

EMBARGOED FOR DELIVERY

**Statement of Mark Sobel
Nominee for United States Executive Director
International Monetary Fund
U. S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
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(As prepared for Delivery)

Thank you Chairman Corker, Ranking Member Cardin and members of the Committee. I am honored that President Obama nominated me to serve as Executive Director of the United States to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and I am grateful to Secretary Geithner, Secretary Lew, Under Secretary Nathan Sheets, and former Under Secretary Lael Brainard for their strong support throughout my career. I am delighted to be joined today by my wife, Martha Halperin.

Working with talented Treasury colleagues and senior officials in Administrations from both parties in a career spanning over three decades in the civil service, I have had the rare privilege and honor of holding a front row seat in the making of American financial history.

Since 2000, I have served as Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Monetary and Financial Policy. During the transitions in 2001 and 2009, I had the great honor of being designated as the Acting head of International Affairs and I also served in the past year as the Acting U.S. Executive Director at the IMF. Earlier in my career, I served as an Assistant Financial Attaché in Bonn, Germany; Director of Treasury's International Monetary Policy and Transition Economy Offices; and a member of the staff of the U.S. IMF Executive Director.

Over the last decade, I have been particularly proud to play a role in America's leadership in building and establishing the G-20 Finance Ministry and Leaders process and reforming the IMF.

Seventy years ago, as our brave soldiers fought in World War II to liberate the globe from tyranny and dictatorship, our nation's financial diplomats took the lead in creating a new vision for international economic cooperation. Their vision shunned protectionism and beggar-thy-neighbor currency policies, forces that helped catalyze the war, and instead trumpeted multilateralism and shared prosperity.

At the center of that vision, they created the IMF. Since its inception, the Fund has well served the world economy, and U.S. national security and economic interests -- whether it be in helping to mitigate economic crises in Latin America in the 1980s, support the transition of the ex-Soviet states in the 1990s, combat the Asian and emerging market crises of the latter 1990s, provide concessional support and debt relief for poverty alleviation in low income countries, or tackle the European crisis of the past years.

Without the IMF, these developments had the potential to rock geopolitical stability to a much greater extent, often in countries with strategic significance to our national security. Without the IMF, these developments also had the potential to spread more virulently around the world and seriously harm U.S. growth and jobs through decreased export opportunities, lost foreign investment, and financial shocks.

Throughout my career, I have seen first-hand the IMF's strengths. Its ability to act as the world's first and rapid crisis responder is an unparalleled global public good, as is its excellence in designing and supporting country reform programs. The IMF brings together officials from around the world, creating a culture of shared understanding. It fosters multilateral rules of the road. Its technical assistance helps countries build the infrastructure for more robust economic policies. The IMF's surveillance can help prevent crises.

But despite the Fund's strengths, the organization – like any other – has room for improvement, for example, in better analyzing and articulating policies to tackle modest global growth, addressing global rebalancing and exchange rate issues, strengthening its work on crisis prevention and debt sustainability, supporting pro-poor spending in low income countries, and helping make financial sectors more resilient.

I believe firmly in tenaciously defending U.S. interests and in advancing multilateralism, as well as in working pragmatically and collegially, with analytic rigor, and in a non-partisan manner. I also believe in the IMF's mission and that our nation's leadership of the IMF is critical. Those beliefs have guided my career.

If confirmed as U.S. Executive Director, I will work vigorously to continue to strengthen and improve the IMF, consistent with those beliefs. I will dedicate myself to doing my utmost to work with Congress to help forge a stronger consensus in our country in support of the IMF and its critical global role, and I thank this Committee for its strong backing of the Fund in securing the recent passage of legislation to implement the 2010 quota and governance reforms.

Again, to have been nominated by the President to represent the United States in the IMF – the very institution at the center of America's post-WWII global economic and financial vision – is a tremendous and humbling honor and a responsibility that I am eager to undertake.

Thank you.