

Testimony of Sung Kim
Ambassadorial Nominee to the Republic of Indonesia
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
October 16, 2019

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, I am deeply honored to appear before you today as the President's nominee to be United States Ambassador to the Republic of Indonesia. I am grateful to the President and Secretary Pompeo for placing their confidence in me and, if confirmed, I look forward to working closely with this Committee to advance U.S. interests and our strong relationship with Indonesia.

With the Chairman's permission, I would like to begin by thanking the many friends and colleagues who have played an essential role in my career – some of them are here today. First and foremost, I'd like to thank my wife Jae and our two daughters, Erin and Erica. I know they are proud and excited about the prospect of helping me represent the United States in Indonesia. My family, friends, and colleagues have all been a source of tremendous support and inspiration.

Mr. Chairman, it has been a privilege to spend my entire 30-year career in the State Department focused on Asia. I have been honored to represent my country as Ambassador to the Republic of Korea and to the Republic of the Philippines. To be able to serve a third time as Ambassador in this region of great importance to U.S. interests would be an incredible honor, particularly given the depth and breadth of our relationship with Indonesia.

The United States and Indonesia have a strong relationship that dates back to a time in which prospects for democracy and prosperity in Southeast Asia seemed far from certain. Now, as we celebrate 70 years of diplomatic relations, it is remarkable how much Indonesia has achieved, as both a stable democracy and a G20 economy. As a proud partner and friend of Indonesia, we look forward to a future of even more progress, shaped by our shared commitment to democracy and good governance, respect for human rights, and promoting stability and prosperity in the region. In April, Indonesia successfully conducted what was likely the

largest single-day election anywhere. Its democratic institutions are strong and only growing stronger.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I look forward to leading the dedicated Mission team of Americans and Indonesians who are working tirelessly to advance the U.S.-Indonesia Strategic Partnership. I also pledge to be a responsible steward of resources provided by Congress, both for the operations of our large diplomatic platform in Indonesia and for foreign assistance.

U.S. engagement with Indonesia is both broad and deep. We have extensive defense cooperation, robust partnership on counterterrorism, meaningful development programs, increasing maritime security cooperation, growing science and technology ties, and deep people-to-people diplomacy.

Regionally, Indonesia has long been a leader in Southeast Asia. Today we recognize the dynamic role that Indonesia can and does play in support of ASEAN unity and centrality, and the promotion of stability in the evolving strategic context. Indonesia's initiative to forge a shared ASEAN vision of a free and open Indo-Pacific region stands as a valuable example of such leadership.

We recognize Indonesia's growing leadership on a wide range of key global issues. Indonesia, an active member of the United Nations, is a top source of UN peacekeepers. Indonesia is currently serving a term on the UN Security Council, where we coordinate closely on the top issues facing the international community, including the denuclearization of North Korea and counterterrorism.

Last year Indonesia hosted the Our Oceans Conference, and continues today to marshal global attention and resources to address marine debris, and illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing.

We also appreciate the special role Indonesia, as the world's largest Muslim-majority nation, can play as a positive example of where Islam and democracy not only coexist, but thrive. If confirmed, I will support Indonesian efforts to reinforce tolerance and interfaith harmony, and to advance respect for human rights more broadly.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I also plan to focus on advancing a far more significant, balanced bilateral economic and trade relationship. Our trade should better reflect the size of our markets and depth of our cooperation in other areas. The extent and type of our two-way economic engagement will add to the bedrock of a long term partnership.

The ties between our two countries are much more than what our governments do together. The full Strategic Partnership is about our private sectors working together, it's about our civil societies advancing shared goals, and it's about students, the next generation of leaders in our two countries, learning from each other. More than anything else, our relationship is about people-to-people ties, and I look forward to leading our efforts to deepen the special friendship between Americans and Indonesians.

As two of the world's largest democracies, we share a responsibility and compelling national interest to address strategic challenges on the international stage. If confirmed, I will do my best to ensure that our shared responsibility is carried out to the fullest.

I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today and am pleased to answer your questions.