

**Statement of Richard Duke Buchan III**  
**Nominee to be U.S. Ambassador to Spain and Andorra**  
**Senate Committee on Foreign Relations**  
**September 27, 2017**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Murphy and Distinguished Members of the Committee. And another special thanks to you, Chairman Johnson for your personal introduction and for your support.

It is a great honor to appear before this distinguished committee. I am humbled to be President Trump's nominee to serve as the United States Ambassador to the Kingdom of Spain and the Principality of Andorra. I am deeply grateful to President Trump for his confidence in me. If confirmed, I will work tirelessly to represent the interests of the United States of America, and to further enhance our strong partnerships with these two great nations.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Murphy and Distinguished Members of the Committee, I want to start by thanking each of you for your service to our great nation. We need public service now more than ever, and as an American I want to say how much I appreciate all that you do for this country that we love.

Each of us has followed a unique path to public service. As a 10<sup>th</sup> generation North Carolinian who grew up on a tobacco and cattle farm, I know that I am here because of the people and the land that nurtured me. I would like to recognize those in attendance here today: my amazing wife Hannah; my three dear children Cate, Beau and John; and my charming and insightful mother Betty. My father is here in spirit. I would also like to take a moment to remember my grandmother who taught me that I have two ears and one mouth and that I should use them accordingly. The lessons my family and community have taught me – including the importance of hard work, of listening to and respecting others, of dreaming big – will continue to guide and inspire me if I am allowed to represent the United States of America overseas.

If confirmed, I look forward to joining the extraordinary team from the State Department led by Secretary Tillerson and the many other U.S. agencies that work together to represent our nation around the globe. The staff of the U.S. Mission to Spain works diligently to serve American citizens, promote American business and advance U. S. interests. I am awed by the talent of these patriots. I also want to recognize their families who serve alongside them with equal honor, dedication and commitment. My career in international finance has focused on building bridges often between diverse individuals and groups to bring out the best in others to solve problems. I hope to apply those skills leading Mission Spain.

Global engagement is vital to America's success. Our international relationships impact all levels of our economy, our national security and our shared responsibility to address the world's toughest problems. My three decades of work in Spain, other European countries, Latin America and Asia have taught me the importance of listening to and learning from others to forge solutions. If confirmed, this experience and international perspective will be vital to my role as a U.S. ambassador.

The opportunity to serve my country as U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of Spain and the Principality of Andorra is a dream come true. I have loved Spain since my childhood, when I first read about that faraway land of Don Quixote and Picasso in the World Book Encyclopedia. In

1980, as an eager and curious high school student, I first convinced my parents to let me study abroad at La Universidad de Valencia.

At the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, I double majored in Spanish and economics, studying an entire academic year at La Universidad de Sevilla. In the years since, my family has worked to strengthen ties to Spain and Latin American countries by establishing The Buchan Excellence Fund, which is UNC's single largest endowment focused on Spanish languages, literature and culture. It embodies my conviction that knowledge, understanding and, above all, human connections, are the keys to success in business, diplomacy and life. One of our Fund's hallmark projects is *21<sup>st</sup> Century Pen Pals*, a video exchange program between American and Spanish schoolchildren. As a family we have a deep appreciation, respect and love for the Spanish people and culture. It is only surpassed by our love for the United States.

Few countries are as united in history and culture as Spain and the United States. These centuries-old ties have only strengthened in recent years as Spain has become one of our chief allies in the fight against terrorism, and the broader effort to uphold democracy and to promote prosperity around the globe. We could not ask for a better partner. It is an alliance based on shared values, respect and collaboration.

Sadly, Spain, like America, has faced terror attacks at home, most recently in Barcelona. As we share their grief, we deeply admire their resolve in the face of evil. And just as we do, Spain understands this is a global conflict, bravely committing blood and treasure to combat terror around the world. It is a significant contributor to NATO, EU and UN peacekeeping missions. There are currently 3,000 Spanish troops deployed overseas, including in the Baltics, Turkey and West Africa. For over 60 years Spain has been a welcoming host to our military, and today, we have more than 4,000 personnel based there. Rota Naval Station and Morón Air Base are essential for major coalition operations in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya and West Africa. We thank the Spanish government and people for their support. If confirmed, I will work to strengthen these historic ties as we confront our common enemies.

The Trump administration is keenly aware that these efforts involve not just the military but law enforcement as well; and it is appreciative of Spain's work. We rely on Spain to help us track and apprehend foreign fighters. Spanish authorities have also worked closely with the DEA to battle the scourge of drugs. If confirmed, I will enhance this robust cooperation.

As I know first-hand from my years as a global investor, Spain is a vital economic partner. The United States and Spain generated \$24 billion in two-way goods trade in 2016. Spain is our 9<sup>th</sup> largest source of foreign direct investment. Its total capital investment in the U.S. exceeds \$72 billion; U.S. subsidiaries of Spanish firms employ more than 80,000 U.S. workers in financial services, construction, alternative energy, tourism and consumables. My career has been built on finding and pursuing opportunities. With Spain's economy predicted to grow at over three percent this year, if confirmed, I will strive to increase Spanish investment in the U.S. and to increase opportunities for U.S. businesses in Spain.

Our human connections to Spain are deep and meaningful, stretching back to before the founding of our Republic. They remain strong today because of our shared values and interests. Over two million Americans traveled to Spain last year to explore its rich culture and beautiful landscape. Approximately 770,000 Spaniards visit the U.S. each year, spending about \$1.7 billion. Over 28,000 Americans study in Spain each year and around 6,600 Spaniards study in the U.S. More than 200,000 Americans live in Spain. If confirmed, the safety and security of these American citizens will be a top priority.

We can also rely on Spain to share our broader geopolitical interests. Spain has been a reliable backer of EU sanctions against Russia and supports implementation of the Minsk agreement even as it shares our desire to find areas of common ground with Russia where appropriate. Spain is a strong supporter of tough, effective sanctions enforcement, and recently took action to enhance pressure on North Korea. Spain is also an important partner in seeking democratic reforms in Venezuela, and remains a strong voice within the EU for sanctions and other measures. If confirmed, I will vigorously represent our policies to insure that the United States and Spain continue to work together closely.

While I have spoken much of Spain, if confirmed, I will also represent the United States before the Principality of Andorra. Situated in the Pyrenees Mountains, this breathtaking country is also rich with history and culture. Andorra has been a reliable partner in key votes at the United Nations and other important international fora. It has also advanced its fight against money laundering and is diversifying its economy. These steps have already borne fruit in a revitalized and increasingly outward-looking market. The Embassy works closely with our Andorran partners on educational exchanges and trade promotion. If confirmed, I will be honored to represent U.S. interests in the Principality of Andorra and to build on our long friendship and close bilateral cooperation.

Distinguished Senators, I would like again to thank you for your time. I began by talking about our shared journey. My family and I have been blessed in so many ways. We owe so much to America. If you will honor me, I pledge to give my all to strengthen and advance the partnership with our long-term and unwavering friends, Spain and Andorra. I welcome your comments, questions and a continued relationship. Thank you. And God bless America.