

**Statement by Donald K. Steinberg**  
**Nominee for Deputy Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International**  
**Development before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee**  
**September 22, 2010**

Mr. Chairman and Distinguished Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. It is an honor to be here as President Obama's nominee for the position of deputy administrator of the United States Agency for International Development. If confirmed, it would be an honor to work with Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Administrator Raj Shah and USAID's talented and dedicated personnel to reaffirm the agency's status as the premier development agency in the world.

In a real sense, this nomination brings my professional career full circle. Some 35 years ago, as a junior Foreign Service officer, I arrived in the Central African Republic, armed only with a master's degree in economic development, and boundless enthusiasm. One of my first assignments was to help design and implement a combined USAID/Peace Corps rural health program in the province of Ouham, bringing sustainable maternal-child care, basic immunization, and safe water and sanitation to local residents.

Drawing on the advice and partnership of the local population, the projects we helped implement achieved rapid results, and before my departure more than two years later, we could already document improvements in maternal and infant mortality rates and other basic indicators. Knowing that mothers and children were thriving in part because of my own work, I was hooked.

Throughout almost three decades in the Foreign Service, I sought out opportunities to work with USAID on humanitarian, recovery and development assistance programs. In Malaysia, I monitored projects performing basic and applied research in agricultural development and tropical diseases. In Mauritius, I helped develop free trade zones and supported a dismantling of protectionist trade policies under the African Economic Policy Reform Program. As South Africa made its historic transition from apartheid to non-racial democracy, I worked with my USAID colleagues to train a new generation of African National Congress leaders on the fundamentals of market economics and to encourage U.S. business to support empowerment programs for disadvantaged populations.

As ambassador to Angola in the late 1990s, I worked with the full range of USAID offices, including the then-newly established Office of Transitional Initiatives, to address the socio-economic legacies of a quarter century of civil war in order to consolidate a resilient yet shaky peace process.

In the course of this service, I observed USAID at its best. I came to identify three keys to the agency's success. The first element is operational excellence: the capacity to

identify humanitarian and post-conflict reconstruction and development needs, and to work through transparent and accountable processes of project design, resource mobilization, procurement, and implementation to achieve measurable and sustainable results.

The second element is ground truth: the ability to inform its projects and the broader policy process alike of field realities based on personal observations, serving as our government's eyes and ears in the most difficult and inaccessible sites.

The final factor is USAID's status as a thought-leader and innovator on development. USAID provides the U.S. government and the international development community with basic and applied research and analysis on issues, such as the youth bulge, climate change, agricultural reform, water, public-private partnerships, and girls' education.

However, the administrative management of these projects, combined with growing security concerns and burgeoning demands for reporting, tended to keep USAID personnel tied to their desks in Washington and in U.S. missions abroad. Another detriment to USAID development leadership was the elimination of the Bureau of Policy and Program Coordination in 2006. As Administrator Shah has observed, the absence of a policy bureau hampered the agency's capacity to "implement policy directives throughout the Agency, to cooperate with State and others in the design of multi-year development plans, to undertake effective program monitoring and evaluation, and to engage in effective partnerships with other donors and key development actors."

Mr. Chairman, there is broad recognition in the legislative and executive branches of government and on both sides of the aisle of the need to reassert USAID's operational excellence, global presence, and intellectual capacities. This reflects a growing understanding of the centrality of the development agenda to the achievement of American national security interests around the world, standing side-by-side with our nation's diplomacy and defense capabilities. There is also a willingness to take the tough steps needed to achieve this result. The door is open and the seat at the table is waiting, but USAID must empower itself to seize the opportunity.

Dr. Shah and his team have articulated and begun to implement a reform agenda with steps in this direction. These include rebuilding USAID's policy capacity, including the recent launch of the Bureau of Policy, Planning and Learning; restoring budget authority and accountability by creating the Office of Budget Resources and Management; reforming procurement practices to re-assume in-house responsibility for core government functions and expand relationships with host governments and civil society partners; and enriching the agency's talent pool by bringing on new Civil Service, Foreign Service, and in-country national staff, in part through the Development Leadership Initiative that began in 2008, and empowering them to drive the agency in new directions.

If confirmed, these management challenges would drive much of my work as deputy administrator, but I also look forward to contributing to the broader substantive issues at

play in the development arena, including the major initiatives launched by President Obama, Secretary Clinton and Dr. Shah in food security, global health and climate change. These initiatives not only reflect the altruistic spirit of American foreign assistance, but recognize that stable societies able to meet the basic human needs of their population represent our best partners in building a safer and more prosperous world for all.

If confirmed, I would draw on my Foreign Service experience and my service since 2005 at International Crisis Group. As deputy president of this non-profit organization, I oversaw the production of more than 200 major reports designed to promote and inform efforts to resolve conflicts in dozens of countries. I developed a strong understanding of the six interlocking challenges facing these societies and their international partners: restoring human security, building a responsive and transparent political framework, kick-starting the economy, ensuring a balance of reconciliation and accountability for past abuses, promoting strong civil society, and getting the regional context right.

I would also like to highlight my intention, if confirmed, to focus on issues related to women's empowerment and protection, and need for systematic inclusion of women in peace processes, post-conflict reconstruction, and long-term development and governance. These issues have been central to my professional career, including in my current service on the U.N. Civil Society Advisory Group for Women, Peace and Security, and as a board member of the Women's Refugee Commission. I welcome the Obama Administration's, and this Committee's placement of maternal-child health care, girls' education, women's livelihood, and civil society groups at the heart of current development efforts

USAID has the chance to identify new partners and to harness new resources, expertise and commitment within a "whole of government" approach. This was the philosophy that drove the State Department/USAID Joint Policy Council, which I directed until 2005. The Council was guided by a new vision for the State/USAID relationship that stressed the commonality, coordination and complementarity of their roles.

USAID is also articulating new partnerships with its development partners, including foreign recipients of development assistance, other donor countries, international financial and development institutions, civil society actors, charitable foundations, contractors/implementers, and the private sector. Such relations are based on the ideals of partnership, transparency and open communications.

Perhaps most importantly, if confirmed, I look forward to helping USAID better articulate its vision and message to our ultimate authority: the American people and their elected representatives. Americans are generous in sharing their bounty with those less fortunate, and are savvy about the national security and economic benefits deriving from our assistance programs. But especially in today's tight economic and fiscal environment, they are rightfully demanding that the stewards of their tax dollars ensure – even as we invest in innovation and take risks to increase our development impact – that those dollars are spent wisely, efficiently and without corruption or waste. If confirmed, these would be my ultimate marching orders.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today, and I look forward to any questions you may have.

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