Statement of Laurie S. Fulton
Ambassador-Designate to Denmark
before the
U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
July 7, 2009

Madame Chairwoman, Ranking Member DeMint and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for permitting me this opportunity to appear before you as the President's nominee for the position of United States Ambassador to Denmark. It is a tremendous honor to be asked to serve in this post. For me personally, as one with Danish roots, it is an especially great privilege, and I thank President Obama and Secretary Clinton for their confidence in me.

Denmark is one of our longest-standing and most reliable partners. Diplomatic relations between our countries date back to 1791. My personal connection to Denmark is as recent as my grandfather.

Jens Jensen, my mother's father (morfar, in Danish) immigrated to the United States from Denmark in 1910. His siblings and parents remained in Denmark. My grandfather, although a relatively new arrival in this country, joined the Minnesota National Guard and served in Europe as a member of the U.S. forces in World War I. He was honorably discharged in 1919, and returned to Minnesota and South Dakota where he raised a family, including my mother, who was his oldest child.

My family's Danish roots still run deep. With my mother and siblings, I made my first trip to Denmark in 1970, and since then, my family and I have been there numerous times, and many of my Danish cousins have visited the United States as well.

I grew up in a family committed to public service; and for four generations in this country, we have been active in local, state and national politics and community affairs. This commitment to public service is deeply rooted in the traditions of my family's Danish heritage. My great-grandfather Mads Jensen was elected in 1918 to the Landsting, which then was one of the two houses of Denmark's Parliament. Mads was a small farmer from near Horsens in Jutland, who participated in the parceling of large estates into smaller farms purchased by small landholders. He served in Denmark's Parliament until 1940, including

during a period of major land reform in 1919, and as chair of the Commission to redistribute land in Southern Jutland in 1924.

Closer to home, my grandfather served as a county commissioner in South Dakota; my mother was elected as a Public Utilities commissioner in South Dakota.

This commitment to public service was ingrained in me. After earning a B.A. from the University of Nebraska at Omaha, it was my privilege to work on the Hill in the 1970s for Senator Abourezk and then Congressman Tom Daschle, both from South Dakota, as well as on various campaigns for them and for Senator George McGovern. From 1982-2000, I was active with Peace Links, an organization dedicated to involving mainstream women to end the threat of nuclear war, engage in peace-building and promote alternative means of resolving international conflicts. I served as Peace Links' first Executive Director and then as a member of its Board of Directors. For my work with Peace Links, I was honored with the Pioneering Peace Builder Award by the National Peace Foundation in 2002.

In 1989, I earned a J.D. from the Georgetown University Law School. For the past twenty years, I have practiced law at Williams & Connolly LLP. As a partner there, I have a national practice in complex civil litigation, government investigations, and white-collar criminal defense, and was recognized as one of "Washington's Top Lawyers" by *Washingtonian* magazine in December 2004. During this time, I have been active in the American Bar Association, including serving as Co-Chair of the Litigation Section's Criminal Litigation Committee.

In January 2004, I was confirmed by the United States Senate to serve on the Board of Directors of the United States Institute of Peace, where I served until last October. I am currently Co-Chair of the USIP International Advisory Council. Other non-profit organizations with which I have been actively affiliated recently include Bright Beginnings, Inc., the Women's Advisory Board of the Girl Scouts of the National Capital area, the Georgetown University Law School Admissions Interview Program, and the South Dakota Farmers Union Foundation.

If I have the honor of being confirmed by the Senate as Ambassador to Denmark, my plan is to focus on three primary areas:

ONE: Denmark is a valuable and reliable partner of the United States, and my primary focus should I be confirmed will be to continue to foster and enhance

this partnership. Despite its relatively small size, Denmark has been a major ally for decades. For example, Denmark has approximately 700 troops on the ground in Helmand Province, Afghanistan – an area that is critical to the ability to achieve stability in that country. Danish soldiers are actively engaged in security and stabilization operations, and are assisting with the building of the Afghan National Army. Denmark has 265 personnel as part of NATO peacekeeping forces in Kosovo. Denmark also provided 500 troops to help with stabilization efforts in Iraq, and a contingent of ten troops remains to support a NATO training mission in Iraq. Denmark contributes valuable naval assets to Coalition counter-piracy operations off the Coast of Somalia and is leading international efforts to develop legal measures to prosecute Somalia's pirates.

Denmark is an influential European partner. At the NATO Summit in Strasbourg-Kehl this year, former Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen was chosen as the next Secretary General of NATO; he will assume his new duties in August. Denmark can be a key player in helping persuade other nations to join our shared views and positions.

Secretaries Clinton and Gates have encouraged the concept of "Smart Power" in demonstrating strength and assisting with the development of global security. Denmark's "integrated approach" is consistent with this concept, and Danish troops support development and reconstruction efforts as well as military and security efforts. Denmark and the United States share the world view that to create a secure global environment, we must assist underdeveloped and developing countries. Among my priorities will be to look for ways for Denmark and the United States to work cooperatively so that both countries can maximize the effectiveness of their assistance efforts.

TWO: President Obama stresses that in partnerships, there are things that we can learn from our friends and partners. Denmark is a leader in developing and successfully implementing renewable energy resources, and has demonstrated an ability to become energy self-sufficient. The Danes are proud of their achievements, and are exporters of renewable energy technology. This Administration shares a commitment to "clean energy", and one of my priorities will be to focus on Denmark's path to energy self-sufficiency, development of sustainable energy, and efforts to arrest climate change – with a particular eye to how we might partner in these areas as well.

Denmark will host the COP 15 conference on climate change in December of this year. Special Envoy on Climate Change Todd Stern leads the negotiations

on behalf of the United States for COP 15. There will be many activities surrounding the conference, including trade shows in which U.S. energy technology companies will participate. If I am confirmed, I will work to ensure that the U.S. delegations in advance of and during this conference have the support they need to achieve our objectives.

THREE: President Obama and Secretary Clinton have elegantly and repeatedly stated our goal of fostering opportunities for every person to reach her – or his – potential, and to become a full participant in our societies, regardless of race, gender, religion, or ethnic background. Denmark shares this commitment and challenge. Among my priorities is public diplomacy and outreach, including meeting with Danes in farms, towns and cities throughout Denmark. Our exchange programs have been and continue to be popular and important pieces of public diplomacy, and I look forward to supporting these exchanges in ways that encourage the dialogue to continue after the exchange visit.

Among my goals is to focus on opportunities to engage with "young adults" from ages 17 to 25. This generation has come of age after the end of the Cold War and during a time when U.S. popularity abroad has waned. Like the United States, Denmark is a high-tech country. With the expanded communication tools available today, I hope to work with Denmark to pioneer new exchange opportunities using Internet and electronic tools, to enable more of the young people in our countries to participate in person-to-person and group-to-group conversations.

Also of special interest to me will be opportunities to engage in conversations with women in Denmark about the common problems we face, including education, employment, integration, and health care.

Madame Chairwoman and members of the Committee, again, thank you for permitting me to appear before you. I am truly honored by this opportunity. If confirmed, I will do my very best to represent the United States – and I would hope to meet with you again in the future to report on our continuing partnership with Denmark.

Thank you, and I look forward to answering your questions.