

**Testimony of Dean Pittman Ambassador Designate to the
Republic of Mozambique**

Senate Foreign Relations Committee

**Subcommittee on African Affairs, Global Health, Human Rights and
International Organizations**

November 3, 2015

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee: It is an honor for me to appear before you today as President Obama's nominee to be Ambassador to the Republic of Mozambique. I am grateful to the President and Secretary Kerry for the confidence they have placed in me. Mr. Chairman, I served in Mozambique 24 years ago at a time the country was just emerging from years of devastating civil war. Mozambique has come a long way since those days. Over these last decades the United States has aimed to build a strong, productive partnership with Mozambique and its people as we advance our mutual interests in tackling a wide range of issues, including expanding investment opportunities, combatting transnational crime and illegal trafficking, stopping the spread of HIV, and building more inclusive, democratic institutions that can meet the needs of all Mozambique's people.

And we have seen significant—though uneven—progress. On the economic front Mozambique has registered impressive growth over the past decade —

upwards of seven percent a year. This economic growth will likely continue as the country develops its recently discovered natural gas fields; an area where opportunities for U.S. investment are already being realized. Most notably, when the Texas-based company—Anadarko—concludes its negotiations with the government to develop a large section of the natural gas fields—a multibillion dollar project—it will become one of the largest investors in sub-Saharan Africa. Already other U.S. companies are taking advantage of what are expected to be increasing investment opportunities, not only in the energy field, but also in construction, tourism, and agriculture. With our opening of the embassy's new Foreign Commercial Service Office in 2014, we have deepened U.S. government advocacy support available to U.S. companies and investors. As a new Trade Africa partner, the United States will work closely with Mozambique to expand economic ties and improve the environment for trade and investment.

But it is clear these positive developments only tell part of the story. Despite such impressive economic growth, the majority of Mozambique's 25 million people continue to live below the poverty line. Mozambique has an HIV prevalence rate of over 11% nationwide, a huge threat to the country's well-being. Educational opportunities, while improving, still are not equally available across the country and illiteracy remains a challenge, particularly among women and girls. Weak institutions and porous borders continue to make Mozambique a target

of international trafficking and other criminal networks. And perhaps most troubling, recent violent skirmishes between the government and opposition party underscore that peace remains fragile.

Mozambique's progress and ability to be a strong partner with the U.S. depends in large part on continued peace and stability, strong democratic institutions, a healthy, educated population, an engaged civil society and economic growth that is inclusive and benefits all Mozambicans. These are areas where the United States has long worked closely with Mozambique and its people and where, if confirmed, I will continue to focus our attention. Let me offer a few examples of areas where we have worked successfully with Mozambique to advance our mutual interests.

As the largest bilateral donor to Mozambique, the United States provides the majority of our support to improve the health of Mozambicans. The President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, the President's Malaria Initiative, the Global Health Initiative, and the Peace Corps are all working together towards this goal in partnership with both the Mozambican government and civil society. Thanks to the partnership between the Mozambican government and international donors including the United States (through PEPFAR), more than 675,000 people living with HIV are now on treatment, and 75% of them are supported by the generosity

of the American people. If confirmed, I will continue to advance our ambitious vision of creating an AIDS-free generation by working to reduce the transmission of HIV/AIDS, boost the percentage of HIV-positive Mozambicans on treatment, and control the epidemic in the highest burden districts of Mozambique by the year 2018. At the same time, I will encourage the Mozambican government to commit more of its own resources—particularly as its ability to do so increases—to improving the health of its people and ensuring the sustainability of its health care system.

In the agricultural sector, where there is significant room for expansion, the U.S. government is helping Mozambicans improve overall performance in order to reduce hunger, poverty, and malnutrition. Our support is also designed to help create opportunities through entrepreneurship, access to markets, improved technology, and a healthy business climate that will aid in transforming subsistence farming into commercial agriculture.

We worked closely with Mozambique to carry out the recently concluded five year Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) Compact that focused on investments in water supply, sanitation, drainage, roads, bridges, land tenure, and agriculture to increase productive capacity in areas where economic development has lagged.

In addition over the last couple of decades, the United States has been a major contributor to ridding Mozambique of landmines, a deadly reminder of the civil war and an obstacle to development and economic growth. Earlier this year, Mozambique officially declared itself “impact free” of landmines.

We also recognize Mozambique’s potential as a regional partner and leader, particularly in light of its expectation of becoming a world-class energy exporter. To fulfill this role, Mozambique must be able to secure its long land borders and coastline. There needs also to be sustained efforts to promote maritime security and curb illegal trade flows. If confirmed, I will continue to build upon our partnership with the Mozambican authorities to promote regional maritime and border security as an integral part of efforts to advance regional stability and economic growth.

We are also cooperating with Mozambique to conserve coastal wetlands and marine reserves, and to reestablish the country’s unique wildlife parks and combat wildlife trafficking, a very serious threat to Mozambique’s sovereignty, border security, as well as the economic welfare of the population. The government of Mozambique has already taken important steps: enacting a stronger conservation law and recently courageously destroying a stockpile of confiscated ivory and rhino horn. If confirmed, I will advocate for continued demonstrations of political

and national will to take on powerful criminal enterprises intent on profiteering at the expense of Mozambique's natural heritage, and indeed a global heritage.

Underpinning all of this work are our people-to-people ties. Our American Cultural Center and American Corners provide spaces for the exchange of ideas on topics from the environment to entrepreneurship, from capacity building to culture. More than 1,200 Mozambicans have come to the United States as part of a wide variety of exchange programs and returned home to contribute to their communities the perspectives and skills gained here. And, these exchanges work both ways. We have a robust Peace Corps program in Mozambique, and as a former Peace Corps volunteer, I know what invaluable experiences our volunteers gain from work they are doing in many communities large and small throughout the entire country.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, I want to thank you for the privilege of appearing before you today. If confirmed, I welcome the challenge of protecting and advancing the interests of the United States in Mozambique; it is a duty and responsibility I would be honored to accept. Thank you and I would welcome any questions you might have.