

Statement of Thomas F. Daughton

Ambassador-Designate to the Republic of Namibia

Senate Committee on Foreign Relations

September 24, 2013

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Flake and Members of the Committee:

It is a great honor and privilege to appear before you today as President Obama's nominee to be the Ambassador to the Republic of Namibia. I appreciate the confidence that the President and Secretary Kerry have shown in putting my name forward for your consideration. If confirmed, I look forward to working with this committee and the Congress to advance U.S. interests in Namibia.

I have spent a third of my 25 years in the Foreign Service working on the African continent, including as Chargé d'Affaires in Gabon in the early 2000's. Recent years have taken me elsewhere in the world, but if confirmed, I very much look forward to getting back to Africa. In doing so, I will have the invaluable support of my wife, Melinda Burrell, who I am delighted to have here with me today.

U.S. relations with Namibia are strong, and our two countries share a firm commitment to democratic values. Since its independence in 1990, Namibia has stood as an example of stability and good governance in southern Africa. Namibia has held several democratic elections in its relatively short history, and will conduct elections for a new president next year. One of the goals of the United

States in Namibia is to see the country's young democratic institutions continue to become stronger. If confirmed, I will work with the Namibian government and civil society toward that goal.

The United States and Namibia also share an interest in increasing economic growth and prosperity. For more than 20 years, Namibia has worked hard to create jobs, attract foreign investment, and welcome advice and assistance as it works to diversify its economy. A \$305 million Millennium Challenge Corporation Compact (MCC) with Namibia that will come to a close next year has targeted tourism and agriculture as sectors where growth can help decrease poverty, and has provided assistance to the education system in order to give more Namibians the skills employers need to be competitive in the regional economy. Namibia has one of the highest levels of income inequality in the world, and education can help narrow that divide. In its first four years, the MCC compact has helped Namibia benefit from a growing tourism industry, increase and improve its livestock production, and improve its national education system. If I am confirmed, one of my priorities will be to ensure that the implementation of the final phase of our MCC compact is effective and has a lasting beneficial impact in Namibia.

Namibia has a 13-percent HIV/AIDS prevalence rate among adults and one of the highest tuberculosis case rates in the world. Statistics from recent years reflect significant progress in tackling both of these interrelated diseases, and the United States continues to work actively with Namibia to combat them. Namibia received nearly \$90 million in PEPFAR funds in FY2012 and is included in the Global Health Initiative. An important focus of the United States effort is helping the Namibian government to strengthen its health system to sustain treatment and prevention of these devastating diseases as we work together to achieve an AIDS-free generation. Namibia has been at the forefront of PEPFAR's efforts to move its

programs to a more sustainable response. Specifically, since 2004, the Namibian government, in collaboration with PEPFAR, has achieved major success in the areas of preventing mother-to-child transmission, treatment coverage (80 percent), human resources for health, and health financing. The Namibian government today funds over half of the HIV/AIDS response and has taken financial and supervisory responsibility for doctors, nurses, and pharmacists previously supported by PEPFAR and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. Namibia stands as a one of the models in the region of a host country-led HIV/AIDS response and a transitioning PEPFAR program. If confirmed, I will do my utmost to make sure that our taxpayers' resources continue to be used effectively in this effort.

There is considerable potential for growth in trade between Namibia and the United States. The Namibian government has ambitious plans to increase electricity generation and transmission capacity throughout the country. It also plans to expand the port at Walvis Bay and develop a transportation corridor to connect the port with neighboring countries. These efforts should provide significant opportunities for American companies to sell their products. Trade goes both ways. More exports from Namibia will help the Namibian economy grow, thus increasing demand for goods and services. If confirmed, I look forward to promoting the efforts of U.S. companies to do business with Namibia and making available the tools we can offer for Namibians to grow their economy.

Namibia has the potential to emerge as a strong leader in southern Africa. I welcome the opportunity to promote stronger diplomatic ties between our two nations and better mutual understanding among our peoples. I look forward to leading a team committed to advancing our interests and to supporting one of Africa's youngest nations as it tackles the challenges of development.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Flake, and Members of the Committee, thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you today. I will be happy to answer any questions you might have.