

STATEMENT OF DWIGHT L. BUSH, SR.
AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE TO THE
KINGDOM OF MOROCCO
SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

September 24, 2013, 10:00am

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Flake, and distinguished Members of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations:

I thank you for the privilege to appear before you today. I also want to specifically thank Senator Durbin for his kind words in support of my nomination. I am deeply appreciative for the trust and confidence placed in me by President Obama and Secretary Kerry for nominating me to be the Ambassador to the Kingdom of Morocco.

I sit before you today as a testament to the remarkable promise and beauty of our great country. I am the fourth of five children raised by Charlie and Jessie Bush, two parents who committed their entire lives to only one mission: to make sure that their children could fully participate in the American Dream. I grew up in East St. Louis, Illinois, a town of rich history whose boom and bust cycles reflect both the hope and tragedy of industrial America. I consider myself fortunate to have grown up with the working class families, the great teachers, and the mentors that helped me along the way.

My father passed away several years ago, and I know that he is at peace today and happy with his progeny. My mother sits here behind me, and I must acknowledge and thank her for the sacrifices that I know she and my dad made for my siblings and me. I must also thank my dear wife, Antoinette Cook Bush, for her love and steadfast support of me, and our children Dwight Bush Jr and Jacqueline Bush who bring me endless joy every day. The rather extensive family and friends gathered are here today because they know that I depend on them daily for sustenance and support.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that my life experience to date has uniquely prepared me for the job at hand. After graduating from Cornell University I have had a nearly 35 year career characterized by increasing responsibility and broad leadership experiences in the areas of corporate management and investing, as well as corporate, education, and philanthropic governance. Among other things, at The Chase Manhattan Bank I raised capital for Fortune 500 companies. As an

entrepreneur, I have started and served as the Chief Executive Officer of a bank. I have been a member of the Executive Committee of Cornell University, and I have been on the boards of directors of several public and private companies, and not for profit organizations. For the last 10 years I have been a member of the board of trustees of the GAVI Alliance, a public-private partnership that vaccinates over 70 million children a year in the poorest countries throughout the world. Through my involvement with GAVI I have interacted with leaders of many developing countries, and I have become keenly aware of the nuances of diplomatic engagement. I am a student of history, and I have previously visited Morocco and several other Saharan countries as well as over other 40 countries, most in the developing world. These experiences have helped me to develop a broad set of leadership skills, including the ability to set goals, establish an esprit de corps, and motivate others to perform at high levels. I look forward to working with our outstanding career Foreign Service officers, and if I am confirmed by this committee, I will bring the fullness of my experiences together in my representation of our country in the Kingdom of Morocco.

Mr. Chairman, no country has been a friend of the United States of America longer than Morocco. It was the first nation to recognize our country back in 1777. However, we should not be satisfied with simply having a friendship that is longstanding. We should want a relationship that is dynamic, growing and reflective of the times. As we look ahead, we must also acknowledge the challenges that face the Maghreb region today. We have bilateral priorities to advance, American interests to maintain, and a U.S. workforce in Morocco to protect. If confirmed, protecting Americans and American interests in Morocco will be my highest priority.

Our longstanding relationship has produced several milestones that demonstrate the depth and breadth of our close relationship. Morocco is a major non-NATO ally. We also have a thriving Free Trade Agreement with Morocco, and a \$697.5 million Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) Compact that entered into force in 2008. When that MCC Compact ends this month, Morocco will commit its own resources to complete MCC programs.

Morocco is on a positive path, but it faces significant challenges. Morocco's youth face high levels of unemployment and they could be susceptible to violent extremist ideologies. While the Moroccan government has been successful in finding, arresting and prosecuting terrorist cells over the years, the specter of transnational terrorism has grown significantly in the region. These facts make it

all the more important for Morocco to continue to address the problems that cause young people to lose faith in their system and communities. There needs to be a heightened focus on education and employment opportunities, and creating an environment in which Moroccans feel they are real stakeholders in their government and their society.

Morocco's continued development and stability depend on the political, economic and social reforms that King Mohammed VI has championed since he assumed power nearly 15 years ago. In early 2011, Morocco introduced a reform program that included a new constitution and parliamentary elections that were widely found to be free and fair. The 2011 constitution strengthened the role of the parliament and the elected government, enhanced its ability to pass laws on a wide range of issues, and shifted some political prerogatives from the King to Parliament. Additionally, the work of USAID will expand opportunities for millions of Moroccans to lift themselves out of poverty and play productive roles in Morocco's future. If confirmed I will work closely with my colleagues across various agencies and with the Government of Morocco to ensure we continue to make progress on principles of good governance.

On the economic front, the U.S.-Morocco Free Trade Agreement has increased exports of American products to Morocco, by 369 percent. U.S. investment in Morocco has also risen sharply in recent years. With the expansion of Morocco's deep-water Tangier-Med port, Morocco may be well positioned to become a bridge for American exports to Europe, the Middle East and Sub-Saharan Africa. These steps should increase access to Moroccan markets for U.S. exports and investment. If confirmed, I will commit myself to working to increase commerce with this key ally.

While political and economic reforms are extremely important, the promotion and protection of human rights is also important. Human rights are a core value of the United States and will certainly figure prominently in my engagement with Morocco. If confirmed, I will make the promotion and protection of human rights a high priority.

The Moroccan government also understands that its future depends on the development of the region. Increasing trade among the countries of the Maghreb could lead to greater levels of economic development than they can achieve alone. Improving cooperation among these neighboring countries can help them all better cope with illegal migration, trafficking and violent extremism. However, one of the major impediments to improved cooperation among North African countries

has been the issue of Western Sahara. If I am confirmed as Ambassador to Morocco, I will fully support the efforts of the UN Secretary General's Personal Envoy to develop with Morocco and other parties in the region a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution.

If confirmed, my priorities will be to promote partnership, expand U.S. exports, promote human rights, counter violent extremism, reinforce military cooperation and peacekeeping, and of course, protect Americans living in Morocco.

Mr. Chairman, I want to express how humbled I am to be nominated to this great country. If confirmed, I will do all that I can to further deepen our relations with Morocco, our strategic ally, and a key partner in the Maghreb.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you and Members of the Committee for this opportunity to address you. I welcome any questions that you may have.