

**Statement of Tulinabo Mushingi**  
**U.S. Ambassador-Nominee to the Republic of Senegal and Republic of**  
**Guinea-Bissau**  
**Senate Committee on Foreign Relations**  
**April 26, 2017**

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and Distinguished Members of the Committee,

I am honored to appear before you today as President Trump's nominee to serve as the next Ambassador to the Republic of Senegal and the Republic of Guinea-Bissau. I appreciate the confidence and trust the President and Secretary of State have shown in nominating me for this position. I am equally grateful to receive the distinguished Committee's consideration.

Today, it is my privilege to present my wife, Rebecca, who honorably served our country working for the U.S. Peace Corps, and my daughter, Furaha. Both have supported me throughout my career in the Foreign Service.

My work and travels across Africa, including as Ambassador to Burkina Faso, have provided me with the experience needed to foster strong ties between the United States and Senegal and Guinea-Bissau. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with the Members of this Committee and their staffs to promote and protect U.S. interests in both countries.

Allow me to first turn to our relations with Senegal, where a shared commitment to democratic values, security, and economic growth forms the bedrock of our partnership. Senegal's success in these areas sets a strong example for the region, advancing our core interests of reducing regional threats and promoting greater trade.

Through their democratic traditions, the people of Senegal have shown over and over again that they can and will hold their leaders to account by casting votes in democratically-held elections and exercising their right to free speech. Senegal's leaders have also shown that they respect the democratic rights and will of the people.

The United States supports the Government of Senegal's efforts to resolve the 34-year, low-intensity, separatist conflict in the southern Casamance region. A *de facto* cease fire has been in place there since 2013, I believe due in no small part

to the success of our economic development and diplomatic efforts. This regular and sustained engagement with all parties to the conflict, has contributed to real change on the ground and the possibility of a lasting peace. If confirmed, I will make sure our effort to support the Casamance peace process remains a priority.

Senegal stands as one of our most reliable partners in Africa in the effort to promote good governance, fight terrorism, and counter the drivers of terrorism. Senegal is a member Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI) and of the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership (TSCTP) programs and is a leading voice for using regional approaches to CT challenges. Senegal consistently ranks among the top ten troop and police contributors to UN peacekeeping missions. To truly understand Senegal's importance, one need look no further than the instrumental role Senegal played in helping ensure the peaceful transition to power of a democratically elected president after 22 years of dictatorship in The Gambia, and the role it continues to play in supporting the Economic Community of West African States Military Intervention in The Gambia (ECOMIG).

In 2016, Senegal and the United States signed a defense cooperation agreement. This agreement gives us the ability to respond quickly to emergency situations in the region, while also supporting Senegal's capacity to fight terrorism. If confirmed, I will work with Senegal to continue to strengthen our common effort to fight terrorism in West Africa and beyond.

Senegal aims to be an attractive destination for investment – by its own citizens and by foreign investors. American entrepreneurs are finding new opportunities to do business in Senegal, and U.S. development assistance has already made critical contributions to the infrastructure the country must have for sustained economic growth.

In September 2015, Senegal completed a \$540 million MCC Compact focused on developing transportation and irrigation infrastructure in northern and southern Senegal, dramatically improving agricultural productivity and market access for farmers. In December 2015, the MCC Board selected Senegal as a candidate for development of a second five-year compact. The government of Senegal is working closely with MCC to identify ways to alleviate the high cost of energy.

Lastly, our people-to-people relations have never been stronger thanks to robust public diplomacy exchanges and over 275 American Peace Corps volunteers placed in communities across Senegal, working on projects in

agriculture, agroforestry, health, and community economic development. If confirmed, I will work to deepen the bilateral partnership through programs like these, which are aimed at helping Senegal become an even stronger partner for the United States.

Turning now to Guinea-Bissau, our efforts remain focused on promoting stable civilian governance to increase democracy, economic development, and counter drug trafficking in the Gulf of Guinea. Guinea-Bissau has seen five different governments in the last 15 months. This reflects deep divisions, driven in large part by personal grievances, which have hindered efforts by the United Nations and ECOWAS to bring about a resolution to Guinea-Bissau's long-standing political impasse.

Instability and weak governance not only threaten the country's own development; they set a dangerous example in a region where trans-national crime already thrives on porous, undefended borders and unpatrolled seas. Democracy and rule of law will flourish only if the President, the Government of Guinea-Bissau, the National Assembly, and leaders of the main political forces work together to establish an inclusive, responsive, and an accountable government that serves all citizens.

In FY2016, Guinea-Bissau received limited assistance in International Military Education and Training to support the professionalization of its military forces and more constructive and stable civil-military relations. The country also received aid to promote Rule of Law and support counter-narcotics projects. If confirmed, I will work with international organizations, such as the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau, and regional bodies such as ECOWAS and the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries, to support security and constitutional rule and to bolster economic growth.

Mr. Chairman, I have been fortunate to work in public service and particularly on African issues for many years. I am very familiar with the culture and peoples of West Africa and U.S. interests in the region. If confirmed, I look forward to working with our truly extraordinary U.S. Mission team in Senegal and Guinea-Bissau, and, as Chief of Mission, working to ensure the safety, security, and of all U.S. citizens as we work together to advance U.S. interests in Senegal and Guinea-Bissau.

Thank you for inviting me to appear before you today. I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.