

Opening Statement of Juan Carlos Iturregui
Nominee for U.S. Ambassador to the Dominican Republic
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
June 13, 2024

Good morning. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, distinguished Members of the committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as the President's nominee for U.S. Ambassador to the Dominican Republic.

I would like to recognize my wife Maud and our son Tomas and daughter Emma, along with my sister Giselle, I'm blessed that they can accompany me on this important day for all of us. I am deeply grateful to President Biden and Secretary Blinken for their confidence in me and allowing me this incredible opportunity to serve our country.

I want to discuss the opportunities for engagement in the Dominican Republic that I would pursue, if given the opportunity to serve. The United States and the Dominican Republic already enjoy a strong, growing, and close relationship, with over two million Americans of Dominican heritage residing across the United States, over four million U.S. tourists visiting the Dominican Republic every year, and more than 30 billion dollars in annual trade between our countries. We share democratic values and the desire for our countries and our region to be prosperous and safe. Our governments share and cooperate on a wide variety of priorities.

I am convinced these shared perspectives and democratic values present the chance to further strengthen our ties with the Dominican Republic, which is already a trusted partner and close ally. We must continue our efforts to advocate for democracy and human rights in our hemisphere, combat corruption, promote long-term economic growth, and enhance citizen security as we tackle the challenges of our time.

I am a firm believer in the transformative power of democracy. It enables ordinary citizens to play an active role in their government. It provides a

voice and power to the people as well as the opportunity to create change. Recently re-elected President of the Dominican Republic Luis Abinader has made it clear that he listens to the Dominican people, who are tired of corruption and want their government to do better for them. The United States supports President Abinader's efforts to fight corruption and make the government work for the people. If confirmed, I look forward to supporting our joint anti-corruption goals and strengthening the rule of law in the Dominican Republic. I am eager to collaborate with the Dominican government on good governance initiatives, security, investment and near-shoring initiatives, human rights, energy, and improving the lives of all people in the Dominican Republic.

I have spent much of my career working on business, regulatory, and public policy issues while specializing in infrastructure and renewable energy in the Caribbean and Latin America. I know how important good governance is to fostering investment and promoting development that positively impact people's lives. Hence, it is crucial to broaden our economic partnership and solidify our connections with like-minded partners, and I will do this if I am confirmed. Through my last nine years on the board of the U.S. Inter-American Foundation – a small yet very effective federal agency that Congress generously funds – I have witnessed first-hand the enduring impacts of investing in grassroots development and empowering local communities to support themselves and obviate the need to migrate.

In conclusion, honorable committee Members, if confirmed, I will promote U.S. values and U.S. interests in the Dominican Republic.

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to this committee and its members for your support for continued U.S. engagement with the Dominican Republic and for your consideration of my nomination. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and Members of the Committee for the opportunity to be here with you today. I look forward to answering any questions you may have.