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Thank you Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the Committee. I would like to request that my full written statement be entered into the record.

It is a great honor and privilege to be the President's nominee to be the United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organizations in Rome. I would like to thank the President and Secretary Rice for the confidence they have shown in nominating me for this important post. I would like to introduce my wife, Elaine, who has joined me here today.

I have had the opportunity to serve at many levels of government over my 25 plus years in public service. The opportunity to represent the United States in such a key role would be one of the great highlights of my career, and I thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today.

I believe that the goals of the UN organizations in Rome are important and vital. Throughout my life, I have been drawn to organizations whose purposes are to deliver humanitarian assistance and, even more importantly, to enable people to realize their potential and improve their circumstances through increased agricultural productivity and economic prosperity.

I follow in the footsteps of two prominent humanitarians – Ambassador and Senator George McGovern, who has devoted his life to helping the hungry poor in the United States and around the world, and Ambassador and Congressman Tony Hall, who was nominated three times for the Nobel Peace prize for his leadership and advocacy for hunger relief programs.

World hunger and malnutrition continue to afflict more than 850 million people throughout the world. The United States is leading the way in supporting the efforts of many organizations to combat this scourge. The United States is the largest donor to the World Food Program (WFP). In 2005, we contributed more than \$1.2 billion worth of food aid, 44 percent of the total contributions received by WFP. The United States, paying 22 percent of the assessed budget, is the largest contributor to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), contributing \$82 million in FY-2005. The United States is also the leading contributor to the International Fund for Agricultural Development. In April, the United States pledged \$54 million to IFAD's Seventh Replenishment, which covers the 2007-2009 time period.

The United States has a special obligation to ensure that these organizations are as effective and as efficient as they can possibly be. We also have an obligation to ensure proper stewardship of U.S. resources that are provided to benefit the poor and hungry. If confirmed, I will work to advance results-based management, increased transparency, strengthened oversight, and savings and efficiencies. An important component of my work would be to continue to promote increased hiring of qualified American citizens for key jobs at the UN agencies in Rome.

If confirmed, I will work to ensure that the organizations focus their efforts and the limited resources of their donors on those areas in which they have a unique or comparative advantage. One of my goals will be to work with the UN organizations to improve their efficiency and effectiveness in responding to food and agricultural crises and in meeting the challenge to increase food access and availability around the world. Particularly important this year is the potential for a worldwide Avian Influenza pandemic. The United States has been working closely with the Food and Agriculture Organization and the World Organization for Animal Health (in Paris) to establish a Crisis Management Center to strengthen their collaborative response to Avian Influenza.

Last year, the World Food Program was at the forefront of rapid and efficient responses to unprecedented natural disasters -- including the Indian Ocean Tsunami and the earthquake that struck Pakistan, India, and Afghanistan. This year, WFP has been in the headlines for its response to humanitarian emergencies in Darfur as well as in other parts of the world. If confirmed, I will work with WFP and other donors to ensure that WFP has the resources it needs to respond efficiently and effectively to emergencies.

The United States continues to be the largest single international donor to Sudan, providing more than 85 percent of the food distributed by the World Food Program thus far in 2006. With the assistance of funds provided through the FY 2006 supplemental request, the United States plans to provide half of WFP's total estimated requirements for Sudan in 2006.

In addition to providing humanitarian food aid, the United States contributes to the World Food Program's school feeding programs. For nearly 40 years, WFP has been the largest organizer of school feeding programs in the developing world. Working with national governments, local authorities, and other aid groups, WFP uses food to attract children to school in areas where enrollment ratios are lowest and where school feeding will have the greatest impact. The U.S. contribution to WFP comes through the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program, which is administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. This program helps support education, child development, and food security for some of the world's poorest children. Its fundamental goal is to use food as an incentive to improve education and nutrition. Its key objectives are to reduce hunger and improve literacy and primary education, especially for girls.

Two years ago, the U.S. Agency for International Development commemorated the 50th anniversary of Food for Peace. For 52 years now, the Food for Peace program has brought hope and nourishment to the hungry corners of this earth. Approximately 3 billion people in 150 countries have benefited directly from U.S. food aid. I am proud of American generosity. As President Bush has said: "Millions are facing great affliction, but with our help, they will not face it alone. America has a special calling to come to their aid and we will do so with the compassion and generosity that have always defined the United States.

Public diplomacy continues to be a vital component of U.S. foreign policy, and, if confirmed, I will follow in the steps of my predecessors. More people in the developing and developed countries need to be aware of the important role the United States plays in providing humanitarian food assistance. We have a strong message that not only promotes the role of the United States as a humanitarian benefactor, but underscores our commitment to global development in the context of freedom, democracy, good governance, and functioning markets. The United States is committed to

partnerships for a better life, as the President has said. Partnerships with the UN, other countries, and NGOs improve the lives of all people worldwide. These partnerships serve basic human dignity.

Since February 2002, I have had the unique opportunity and privilege to lead the Peace Corps as its Director. I have traveled to 60 countries and have witnessed first-hand both the challenges and suffering of our host communities and the success of Peace Corps programs. Peace Corps Volunteers have brought hope and inspiration to many towns and villages by training and generating new ideas in health, education, HIV/AIDS, agriculture, information technology, and small business. I am very familiar with the possibilities that grassroots and sustainable development can bring to the lives of men, women and children.

Our efforts have been collaborative. We have worked with other U.S. agencies, host countries, community partners, non-governmental organizations, and UN agencies to advance strategic and well-planned programming and to train men, women and children around the globe.

I believe in the strength of collaboration and I welcome the opportunity to work with the UN organizations in Rome in combating world hunger.

In my early years, my parents were migrant farm workers who moved throughout the United States harvesting crops and doing everything to make a decent living and to provide for my brother and me. We faced challenges in our lives, but we endured through perseverance and the hope of a better life ahead. I am before you today because my great parents never wavered nor ceased to inspire and motivate us. Our lives were framed against a backdrop of uncertainty and struggle. I know what it is like to live without, and I have learned the hard way the value and the strength of human potential.

Throughout our world, hunger denies many the opportunity to pursue their dreams and aspirations. If confirmed, I look forward to serving and representing the United States in our quest to eradicate world hunger and malnutrition.

Thank you, again, for the opportunity to appear before you today. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.