

**Statement of Christopher Landau
Nominee for Deputy Secretary of State
Senate Committee on Foreign Relations**

March 4, 2025

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Shaheen, and distinguished Members of this Committee:

I'm honored to appear before you today as President Trump's nominee for Deputy Secretary of State. I'm grateful to the President and Secretary Rubio for their trust and confidence. And I appreciate the time that the Members and staff of this Committee have spent with me. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with you.

On a personal note, I'd like to thank my wife Caroline and our children Nathaniel and Julia, who are here today, for their love and support. And I'd like to acknowledge my late parents, George and Maria Landau, for introducing me to the State Department and the Foreign Service. My father was a career Foreign Service Officer for almost 30 years and served as Ambassador to three countries in South America for 13 of those years. I was born in Spain, lived in Canada, Paraguay, Chile, and Venezuela, and attended the American School of Asunción for five years. My parents, and my upbringing abroad, triggered a lifelong passion for international relations that has culminated in this nomination. I only wish that my parents could be here today, which would have been my father's 105th birthday.

The experience of growing up abroad in a Foreign Service family proved invaluable when I served, during the first Trump Administration, as Ambassador to Mexico. And my experience in Mexico, in turn, taught me what the State Department does well—and could do better.

One of the Department's biggest assets is its worldwide network of foreign missions and the people who staff them. And conversely one of the Department's biggest challenges is the need to sync up those foreign missions with policymakers in Washington. My experience in Mexico highlighted the need to strengthen this feedback loop: policymakers in Washington must provide our foreign missions with clear directions and demand accountability for results, and in return our foreign missions must relay relevant and useful information back to policymakers in Washington. The State Department's political leadership must be able to articulate the President's foreign policy to our Embassies, foreign audiences, and the American people, and must demand and deliver concrete results.

My job, if confirmed, will be to harness the Department's formidable worldwide footprint to make our country safer, stronger, and more prosperous. I'd like to emphasize three major points.

First, we must defend the sovereignty of the United States—our people, our borders, our Constitution, and our laws. International organizations, treaties, and alliances can all be valuable tools for advancing our own national interests, but we must never forget that they are just tools and not ends in themselves. Our duty is to the people of the United States and the Constitution of the United States. In particular, the State Department must recognize that global mass migration is one of the key foreign policy challenges of our time and prioritize enforcement of our immigration laws.

Second, we must leverage our national strength to secure better results for the American people in terms of national and economic security. Our diplomacy is most effective when foreign leaders know that we say what we mean and we mean what we say, and that we have the resources and the will to back it up. Our country's economic and military might should allow us to rack up one diplomatic victory after another and steer clear of wars and foreign interventions. Sadly, this has not been the case in recent decades.

Third, we must restore commercial statecraft as a pillar of our foreign policy. Our country's Founders understood the great potential of trade with foreign nations, but for a long time now economic and commercial affairs have been relegated to second-class status at the State Department and our Nation has racked up massive trade deficits with foreign countries. We must work closely with the private sector to open new markets for American goods and services, out hustle foreign competitors, and attract foreign investment to the United States. We also must ensure that our trade and commerce is fair, and that other countries do not take advantage of our markets without affording us reciprocal access to theirs.

These are just a few of the key areas on which I hope to focus if confirmed. Again, I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you here today, and will do my best to answer your questions. Thank you.