

**Statement of Cindy McCain**  
**Nominee to be the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations**  
**Agencies for Food and Agriculture Agencies in Rome**  
**Senate Foreign Relations Committee**  
**September 28, 2021**

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch and distinguished members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today, I am honored to be here. Sitting here in the place that my husband John loved the most, is bittersweet. Senator Graham, thank you for the kind introduction, we are so lucky to have you as part of our family. I am pleased to join my colleagues on this panel, especially Senator Jeff Flake, both our family and the entire state of Arizona are grateful for your leadership and friendship.

I am grateful and honored to be President Biden's nominee as the United States Representative to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Agencies in Rome. I hope to bring honor, civility and transparency to the role you have entrusted me to accept. One in three people globally don't have access to enough food, and that, simply, is not OK. I plan to spend my time, if confirmed, working tirelessly to lower that number.

I would be honored to help advance US values and worldwide global food security efforts. The goal is simple to state but difficult to achieve: alleviate hunger and promote agricultural development to increase food access and stability for the hundreds of millions of food insecure around the world. I am very optimistic that with the partners and team we currently have in place in Rome and around the world, we can build on all of the already impressive accomplishments in this arena. There has never been a more important time for US leadership on food and agricultural issues both within the UN agencies and around the world.

I have been working on humanitarian issues the majority of my adult life. My parents taught me that as a woman, I could do anything I wanted to. My husband instilled in me the desire to serve a cause greater than myself. I have had the opportunity to pull landmines out of the ground in Mozambique, Angola and Cambodia. I have worked on school feeding programs in Congo and Uganda. I was able to elevate the plight of Syrian refugees in Greece, Jordan, Turkey and Lebanon as they fled conflict in their home country. I have battled human trafficking not only here in the United States but in South East Asia and in Europe. Early in my humanitarian journey I led a group of medical professionals into multiple conflict zones. I have witnessed firsthand what hunger, conflict, and the ravages of natural disaster can do to communities and families. I have seen UN agencies at their best, and at their worst.

If confirmed, I will welcome your guidance and wisdom on how best to represent US policies and priorities in Rome. There are certain things that I look forward to focusing on.

Being from Arizona, water has always been an issue. I would like to focus on the intersection of access to water and agricultural needs. I hope to promote American thought leadership, innovation, and technology so that others may use less water to feed more people.

I will also focus on representing and fostering US values and integrity. We need to guard against malign actors in the UN system and hold others accountable for good governance and transparency. I take very seriously my role in ensuring that US taxpayer money is not being misused or misspent, and will work to reduce redundancy, sharpen focus, and improve efficiency.

The US leadership in the fight against hunger is a tribute to the work of this committee and our workers on the ground around the world, but government contributions just aren't enough to take on all of the current global crises we face. I would like to expand public-private partnerships, to bring both new ideas and new donors to fight hunger and food insecurity. I look forward to developing new relationships as we develop local economies and fight poverty.

I have seen firsthand the use of hunger as a weapon in conflict—and it is simply unacceptable. It goes against everything we as a country stand for, and I would like to use the reach and power of our diplomacy to ensure no person goes hungry at the hands of another person.

Finally, I'd like to close by paying brief tribute to my late husband, your former colleague, John McCain, and to the great cause of his decades of service—human dignity. His efforts to defend human rights wherever they were denied and to advance the values of our democracy to every corner on earth were undertaken to serve that one end—respect for the dignity of every human life. John believed he had as much dignity as any other person on earth, but not one measure more, and he felt a personal responsibility to those of his fellow human beings who suffered oppression and deprivation.

Should I be confirmed, he would expect me to use my opportunity to serve the same end, and I will do my best to do so in the hope that he would be proud of me. Thank you.