

**Opening Statement of Douglas D. Jones**  
**Nominee for U.S. Ambassador to Bosnia and Herzegovina**  
**Senate Foreign Relations Committee**  
**September 11, 2024**

Chairman Cardin, Ranking Member Risch, and distinguished Members of the Committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee to be the U.S. Ambassador to Bosnia and Herzegovina. I am deeply grateful for the confidence and trust the President and the Secretary of State have placed in me. If confirmed, I pledge to work closely with this Committee and others in Congress to advance U.S. interests in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

I would not be here today without the love and support of my family, friends, and colleagues. I would like to thank my wife Karen -- who I met 24 years ago this month in Bosnia and Herzegovina where she worked for over six years with NGOs helping refugees return home after the war -- for her love and support throughout many postings, frequent moves, and long separations. We are blessed with our daughter Sophia and her remarkable resilience and indomitable sense of adventure growing up through multiple moves, schools, and languages.

I am grateful to my parents, and my sisters Alison, Lorraine and Hilary. To my late father, Robert Jones, who served in the military and was also a Foreign Service Officer, I am indebted for instilling in me a calling to public service and for showing me the power of the United States and its values to inspire positive change throughout the world. And to my mother, who always championed my education and supported me whatever direction I decided to take my life.

The security and stability of Bosnia and Herzegovina is a critical piece to the United States' broader goals of a Europe whole, free, and at peace. The United States has played a pivotal role in Bosnia and Herzegovina for decades -- bringing an end to a horrible war through the Dayton Peace Accords, which laid the foundation for peace and stability. Bosnia and Herzegovina has tremendous potential, but that potential is too often stymied by corruption, ethnonationalist divisions, and political dysfunction. If confirmed, I look forward to leading our excellent team at U.S. Embassy Sarajevo to help Bosnia and Herzegovina address these obstacles and realize its potential. It is in the interest of the United States to have a Bosnia and Herzegovina that is peaceful, prosperous, and integrated into Euro-Atlantic institutions. If confirmed, I would prioritize the following:

I would have no higher priority than the safety and security of Mission Sarajevo and all U.S. citizens in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

If confirmed, I will seek to protect the United States' decades of investment in Bosnia and Herzegovina by supporting its Euro-Atlantic integration as the only viable future for the country. I will commit to working with our Allies and partners on the necessary reforms required for progress on membership in the European Union and NATO. This is the future the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina have overwhelmingly said they want and the only path that ensures the country's peace and prosperity. I am committed to using all available tools including sanctions

and supporting the authority of the High Representative when called for, to push back against internal and external malign influences that wish to break the country apart.

I will support rule of law and anti-corruption reforms at all levels of government. Corruption in Bosnia and Herzegovina is rampant across all sectors and hurts the government's ability to deliver on its promises and impacts citizens' day-to-day lives. We aren't the only ones who notice, the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina are living with this, which is why so many talented, young people are leaving. To achieve real progress on Euro-Atlantic integration, government functionality, economic opportunity, and tackling corruption is key.

Finally, I will work to thwart the efforts of local and outside actors, especially Russia and the People's Republic of China, that seek to undermine the security and stability of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Strong U.S. people-to-people and economic engagement are essential to push back on those who wish to undermine security and stability in BiH.

To the Chair and Ranking Member, I thank this Committee and other members of Congress for your interest and active engagement in Bosnia and Herzegovina and I look forward to your questions.