

**WRITTEN STATEMENT OF DR. KERRI-ANN JONES  
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INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL AND SCIENTIFIC AFFAIRS**

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS**

**JULY 28, 2009**

Madam Chair and Members of the Committee,

It is a great honor to appear before you today as President Obama's nominee for the position of Assistant Secretary of State for Oceans, International Environmental and Scientific Affairs (OES). I am deeply grateful to President Obama and Secretary Clinton for entrusting this important position to me. I am very grateful to the Committee for your time and your consideration of my nomination.

Within the Department of State, the OES Bureau serves as the leader and steward of key foreign policy issues that are truly global in nature. These issues address the very basic elements of our world: the air we breathe, the water we drink, the waters we fish and navigate, the creatures we share the planet with -- from whales to viruses -- the poles that cap our planet and the space beyond that we seek to explore. These issues are critical to our foreign policy and national security. Climate change poses an immediate, alarming and complex international challenge. International agreements on mercury, organic wastes, fishing or deforestation will affect our personal health and our planet's health as well as our trade interests. The emergence of H1N1 influenza reminds us of the ongoing threat of a human pandemic. The solutions to these challenges will be found through diplomacy, science and technology. As Secretary Clinton noted in her confirmation hearing:

“The best way to advance America's interest in reducing global threats and seizing global opportunities is to design and implement global solutions.”

Having worked with OES for many years and looking forward, if confirmed, to the Assistant Secretary position, four observations come to mind. These observations will play a large part in guiding me forward.

The first observation is the importance of a strategic approach. OES's portfolio of issues and engagements is broad. The Bureau is working to develop a strategic approach in many areas. For example, it is promoting sustainable fishing practices through its coordinated engagement with regional fishery management organizations. However, we need to expand our strategic thinking and ensure that efforts in various settings are coordinated and strongly reinforce our foreign policy and national security objectives.

The second observation is the importance of partnerships, as both President Obama and Secretary Clinton have repeatedly emphasized. The problems we face cannot be solved

unilaterally. OES builds partnerships around the globe to solve common problems. This is certainly true for climate change and many other challenging issues. OES and Todd Stern, the Special Envoy for Climate Change, are working with our international partners around the globe to address this urgent issue. Also, through the Antarctic Treaty and the Arctic Council, OES works with other nations to protect these unique and vulnerable regions of our planet and to manage human activities in those regions. Likewise, OES participates in ongoing international discussions to promote the compatibility and interoperability between GPS and the emerging Global Navigation Satellite Systems. OES has strong partnerships with the private sector. For instance, OES has facilitated the very successful Global Polio Eradication Initiative – a joint venture between Rotary International, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, UNICEF and the World Health Organization.

Congress is an essential partner for the work of OES. The Bureau has worked closely with both the Senate and the House on a range of issues and will continue to do so. OES also relies on strong partnerships across the U.S. government, working with the US Agency for International Development (USAID), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the National Science Foundation (NSF), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the National Aeronautics and Space Agency (NASA), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and many others. OES is also dependent on strong partnerships within the Department of State - working closely with the Special Envoy for Climate Change, the Science and Technology Adviser, the regional Bureaus, the Economic, Energy and Business Affairs Bureau and others. For example, OES works with an interagency team comprised of USAID, the U.S. Forest Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Department's Africa Bureau to implement the Congo Basin Forest Partnership, which seeks to train conservation professionals and assist the people of the region to secure long-term forest based livelihoods through forest conservation.

The third observation is the centrality of science to OES's mission. OES stands at the intersection of foreign policy and science and technology. Science and technology is a unique communication channel, building trusted relationships; it provides an invaluable asset in policy-making - objective data; it is a problem solving tool needed to address the global environmental and health challenges; and it is a development tool, key to the ongoing economic competitiveness of our country and to addressing the development challenges faced by millions around the world. The issues OES addresses are steeped in and dependent on science and technology. For that reason, OES is also the home of the nation's international science and technology agreements which promote and facilitate collaboration. The importance of science and technology in diplomacy and development will continue to expand in the future as we continue to face rapid technological advances, complex environmental and health problems, and an expanding global scientific community.

The final observation and perhaps the most critical is recognizing the importance of the people who carry out this work. OES's work is carried out by devoted professionals – Foreign Service, civil service, contractors and fellows. These professionals continually blend technical and diplomatic perspectives. In the field, at embassies and regional hubs around the world, the Foreign Service environment, science, technology and health (ESTH) officers are addressing issues directly with their ministry counterparts on a daily basis. We must continue to strongly support these officers who advance our interests in scientific and technical fields, providing them

with training and advancement opportunities. The Department has augmented its scientific and technical personnel with the AAAS, Jefferson, and Sea Grant fellowship programs, bringing junior and mid-career scientists and technical experts into its workforce. Also, the Embassy Fellows program places technical personnel from federal agencies at embassies for short-term assignments. Science envoys, which the President discussed in his Cairo speech and are described in Senator Lugar's bill, provide an important missing dimension - drawing on distinguished and prominent leaders of the U.S. science and technology community. This program will send our scientists into the world as emissaries, acknowledging the importance of science as a diplomatic channel and a tool for addressing challenging problems. The program will build trusted partnerships. I began my career as a AAAS Science, Engineering and Diplomacy fellow believing that science and diplomacy are natural partners and this belief has only strengthened with time.

I am excited by the opportunity to serve in this position, if confirmed, as this challenging collection of issues reflects my experience and career track. I have a science background. I have also been fortunate enough to serve with the National Science Foundation (NSF), the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), the National Security Council (NSC), the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and USAID, in Washington, DC and New Delhi. I have had the opportunity to view the OES range of issues from varying perspectives, working on policies and programs that sought to advance US foreign policy, national security and scientific interests.

In closing, I would like to acknowledge my gratitude to my family and friends, who over the years have provided enormous amounts of love and support. Most especially, I would like to acknowledge my husband, Thomas Beck, who is simply extraordinary. I deeply appreciate the Committee's consideration of my nomination, and if confirmed, I will accept my duties with gratitude and humility. I will bring my expertise and experience to bear on these challenging foreign policy issues, and I will do my best to serve the interests of the American people, which is always a great honor. Thank you for holding this hearing, and if confirmed, I look forward to a close working relationship with this committee and other members of Congress. I would be pleased to respond to your questions.