

**STATEMENT OF SUSAN L. ZIADEH  
AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE TO  
THE STATE OF QATAR  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS  
[JUNE 21, 2011]**

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Lugar, Members of the Committee, I thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today.

I am honored to be President Obama's nominee to serve as U.S. Ambassador to Qatar. I deeply appreciate the confidence President Obama and Secretary Clinton have shown in me. If confirmed by the Senate, I will exercise the full range of our diplomatic tools to promote regional security cooperation, expand commercial ties, and develop stronger educational partnerships between the United States and Qatar.

With your permission, I would like to introduce my sister Rhonda, here today representing the Ziadeh family. I would like to thank my family for their encouragement as I pursued graduate studies in Egypt and Lebanon, where Middle East issues became my lifelong intellectual and professional pursuit. Through seven tours in the Middle East, including Iraq, their support continues.

The United States and Qatar enjoy an excellent military-to-military relationship. Qatar's Al Udayd Air Base hosts the U.S. Air Force's 379th Air Expeditionary Wing as well as the Combined Air Operations Center, critical to U.S. military operations in the CENTCOM AOR, including Afghanistan. If confirmed, I will work to expand our counterterrorism and regional security cooperation.

From the United Nations to the Gulf Cooperation Council, Qatar has played an active and helpful role in multilateral diplomacy. In Libya, Qatar was the first Arab country to dedicate military resources to the international coalition and has pledged significant financial support to the Transitional National Council. In Egypt, Qatar announced plans to invest \$10 billion to strengthen the economy. The Amir of Qatar has set a positive example by reinforcing the need for political, social, and economic reforms across the Arab world.

He has also focused on the need for better and inclusive governance. Qatar recently held municipal council elections and has pledged to hold advisory council elections soon. These are important steps and demonstrate Qatar's commitment to representative government. Recognizing that each country will follow its own

particular form of representative democracy, if confirmed, I pledge to work with our Qatari friends and speak out for the core values and principles that define America.

Qatar presents tremendous economic opportunity for American business. With the third largest proven gas reserves in the world, Qatar is the leading supplier of Liquid Natural Gas. Oil and gas account for more than 60% of GDP and 70% of government revenues. Qatar is using these revenues to invest in its infrastructure and its people while diversifying its economy. If confirmed, I will advocate aggressively for U.S. companies competing for the more than \$70 billion worth of major infrastructure projects to be awarded between now and 2022; I will also work tirelessly to find new export opportunities for American goods and services in Qatar.

Qatar has made great strides in education, overhauling its schools. Through the Qatar Foundation and initiatives such as Education City, Qatar is building the intellectual infrastructure necessary for Qataris to compete in a knowledge-based economy. U.S. universities are at the forefront of this process, cooperating on educational services. As a former Fulbright scholar, I know firsthand the value of educational exchanges. If confirmed, I will strongly support these growing institutional ties and promote long-term partnerships.

A top priority is to protect the welfare, security, and interests of American citizens as well as our personnel at Embassy Doha. If confirmed, I will dedicate myself to supporting the American community and helping it succeed in Qatar.

If confirmed, I look forward to welcoming the Committee's members and staff to Doha. Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee, thank you for this opportunity to address the Committee. I would be pleased to respond to any questions you may have. Thank you.