

**Statement of Jeanne M. Maloney**  
**Nominee to be Ambassador to the Kingdom of Eswatini**  
**Senate Foreign Relations Committee**  
**August 6, 2020**

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, distinguished members of the committee, it is a privilege and an honor to appear before you today as the President's nominee to serve as the U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of Eswatini. I appreciate the confidence the President and the Secretary of State have placed in me through this nomination.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to recognize my husband, Andrew, a retired Foreign Service Officer, and our children, Kate and Daniel, who were part of our Foreign Service journey across four continents, for their love and sacrifice. I am grateful for the support of my brothers, Mike and Dan, and to my late mother and grandmother, who instilled in me the love of country and value of hard work.

In my 27 years in the Foreign Service, it has been a privilege to represent the American people and to support and protect American citizens and interests. Most recently, I served as foreign policy advisor to U.S. Army Africa. I've visited 17 African nations in the course of my work; I've witnessed the power of citizens to bring about positive change, and I've also seen the corrosive and dangerous ramifications of poor governance and human rights abuses and violations. Prior to joining the Foreign Service, I spent ten years in the private sector, which provided me broader perspectives on supporting U.S. businesses abroad. If confirmed, I will promote our national interests in Eswatini, and commit to working with you to that end.

The United States has enjoyed good bilateral relations with Eswatini – formerly known as Swaziland – since its independence from the United Kingdom in 1968. Although Eswatini is a small country, it has pursued an independent foreign policy; it is currently the only country in Africa that maintains diplomatic ties with Taiwan.

Eswatini has benefited from decades of political stability and limited internal conflict, but there are areas of concern that merit attention.

Eswatini is a monarchy, governed by a unique combination of parliamentary and traditional structures. Fifteen years ago the country enacted a new constitution that enshrined broader political freedoms and expanded the roles of the legislative and judicial branches. Progress has been made, but more is needed. If confirmed as Ambassador, I will continue to engage broadly on the need for political reform, open discourse, transparency, and inclusivity. I will also seek to expand our dialogue with the country's youth, who make up more than half the population.

A second key area concerns health. In today's interconnected societies, communicable diseases can have global ramifications. HIV/AIDS has had a devastating impact on Eswatini: The country has the highest HIV prevalence in the world; approximately 45,000 children have been orphaned, and more than half of women aged 30-44 are HIV positive. Over the last decade, however, Eswatini has made significant progress with support from the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). New infection rates have declined by a third, and the country

has one of the highest treatment rates in sub-Saharan Africa. The generosity of the American people, including \$490 million of health sector assistance, combined with bipartisan support for these programs, has saved tens of thousands of lives in Eswatini. This is not a time for complacency, however, and if confirmed, I will continue to focus our efforts on achieving sustainable epidemic control, while promoting self-reliance.

It is too early to tell what impact the COVID-19 pandemic will have on Eswatini, but thanks to PEPFAR's investments in health infrastructure, the country is better equipped to conduct testing and contact tracing.

Finally, Eswatini also faces economic uncertainties. Even before COVID-19, the country had a tenuous fiscal position, vulnerable to external shocks. The percentage of its population living in poverty remains stubbornly high. If confirmed, it will be important to coordinate with international organizations like the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, as well as like-minded partners to help Eswatini create an environment that fosters broad-based economic growth and opportunities for U.S. trade and investment. I am committed to working to improve democracy, governance, and transparency, in order to help create an economic climate that benefits the entire population.

If confirmed as the next U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of Eswatini, I will do my best to continue to strengthen our partnership with the Government and the people of Eswatini in support of U.S. goals and interests. I will promote an Embassy team that reflects the diversity and values of the United States, and will prioritize the safety of our staff and U.S. citizens.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and distinguished members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I look forward to your questions.