

**Statement of Jendayi E. Frazer
Ambassador Designate to the Republic of South Africa
Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
Thursday, April 22, 2004**

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee,

It is an honor to appear before you today as President Bush's nominee to be ambassador to the Republic of South Africa. I would like to thank the President and the Secretary of State for the confidence they have shown by selecting me for this position.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to acknowledge my mother, Ida Frazer, who comes here from Minnesota to represent my family. With your permission, I would like to thank her for the loving and unfailing support she has given me, especially over the past twenty-five years that I have worked on African affairs.

One month before South Africa's first democratic election, I received my Ph.D. degree in political science at Stanford University. That day, March 31st, 1994, represented the culmination of my intense study of African civil-military relations and political transitions. South Africa was a recurring focus of my studies.

In the years that followed I contributed to U.S.-Africa policy moving between academia (as Assistant Professor at the University of Denver, and at Harvard University) and government service at the Department of Defense and National Security Council. As a Council on Foreign Relations Fellow, I worked with the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and was a Director for African Affairs at the National Security Council from 1998 to 1999. I am especially proud since 2001 to serve as Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for African Affairs at the National Security Council. In this position, I have engaged South Africa's most senior officials on key U.S. policy priorities to combat HIV/AIDS, expand trade and

democracy, alleviate poverty, and end Africa's wars. I know that the United States and South Africa share these common interests that will shape world affairs.

Mr. Chairman, the timing of this hearing today is made more meaningful, as it coincides with the month South Africans celebrate ten years of democratic freedom. It was just under ten years ago that Nelson Mandela was sworn in as South Africa's first post-apartheid President. In five days President Thabo Mbeki will be inaugurated to a second five-year term following the third free and fair election marking the consolidation of South Africa's democratic transition. The United States and South Africa have accomplished a great deal this past decade. I would like to offer a few initial thoughts on the progress, challenges, and opportunities ahead, reflecting what my emphasis would be if privileged to represent the United States in South Africa.

The South African Government, in my view, has made remarkable progress promoting interracial reconciliation. Previously separate and unequal government, academic, and commercial institutions are being converted into structures to serve all its citizens. Government services are reaching neighborhoods and townships that had been neglected for decades or never served at all. The government has maintained a good business climate and helped the country's major businesses become even more competitive in the global economy.

We have played a key role as a partner to the new South Africa, providing critical assistance to the government and people as they faced the many challenges of a complicated transition. Our government and our private citizens, acting through faith-based and other non-government organizations, through businesses and schools, have touched the lives of many South Africans. It has been a mutual exchange, with our citizens benefiting from their exposure to a wonderful land

and people and our businesses profiting from their investment.

Mr. Chairman, at least two major challenges lie ahead. First, economic growth has been insufficient to lower South Africa's rising unemployment and poverty rates that contribute to growing crime. Second, the terrible and tragic HIV/AIDS epidemic in the last decade emerged on a scale that would shake even the wealthiest of nations.

Congress has provided several important tools that allow us to directly address these challenges. The trade benefits of the African Growth and Opportunity Act and the generous funding given for the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief are two key examples. Equally important, our development assistance through USAID continues to help South Africa with its economic and social transformation. More than a dozen other federal agencies maintain smaller but important programs.

Mr. Chairman, our extensive engagement in South Africa is good for that country and its people, but it is also essential for the pursuit of our global interests. The opportunities are many: South Africa is our largest export market in sub-Saharan Africa; it has the potential to be a model for environmental conservation and eco-tourism; and South Africa's experience promoting racial reconciliation, democracy, and human rights is an inspiration to all troubled and divided nations. Our two governments and countless private actors have done much to expand and deepen our relationship over the past ten years. This work has contributed directly to our successful cooperation on counter-terrorism, peacekeeping and regional security in Africa. We very much look forward to deepening our engagement with South Africa in these areas.

If confirmed, my job will be to encourage South Africa's support for our objectives on these and other issues. Equally

important, I plan to invest heavily in further expanding the ties and mutual understanding between our governments, peoples, and institutions. I believe that further attention to this bilateral foundation will help our two countries identify more points of common concern and diminish points of contention in addressing the global challenges that lie ahead.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed I will have the honor of taking up a bilateral relationship that has consistently grown and improved under the stewardship of very able and dedicated American and South African Ambassadors. I am committed to accelerating that positive trend and to working closely with you and other Members of Congress to advance our policies and interests in South Africa.

Thank you.