

**Statement of Shefali Razdan Duggal**  
**Nominee to be U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of the Netherlands**  
**Senate Committee on Foreign Relations**  
**July 28, 2022**

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Ranking Member, and distinguished Committee Members, it is a genuine honor to be with you today. Senator Kaine, thank you so very much for the incredibly kind introduction.

I am deeply appreciative to President Biden and Secretary Blinken for the nomination and confidence in my ability to serve as Ambassador to the Kingdom of the Netherlands. If confirmed, I look forward to enthusiastically representing and serving the American people as a force multiplier for good to advance key U.S. foreign policy priorities.

If I may, I would also like to thank my husband of 24 years, Rajat; my precious children Tarak and Arya; my lifelong friends who have always been a protective shield of love and support; and the most resilient human I know, my mother, Veena Razdan. I would also like to thank the talented team at U.S. Embassy The Hague and Consulate General Amsterdam, who perform vital diplomatic work every day. If confirmed, I look forward to working with all of you closely.

As an immigrant, I represent the diverse face of the United States and the generations of people throughout our history who found opportunity in our great country. I was raised by a single mom in Cincinnati, who worked two minimum wage jobs to support us. My father left us when I was very young, and this profoundly and permanently affected the direction of my life. Rather than dwell upon what I did not have, I embraced the boundless opportunities that we are given here in the United States. I attended college and graduate school with the help of loans, grants, and scholarships. As I faced some of my own challenges of being a minority woman with limited resources, I became attuned to the values of diversity and inclusion that continue to inspire me today. I also focused on the rights of minorities and the critical importance of being a voice of the oppressed. This motivated me to pursue my years of work with Human Rights Watch and to serve as a Member of the United States Holocaust Memorial Council. While my life was often not easy, I was always saved by the Grace of God and the promise of the United States. I have full confidence that kindness, empathy, honesty, and sweat equity mean something in our country. It is the reason why people from all over the world see us as a beacon of hope and freedom. While my story is not unique, it is one that represents the infinite possibilities of the American Spirit and the American Dream.

The Netherlands was the second country to formally recognize the new American republic, making the U.S.-Dutch connection one of our longest, unbroken, peaceful friendships. If confirmed, I will work, along with the talented Mission team, to deepen our bilateral relationship, and advance the following three priorities:

**First, deepen bilateral and global security:** If confirmed, my highest priority will always be the safety and security of the over 47,000 Americans in the Netherlands, including the 300 Mission personnel and their families, along with the 1.5 million Americans who annually visit the Netherlands. The Netherlands has been a strong military ally of the United States. I will build on decades of close bilateral and multilateral relationships to face the global security challenges of today and potentially those in the future.

**Second, deepen our economic ties:** The U.S.-Netherlands economic relationship is one of our deepest and most important trade partnerships. The Netherlands is one of the largest foreign investors in the United States, and Dutch investment supports over 800,000 American jobs. If confirmed, I will work to deepen our economic ties, promote American business, encourage further Dutch investment in the United States, and promote our shared prosperity.

**Third, promote and defend our shared values of democracy and human rights:** Throughout our 240-year friendship, our shared commitment to a rules-based international order forms our enduring foundation, especially in promoting and defending human rights, protecting democratic institutions, and strengthening the rule of law. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Netherlands to meet ever-evolving new challenges.

If confirmed, I will come to this position with humility and commitment. I would serve as the first person of color as the U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of the Netherlands. I am a grateful and loyal American who loves this country deeply. I was born in India, but I was made in the United States.

It would be an honor to follow in the footsteps of our first Ambassadorial envoy, John Adams. I wholeheartedly commit to being available to members of this committee, members of Congress (and, staff) to work in partnership. Thank you so very much for your time. I look forward to answering your questions.