

Statement by Jonathan Addleton
Ambassador-designate to Mongolia
Before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee
July 23, 2009

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee,

It is an honor and a privilege to appear before you today as President Obama's nominee to be the next Ambassador to Mongolia.

The proper first thought on such an occasion is one of gratitude; to my country for this opportunity; to President Obama and Secretary of State Clinton for their confidence and trust; and also to USAID and State friends and colleagues around the world who have always provided tremendous support.

Allow me to also publicly express my love and gratitude to my immediate family -- my parents, who taught me the true meaning of dedication, commitment and faith; my older brother David and younger sister Nancy, both of whom I admire greatly; my wife Fiona and daughter Catriona, who will accompany me to Ulaanbaatar if I am confirmed; and my two sons, Iain, who is a sophomore at Davidson College in North Carolina, and Cameron, who is a rising junior at Mount de Sales Academy in Macon, Georgia and hopes to be able to visit Mongolia as often as possible.

As a Foreign Service officer previously serving in Mongolia, it was my privilege to travel the length and breadth of the country, visiting all 21 provinces and meeting with a wide range of Mongolians, from senior officials to students, entrepreneurs to herders. As anyone who has visited Mongolia is well aware, it is a country that draws its strength in part from its unique culture, proud history and remarkable landscapes.

Let me briefly highlight some of the key themes that will dominate this next period of service to my country, should I be confirmed as the next ambassador to Mongolia:

First, good governance: Nearly two decades ago, the Mongolian people broke from the past and made the decisive choice to pursue democracy. The most recent presidential elections in May serve as one milestone in a continuing journey that, for all its many challenges, has not only met

with success but also provides an important example for others in the region. The United States has been -- and will continue to be -- a consistent and supportive partner in that journey. If confirmed, supporting Mongolia's continuing efforts to strengthen its democratic institutions will be at the top of my priorities.

Second, development: As the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Mission Director in Ulaanbaatar during 2001-2004, it was my privilege to play a part in a number of pioneering programs, including the revitalization of Xaan Bank, the establishment of Xaac Bank and the expansion of small businesses through the Gobi and Ger initiatives. To some extent, it was these and other USAID-funded programs that helped lay the foundation for the arrival of the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) as a vital development partner. If confirmed, I will help foster and continue to build upon the good relations between MCC and USAID to play a productive role in promoting economic and social development across Mongolia.

Third, business promotion: Sustainable development in Mongolia requires a vibrant private sector to create jobs, pay taxes, and help shape the future direction and well-being of the country. When it comes to business development, both Mongolia and the United States have much to offer each other in any number of sectors, including mining, industry, tourism and services. If confirmed, as ambassador, I will work to strengthen, encourage and support U.S. businesses that are already active in Mongolia and encourage greater American investment in underserved areas.

Fourth, security: As part of both Central and North East Asia, an independent and prosperous Mongolia contributes greatly to stability across both regions and around the world. In recent years, Mongolian military units have joined international efforts as far afield as Iraq and Afghanistan, Kosovo and Sierra Leone. As Mongolian leaders have noted, Mongolia's own long-term security lies in part in being a productive and respected partner within the broader international community. Here again, the United States can play a positive and supportive role to help Mongolia remain an active ally in international security efforts.

Fifth, people-to-people engagement: Durable long-term relationships hinge on the extent to which peoples and cultures interact with each other, learn from each other and respect each other. With some 125 volunteers, the Peace Corps is a prime contributor to bringing what is great about America to even the remotest parts of Mongolia. Fulbright and private academic exchanges are also increasing, along with programs sponsored by the Mongolian Graduates of American Universities, the American Center for Mongolian Studies and other institutions.

There are other examples, too, of Americans and Mongolians -- motivated by a broad spectrum of civic, cultural, spiritual and scientific interests -- interacting with each other in any number of ways. Relations are strengthened still further by the emergence of small but vibrant Mongolian *Diaspora* communities in the United States in places like California and Virginia. These communities provide valuable new opportunities for Americans and Mongolians to interact with and learn from each other.

Let me also note with appreciation the interaction that several Members of Congress already have with Mongolia and express the hope that these exchanges involving Members and congressional staff will grow and evolve in both directions.

Finally, if confirmed as Ambassador, I will further strengthen our already outstanding embassy in Ulaanbaatar, joining with Mongolian and American colleagues alike as we work together to protect the interests of American citizens, engage with our Mongolian counterparts from all walks of life, and strive to reflect the best that the United States has to offer.

In closing, let me say I can think of no more rewarding work for an American diplomat with my experience and background than to work in such a position. If confirmed, I will proudly serve as United States Ambassador to Mongolia. I thank you once again for the privilege of making these brief remarks. I welcome and look forward to any questions that you might have.

Thank you.