

**Opening Statement of Peter Lord  
Nominee for U.S. Ambassador to Republic of Senegal and  
the Republic of Guinea-Bissau  
Senate Committee on Foreign Relations  
June 13, 2024**

Chairman Murphy, Ranking Member Young, Members of the Committee, it is an honor to appear before you as the President's nominee to serve as the next United States Ambassador to the Republic of Senegal and to the Republic of Guinea-Bissau.

Please allow me to begin by thanking my family, in particular my wife, Leah, and our two daughters. I would also like to offer my appreciation to our parents – Richard & Debbie Lord and Ken & Kathy Zimmerman. Serving our nation overseas is a multi-generational privilege, joy, and sacrifice, and I am truly grateful for their support.

As a career member of the Foreign Service, I have been honored to represent the United States in assignments across Africa, Europe, and the Middle East as well as in Washington and at the United Nations. In each assignment, I have sought to serve with integrity, lead with vision and by example, and advance the interests and values of the United States. If confirmed, I believe this background will be valuable in leading our Mission, advancing bilateral goals with Senegal and Guinea-Bissau, and furthering our objectives in West Africa.

Our long-term partnership with Senegal has advanced important U.S. interests, including in supporting public health, expanding energy solutions, bolstering regional peace and security, investing in economic growth, and deepening democracy. The recent elections in Senegal – particularly the period before the polls – highlighted the importance of our continued partnership and engagement on democracy, human rights, and governance in Senegal. Now is a crucial time to expand our engagement to demonstrate a democratic dividend and our partnership with the new government.

In Guinea-Bissau, our relationship has been deepening in recent years, with a focus on agricultural production, food security, economic growth, and public outreach. Our engagement in Guinea-Bissau comes against a backdrop of our continued work to underscore the importance of democratic principles and collective action against transnational threats.

If confirmed, I will work steadfastly to advance U.S. interests and values – for democracy and good governance as well as for our security and prosperity. This includes countering false narratives and the corrupt and unfair practices of our adversaries. We do this best when we listen, partner, and collaborate on shared interests and challenges – not dictate choices and undermine host country laws and interests, as our adversaries so often do.

To advance our interest and values, we must first protect the security of the United States and our citizens. This includes cooperating to fight transnational threats, promote regional stability, and counter violent extremism. It also encompasses addressing trafficking in persons as well as engaging on health threats and food security.

Second, we must expand prosperity through economic growth, mutually beneficial trade, and job creation, particularly for Senegal and Guinea-Bissau's young populations. U.S. assistance has a catalytic effect, but long-term economic growth will only be sustained by working with these governments to foster a business-friendly environment and through creation of private sector connections that enable trade. If confirmed, I will seek to promote U.S. businesses and create economic opportunities.

Third, accountable governance, rule of law, and respect for human and labor rights are essential for Senegal and Guinea-Bissau to achieve the full potential of democracy as well as attract investment, enable stability, and ensure that all citizens accrue the benefits of development. U.S. engagement has helped to build the capacity of public institutions to deliver these results. If confirmed, supporting effective democratic governance will be a top priority.

If confirmed, I will make protecting the many U.S. citizens living in and traveling to Senegal and Guinea-Bissau my highest priority. I will also dedicate my attention to leading the team at the U.S. mission to foster a workplace with high morale and a team-oriented ethos. I will focus on accountability of resources and effectiveness of interagency collaboration to ensure our partnerships deliver with excellence. I also commit to working closely with you and other Members of Congress, including to fully support congressional travel and engagements.

Thank you for the honor to appear before you today. I look forward to your questions.