

**Statement of Greg Lebedev
Nominee for United States Representative to the United Nations
For Management and Reform
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
September 11, 2008**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Senator Vitter, and distinguished Members of the Committee for the opportunity to appear before you today as the President's nominee to be the U.S. Representative to the United Nations for Management and Reform. I am grateful to President Bush and to Secretary Rice for their confidence and support.

For nearly thirty years I have worked in the foreign affairs community – as State Department Assistant Inspector General for Foreign Assistance, as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Security and Consular Affairs, as Executive Vice President for International Policy at the United States Chamber of Commerce, as a Senior Partner in a global consulting firm whose clients included multilateral organizations, and currently as Chairman of the Center for International Private Enterprise, one of the four institutes of the National Endowment for Democracy.

During that same period I also acquired considerable experience in management and finance, having served as a CEO, a COO, and a CFO of industry associations; provided consulting advice to public and private as well as foreign and domestic organizations about management, financial structures, and human resources; evaluated economic and military assistance

programs as a State Department Assistant Inspector General; and have spoken frequently about public corruption and its corrosive effects upon private enterprise. I believe these experiences have provided me with uniquely relevant insights which will permit me to effectively address the challenges of the position for which I have been nominated.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I will focus on our shared interest in improving the management and governance structures of the United Nations, and thereby heighten the efficiency and effectiveness of this important institution. The time I will spend at the U.S. Mission will measurably contribute to the continuity of attention on governance and management reform – the linchpin to any broader institutional initiatives that may be pursued. To be sure, without the requisite measure of accountability, transparency, and fiscal discipline the UN will forever be unable to meet the high expectations that we, and other member states have for this critically important multilateral organization.

Filling the currently vacant position of U.S. Representative to the United Nations for Management and Reform is key to meeting America's commitment to UN reform and fiscal stewardship. Placing a seasoned policy and management professional in this role sends a very clear signal to the international community that the United States, as the UN's largest contributor, has not turned away from its fiduciary duty to advance the changes that are needed. To be sure, to leave this post vacant – and thus dim the spotlight on reform – would weaken the ability of the Administration to continue to achieve much-needed improvements in the UN system.

In his 2007 speech to the General Assembly, the President spoke to the critical mission of the United Nations and its role in the liberation of people from four universal enemies: tyranny and violence; hunger and disease; the chains of illiteracy and ignorance; and poverty and despair. Progress can be made toward the realization of these long-term objectives, but only if the UN and its affiliated bodies are effective, transparent, and accountable. Our belief in the importance and value of the United Nations is enduring, but our commitment is not unconditional. Reports of scandal, mismanagement, and dishonesty shake the confidence of donors and cast doubt on the organization's ability to deliver results to those in need. Consequently, if confirmed, I intend to devote much of my attention and energy to the following areas:

UN Transparency and Accountability Initiative:

In 2007, the United States launched a UN Transparency and Accountability Initiative (UNTAI) to apply common governance standards throughout the UN system, including: independent internal oversight, disclosure of internal audits, ethics protocols, whistleblower protections, and financial disclosures by staff. This initiative came about in the wake of abuses by the North Korean government while a beneficiary of UN humanitarian and development activities. UNTAI draws upon existing practices within the UN Secretariat, and seeks to have them implemented in the UN Funds and Programs – in particular UNDP and UNICEF in New York, as well as all the other programs and specialized agencies throughout the UN system. If

confirmed, I will work to continue our progress on this important program of work.

UNDP Accountability:

There have been serious concerns about UN Development Program (UNDP) operations and the lack of internal controls in several countries, most recently in North Korea where UN auditors discovered that UNDP had violated UN rules. We have similar concerns about UNDP as an implementing agent for the Global Fund to Combat HIV, Malaria, and Tuberculosis in Burma.

The Department of State has been working with senior UNDP officials in an effort to help that organization meet the standards of the UN Transparency and Accountability Initiative, and to begin to more aggressively disclose audit and programmatic information, promote ethical behavior, and protect whistleblowers. If confirmed, I will be forceful but fair in working with UNDP to improve the quality of the oversight of its programs.

Budget Issues:

If confirmed, I will also be a strong advocate for fiscal responsibility within the UN. The General Assembly approved an initial budget for 2008-2009 of \$4.2 billion; however, this did not include approximately \$1.1 billion in budgetary add-ons identified last fall but about which UN members decided to defer action rather than face tough decisions. The U.S. rightly objected to the adoption of this budget because this piecemeal approach clearly undercuts any rational process for fiscal planning. If confirmed, I will be

actively involved in negotiations this fall to limit any increases to only those that are most vital to U.S. goals and interests.

While there have been a number of positive achievements in the UN reform arena, we are not yet satisfied with the progress that has been made throughout the UN system. Certainly, more work remains to be done. Although, I would not suggest that the tasks that remain could be completed over the next few months, I believe we must continue to advance our initiatives without interruption in order to bridge the gap between this and the next Administration. I look forward to this opportunity and challenge.

In summary, the diversity of my experience is uniquely relevant to the challenges presented by the U.S. agenda for UN management and reform, and if confirmed I look forward to working with you, the members of this Committee and all those who are committed to making the UN a more effective and efficient organization.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I will be pleased to answer any questions you may have at this time.