

Statement of Liliana Ayalde
Nominee for Ambassador to Brazil
The Senate Foreign Relations Committee
July 30, 2013

Mr. Chairman, and members of the Committee, thank you very much for this opportunity to appear before you.

I am extremely honored to be here today, as the President's nominee to be the U.S. Ambassador to the Federative Republic of Brazil. Please allow me to express my deep gratitude to the President and the Secretary of State for the trust and confidence in me as shown through this nomination. Also, please allow me to express my gratitude to the Committee as it undertakes its vitally important constitutional role of advice and consent.

With the Chairman's permission, I wish to recognize my family, friends, mentors and colleagues who have supported me over the years—many of whom are here today. I especially would like to acknowledge my parents and my daughters. Each knows the joys and sacrifices of public life, and I am grateful for their love and steady support.

I come before you today as a career member of the United States Foreign Service. I have served my country for 30 years in diplomacy and development, mostly in the Western Hemisphere. As a teenager, I had the privilege of spending three years of my life living and learning in Brazil. The impact this vibrant and ambitious country had on me has never faded. I was impressed by the openness and spirit of the people, and the deep pride Brazilians have in their national heritage. I recognized in Brazil's racially and ethnically diverse society strong similarities with the United States.

If confirmed, I would give the highest priority to ensuring the well-being and safety of our mission and that of American citizens who live and travel in Brazil. In 2012 alone, Brazil received nearly 600,000 tourists from the United States. As host to the 2014 World Cup and the 2016 Summer Olympics, Brazil will receive even more visitors and attention in the coming years, providing the opportunity to showcase to the world its dynamism and diversity. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Brazilian government to support its efforts to ensure safe and successful major events.

The relationship between the United States and Brazil is strong. We share important values, including a commitment to democracy, rule of law, human rights, environmental protection, and sustainable development; the desire to see peaceful resolution of disputes between nations; and a commitment to multilateralism. In recent years, we have made great progress in expanding the relationship, not just on the political, economic, energy, and defense levels, but also in people-to-people exchanges aimed at expanding learning opportunities and promoting innovation. Dozens of bilateral dialogues, memoranda of understanding, agreements, working groups, and people-to-people exchanges underpin our broad-based relationship.

If confirmed, I will work to consolidate these important gains and allow our relationship to grow by promoting the following themes:

Shared leadership to address global challenges. Brazil has committed itself to global leadership. The May 2013 selection of Brazilian Ambassador Roberto Azevedo as the World Trade Organization's next director general and Paulo Vannuchi to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights further illustrates Brazil's growing influence. It is in our interest to work with Brazil to address common challenges, such as food security, environmental stewardship, arable land and fresh water management, nonproliferation, advancement of women and girls, public health, the collective defense of democracy and human rights, and the trafficking of drugs, weapons, and people. Our engagement includes a growing number of innovative trilateral initiatives, and we welcome Brazil's commitment to be full partners in tackling this global agenda. A perfect example of our increased cooperation is the upcoming Global Partnership Dialogue, led by the Secretary of State and his Brazilian counterpart, which deepens our interactions with Brazil on priority strategic challenges.

Partnering to realize our trade and investment potential. Boosting and sustaining economic growth is a key priority for the United States and Brazil. Both of our societies look to their policymakers to advance policies that lead to greater prosperity, equity, and opportunity. Strengthening our middle classes and expanding diversified cross-border trade and investment are important shared priorities. If confirmed, I would work to promote mutually beneficial investment between our private sectors to spur innovation, support growth, and create jobs in both of our countries.

Building our people-to-people capacity. Our public diplomacy efforts are of vital importance. If confirmed, I would focus on education, tourism, and English

language training to increase Brazilians' exposure to the United States and understanding of U.S. policies and goals in the region. Brazil's Scientific Mobility program – a fully-funded initiative that will send 101,000 Brazilian students to study science, technology, engineering, and math at foreign universities – will connect us with Brazil's next generation of science, technology, and entrepreneurial leaders, provide a huge boost to U.S. colleges and universities, and complements President Obama's 100,000 Strong in the Americas initiative.

If confirmed, I would encourage outreach to Brazil's vibrant community by engaging civil society and strengthening outreach to youth and future leaders in universities, political parties, and business. I will strive to expand our relationship by reaching out to people and regions across Brazil we might not have reached in the past and acquaint Brazilians from all backgrounds with the United States.

Brazil's history has shown that it is not necessary to choose between democracy and economic development. A commitment to democratic institutions and free markets can allow a country to peacefully transform itself into a middle class society and global leader. In the process, Brazil has created the opportunity for us to re-imagine our relationship and opened the possibility for both countries to construct a new kind of strategic partnership. This is not to say that Brazil does not have challenges, or that we do not have differences. But we have the mechanisms in place to address these issues constructively, and the points of converging interests far outweigh our differences. The potential for the relationship between Brazil and the United States is as great as our willingness to embrace the opportunities before us, and our goal is to show that we can best achieve our mutual interests through collaboration and cooperation.

If confirmed by the Senate, I look forward to working with the distinguished members of this Committee, Congress, and your staffs to achieve the goals of U.S. policy and foster a relationship with Brazil that is worthy of both our great nations. Let me once again thank you for inviting me to testify today and I look forward to your questions.