

**Statement of Stephanie Sanders Sullivan
Nominee to be U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Ghana
Before the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
July 31, 2018**

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

I am honored to appear before you today as President Trump's nominee to be the next Ambassador to the Republic of Ghana. I appreciate the confidence he and Secretary of State Pompeo have shown in me through this nomination. If confirmed, I look forward to working with you and other Members of Congress and staff to advance American interests in Ghana.

My husband, John Sullivan, and our sons, Dan and Scott, are here today. We have fond memories of our four years in Ghana when the boys were small. In addition to three years as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Africa, I have spent half of my 32-year Foreign Service career working on African issues. Before serving as Acting Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, I was Ambassador to the Republic of Congo. If confirmed, I look forward to returning to the region and building on the strong relationship between the United States and Ghana.

Ghana is one of our leading partners in sub-Saharan Africa and hosts the Africa Bureau's fifth-largest diplomatic mission. It serves as a regional hub for many U.S. government activities, hosting one of the Young African Leaders Initiative Regional Leadership Centers, for example. The country has historically been a leader on the continent, blazing the trail for independence in 1957. Our two peoples enjoy longstanding ties. Back in 1961, Ghana welcomed the world's first Peace Corps Volunteers. Today, some 150 volunteers serve alongside counterparts in the agriculture, education, and health sectors throughout the country. In addition, the Fulbright, Humphrey, and other exchange programs have built decades of personal connections between Americans and Ghanaians.

In keeping with U.S. policy priorities for Africa, our efforts in Ghana advance three mutually reinforcing goals: promoting economic development and trade; improving regional security; and strengthening good governance.

Our first goal is promoting economic development and trade. Ghana has the potential to become one of sub-Saharan Africa's leading economies. It has recently experienced strong economic growth, advancing at a rate of 8.5 percent in 2017. The United States is among Ghana's principal trading partners, with bilateral trade exceeding \$1.6 billion last year. Many major U.S. companies operate in Ghana. Earlier this month, Secretary of Commerce Ross led a delegation of the President's Advisory Council on Doing Business in Africa to Ghana, where he signed a Memorandum of Understanding to deepen the commercial partnership between our two countries. Also, through a \$498.2 million Millennium Challenge Corporation compact, the United States supports the transformation of Ghana's energy sector via private sector participation and key policy and institutional reforms that will provide more reliable and affordable power to Ghana's businesses and households.

If confirmed, I will promote trade and help Ghanaian businesses take better advantage of the African Growth and Opportunity Act. I will also encourage the Government of Ghana's anti-corruption efforts, its investment of oil revenues to advance development, sustainable management of its environmental resources, and pursuit of regional economic integration. I will support Ghana's journey away from dependence on traditional development assistance, in line with President Akufo-Addo's vision of "Ghana Beyond Aid."

Our second goal is improving regional security. We share an interest in countering terrorism and promoting stability across West Africa. Ghana has provided peacekeepers throughout the world since 1960. Through its regional training centers, Ghana builds peacekeeping and security sector capacity beyond its borders. In fact, Ghana is the only country in sub-Saharan Africa that trains U.S. military forces. Our two countries recently signed a Defense Cooperation Agreement that will strengthen Ghana's defense capabilities and reinforce our security and military cooperation. If confirmed, I will also continue partnering with the Department of Defense's Africa Command on improving coastal and maritime security, both critical to protecting Ghana's offshore petroleum and fisheries sectors and to countering transnational threats.

Our third goal is strengthening good governance. We work with Ghana to reinforce democratic institutions and enhance government responsiveness to its citizens. If confirmed, I expect to witness Ghana's eighth consecutive peaceful, national democratic election in December 2020. I will champion the fight against human trafficking. I will also work with the Ghanaian government to bolster Ghana's democracy via the U.S. Agency for International Development's governance programs. Our robust bilateral partnership also helps Ghanaians reach their full potential, through strengthening the health, education, and agriculture sectors.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I will reinforce bilateral ties. I will vigorously pursue the safety and security of American citizens and advance U.S. interests in Ghana. I will ensure responsible stewardship of taxpayer dollars through effective leadership of U.S. Mission Ghana's strong interagency team.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to appear before you today. I would be honored to respond to any questions.