

Statement of Paul Wayne Jones
Nominee for Ambassador to the Republic of Poland
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
July 22, 2015

Mr. Chairman and Committee Members,

It is a privilege to appear before you as President Obama's nominee to serve as United States Ambassador to the Republic of Poland. I am honored by the trust and confidence President Obama and Secretary Kerry have placed in me.

With your permission, I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce some family members here today. My wife, Catherine, and I have represented the United States together for the past twenty years of our marriage. Catherine, an award-winning author and mobile app developer, has lived in more countries than I have, as the daughter of retired U.S. Foreign Service Officer and Ambassador Brandon Grove, whom I'd also like to introduce. We're so proud of our two children, Allie and Hale, who have been on the Foreign Service road with us since birth. My brother-in-law, Paul Grove, is well known from a distinguished career here in the Senate, and his wife, Martha, similarly at the National Archives. I regret my father, a World War II veteran, did not live to see this day.

Mr. Chairman, I bring broad experience to this position, having served overseas on four continents as well as in Washington over the past 28 years, including as ambassador and three times as deputy chief of mission. I also bring intensive current experience from the past two years as Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Europe and Eurasia, where I have been responsible for U.S. relations with Europe, particularly Russia and Ukraine, as principal deputy to Assistant Secretary Toria Nuland.

I'm honored to be nominated to succeed Ambassador Steve Mull, a longtime friend who has served with distinction for the past three years, together with an extraordinary team of Americans and Poles at our Embassy in Warsaw and Consulate in Krakow.

Today, Poland has become one of our closest, most capable NATO Allies, a relationship that at its core is founded on democratic values and shared commitments to policies that provide peace and prosperity for our peoples. Poland will host the 2016 NATO Summit, an example of its growing Transatlantic and regional security role. The Alliance will review implementation of its Readiness Action Plan, which includes strengthening the headquarters of Multinational Corps Northeast in Poland and standing up NATO's new spearhead force, which conducted its first live training exercise in Poland last month.

For its part, Poland is strengthening the Alliance through its 10-year, \$45 billion defense modernization plan; its commitment, now enshrined in law, to invest at least 2% of its gross domestic product in annual defense spending; and its future hosting of a U.S. site for NATO ballistic missile defense. Poland has shared our sacrifice in Iraq and Afghanistan, is contributing to NATO's mission in Afghanistan, and is a member of the Counter-ISIL Coalition.

As President Obama said in his June 2014 visit to Warsaw, the United States has an "unwavering commitment to Poland's security" through our shared Article 5 obligations. In the wake of Russia's actions in Ukraine, we have demonstrated this commitment. The United States maintains a persistent, rotational military presence in Poland, complemented by significant U.S. and NATO air, land, and sea exercises in Poland and the region. And as Secretary Carter announced last month, we will begin prepositioning military equipment and materiel in Central and Eastern Europe, a large portion of which will be in Poland.

Our relationship with Poland takes inspiration from the strong cultural ties between our peoples, fostered by a vibrant community of some 10 million Polish-Americans. Since the fall of communism in 1989, Poland has set a standard of democratic and economic reform based on shared transatlantic values. A staunch supporter of Ukraine, Poland has provided Ukraine financial, decentralization, anti-corruption, and security assistance. Poland is also one of the top contributors of monitors to the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission in Ukraine.

The United States and Poland enjoy strong economic ties. U.S. exports to Poland have grown 22% since 2009, supporting tens of thousands of American jobs. U.S. defense companies are full partners in Poland's defense modernization, and the recent selection of Raytheon's Patriot system will strengthen these ties and sustain jobs at home. The United States is a leading and growing source of investment in Poland across a wide range of sectors.

While security is the foundation of our relationship, particularly today, if confirmed I will seek to deepen our ties across the board, from education, exchanges and entrepreneurship, to trade, investment, and innovation, energy security, science and technology, law enforcement, and counterterrorism.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I look forward to working with this Committee and Congress. I am happy to address your comments and questions. Thank you.