

**Opening Statement of Mary E. Daschbach  
Nominee to be U.S. Ambassador to the Togolese Republic  
Senate Committee on Foreign Relations  
September 11, 2024**

Chairman Cardin, Ranking Member Risch, and distinguished Members of the Committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as the nominee to be the U.S. Ambassador to Togo. I would like to thank President Biden and Secretary Blinken for this opportunity and express appreciation for this distinguished Committee's time and consideration. I would also like to recognize my family for their love and encouragement during my nearly 30 years of government service.

I have served most of my career in Africa, including as the Public Affairs Officer at Embassy Lomé. I traveled throughout Togo and have fond memories of the warm welcome I received from the Togolese people. I was impressed by the richness and diversity of music, art, and cultural traditions, as well as the entrepreneurial spirit, resilience, and openness of the people I met.

The United States and Togo have a positive relationship based on our shared goals of advancing peace and security and promoting trade and economic growth; and the United States is committed to working with Togo to strengthen democratic institutions to ensure freedom and opportunity for all in Togo.

Today, Togo faces a spillover of extremist violence from the Sahel in the north of the country that could undermine its stability, development, and prosperity, and is seeking support to address this historic challenge. Togo is a key security partner for the U.S. strategy to prevent conflict and promote stability in Coastal West Africa. Our Embassy in Lomé is working with the government and people of Togo to foster an inclusive approach that strengthens resilience to extremism and prevents further spread in a way that protects civilians and addresses drivers of conflict. If confirmed, I will continue to advance security cooperation to promote responsiveness to at-risk communities, reinforce maritime cooperation, and enhance stability in West Africa.

The United States also works closely with Togo to promote bilateral trade and economic growth and to support opportunity and development. Home to the Gulf of Guinea's deepest port and a regional airport with direct flights to the

United States, Togo seeks private sector investment to leverage its geographic advantage as a transportation and logistics hub, particularly as a gateway to the landlocked Sahel. Togo is a beneficiary of the African Growth and Opportunity Act and has established an export processing zone with U.S. government support. If confirmed, the Embassy team and I will advocate strongly on behalf of American investors and continue engagement with Togo to foster a business climate that is attractive to U.S. companies.

Togo's population is young and growing quickly. The United States is working with Togo to modernize its communications, technology, land, and energy sectors to expand services to underserved populations. Through Peace Corps, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food for Education program, and the President's Malaria Initiative and other health programs, the United States is strengthening Togo's capacity to reduce poverty, increase food security, and improve health. If confirmed, I will ensure that U.S. assistance is well-managed and reaches the most vulnerable.

While Togo aspires to become a regional economic leader and to reinforce its internal security, these goals cannot be achieved without strong democratic institutions. Restrictions on the media, limitations on freedom of peaceful assembly and association, and impunity remain a concern. If confirmed, my Embassy team and I will continue to work with the Government of Togo, political parties, civil society organizations, and other diplomatic missions to promote open and inclusive governance that responds to the concerns of all of Togo's citizens.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and distinguished Members of the Committee for this opportunity. If confirmed, I am committed to a One Mission approach that draws upon the talents and strengths of the interagency team and I will prioritize the safety and security of Americans in country. I look forward to working with you and other Members of Congress to reinforce our relationship with Togo at this critical time. I welcome any questions you may have and hope you and your colleagues will visit to witness this important bilateral partnership firsthand.