

Congressional Testimony of Mark B. Childress
Ambassador-Designate to the United Republic of Tanzania
And the East African Community
Before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
September 24, 2013

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Flake, and Members of the Committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as President Obama's nominee to be Ambassador to the United Republic of Tanzania and the East African Community (EAC). I am humbled by the trust and confidence that President Obama and Secretary Kerry have placed in me; and if confirmed, I look forward to further strengthening our relationship with Tanzania and broadening our engagement with the EAC.

I would like to take a moment to acknowledge my wife, Kate, a business executive, who also has worked in the government and non-profit sectors, and whom I wish to thank for her support.

I lived and worked in Africa on several occasions as far back as the 1980s, and I have returned as often as possible. Should I be confirmed, I believe my years of public service, in both the executive and legislative branches, my strong legal background, and my previous work overseas in Africa and in Australia assisting

development and non-profit organizations, provide me with the experience and tools necessary to carry out this important assignment.

Mr. Chairman, I come before this committee at an important juncture in our relationship with Tanzania. Tanzania's government, under the leadership of President Kikwete, has embarked upon an ambitious economic and political reform agenda. This agenda, a driving force for Tanzania's development, presents an opportunity for the United States to move towards what President Obama has described as a new model for Africa that builds capacity in countries like Tanzania, based not just on aid and assistance, but on trade and partnership. In agriculture, energy, and many other areas, the best way for Tanzania to achieve its own ambitious goals is to use public resources to leverage private sector investments.

Tanzania's development also provides business opportunities for both American and Tanzanian companies, and the recently announced Trade Africa is just one of the platforms that can expand trade between Tanzania, the EAC, and the United States. If confirmed, I stand ready to promote U.S. firms, and will work to ensure a level playing field for U.S. interests.

Tanzania has significant natural gas reserves, and it is important that the U.S. support its efforts to develop these resources as rapidly and responsibly as possible. President Kikwete has committed to increased accountability and

regulatory reform in the energy and power sectors, and the U.S. supports these reforms because they create an attractive environment for private investment.

In addition, tourism provides approximately 14 percent of the gross domestic product and an estimated \$1.7 billion in revenue. Unfortunately, poaching and wildlife trafficking threaten not only this important contribution to the Tanzanian economy, but a unique, natural legacy. If confirmed, I am personally committed to assisting Tanzania in combating these threats.

Our strategic objectives in Tanzania include promoting democratic institutions; supporting Tanzania's economic growth and private sector development; working with Tanzania to tackle HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other health challenges; helping Tanzania improve its schools, promoting regional stability, including Tanzania's peacekeeping efforts throughout the region, and cooperating on security threats such as terrorism, drug trafficking, and piracy.

Today, the partnership with Tanzania is as strong as ever, and President Obama's recent trip highlighted the successes already achieved and the opportunities and challenges that remain. Tanzania is one of four Partnership for Growth countries because of its demonstrated commitment to democratic governance and economic freedom, and receives assistance under almost every presidential initiative, including: Feed the Future, Global Climate Change, and the

Global Health Initiative which includes the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and the President's Malaria Initiative, in addition to the recently announced Power Africa and Trade Africa. These programs can produce tangible and lasting results. For example, since the inception of PEPFAR the American people have provided treatment to more than 405,000 Tanzanians and placed more than 1.2 million into care and support programs. Tanzania is close to eliminating malaria from Zanzibar. On the mainland, where the mortality rate in children under five years has been reduced by half, much of this progress is thought to be a result of gradually scaled up malaria control efforts. Our partnership with Tanzania under Feed the Future has helped 14,000 farmers apply improved technologies and management practices, contributing to a rice yield increase of 50 percent since the program started. In addition, nutrition programs have reached over 96,000 children.

Tanzania has successfully completed its first Millennium Challenge Compact, the largest awarded to date, which focused on building new roads, and increasing access to water and electricity. In order to ensure successful completion of all the projects, Tanzania made a significant contribution of its own financial support. Tanzania was found eligible for a second compact, and is developing its new project proposals.

Key to many of these successes is a transparent, democratic society that protects rights and promotes tolerance. If confirmed, I will actively engage with Tanzania's youth, and support their efforts to advance democratic values. This is essential, as nearly 45 percent of the population is under age 15. I will utilize the Young African Leaders Initiative and other exchanges to build relationships that will continue into the future. I also will work with the Government of Tanzania to continue to promote human rights and the rule of law across all sectors. And, I will seek out opportunities to support Tanzania's traditions of religious and ethnic tolerance, which have come under strain over the past several months.

Looking ahead, Tanzania has its next election in 2015, and is currently in the process of constitutional reform that will further define individual rights, and which will ultimately determine the structure of the union between Zanzibar and the mainland. It is critical that Tanzania's constitutional process continues to be transparent and includes consultations with civil society. If confirmed, I will ensure that we monitor these developments closely and promote a democratic and peaceful process.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you and the Committee for considering my nomination, and look forward to answering any questions that you may have.