

**Statement by Sue K. Brown
Ambassador-Designate to Montenegro
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
December 9, 2010**

Madam Chair and Members of the Committee,

It is a privilege to appear before you today as President Obama's nominee to serve as the United States Ambassador to Montenegro. I am honored by the confidence placed in me by the President and Secretary Clinton.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with this Committee and the Congress in advancing U.S. interests and to support Montenegro on the path toward a thriving democracy with market-based prosperity and effective rule of law.

I am thankful for the support of my family who is here with me today, my daughter Tisha and my sons Kevin, Justin and Ken who have traveled the world with me.... and provided great support, love and strength during my Foreign Service career.

For more than three decades, I have had the privilege and honor to represent our nation abroad as a career diplomat. I have served in a number of positions around the world and have seen firsthand the important role that the United States plays in partnering with countries as they work to

strengthen the rule of law and eradicate poverty and instability, while granting a voice to all citizens. My experiences as Deputy Chief of Mission in Ghana and Eritrea, as well as my work as Office Director for Southern Africa, will enhance my effectiveness in assisting Montenegro on its path toward market-based prosperity and a thriving democracy.

Montenegro's continued integration into the Euro-Atlantic community remains a high priority for the United States. In November, the European Commission recommended that Montenegro be granted the status of EU candidate country after certain conditions are met. This decision – coming so soon after the country's reemergence as an independent, democratic nation in 2006 – is an indicator of the tremendous progress that has already been made in Montenegro.

Additionally, Montenegro is taking its place in the transatlantic security community, participating alongside other nations to advance stability and prosperity in Afghanistan as part of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). Through its participation in ISAF, Montenegro is demonstrating its commitment to addressing critical security challenges and its intention to be a net provider of security.

The U.S. Government will continue to work closely with Montenegro as it moves toward membership in NATO, and to support Montenegro's

progress on reforms needed to meet NATO standards. NATO Membership is a very high-priority goal of the Government of Montenegro. Through its State Partnership Program with the Maine National Guard, Montenegro is participating in quality training and familiarization in national incident management, interagency response and family support. The Maine National Guard and Montenegrin Navy have conducted coastal patrol and helicopter training in both the U.S. and Montenegro.

If confirmed, I will continue to pursue the U.S. goals of strengthening the rule of law, promoting economic growth and prosperity and reinforcing democratic institutions. These three goals are closely tied, and hinge upon the extent to which Montenegro takes on the fight against corruption and organized crime within its borders and implements the effective rule of law for all of its citizens. The United States is a partner in the effort to confront these serious challenges, and we are providing experienced law enforcement and prosecutorial expertise to the Government of Montenegro to help in this critical work.

Montenegro's ability to effectively combat these challenges will largely determine its economic success, internal stability and eventual place it will take in the Euro-Atlantic community. If confirmed, I will work with my team to advance the shared goal of a Montenegro that is a prosperous

and democratic source of stability in Balkans, and a strong ally of the United States.

There will be no higher priority for me, if confirmed, than the safety and security of U.S. citizens in Montenegro. Likewise, I will have no hesitation to act as a strong advocate for American business interests in Montenegro. The morale, welfare and professional development of the U.S. Embassy team will always be front and center for me, as well, if I am confirmed for this position.

Madam Chair and Members of the Committee, thank you for this opportunity to appear before you. I would be pleased to answer any questions that you may have.