

Statement of Douglas M. Griffiths  
Ambassador-Designate to Mozambique  
Senate Foreign Relations Committee

May 17, 2012

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

It is an honor for me to appear before you today as President Obama's nominee to be Ambassador to the Republic of Mozambique. I am grateful to the President and Secretary Clinton for the confidence they have placed in me as their nominee. I am also thankful for the enduring support of my wife Alicia and my two daughters. Through evacuations, earthquakes, gunfire and floods they have been enthusiastic and adventurous partners in public service.

In my twenty-four years in the Foreign Service, I have served in countries of vastly different economic and social circumstances. Through postings in Canada, Portugal, Mozambique, Morocco, Switzerland, Haiti, and Ecuador I have gained broad geographic exposure and solid experience in management, trade and the promotion of good governance. I also worked in the Office of Southern African Affairs at the State Department, gaining invaluable insight into regional issues. In Haiti, Ecuador and Geneva, I have had the opportunity to serve as chargé d'affaires, a.i. for extended periods. Mr. Chairman, I believe that my current

position as Deputy Permanent Representative at the U.S. Mission to the United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva, where we engage daily on public health, economic development and humanitarian relief, is excellent preparation to serve as American Ambassador to Mozambique.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I look forward to working with you and the Honorable Members of this Committee to advance U.S. interests in Mozambique. Following three decades of conflict, Mozambique has enjoyed peace and stability since the early 1990s. We commend Mozambique on its overall progress over the past two decades and on its more recent steps in addressing governance concerns since the 2009 elections. The upcoming 2014 presidential and parliamentary elections will be key barometers of democratic freedoms. As development depends on good governance, if confirmed, my top priority will be to work alongside the Mozambican people to continue to strengthen democracy and governance in advance of these elections.

Mozambique's economic growth has consistently been among the highest in sub-Saharan Africa in recent years, averaging six to eight percent. However, despite this sustained growth and the quadrupling of Gross Domestic Product since 1992, the majority of Mozambique's 23 million people live below the poverty line, some well below that line. Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I will support growth-oriented policies to foster job creation and poverty reduction, while stimulating

broad-based economic growth. I will also aggressively identify and pursue every opportunity for American firms.

Sound economic policies and transparent governance will be increasingly important in Mozambique as the country is poised to experience a boom in natural resource revenue in the coming years from recently discovered natural gas and newly developed coal deposits. For this reason, Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I will champion U.S. government efforts that support sustainable economic growth throughout Mozambique, including the poorest areas of the country. The U.S. government is helping Mozambicans to boost the productivity of key crops, improve their agricultural policy, and improve maternal and child nutrition, with the ultimate goal of sustainably reducing hunger and poverty. The \$506.9 million Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) Compact is focused on road construction, water systems and modernization of the land tenure system.

As the largest bilateral donor to Mozambique, the U.S. directs the bulk of our assistance to improving the health of Mozambicans. The President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, the President's Malaria Initiative, the Global Health Initiative, and the Peace Corps are all working towards this goal. If confirmed, I will advance our vision of creating an AIDS-free generation by reducing the transmission of HIV/AIDS, boosting the percentage of HIV-positive

Mozambicans on treatment and encouraging the Mozambican government to commit more of its own resources to improving the health of its people.

Mozambique and the United States share a strong common interest in promoting regional stability. Mozambique will assume the presidency of the Southern African Development Community in August 2012, significantly elevating its role in promoting regional stability and economic integration. Securing the country's long land borders and coastline are indispensable to economic development in Mozambique and the region at large. Facilitating the legal flow of goods, services and people is a major driver for economic growth, but it must be coupled with sustained efforts to curb maritime piracy and illegal trade flows. I will, if confirmed, build upon our partnership with the Mozambican authorities to promote regional maritime and border security.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, I want to thank you for the privilege of appearing before you today. If confirmed, I welcome the challenge of protecting and advancing the interests of the United States in Mozambique and accept the corresponding responsibilities of that duty. I would be happy to answer any questions you might have.