

**Testimony of Mark F. Brzezinski,
Ambassador-Designate to the
Kingdom of Sweden,
Before the
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
October 5, 2011**

Chairman Coons, Ranking Member Isakson, and distinguished Members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee:

Thank you for the privilege of appearing before you today. I am deeply grateful to President Obama and Secretary Clinton for their support and confidence in nominating me to be the U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of Sweden. If confirmed by the Senate, I pledge to devote all my energy to represent the United States to the best of my ability.

If you will permit me, I would like to introduce to the Committee my wife Natalia Brzezinski. We are the very proud parents of Aurora Emilie – a rambunctious and wonderful little girl – age two and a quarter. Life is a team sport, and our little family is the source of so much pride, love, and support.

My wife and I are both children of immigrants from Eastern Europe. My father and mother, immigrants from pre-war Poland and Czechoslovakia respectively, instilled in me the belief that public service is the highest calling and that America is a beacon for the world. As a Fulbright grantee in Eastern Europe just after the collapse of the Berlin Wall, I witnessed how important American leadership is for democratic development and for free market growth.

This lesson has informed my experiences in international affairs since then, from my service on the National Security Council in the 1990s to my private legal practice, where I counsel companies on anti-corruption compliance. If confirmed, I will bring these experiences with me to Sweden, which is such an important

partner in promoting democracy, human rights, and economic growth around the world.

Sweden has risen to the global security challenges of our time and joined with the United States and other countries as an active contributor to international security missions. For example, Sweden contributes to the NATO missions in Afghanistan and Libya.

Sweden understands, as does America, that military and diplomatic efforts are not the only tools for combating instability – development plays a very important role. If confirmed, I pledge to advance U.S.-Swedish cooperation on democratic development, from Belarus and Ukraine, to the Middle East, and North Africa.

America and Sweden are committed to combating terrorism and preventing violent extremism. In the last year, the suicide bombing in Stockholm, the horrific attacks in Norway, and the arrests of terrorist cells in the region highlight that counterterrorism is a common focus in our bilateral and regional relationships.

The United States and Sweden share a strong commitment to political participation of women. This is personified by the inclusion of Sweden's former Minister of Enterprise and Energy, Maud Olofsson, on Secretary Clinton's International Council on Women's Business Leadership. If confirmed, I pledge to advance our collaboration with Sweden to promote women in politics and business.

The United States and Sweden share an important trading partnership and a commitment to green energy. If confirmed, I will build on the close cooperation our Embassy has forged with Sweden on alternative energy and environmental sustainability.

This year Sweden took over the rotating Chairmanship of the Arctic Council. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Sweden to advance our

common goals of protecting the environment and conserving the Arctic's biological resources while promoting economic cooperation and protecting Arctic communities with other Arctic Council members.

As a former Fulbright recipient, I appreciate the value of international exchange programs. If confirmed, I envision fostering further support for exchange programs, especially those that advance green energy and clean technology.

Let me close with a personal story. My grandfather, Tadeusz Brzezinski served as Poland's consul general in Leipzig from 1931 to 1935. As consul general, he provided Polish passports to Jews, even if they were not Polish citizens, so they could be freed from imprisonment or leave Nazi Germany. His story is part of what informs my belief that public service is the highest calling. In 2012, Sweden will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the birth of Raoul Wallenberg, a diplomat whose efforts to save Hungarian Jews from the Holocaust clearly demonstrate what a difference one person can make. If I am confirmed, it will be my mission to advance the American-Swedish relationship in a way that honors the spirit of Wallenberg's legacy.

Thank you for your time and I look forward to your questions.

Thank you.