

**Opening Statement for
Beth Van Schaack
Nominee to be Ambassador-At-Large for Global Criminal Justice
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
January 12, 2022**

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and Distinguished Members of this Committee—thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I am very touched by Senator Booker’s generous introduction.

It is a great honor to have been nominated by President Biden to serve as Ambassador-at-Large for Global Criminal Justice and to return to the State Department office where I once served as Deputy. I am grateful to the President and to Secretary Blinken for the confidence they have placed in me and for giving me the opportunity to return to public service to advance global justice on behalf of the American people.

I am pleased to be accompanied today by my husband, Brent, my mom Carol, and my kids Miles and Brooke, who are joining us from the universities of the great states of Washington and Michigan, respectively.

I am thinking today of my father, a veteran of the U.S. Army, who would be very proud of his two daughters: me, as I sit before you today, and my sister, a devoted pediatrician and also an Army veteran. My family has been an endless source of love and support over the course of my career in international justice and for that I will be forever grateful.

I am confident that my previous professional experiences position me well to lead the Office of Global Criminal Justice, which helps to advise on the United States’ policies around atrocities prevention and response and to liaise with international justice efforts around the world.

I started my legal career in the Office of the Prosecutor of the Yugoslavia War Crimes Tribunal in the 1990s, during the renaissance of the field of international criminal law. Since then, I have worked in the areas of international and transitional justice, and on behalf of victims of grave human rights abuses—as a practicing lawyer, a diplomat, a civil society advocate, an academic, and a mentor. If confirmed, I will bring lessons learned from all these incarnations to the role of Ambassador-at-Large and draw inspiration from the demands of survivors for justice and accountability.

First, I would work to ensure that the United States provides steady leadership in efforts to advance justice around the world—in international, regional, hybrid, or national courts and tribunals—to tackle impunity while ensuring fair and effective proceedings.

Second, if confirmed, I would ensure that the Office of Global Criminal Justice provides trustworthy expertise to Department leadership and our embassies and posts around the globe on the whole range of transitional justice tools that are available to states, including civil and criminal justice processes, truth-telling and historical memory exercises, reparations, psycho-social rehabilitation, and other measures to protect against a recurrence of violence.

Third, I would work with other relevant offices to strengthen the atrocities prevention and response architecture across the U.S. government to ensure timely early warning and a robust response.

Fourth, I would commit to fully implementing the vitally important pieces of legislation Congress has enacted, including the groundbreaking Global Magnitsky, Uyghur Human Rights Policy

and Forced Labor, and Elie Wiesel Acts as well as the suite of statutes allowing for the prosecution of individuals who stand accused of committing grave international crimes. As you well know, this is a deeply bipartisan issue, and—if confirmed—I look forward to building strong partnerships with members of Congress to ensure the robust execution of U.S. laws around atrocities prevention and response.

Fifth, I pledge to be a careful steward of the funds Congress has entrusted to the Office of Global Criminal Justice, including the War Crimes Rewards Program.

And finally, if invited to serve, I look forward to joining a tremendous team of civil servants, foreign service officers, and subject matter experts who are dedicated to working tirelessly on behalf of victims of atrocity crimes the world over. I commit to contributing to efforts to diversify the Department, to mentoring with care the next generation of U.S. diplomats, and to maintaining morale notwithstanding the office's difficult subject matter.

Given the rise of authoritarianism, the endurance of brutal conflicts around the world, and retrenchments in states' commitments to respect human rights, there is much work to be done. The United States was present at the founding of the field of international justice, and—if confirmed—I will be committed to building upon this proud Nuremberg legacy within contemporary U.S. foreign policy.

I hope with these brief remarks I have conveyed my passion for this work, the broad-based expertise I can offer, and my enduring commitment to enhancing U.S. foreign policy around atrocities prevention and response.

Thank you Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and Members of this Committee for your consideration of my nomination. It would be a great honor to return to the State Department and to the Office of Global Criminal Justice. I look forward to your questions and, if confirmed, to working diligently with you on these issues.

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