

Background on the Senator-elect's statements, positions, and record on diplomacy, international assistance, and U.S. international affairs programs.

A Michigan physician and epidemiologist who has led Detroit's health department and Wayne County's health services, Senator-Elect Abdul El-Sayed has connected America's role in the world and foreign policy to U.S. interests here at home, stating, "**Foreign policy isn't just about what we do abroad, it's about how what we do abroad affects us at home**" describing an approach that puts "**peace and diplomacy first**."

El-Sayed is a University of Michigan graduate and Rhodes Scholar. His public-service record includes working on rebuilding Detroit's health department after the city's bankruptcy and overseeing health services in Wayne County, home to roughly 1.8 million residents.

ON U.S. INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE:

- In a public statement shared by Peace Action, Flanagan said, "the gutting of our non-military foreign affairs capabilities is a large issue that we should work to reverse" and that "the United States's role in promoting public health, education, and democracy is not just essential to maintaining a stable global order, it aids in our safety, and promotes quality of life around the globe."
- In June 2024, Flanagan said, "Women farmers feed our state and the world," highlighting U.S. efforts at the United Nations to designate 2026 the International Year of the Woman Farmer.

ON GLOBAL ECONOMIC ENGAGEMENT:

- During her 2023 visit to Japan, Flanagan said, "Minnesota's economy benefits when we strengthen economic ties across the globe." She added, "By meeting with our partners in Japan and promoting Minnesota businesses, we are elevating Minnesota on the global stage and creating economic opportunities for all Minnesotans."
- As part of the first USDA trade mission devoted solely to Indigenous products, Flanagan said, "I am proud to lift up Native agriculture as a standard part of our Minnesota trade missions," and that she looked forward to "connecting with more Native farmers and producers and showcasing the products that Minnesota has to offer to our global partners."
- Flanagan supports eliminating tariffs that harm Minnesota farmers while maintaining protections for industries such as iron mining. She has said, "Tariffs and trade deals need to prioritize Minnesota workers, businesses and farmers."
- In a May 2025 MSNBC interview, Flanagan warned that Minnesota soybean producers were losing sales to Brazil, adding, "that could potentially be permanent" as tariffs were hurting farmers and small businesses.

- In an October 2026 Senate debate, she warned that tariffs had cost Minnesota growers "entire markets, potentially for generations," and argued, "tariffs are under the control of Congress."
- During the June 2024 Indigenous trade mission to Canada, Flanagan highlighted, "Indigenous producers have long been underrepresented in international trade markets," describing discussions with producers about export barriers and ways to help them access those markets.

ON RUSSIA'S WAR IN UKRAINE:

- Flanagan's platform states she supports rebuilding ties with NATO allies and backing Ukraine against Russia's invasion. On the second anniversary of the full-scale invasion, she said, "Our message continues to be very clear:
  We proudly stand with Ukraine and the Ukrainian community here in Minnesota."
- She reaffirmed her support for Ukraine in an October 2026 debate, saying, "I think Ukraine is our ally and needs to be treated as such."
- During an October 2026 Senate debate, Flanagan criticized proposed diesel purchases from Russia, saying, "this president has been cozying up to Vladimir Putin. It is wrong. And I think we need to make sure that the work that we do on behalf of this country is not done with dictators."

ON CONFLICT IN THE MIDDLE EAST:

- In a September 2026 interview, Flanagan said that Congress must exercise its war powers over Iran, saying that "we are fighting a war that is based on a whim" and that Congress is supposed to determine whether or not the U.S. goes to war.
- In an October 2026 Senate debate, Flanagan opposed further funding for the Iran war, saying, "Iran should not have a nuclear weapon… But in this moment, I would not support any additional funding to go to this war in Iran."
- In an October 2025 statement on the Israel Hamas war, Flanagan said, "We must bring all the hostages home, reach a ceasefire deal, stop the suffering, and start on the path towards peace."
- During an October 2026 Senate debate, she called for a two-state solution, stating, "Of course, we need a two-state solution, and one of those states should absolutely be Israel."
- In a July 2025 statement, Flanagan urged U.S. and Israeli leaders "to get food and basic aid to the children and families starving in Gaza immediately."
- Flanagan supports using U.S. international assistance to advance a peaceful future for Israelis and Palestinians saying in a 2026 debate, "we need to use the tools in our toolbox to allow humanitarian aid to get into Gaza." She also said she "would not support additional offensive weapons or military aid to Israel under Benjamin Netanyahu."