

**STATEMENT OF
PAIGE EVE ALEXANDER**

**NOMINEE FOR
ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR FOR EUROPE AND EURASIA
UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
BEFORE THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE
NOVEMBER 17, 2010**

Mr. Chairman and Distinguished Members of the Committee:

It is an honor to appear before you today as President Obama's nominee for Assistant Administrator of the Bureau for Europe and Eurasia at the United States Agency for International Development.

I am humbled by the trust and confidence that President Obama and Administrator Shah have placed in me and am grateful to have the strong support of Secretary Clinton.

If confirmed, I will work tirelessly with the dedicated men and women of USAID to fulfill the Secretary and Administrator's shared goal of modernizing and strengthening the Agency, following the President's directive of elevating development to a core pillar of American power.

I want to recognize Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator Roberta Mahoney. Roberta is a 25 year veteran of the USAID Foreign Service who served in the region and has been a thoughtful and engaged leader in this Bureau during this time of transition. Her knowledge has been invaluable and the dedication of the men and women within E&E, both in DC and the field, reflect the innovative and results-focused qualities of those who have chosen this illustrious career path to serve our country.

I would especially like to thank my family, friends, and professional colleagues whose strong support and encouragement have allowed me to follow my passion and pursue this opportunity. I would like to introduce my husband and best friend, Steve Grand. Because I had the audacity to think that following him to Czechoslovakia nearly 20 years ago might eventually lead to a marriage proposal, this is why I am sitting before you today. He opened my eyes to the world in so many ways, which also included giving me three wonderful children who keep us on our toes: Rachel, Carly and Josh. They all know the importance of public service and I am here today with their full support, which means the world to me.

Over the last 20 years, I have interacted with USAID and have worked on development more broadly from several different perspectives –government, private foundations, academic institutions and non profit organizations.

I began my career in Washington in Senator Kerry's office during his first term. My time on the Hill was formative. The experience of seeing first hand how government works to serve its people was a powerful motivator for me to pursue a career in international development. The opportunity to work in Senator Kerry's office also gave me a keen understanding of the critical role that the Congress plays in policy priorities.

In 1993, when I was fortunate to join USAID, I witnessed a dramatic and unprecedented growth in the development of the Europe and Eurasia region. USAID proved that fast track graduation of assistance programs in some of these countries was possible and learned valuable lessons. As Deputy

Director of the interagency Balkans Task Force, I witnessed USAID's agile response as it demonstrated that innovative program design and implementation are imperative to a well-functioning whole-of-government approach to development.

Having now spent the last nine years as Vice President at the International Research Exchanges Board (IREX), I am also keenly aware of how technical assistance providers and grassroots organizations are important partners in implementing U.S. development and diplomacy objectives. Sound approaches to development must permit rethinking, reforming and recalibrating our work in response to changing environments. If confirmed, I will continue to focus on finding scalable solutions that can affect development globally.

USAID's Europe and Eurasia Bureau supports programs in 16 countries with an annual budget of over \$800 million. The Europe and Eurasia region poses many challenges, both politically and developmentally, and also presents enormous opportunities to showcase what has been done right through American assistance.

The work carried out in this region demonstrates the President's commitment to development as a process of creating the conditions where assistance is no longer needed.

Over the course of my career, I have learned that while development is a continuum, it is not necessarily a linear process. Although 12 of the

countries in the European region have graduated from large-scale U.S assistance, major development challenges and the threat of backsliding still persist. We must create critically-minded citizens, involve youth, and find opportunities that include the use of new technologies to hold governments accountable. If confirmed, I will make it a priority to focus and concentrate USAID assistance in areas where it can best be utilized.

Under the leadership of Administrator Shah, USAID has outlined a series of focus areas to strengthen, optimize and streamline development work. These are embodied in the Administrator's "USAID Forward" agenda, springing from the Presidential Policy Directive on Global Development. It also builds on the exciting and visionary work of Secretary Clinton on the Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR). In this regard, E&E has shown itself as a leader in brokering new approaches to development. If confirmed, I look forward to helping seize this historic opportunity to capitalize on the success of these lessons to modernize and strengthen the Agency. This will require a sharpened focus on strategic objectives, promotion of management efficiencies and the transformation of our relationship with important countries from "assistance" to "cooperation and partnership".

In this region, we must continue to work with our partners – both globally and locally – to advance our shared goals in promoting democracy and prosperity. As we focus our efforts and draw down resources, we are finding ways to leverage existing investments.

This is especially important in the current fiscal environment. Administrator Shah has instructed the Agency to achieve greater cost-saving and efficiencies, and if confirmed, I pledge to be an accountable steward of your constituents' hard-earned tax dollars.

If confirmed, I will look for ways to engage with our European and Eurasian partners, recognizing that we have many common objectives, and identify the most innovative and practical ways to cooperate to reach those goals.

Thank you again for giving me the opportunity to appear before you today and I welcome any questions you might have.