

Statement of Dorothy C. Shea
Nominee for U.S. Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
June 21, 2023

Chairman Coons, Ranking Member Ricketts, distinguished Members of the Committee, it is a great honor to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee to serve as Deputy Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with you and your colleagues to protect U.S. strategic interests by engaging with and through the United Nations and its member states.

I am both proud and humbled to again appear before this august body – having come before this Committee almost three and a half years ago when I was nominated to be Ambassador to the Lebanese Republic. As I did then, I present myself to you in the spirit of public service that both of my parents, now deceased, inculcated in me: my father Brandan Shea served in the Army in World War II – mostly in North Africa – and later in France as part of the Marshall Plan. He went on to serve for several decades as a civilian with the Department of Defense. My mother also had a career in public service after raising six kids. Speaking of whom, I would like to acknowledge several of my siblings and family members who are here with me today. Their love and support for me has been vital to my success and resilience throughout my 31-year Foreign Service career.

Being in this chamber also brings to mind my time as a Pearson Fellow with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in 2009-10. It was a great honor to cover Middle East issues for the then-Ranking Member Richard Lugar, a true statesman from whom I learned a great deal. I am also lucky to count as friends my fellow SFRC staffers, some of whom are here today.

I have brought a commitment to public service over the past three-plus years as U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon, where I have worked every day to advance U.S. interests in a profoundly complex political, economic, and security environment.

I know that if I am confirmed to take on this new challenge, I will face a diplomatic ecosystem with its own complexities, and I am braced for a steep learning curve. I am also well aware that I would be joining a very capable, dedicated team of public servants at the Mission in New York, led by Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield, from whom I take great inspiration.

I am excited at the prospect of joining this team and hold firm in my belief that American leadership at the United Nations and other international organizations is crucial to the direction, performance, and accountability of those bodies.

We need look no further than the international response to Russia's unprovoked and unjustified invasion of Ukraine. In the days following the invasion, the United States led efforts to mobilize the UN membership, resulting in 141 nations voting in the UN General Assembly to condemn Russia's aggression and demand an end to the invasion. That action triggered consideration of Russia's actions in a host of relevant UN bodies, including the UN Human Rights Council, where Russia's membership was suspended. Across the international system,

Russia is today less influential and more isolated on many matters they claim as national interests.

U.S. leadership at the UN and other international organizations has been evident throughout this period, and underscores the value in our determined investment in a UN system that is ready and able to respond to the needs of today and tomorrow.

That leadership is not a given. It requires constant tending and attention to our competitors. Most notably among those is China, which is making its own investments designed to reshape or redirect multilateral bodies. As this committee knows well, that effort is expanding, and the United States must energize its efforts and rally broad-based partnerships to safeguard institutions that should serve the interests of all member states, not just one.

If confirmed, I look forward to lending my efforts to that urgent cause, as well as to working with like-minded counterparts to tackle other pressing challenges to peace and security; burgeoning humanitarian needs, and global issues including climate change, food insecurity, the trafficking of fentanyl and its precursor chemicals, transnational crime, and much more.

I am also motivated to contribute to our collective efforts to defend American values by fighting hate and antisemitism in the UN system. Indeed, if confirmed, I look forward to adding my voice and energy to efforts to promote bold and lasting reforms across the UN system to make it more effective, efficient, representative, and credible.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and distinguished Members of the Committee, I am a firm believer in the confident use of appropriate foreign policy tools to advance American interests. I am convinced that our foreign policy is best served when there is close collaboration between the executive and legislative branches of government. If confirmed, I pledge to continue that cooperation as we pursue our vital interests through the United Nations.

Thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you today. I am happy to take your questions.