

**Statement of Sarah-Ann Lynch**  
**Nominee to be U.S. Ambassador to the Co-operative Republic of Guyana**  
**Senate Committee on Foreign Relations**  
**December 4, 2018**

Chairman Corker, Ranking Member Menendez, and distinguished Members of the Committee, I am honored to appear before you today as President Trump's nominee to serve as the next U.S. Ambassador to the Co-operative Republic of Guyana. I am deeply grateful to the President, Secretary Pompeo and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Administrator Mark Green for the support and confidence they have placed in me. If confirmed, I pledge to work closely with you, with this committee and its staff, and other members of Congress to advance our nation's interests in the Co-operative Republic of Guyana.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my husband, Dr. Kevin Healy, who is with me today, for all his support over the years. Our children could not be here, but I would also like to thank them - Mariah, Garrett and Dylan - for their support, as well as for their service to AmeriCorps/City Year, the U.S. Army National Guard and various community organizations. I am also extraordinarily grateful for the encouragement of my mother, Evelyn, a former member of World War II's Cadet Nursing Corps, and my late father, Robert, an Army veteran of World War II.

My passion for international affairs was sparked years ago when I was accepted into the U.S. Peace Corps. I was honored to serve as a Peace Corps volunteer in Morocco, and, if confirmed, it would be a privilege to work with today's volunteers who are delivering critical U.S. assistance to the Guyanese people. I continued my work in international affairs as a USAID Foreign Service Officer, serving for the past 25 years overseas in Bangladesh, Peru, Afghanistan, and Iraq, and in Washington, most recently as the Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator in the Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean. Having served over half of my career working on issues related to Latin America and the Caribbean, I am particularly honored to be considered for this important position in a region that is near and dear to my heart.

If confirmed, I will proudly promote U.S. values and represent the United States in Guyana, a melting pot of ethnic and religious diversity. I pledge to work with Guyana in areas of mutual interest as we seek to: (1) support the Government of Guyana as the country emerges as a petroleum producer and leverages its newfound revenues to expand economic opportunities and social services for all its citizens; (2) increase fair and reciprocal bilateral trade and investment, including promoting opportunities for U.S. businesses; and, (3) work with the Guyanese government and people to build upon gains in democratic governance, the rule of law and citizen security. A secure, democratic and

prosperous Guyana will be a key ally for the United States for years to come in the region that we share.

This is a particularly momentous time for Guyana, a country the World Bank currently identifies as middle-income. However, the discovery of significant reserves of oil in recent years could alter the equation for this small nation. It is estimated that Guyana holds over 4 billion barrels of offshore oil reserves, which could put it into the top twenty oil producing countries in the world. As such, it is critical the country not fall into the trap of the “resource curse.” Guyana must continue to look for opportunities to diversify its economy, improve its governance, and strengthen its civil society. If confirmed, I will look for ways to build upon the work that Guyana has already done to chart a productive course for its future.

We only have to look to Guyana’s west – to Venezuela - to see how poor governance and corruption have destroyed what should be one of South America’s most prosperous economies. Venezuelans are fleeing their country in droves, with thousands now entering neighboring Guyana. While the government and people of Guyana have been extremely generous in their assistance to the Venezuelan people, Guyanese systems could become overwhelmed. If confirmed, I pledge to work with the Government of Guyana to help them continue to look for ways to address this situation.

I look forward to enhancing U.S. - Guyanese relations and exploring every opportunity to engage with the government and people of Guyana to help them fulfill their ambitious agenda. Also, as the Secretary of State’s representative to CARICOM, if confirmed, I will work closely with our regional partners to broaden our engagement under the U.S.-Caribbean 2020 strategy.

Finally, as a matter of the highest priority, I will strive to protect U.S. Mission personnel and private U.S. citizens in Guyana.

Chairman Corker, Ranking Member Menendez and Committee Members, I thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you today, and I welcome your questions.