

**Statement of David Dale Reimer**  
**Nominee to be U.S. Ambassador to Mauritius and Seychelles**  
**Before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations**  
**October 3, 2017**

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Booker, and Members of the Committee,

I am honored to appear before this Committee today as the President's nominee to be the next United States Ambassador to the Republic of Mauritius and the Republic of Seychelles. I am grateful for the confidence and trust that the President and Secretary Tillerson have placed in me.

Democracy and trade continue to be important elements of our bilateral relations with the Republic of Mauritius. Mauritius is politically stable, committed to democracy, tolerant of ethnic diversity, and economically strong for nearly fifty years, since its independence from the United Kingdom. The country has gone through a remarkable economic transformation from an economy based on sugar production to a diversified economy based on export-oriented manufacturing, tourism, and the financial and business services sectors. In many ways, Mauritius is a model, politically and economically, for Africa and the rest of the developing world.

A challenge in our bilateral relationship with Mauritius is its claim of sovereignty over the British Indian Ocean Territory, which Mauritians call the Chagos Islands. Together with the United Kingdom, we have operated Naval Support Facility Diego Garcia in these islands for the last fifty years. Diego Garcia is a strategic military base for our armed forces in the region. Mauritius has taken its sovereignty claim to the International Court of Justice for an advisory opinion, and we continue to strongly support the UK's long-standing territorial claim.

As a career diplomat and economic officer, I bring years of experience to the task of promoting democracy and economic prosperity for the benefit of the United States and its partners around the world. I have visited Mauritius several times, and my service in Africa, the Caribbean, Europe and the Middle East has prepared me for the challenges and opportunities of this post. If confirmed, I will work with the Mauritian government and people to encourage them to embrace more strongly leadership roles that will promote democracy and build economic prosperity in the region, which will also benefit the American people. As a former Economic and Commercial Officer overseas, I look forward to the opportunity to promote U.S. exports and investment in both Mauritius and the Seychelles.

The United States Government enjoys a positive bilateral relationship with the Government of Seychelles. In the recent past, the Government of Seychelles has been a steadfast partner in fighting maritime piracy in the Horn of Africa. The near-elimination of that scourge owes much to Seychelles' efforts. We continue to partner with the Seychelles' people and government in the fight against piracy, terrorism, drug trafficking, and illegal fishing.

On the economic side, Seychelles has the highest per capita income in Africa, although it is not evenly distributed, and poverty still is problematic across the country. Over the last eight years, Seychelles has achieved needed economic reforms, and the economy remains on a positive track. In the last year, Seychelles has adapted well to a political environment in which the Presidency and Legislature are controlled by opposing parties. This is the first time this has happened in the history of the country. If confirmed, I will encourage Seychelles to continue with its economic reforms, to continue to improve its human rights standing, and to continue its growth as a strong, fully-functioning democracy. Although the United States Embassy is located in Mauritius, if confirmed, I intend to travel frequently to the Seychelles.

If confirmed, my highest priority will be the protection of Americans living and traveling in Mauritius and Seychelles. I commit to you to serve as an energetic advocate for the promotion of U.S. business and investment opportunities and will be a careful steward of U.S. resources in Mauritius and Seychelles.

I am deeply honored to be nominated for the post of Ambassador to Mauritius and Seychelles. If confirmed by the Senate, I look forward to working closely with you and other Members of the Committee. I welcome your questions.

Approved: AF – Donald Y. Yamamoto (DYY)

Drafted: AF/E: David S. Campbell, x7-9048, cell: (505) 933-4240

Cleared: AF: Vincent Spera (ok)  
H: Theodore J. Craig ()  
AF/ERA: Kathleen Moody (ok)  
P: Luis Mendez (ok)  
S/P: Roopa Rangaswamy (ok)  
D: Jamie Shufflebarger (ok)  
PM/RSA: Tai Dickerson (ok)  
Embassy Port Louis: Melanie Zimmerman (ok)