

**EMBARGOED FOR DELIVERY**

**Statement by Swati Arvind Dandekar  
Nominee for U.S. Executive Director for the Asian Development Bank  
with Rank of Ambassador  
U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations  
Hearing held February 11, 2016**

*As prepared for delivery:*

Chairman Gardner, Ranking Member Cardin and distinguished members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I am honored to have been nominated by President Obama to be the next United States Executive Director with the rank of Ambassador to the Asian Development Bank.

I came to the United States as an immigrant in 1973 when I married my husband of 43 years, Arvind Dandekar who is here today. Arvind is President of Fastek International, a software development company. Arvind has always been supportive of my public service. We have two sons. Our older son Ajai and his wife Allison live in Seattle, Washington. Both Ajai and Allison are medical doctors. They have two sons, Evan (9 years) and William (5 years). Our younger son Govind and his wife Shaneeda live in Vancouver, Canada. Govind is an economist and computer scientist, and Shaneeda is a lawyer. They have two daughters, Ayaana (2 years) and Iyla (1 month). Our sons and their families were not able to be here today.

During my nine years in the Iowa House and Senate, from 2003 until 2011, I had the chance to work at the state level. Additionally, during my two years as a Commissioner of the Iowa Utilities Board I gained national level experience. I am excited by the potential opportunity to work internationally as the U.S. Executive Director of the Asian Development Bank (ADB). As a legislator I always worked with both sides of the aisle to develop consensus positions that were acceptable to all interested parties. Senator Joni Ernst was my colleague in the Iowa Senate and we became friends. I served as the Economic Development Budget chair in the Iowa House and Commerce Committee chair in the Iowa Senate. I have gained insight in to state finances and budgets in these assignments. I also have extensive experience serving on a variety of boards in Iowa, such as the Linn-Mar School Board, Vision Iowa Board, Iowa Values Fund, Iowa Power Fund, and Iowa Utilities Board. These experiences have provided me with a firsthand look at the transformative power of appropriate use of development funds.

My extensive background in managing projects and cultivating partnerships will help me to carry out the responsibilities of the U.S. Executive Director at the ADB, which is dedicated to reducing poverty in the Asia Pacific region through sustainable and inclusive economic growth, investments in human capital, and good governance. If confirmed, my first priority will be to advance U.S. policy interests at the ADB. Additionally, I will work to ensure that the U.S. Commerce Department and other entities that publicize opportunities for U.S. businesses to compete for business overseas include information on how to compete for contracts from the ADB; strengthen outreach to and engagement with Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) communities and citizens to establish direct feedback channels for information on

implementation status of ADB projects; modernize the ADB's communications, such as the Bank's website, to increase transparency and enhance marketability of the ADB; encourage ADB's efforts to create opportunities for women and girls across Asia and for its own female staff; maintain communication with Congress; and advocate for ADB's continued application of high social, environmental, and fiduciary standards, including promoting their adoption by new multilateral institutions in Asia.

My upbringing in India provides me with an excellent understanding of the Asian culture. In addition to English and Hindi, I am fluent in Gujarati and Marathi. I also have working knowledge in Urdu, Punjabi and Bengali languages. My language skills and cultural awareness will position me well to address challenges facing the ADB and communicate how ADB is fueling positive economic development and stability throughout the region.

I have led delegations to India as Iowa Legislator, as Iowa Utilities Commissioner and as President of the National Foundation of Women Legislators. After leading these delegations, I believe empowering women is the key to eradicating poverty and to achieving economic growth. If confirmed, I hope to work closely with NGOs and other international organizations on women's issues as it relates to development financing.

If confirmed, I look forward to representing the United States at ADB and ensuring that our country's priority initiatives are advanced. It is my distinct honor to appear before you, and I sincerely appreciate the opportunity to be here today. I look forward to answering any questions you may have.

Thank you.