

**Testimony of Ambassador-designate William E. Todd
Nominee for Ambassador to the Kingdom of Cambodia
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
March 13, 2012**

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Subcommittee, I am deeply honored to appear before you today as President Obama's nominee to be the Ambassador of the United States to the Kingdom of Cambodia. I want to thank President Obama and Secretary Clinton for the confidence they have shown in me by nominating me for this position. If confirmed, I will work closely with this Committee and other interested Members of Congress to advance U.S. interests in Cambodia.

Cambodia's history is marked by tragedy, conflict, and survival. Today, however, we see a modern Cambodia that refuses to let its past dictate its future. Although Cambodia is still recovering from three decades of strife and war, including the atrocities of the Khmer Rouge era, there are a number of good reasons that Cambodia is imbued with a new sense of confidence and optimism. Cambodia boasts one of the fastest growing economies in Asia over the past decade, and it is reforming and attempting to improve its business and foreign investment climate. The Khmer Rouge Tribunal, which the United States has supported since its inception in 2006, secured its first conviction in 2010 and the trial of the surviving leaders of the Khmer Rouge is underway. These trials are important for accountability and national healing. Cambodia has also started to combat human trafficking, and its cooperation with the international community to combat terrorism is to be commended. Local and national elections in 2012 and 2013, respectively, offer an opportunity for Cambodia to renew its commitment to multi-party democracy. In these ways, the Cambodian people are seeking justice to close the darkest chapter of their recent history and build a new era of greater prosperity and more capable government and democratic institutions -- and for that I believe they deserve our support.

Nevertheless, despite the many significant accomplishments of the past 20 years, Cambodia's development remains a work in progress. Notwithstanding its strong record of economic growth, Cambodia is among the poorest countries in the world. Weak rule of law inhibits progress and threatens the promise of inclusive

development. In addition, every year, hundreds of men, women, and children are killed or maimed by unexploded ordnance left behind as remnants of war. Food security and adapting to global climate change represent emerging challenges for the country. Most significantly, Cambodia's democratic transition is still unfolding. Although civil society and public media have made important gains in achieving political space and greater freedoms, much work still needs to be done to strengthen Cambodia's rule of law, democratic institutions, and respect for human rights.

U.S. engagement in Cambodia has made – and can continue to make – a real and lasting difference. Since the United States re-established relations with Cambodia in 1993, we have served as a buttress of support for democratic development and the protection of human rights. Cambodia's civil society now flourishes due to the strength and dedication of Cambodians willing to take action to accomplish extraordinary things. The United States is proud to stand by them and provide our support. If confirmed, I will ensure that we continue to take the lead in advancing the causes of freedom, democratic governance, the rule of law, and respect for human dignity.

In addition to encouraging a more democratic Cambodia, our bilateral engagement is fostering change in other ways as well. Our military-to-military ties assist the Cambodian armed forces in their own efforts to professionalize, adhere to international human rights norms, and contribute to regional and global peace and stability. U.S. economic engagement helps open doors to increased U.S. investment and trade – something I believe will be a positive driver of change and development in Cambodia. Finally, the United States has been intimately involved in improving the health and livelihoods of Cambodians. If confirmed, I will work tirelessly to deepen our relationship with Cambodia in order to achieve greater progress on these and many other bilateral objectives.

U.S. engagement with Cambodia is increasingly focused on regional objectives. Like the rest of Asia, Cambodia has welcomed an increased U.S. commitment to the region and seeks to strengthen its ties to the United States in order to secure its own future. Over the course of this year, Cambodia is serving as Chair of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), an important

collective that has a population of half a billion people and is already the United States' fourth largest trading partner. The United States has made clear that as we deepen our engagement with the Asia-Pacific region, we will look to ASEAN as a valued partner in maintaining and promoting regional peace and security, committing to intra-regional coordination on disasters and humanitarian crises, fulfilling the region's promise for democracy and respect for human rights, and creating economic opportunities for U.S. business in order to increase exports and create jobs here in the United States. As ASEAN Chair, Cambodia can demonstrate regional leadership on these and other critical issues in the ASEAN Regional Forum and East Asia Summit. In addition, the Secretary of State's Lower Mekong Initiative is fostering cooperation and building capacity on the "connective tissue" of the sub-region – especially education, public health, and the environment. We welcome Cambodia's partnership in this multi-country initiative and its efforts to make the region more prosperous, secure, and peaceful.

Mr. Chairman, I believe the broad range of experience I have gained during my 28-year career in public service will assist me in further advancing our goals with the Kingdom of Cambodia. I have been in the Senior Executive Service for over 14 years and have had the privilege of managing a number of the Department's most important and complex programs. Recently, I finished a one-year assignment in Afghanistan, where I was Coordinator of Development and Economic Affairs. I was responsible for overseeing a \$4 billion development program, managing 600 Americans, and running the Mission's regional and provincial civilian operations. It was the most challenging and rewarding job I have had in my career and I would happily do it again if asked.

From 2008 to 2010, I served as the U.S. Ambassador to Brunei, where I proudly promoted democracy, human rights, and religious freedom initiatives. As Ambassador, I worked closely with Brunei to help it play a more active role in the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum, in ASEAN, and as a contributor to regional security.

Prior to serving in Brunei, I held several senior positions in the State Department, including Acting Inspector General. In the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement, I directed global operations and spearheaded anti-

crime, counternarcotics, and anti-terrorism programs, as well as initiatives to strengthen rule-of-law capabilities and institutions all over the world, including Southeast Asia. During the mid-1990s, I helped develop and implement the Big and Emerging Market Strategy for the U.S. and Foreign Commercial Service, which expanded U.S. exports to countries like China, and opened U.S. Commercial Centers overseas, including three in Asia.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I will dedicate all of my energy and experience to advance U.S. foreign policy objectives in Cambodia and strengthen the relationship between our two countries.

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to appear before you. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.