

Opening Statement of Joshua M. Harris
Nominee for U.S. Ambassador to the People's Democratic Republic of
Algeria
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
June 13, 2024

Chairman Murphy, Ranking Member Young, distinguished Committee Members, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you as the President's nominee to serve as the U.S. Ambassador to the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria. If confirmed, I will work with Congress to advance U.S. priorities in Algeria reflecting our interests and values and to enable the American and local staff at U.S. Embassy Algiers to build the next chapter in this historic and dynamic partnership.

I am proud to share this day with my family. I above all thank my wife, Cheryl – a Foreign Service Officer – for her love and partnership. We are joined by our sons, Toby and Gabriel, who, with curiosity to engage the world and resilience in navigating the upheavals of Foreign Service life, are our loving inspiration.

I joined the Foreign Service in the dark shadow of September 11, embarking upon a career of public service amid the horrors of that attack and striving to advance U.S. national security so that such violence must never reoccur.

Over the past two decades, I have sought to empower Libyans to restore their sovereignty, to partner with Iraqis as they build a democratic future free of outside manipulation, to support Tunisians in fostering economic stability and political inclusion, and to leverage our multifaceted relationship with Egypt to help put Israelis and Palestinians alike on the path to more durable peace and security. If confirmed, I will be guided by these experiences to promote U.S. priorities in Algeria.

For 229 years, the U.S.-Algeria partnership – anchored in the 1795 Treaty of Peace and Amity – has been rooted in history and continually adapting to shared challenges.

Today, Algeria has a crucial voice in diplomacy that aims to realize a lasting ceasefire in Gaza and the return of all hostages, to surge humanitarian aid and protect civilians, and to promote the conditions for enduring peace and security for Israelis and Palestinians. Our governments are coordinating intensively during Algeria's tenure on the UN Security Council, including to call upon Hamas to accept the ceasefire proposal detailed by President Biden on May 31 and urge its full implementation. The United States and Algeria also have a productive dialogue on ending the fighting in Sudan, preventing Libya's enmeshment in regional conflict, and improving security and governance across the Sahel as malign actors probe across the region for vulnerabilities.

Algeria's role in fostering regional peace is underpinned by its success in uprooting terrorism and sustaining hard-won gains for internal stability. If confirmed, I will prioritize further deepening U.S.-Algeria cooperation to advance regional peace, including through our cooperation on the UN Security Council.

Economic and commercial ties between our countries continue to expand. Our trade has quadrupled in the past four years, and the United States is the leading source of foreign direct investment in Algeria – nearly triple the volume of its next largest partner. More than 100 U.S. companies operate in Algeria, the largest country in Africa.

And while contributing to stable energy markets, Algeria is advancing an ambitious agenda for the transition to renewables. A Trade and Investment Framework Agreement is cultivating constructive dialogue as Algeria undertakes reforms to increase transparency, liberalize the investment climate, and enable growth in a commercial partnership already underwriting thousands of U.S. jobs. If confirmed, I will advocate for expanding U.S.-Algeria trade and investment to deliver tangible benefits for the American people.

Algerians are forging their own path, informed by the country's struggle both for independence and against violent extremism. This history continues to guide efforts on the critical issues of promoting the rule of law, building effective institutions, and bolstering respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. If confirmed, I will continue the U.S. government's important dialogue with Algerian counterparts about reforms to foster inclusion, to promote freedom of expression, and to empower the vital contributions of civil society.

My highest priority will be the safety of U.S. citizens in Algeria, and the colleagues at U.S. Embassy Algiers that I will be honored to lead. I will strive to support the professionals of our diplomatic mission and faithfully represent the United States to the Algerian people.

Thank you for the opportunity to address this Committee. I look forward to your questions.