

Statement of Jeffrey DeLaurentis
Nominee for Alternate Representative for Special Political Affairs at the
United Nations
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
July 13, 2011

Madam Chairman, Ranking Member Barrasso, and other distinguished Members of the Committee, I am honored to appear before you today as President Obama's nominee to be the Alternate Representative for Special Political Affairs at the United Nations.

I am grateful to the President, Secretary Clinton and Ambassador Rice for this opportunity and for their confidence in me.

Before proceeding further, let me introduce my wife, Jennifer, who is with me today.

In his March speech dedicating the Ronald H. Brown Building – the new home of the United States Mission to the United Nations – President Obama said, "The world is more secure and the interests of the United States are best advanced when we act collectively." That basic truth underlies the very purpose of the United Nations – as well as the broader commitment of the United States to provide energetic and sustained global leadership at the UN to deepen our security. It is also the tenet that has shaped a good part of my own career at the State Department over the last 20 years. If confirmed, I will work to advance America's interests and values at the United Nations, as we work with the international community to forge common responses to common problems.

As Ambassador Rice has noted, "America can't police every conflict, end every crisis, and shelter every refugee." The UN brings 192 countries together to share the cost of providing stability, aid, and hope in the world's broken places.

We live in an interwoven age of threats that pay no heed to borders— from terrorism to pandemic disease, from criminal networks to environmental degradation. Now more than ever, Americans' security and wellbeing are inextricably linked to those of people everywhere. So our security depends on our ability to work together with others to confront these threats. Now more than ever, the UN provides a crucial venue for countries to come together, shoulder their responsibilities, and carry together the costs of upholding peace and security.

Of course, the United Nations is far from perfect. Progress sometimes comes too slowly. It is all too easy to find examples where the UN could be more efficient and effective, and where it has stumbled in the past. We must continue to be clear about the UN's shortcomings. But let us also remember the indispensable role the UN plays in tackling the threats and challenges of the 21st century, preventing conflict, helping halt the spread of nuclear weapons, isolating terrorists and human rights abusers, providing desperately needed medicine and shelter, combating global poverty, promoting democracy, and advancing American values.

I have had the privilege of spending nearly half of my Foreign Service career in multilateral diplomacy, including two assignments at the U.S. Mission to the UN in New York and one at the U.S. Mission to the UN in Geneva. Each assignment has reinforced my view that our efforts at the UN, although challenging at times, unquestionably advance American interests and values. At the UN, we react to today's crises while trying to avert those to come. At the UN, we pursue actions that will make us more secure. And because of the UN, the international community does not always look to America to solve every problem alone.

Madam Chairman, I would welcome the opportunity to return to multilateral work if confirmed. Under the leadership of President Obama, Secretary Clinton and Ambassador Rice, our entire approach toward multilateral diplomacy is being reinvigorated – and it has produced results for the United States at the UN. The State Department's Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review noted that the United States must partner with other countries to better address issues of shared concern and to reform and reshape international organizations so they can effectively confront 21st century challenges. It recommended that we update our approach to multilateral diplomacy, expand the ranks of diplomats skilled in multilateral diplomacy and improve links between our multilateral and bilateral diplomacy, especially with respect to our engagement with the United Nations. It would be my highest honor to pursue these goals in order to better advance our country's interests at the UN.

U.S. national security depends on a more effective approach to fragile states, an approach that is comprehensive enough to prevent us from having to intervene multiple times in a country emerging from conflict. Fostering security and reconstruction in the aftermath of conflict is a central national security objective. The United Nations plays a leading role here by organizing, directing and promoting peacekeeping and stability operations, and setting the stage for peace building and development. In today's difficult fiscal environment, if confirmed, I

will work to ensure that UN peacekeeping resources are deployed efficiently, effectively, and within the parameters of approved mandates.

If confirmed, I will work, in particular, to bolster lifesaving U.N. peacekeeping and political missions in Afghanistan, Iraq, Sudan, Haiti, the Democratic Republic of Congo and elsewhere. I will seek to strengthen peacekeeping mandates, prevent abuses by peacekeepers and give the UN what it needs to more effectively protect civilians. I will work to ensure full and rigorous implementation of Security Council sanctions on Iran and North Korea as well as other Council sanctions targeting individuals and companies associated with terrorism, atrocities and transnational crime. I will strongly encourage the UN's efforts to advance democracy and human rights in the Middle East and elsewhere, and press for equality and women's rights. And I will support the Administration's efforts to lead the charge for comprehensive reform of the UN and to help the UN fulfill its potential.

If confirmed by the Senate, I'll be a strong advocate for American interests and values.

Madam Chairman, I am grateful to this committee for considering my nomination, and if confirmed, I will look forward to working closely with the members and staff on these critical issues.

Thank you and I look forward to your questions.