career in public service and international affairs, and taught me to embrace diversity, equity, inclusiveness, and access, because society is richer, and organizations are more effective when everyone participates.

I studied Russian history, language, and literature as an undergraduate, and later pursued a master's degree in Soviet Studies. In between, I worked for and was inspired by an outstanding public servant: Senator Carl Levin of Michigan. He took this chamber's oversight role seriously, and in that spirit, if confirmed, I look forward to collaborating closely with the U.S. Congress — and particularly with the members of this Committee — to promote U.S. interests and values in our relationship with the Republic of Kazakhstan.

In my four years as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Central Asia, and currently as U.S. Ambassador to Uzbekistan, I have often been asked why the United States cares about this region. What U.S. national interests are served by devoting time, attention, and resources to these faraway countries? My answer is straightforward: we care because what happens there directly affects the safety and security of the United States and its citizens. We want these countries to develop as stable, prosperous, and friendly U.S. partners because we know that, if they don't, we will pay the price here at home.

At the same time, it is not in our long-term security or economic interests for a single power to dominate this region. We are much better off having mutually beneficial relations with a diverse group of sovereign countries, both big and small, in Europe, Eurasia and Central Asia. The government and people of Kazakhstan appreciate America's steadfast support for their sovereignty since 1991, when we were the first to recognize their independence. My goal, if confirmed, will be to partner with the government and people of Kazakhstan to ensure that they remain free to determine their own policies and chart their own future.

After centuries under the rule of external powers, and thirty plus years as citizens of an independent nation, the people of Kazakhstan have a deep appreciation for the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity; they fully understand why these principles are critical to the maintenance of a stable international order. If confirmed, I will emphasize these shared values, and the importance of holding Russia accountable for its aggression against Ukraine. I will also advocate that Kazakhstan promote accountability for the PRC's atrocities against Uyghurs and members of other religious and ethnic minority groups — including ethnic Kazakhs — in Xinjiang.

The U.S.-Kazakhstan bilateral relationship is already strong. If confirmed, I hope to deepen and broaden it even further, in ways that not only benefit our two countries, but the whole of Central Asia. Kazakhstan has long been a leader in efforts to better integrate the five Central Asian nations. I will continue looking for new ways to promote such regional cooperation, including through the C5+1 diplomatic platform.

My number one priority, if confirmed, will be to ensure the safety and security of my Embassy and Consulate teams, as well as all American citizens in Kazakhstan. Beyond that, I intend to make it a priority to:

1. Deepen our security and law enforcement partnership with Kazakhstan to pursue our shared goals in the region, including countering terrorism and other transnational threats.
2. Encourage Kazakhstan to implement the sweeping reforms it initiated in the wake of serious civil unrest last January, and provide technical assistance and training as needed and requested. It is critical that Kazakhstan's leadership live up to its pledges to uphold media freedom, elevate the role of civil society, strengthen judicial independence, and protect the fundamental rights and freedoms of all its people. We stand ready to continue assisting the government and people of Kazakhstan to make these pledges a reality.
3. Broaden engagement between the citizens of Kazakhstan and the United States by increasing people-to-people interactions and expanding our economic and business, educational, scientific, and cultural ties. Nothing will help solidify the foundation for long-term U.S.-Kazakhstani partnership more than creating and maintaining strong connections between the people of our two nations.

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee, if I am confirmed, I pledge to work closely with you to support America's growing strategic partnership with Kazakhstan. I look forward to your questions.