

Statement of Tulinabo S. Mushingi
Nominee to be Ambassador of the United States of America to the Republic of
Angola and to the Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
Wednesday, June 9, 2021

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, distinguished members of the committee, it is a privilege and an honor to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee to serve as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Angola and to the Democratic Republic of Sao Tome & Principe. I thank the President and the Secretary of State for their confidence in me. I am equally grateful for this distinguished Committee's consideration.

I appear today with the unfailing support of my wife Rebecca, who has also served our country working for 13 years with the U.S. Peace Corps, and our beloved daughter Furaha.

My work across Africa, from Mozambique to Morocco, Ethiopia to Senegal, as well as through assignments in Washington, DC, has prepared me to deliver meaningful results for the American people in the role I have been nominated for. If confirmed, I will work hard to foster stronger ties between the United States and Angola and Sao Tome & Principe.

Bilateral relations between the United States and Angola have markedly improved in recent years. President Lourenço's economic and political reform agenda aligns with U.S. interests and presents a unique opportunity to develop a mutually beneficial partnership with this fast-emerging economy and rising African nation.

Angola plays an influential role in Africa and is looking to diversify its ties away from historic alliances. As such, it has attracted high-level U.S. visits and interaction since 2019, and if confirmed, with your help, I will work to deepen the U.S.- Angola partnership.

Angola has made tangible progress towards transparency and good governance, while initiating the fight against corruption and promoting accountability for human rights violations. Angola still faces many challenges as it addresses a stagnant economy, exacerbated by the impacts of the COVID pandemic. If confirmed, I will continue to press for political and economic reforms, support the fight against corruption, and buttress Angola's development efforts.

As the Government of Angola fosters a better business climate, U.S. companies see tremendous trade and investment opportunities. Recently, U.S. companies have achieved major successes in the energy and IT sectors. If confirmed, I will work with the U.S. interagency team to advocate for U.S. businesses while supporting Angolan efforts to comply with international standards and improve regulatory adherence.

Angola's legacy of land mines continues to impede economic development and environmental conservation. Since 1995, the United States has been the largest donor to demining efforts in Angola, investing more than \$145 million to clear landmines and other dangerous explosive hazards so the people of Angola can advance a wide range of social and economic development efforts safe from buried bombs. The 2018 Defending Economic Livelihoods and Threatened Animals (DELTA) Act helps to combat wildlife trafficking and coordinate with transboundary land and water resource governance authorities. If confirmed, I will reinforce our commitment to help Angola eliminate the threat of landmines and protect its natural resources.

Deep ties bind the United States and Angola: an estimated one-quarter of African-Americans have Angolan roots. The first enslaved Africans to arrive in what is now the United States in 1619 were from what is now Angola. If confirmed, I will look to be honest about this history, while sharing the experience of the United States as we continue to seek improve our nation. I will seek to expand our growing people-to-people ties and promote programs focusing on talented Angolan youth.

Sao Tome and Principe (STP) has a small land footprint but a large and strategically important maritime domain in the Gulf of Guinea shipping lanes. Enhancing the country's ability to monitor its waters and share information on maritime activity and piracy is a key component to improve regional security. STP successfully completed a Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) Threshold Program in 2011, and further MCC engagement is a priority for the future. STP also has a long tradition of democracy and peaceful transfers of power. I will focus on these priorities if confirmed.

As the world hopefully emerges from the COVID pandemic, we expect to see a resurgence in the number of Americans coming to Angola. The safety of our staff and U.S. citizens is always paramount.

Finally, American diplomacy works best when American diplomats best exemplify our nation. If confirmed, I will promote an interagency Embassy team that reflects the values of the United States.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I look forward to your questions.