

Statement of Michael Adler
Nominee to be U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of Belgium
Submitted to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee
December 1, 2021

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and Members of this distinguished committee,

Thank you for the privilege of appearing before you today. I am deeply grateful to President Biden for the confidence he has placed in me to become the United States Ambassador to the Kingdom of Belgium.

I would like to acknowledge my three children, their spouses and my seven grandchildren. They have all given me unwavering love and support in this endeavor to serve my country. My commitment to public service is driven by my love of family, who motivate me to make our country and the world a better place for them and for future generations.

Endless gratitude goes to the love of my life, my wife, Judy Adler. For almost 50 years, Judy has been my partner and has always been devoted and supportive of the numerous initiatives and causes that I have been involved in and led. Judy made it possible for me to pursue all my business and civic aspirations.

I would also like to recognize Judy's parents, Ellen and Fred Selling, who were both Jewish immigrants and fled Germany from Nazi persecution. After moving to the United States, Fred joined the U.S. Army during World War II and served as a translator. He helped to liberate concentration camps in Germany.

I also would like to remember my parents, who taught me by example the importance of public service, social justice, and community service. Bunny and Sam were proud Americans. My father Sam served as a pilot in the United States Army Air Corps during World War II; he was stationed in the South Pacific. My parents set the groundwork for my community involvement. With the values they instilled in me, I worked hard to become a leader in important institutions in my community, such as Mt. Sinai Medical Center and Florida International University, among other organizations.

This opportunity to serve my country in Europe is a testament to America's democracy, and it is a result of the values my family has instilled in me and my efforts to make them proud. My and Judy's parents serve as my inspiration, and they would be so proud to see my family embrace this incredible opportunity. In

this role, I hope to inspire my children and my grandchildren to dedicate their lives to making their community and the world a better place.

First and foremost, if confirmed, I will work with Belgian officials at all levels of government to advance American interests, protect the safety and security of American citizens, and promote American and democratic values. Freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and freedom of religion are values that both our countries hold dear. If confirmed, I also look forward to working with the dedicated FSOs of the Department and ensuring their safety and security.

If confirmed, I will work closely with the Belgian government to address collective security concerns. Working together, we can advance our shared law enforcement and counterterrorism priorities at home and abroad, strengthen the Transatlantic bond with NATO and the EU, and pursue U.S. interests in NATO. To that end, I will encourage Belgium to fulfill its Wales Defense Investment Pledge commitments to spend two percent of GDP on defense by 2024.

If confirmed, I will work to advance our economic interests in Belgium, where more than 900 American companies support 120,000 jobs. In 2020, our combined bilateral trade was approximately \$72.6 billion. Belgium is the 13th largest market for U.S. exports, and we are Belgium's largest trading partner outside the EU. Belgium is home to the Interuniversity Microelectronics Center, or IMEC, which is a leading research and development center for cutting-edge semiconductor and other digital technologies. Belgium is also a key global logistics hub; it plays a leading role in vaccine warehousing and distribution to Europe and the world. If confirmed, I will work with our Commerce Department and our Embassy economic experts to strengthen an already robust and successful partnership.

Finally, if confirmed, I will work diligently to lead our mission team and to work closely with all agencies to deepen our historic alliance with the Belgian government and the Belgian people.

Let me conclude by again noting how great an honor it would be to serve in this capacity. Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to your questions.