

**STATEMENT OF PHILLIP CARTER III
AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE TO THE REPUBLIC OF COTE D'IVOIRE
BEFORE THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE**

[July 13, 2010]

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee

I am honored to appear before you today. I would like to express my gratitude to President Obama and to Secretary Clinton for the trust and confidence they have placed in me as their nominee for Ambassador to the Republic of Cote d'Ivoire. I also would like to express my thanks to my family which has supported me throughout my career. My wife, Amanda, and our younger son, Andrew, are with me today.

The challenges facing Cote d'Ivoire are complex and have regional implications. If confirmed, I will draw upon my 29 years of diplomatic service, most of which has been in Africa, to advance our government's interests in this important West African country.

Conflict and political uncertainty have plagued Cote d'Ivoire for years. The March 2007 Ouagadougou Political Agreement yielded a modicum of stability but the electoral process remains stalled as leaders on all sides seem reluctant to deliver upon commitments made in various political agreements. The OPA, as a homegrown initiative, may still be the best solution for Cote d'Ivoire's political crisis, but its success hinges upon the political will of Ivoirian actors to follow through. The international community did not force these actors to the negotiating table and it cannot make the parties deliver on their promises. Ivoirian leaders must re-commit themselves to transparent negotiations which yield tangible progress towards elections, hopefully by the end of this year. While they are a critical step, elections alone will not signal the end of Cote d'Ivoire's crisis. If I am confirmed and elections are held during my tenure, I will work with international partners, Ivoirian leaders, and civil society to support the freely elected Government of Cote d'Ivoire to continue building lasting peace.

Despite years of crisis, Cote d'Ivoire remains one of the largest economies in sub-Saharan Africa. However, without concerted efforts toward long-term planning, transparency and accountability, the Ivoirian economy will continue its slow but steady erosion. If confirmed, I will work to improve governance and accountability and advance human rights. I will promote an economic program

that helps reduce the poverty that fuels instability in the region, and call for greater transparency in natural resource sectors.

If confirmed, I will continue the admirable efforts of my predecessor, Ambassador Wanda Nesbitt, in working with Ivoirian leaders and stakeholders to address the problem of child labor and trafficking in the cocoa and coffee sectors, and in administering the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief. Our PEPFAR investments have produced significant results in the fight against HIV/AIDS in Cote d'Ivoire. To date, the U.S. government has helped more than 93,000 people through the provision of antiretroviral treatments, palliative-care services, and support for orphans and vulnerable children.

Finally, I will never forget that my number one priority will be to protect American citizens. If confirmed, I will do everything I can to ensure the safety and well being of every American citizen in Cote d'Ivoire, and to promote the United States' security interests.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee for your abiding interest in America's relations with Africa, and for the opportunity to speak with you today. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.