

Statement of Krishna R. Urs
Nominee to be U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Peru
Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
July 19, 2017

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

It is an honor to appear before you today as President Trump's nominee to be the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Peru. If confirmed, I will work closely with this committee and other interested Members of Congress to advance U.S. interests and values in Peru and to help the Peruvian people move towards a prosperous, inclusive, and democratic future.

Accompanying me here today is my wife Denise, who is also a senior Foreign Service Officer, and my children, Katie and David, who have come from Oklahoma and Madrid respectively.

The Republic of Peru, with a population of more than 30 million, is one of the United States' most steadfast partners in a sometimes turbulent region. Successive Peruvian administrations, including both center-right and center-left governments, have pursued market-based economic policies yielding two decades of robust and inclusive economic growth. Peru has cut poverty rates in half, reduced infant mortality, and expanded access to education.

Peru has staked its future on expanding international trade and the U.S.-Peru Trade Promotion Agreement spurred an increase in bilateral trade from some \$9 billion in 2009 to more than \$14 billion in 2016. The United States enjoys a cumulative surplus of more than \$18 billion. As Peru's economy has boomed, it has taken a more active role in the region and the world. The Government of Peru has been a leader in efforts to find a solution to the crisis in Venezuela. Peru hosted the APEC Economic Leaders Meeting in 2016, and it will host the Summit of the Americas in April 2018.

But even as Peru has emerged as a regional leader and staunch partner, it still faces challenges. Transnational organized crime, persistent rural poverty, weak

institutions, and endemic corruption threaten the country's progress. Peru remains among the world's largest coca and cocaine producing countries. Environmental degradation associated with illegal drug production, logging, and mining is a serious concern.

The United States is committed to partnering with Peru to address threats to our common security. In President Kuczynski and his government, we have a strong partner. U.S. government programs in the country advance U.S. priorities by supporting Peru's efforts to combat transnational criminal networks. We also support Peruvian government efforts to overcome persistent rural poverty and improve the livelihood of marginalized populations.

Mr. Chairman, for much of my 31 years in the Foreign Service, I have been fortunate to work on Western Hemisphere issues. I had the privilege of serving four years as Economic Counselor in Lima, from 1996 to 2000. I also served as Deputy Chief of Mission in its Andean neighbor, Bolivia. Prior to my Foreign Service career, I spent my junior year in college studying in Quito, Ecuador. If confirmed, I look forward to working with our truly extraordinary U.S. Mission team in Peru to advance U.S. interests, to ensure the safety and welfare of all Americans and U.S. government employees, and to further strengthen bilateral relations with the Republic of Peru. I look forward to working with the committee in furtherance of these goals, and I am happy to answer any questions you might have, now or in the future.