

Statement of Michael J. Murphy
Nominee to be U.S. Ambassador to Bosnia and Herzegovina
Senate Foreign Relations Committee

Madam Chair, Ranking Member, and distinguished Members of the Committee, it is a privilege to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee as U.S. Ambassador to Bosnia and Herzegovina. I am honored by the confidence and trust the President and the Secretary of State have placed in me. If confirmed, I pledge to work closely with this Committee and others in Congress to advance the United States' interests in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

I want to recognize my wife, Kimberly, who devoted 30 years to public service, starting in the Senate and followed by a career in the Foreign Service. Without her love, patience, and support, I would not be sitting here today. I also want to thank my parents, John and Barbara Murphy, who died in 2019 and 2018 respectively, but who I am confident are watching over me now. They instilled in me the values that have guided my career: a strong work ethic, a devotion to public service, and a commitment to integrity.

If confirmed, I look forward to returning to Sarajevo, where I served from 2006-2009. I found the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina welcoming and friendly, and I am eager to engage with them again. There has been strong bipartisan consensus throughout my career that a Europe whole, prosperous, and at peace is in our national interest. The United States' engagement in, and support for, Bosnia and Herzegovina are critical to accomplishing this goal, and our leadership there is essential.

If confirmed, I will make it a priority to support implementation of the Dayton Peace Accords, subsequent state-level reforms, and most importantly, Bosnia and Herzegovina's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Twenty-six years of peace is a great achievement, but we cannot take it for granted. We must steadfastly support an independent, democratic, and multi-ethnic Bosnia and Herzegovina. We must support the Office of the High Representative and implementation of its 5+2 agenda.

If confirmed, I will also focus on the following.

First, I will support Bosnia and Herzegovina's Euro-Atlantic aspirations. I will work with our Allies and partners to facilitate the reforms necessary for Bosnia and Herzegovina to move towards membership in the European Union and a deeper partnership with NATO. Euro-Atlantic integration is the surest path to the democratic, prosperous, and secure future that all of Bosnia and Herzegovina's citizens seek and deserve.

Second, I will support rule-of-law reforms, especially anti-corruption activities. Corruption in Bosnia and Herzegovina damages U.S. national security by undermining the functionality and stability necessary for Dayton implementation, by putting at risk Bosnia and Herzegovina's Euro-Atlantic integration, and by exposing Bosnia and Herzegovina to malign external influences.

Third, I will support reforms to promote economic growth, bolster trade and investment with the United States, and create the prosperity necessary for citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina and their children to enjoy the opportunities that come from a thriving economy.

Fourth, I will work to counter efforts by local and outside actors, especially Russia and the People's Republic of China, that threaten our interests and undermine Bosnia and Herzegovina's future. I am grateful for this Committee's leadership highlighting the challenges posed by malign actors and for providing tools and resources to push back against them.

Fifth, I will support efforts to advance reconciliation among Bosnia and Herzegovina's constituent peoples and others. The 1992-1995 war in Bosnia and Herzegovina was a terrible tragedy. One hundred thousand lives were lost and horrible crimes were committed, including the genocide in Srebrenica. The guilt for Srebrenica and other crimes rests with those who committed them, not with entire ethnic groups. The duty of today's leaders is to hold perpetrators accountable, acknowledge and honor the victims, and promote reconciliation. It is also to focus their energies on building a common democratic and prosperous future for all in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Finally, if confirmed, I will focus on the safety and security of U.S. citizens as well as the security and well-being of the United States' mission in Sarajevo, its branch offices in Banja Luka and Mostar, and the employees of all three. This includes recruiting, hiring, and developing a diverse group of American and local staff and ensuring our diplomatic platforms are sufficiently robust to advance U.S. interests.

Madam Chair, I thank this Committee and other members of Congress for your interest in Bosnia and Herzegovina. I appreciate your time, and I look forward to your questions.