

Statement of Julissa Reynoso
Ambassador-Designate to the Oriental Republic of Uruguay
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
February 7, 2012

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee,

I appreciate very much the opportunity to appear before this Committee today as President Obama's nominee to be U.S. Ambassador to Uruguay. I am very grateful and humbled by the confidence that President Obama and Secretary Clinton have shown in me by this nomination. This nomination is a great honor for me and I look forward to another opportunity to serve my country, if confirmed.

With the Chairman's permission, I wish to recognize my family, friends, mentors and colleagues that have supported me over the years – many of them are here today, many from New York City. It is only with their steady support that I am here, seeking the U.S. Senate's confirmation and I wish to sincerely thank them for their generous guidance and support.

The relationship between the United States and Uruguay is strong. We share important values, including a commitment to democracy, rule of law, sound economic policies, strong labor rights, environmental protection, investment in people, the desire to see the peaceful resolution of disputes between nations, and a commitment to the multilateral system. If confirmed, I look forward to continuing the productive dialogue between our two countries and will work diligently to advance these goals.

Uruguay is a constructive partner which plays an important role in promoting regional stability and democracy. The country is also a partner in conflict resolution, contributing to peacekeeping missions worldwide. Uruguay remains one of the top troop and police contributors per capita to UN peacekeeping overall. We welcome their contributions to improving security in Haiti as well as in other difficult locations throughout the world.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with President Mujica, Foreign Minister Almagro, the Uruguayan government, civil society, and the private sector as we advance bilateral relations and strengthen the political, commercial, and cultural ties between our two countries.

If confirmed, I would give the highest priority to ensuring the well-being and safety of U.S. citizens who live and travel in Uruguay. I would seek opportunities for enhanced trade between the United States and Uruguay, and promote U.S. exports to Uruguay. I would advocate for further cooperation under our Science and Technology Agreement as well as our Trade and Investment Framework Agreement. U.S. exports to Uruguay have steadily increased over the years to \$973 million in 2010, up 30 percent from 2009, and we enjoyed a \$738 million goods trade surplus with Uruguay. There are approximately 100 U.S. companies operating in Uruguay at this time. If confirmed, I will work vigorously to promote U.S. businesses and believe we can continue to find new opportunities for increased trade between the two countries and I will encourage programs that improve inclusive economic growth as well as promote public-private partnerships.

To build greater mutual understanding through direct contact between Uruguayans and Americans, I will work to establish more partnerships between colleges and universities in Uruguay and the United States.

My work in the Department of State has offered me significant insights into the vital partnerships that exist between the branches of government and, if confirmed, I will work diligently to further develop these partnerships. If I am confirmed as Ambassador, I look forward to working with you, your distinguished colleagues, and your staff to advance our priorities with the Oriental Republic of Uruguay.

Thank you again for the opportunity to appear today. I welcome any questions you may have.