

**Chargé d’Affaires Ms. Kerri S. Hannan Opening Remarks at the
2018 U.S. Midterm Elections Debate**

**Co-organized by PaperJam Business Club and
the American Chamber of Commerce in Luxembourg**

Thursday, May 17, 2018

Arendt & Medernach House

- Thank you to Maison Moderne, Duncan Roberts and his team for tonight’s event, to Arendt and Meddernach for hosting and to our debaters from Democrats Abroad and Republican’s Overseas.
- Finally, thank you to the audience for your interest. I am always heartened to see the tremendous amount of interest in U.S. politics from the international community.
- Tonight we will have a chance to hear our debaters discuss key issues important during the lead-up to the November 2018 U.S. midterm elections.
- Why do midterms matter? All 435 seats in the United States House of Representatives and 35 of the 100 seats in the United States Senate will be contested along with 39 state and territorial governors. Senators serve 6 years, Representatives only 2.
- All funding and spending bills have to originate with the House. All senior government appointments, including ambassadorships, are vetted and confirmed by the Senate. Additionally, redistricting in the United States, a process that can concentrate voters together and give one party an advantage in elections, will happen in 2021. The party in power will have control of that process, impacting the next ten years.
- There are some interesting factors this year. More Republican Congressmen and women have retired or resigned their seats than in the past 12 years, hurting their party’s overall chances to hold onto those seats. Democrats won special elections in Virginia, Alabama and Wisconsin, areas considered Trump strongholds in 2016. On the flip side, some are seeing the surging U.S. economy as a positive for the republican camp. Additionally, there is concern that Russia likely views the 2018 U.S. midterm elections as a potential target for influence operations, the impact of which is still difficult to measure.
- So the two sides tonight will offer their perspectives on the issues of concern to American and share insights into the way politics functions in the U.S .They will elaborate on the

accomplishments and vision of their party and reflect on those of the opposing side. I hope you enjoy the debate and a better understanding of the key issues in the United States today. And remember, November is a long way off. If you are an American, please register to vote.