

**Testimony of Lisa A. Johnson**  
**Nominee to be U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Namibia**  
**Before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee**  
**November 1, 2017**

Chairman Portman, Ranking Member Coons, and Members of the Committee:

I am honored to appear before you today as President Trump's nominee to be Ambassador to the Republic of Namibia. I would like to express my gratitude to the President and to Secretary Tillerson for the confidence they have placed in me. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with the Committee and others in Congress to advance our nation's interests in Namibia.

Please permit me to acknowledge my parents, watching online from Florida today, and my brother Mike, in Washington State. They have supported me proudly as I have represented the United States overseas during the past 25 years. A few close friends and colleagues also are present today to offer their support.

It is a privilege for me to return to a region that is familiar to me. I began my Foreign Service career in Angola and South Africa, and also spent time in Namibia, where I once drafted the Embassy's Human Rights Report.

Since independence in 1990, Namibia has stood out for its strong democratic traditions, its success in combatting HIV/AIDS, and its model wildlife conservation efforts. Namibia has a democratically elected president and parliament, an independent judiciary, and a free and open media. Though small in population, with just under 2.5 million people, Namibia offers promising trade and investment potential. The growing U.S. partnership with Namibia increases security and prosperity for both countries and serves as an example throughout the continent.

I would like to share with you three priorities that, if confirmed, I would work to advance as U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Namibia.

First, both the United States and Namibia seek to strengthen bilateral trade and build stronger and deeper economic bonds. Trade delegations to and from Namibia indicate growing opportunities for U.S. companies. Namibia's natural resources, combined with its stable economy and strong governance, make it an attractive prospect for U.S. business. If confirmed, one of my primary goals would

be to promote American business opportunities and help our trade relationship reach its full potential.

Second, Namibia has struggled with one of the world's highest HIV/AIDS prevalence rates. Our partnership to combat the disease has brought us closer than ever to bringing it under control. Through the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, or PEPFAR, the United States has partnered with Namibia to provide testing, education, care, support, and treatment to hundreds of thousands of people. Namibia is on track to meet UNAIDS targets to achieve epidemic control by 2020. Importantly, the Namibian government is assuming funding and management responsibility for the fight against HIV/AIDS, shouldering two thirds of the financial burden. Namibia stands as a regional example as we seek to shift the burden away from U.S. assistance to host governments.

Finally, if confirmed, my foremost priority will be ensuring the safety and security of American citizens in Namibia, be they living there, conducting business, travelling on vacation, or serving in the Peace Corps.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, I thank you again for this opportunity and look forward to answering your questions.