

Statement of Pamela M. Tremont
Nominee for U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Zimbabwe
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
March 1, 2023

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, distinguished members of the committee, it is the greatest honor of my 30-year diplomatic career to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee to be the next U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Zimbabwe. I am profoundly grateful to the President and Secretary Blinken for entrusting me with this tremendous responsibility.

This nomination is a culmination of my family's service to the American people. My parents, Linn and Jan Danielski, instilled in me a spirit of public service through my father's 26-year Army career. They and my sister Stacey encouraged my dreams when, at 16, I announced my future was in the U.S. Foreign Service. But I am particularly indebted to my best friend and husband of 31 years, Eric Tremont, who has always prioritized me and our family over himself. I would not be here today without him and our 17-year-old son Peyton, who has served alongside us in five countries and was one of the last Eagle Scouts out of Troop 980 in Kyiv. He is undoubtedly watching from Europe, where he goes to school. My family's values and the support of many dear friends have been crucial in this journey, and they inspire me every day to seek diplomatic solutions to global challenges.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, along that journey I have been privileged to represent the United States in eight countries across three continents, including seven years working on southern African issues. The common thread among people everywhere is a desire for representative governance that respects their human rights and offers economic opportunity free from corruption and supported by rule of law. In a word, they want dignity. I firmly believe the Zimbabwean people want and deserve this too. Throughout my career, I have promoted these foundational values, including through U.S. electoral assistance programs in the Comoros, Zambia, and Ukraine, where I coordinated U.S. assistance for the 2019 Ukrainian presidential election just months after Russia's attack on Ukrainian ships ushered in a period of martial law. Our assistance gave Ukrainians confidence in the process to elect the leader of their choice.

This year, Zimbabweans will go to the polls for the second time in the post-Mugabe period. Zimbabwe's constitution guarantees its citizens the right to choose their leaders through free and fair elections, to participate in political

parties or organizations, and to campaign freely and peacefully. Too often Zimbabweans have been denied these rights, and I share the Committee's concerns over the increasing instances of political violence, lawlessness, and intimidation. The Government of Zimbabwe has the opportunity to uphold its own constitution and deliver on President Mnangagwa's yet-to-be-realized commitment to a peaceful, democratic electoral process. If confirmed, I will actively work to support the democratic aspirations of those advocating for Zimbabwean's constitutional rights, and I will seek partnership with all those in Zimbabwe who are doing the same.

The U.S. commitment to the Zimbabwean people is clear. Since we recognized the new state of Zimbabwe immediately after independence in 1980, the U.S. government has invested more than \$4.5 billion dollars in humanitarian and development assistance for Zimbabweans. Millions of Zimbabweans are alive today because of the PEPFAR program. Yet the potential of the Zimbabwean people is stymied by corruption, economic mismanagement, and a lack of investment in human capital that have undermined this former breadbasket of Africa, home of Great Zimbabwe. If confirmed, I will work with this committee to promote economic reform, rule of law, transparency, and women's empowerment to unleash Zimbabwe's economic recovery and offer opportunities for U.S. business. Together we can address poverty and food insecurity in Zimbabwe and the region.

My highest priority will be the safety and security of American citizens and the very talented Embassy staff, including our local staff who have performed admirably under pressure stemming from their employment with us. My leadership touchstone has always been that diverse teams can do anything when properly resourced in a secure and respectful environment, and I have always confronted harassment and discrimination head-on. If confirmed, I will carefully steward U.S. resources, hold my team to a high standard, protect them at all costs, and empower them to work with partners in Zimbabwe who share our vision of peaceful, democratic nations working together to overcome global challenges.

Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to your questions.