

Statement of Brian A. Nichols
Ambassador-Designate to the Republic of Peru
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
October 3, 2013

Mr. Chairman and distinguished Members of the Committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as the President's nominee to be the next United States Ambassador to the Republic of Peru.

I joined the Foreign Service in 1989 and in the nearly 25 years since, I have had the privilege to appear before Congress a number of times. This, however, is my first as a nominee. The lights are a little brighter today. Fortunately they provide a fitting stage for me to recognize my beautiful wife Geri, also a career Senior Foreign Service Officer, my daughters Alex and Sophie, and my mother Mildred. Their love and wisdom has made each day better than the one before it. I would also like to thank President Obama and Secretary Kerry for their confidence in me.

My father served as a Fulbright Scholar in Denmark and taught American studies in Germany. We moved to Providence, Rhode Island in 1969 when I was three -- a fantastic place to grow up by the way. My parents nurtured a desire to serve my country, a lifelong love of learning, and a wanderlust that made the Foreign Service a perfect career. I have had the great fortune to represent America's values and advance our goals in Indonesia and throughout the Western Hemisphere including in El Salvador, Mexico, the Caribbean, and Colombia. Should I be confirmed, I will return to Peru where, in 1989, I served my first tour as a newly commissioned officer.

The late 1980s and early 1990s was a difficult time in Peru with terrorism, political repression, and hyperinflation afflicting rich and poor alike. I saw in the Peruvian people a tireless work ethic, unflagging optimism that they could change their own fate, and tremendous warmth in welcoming me. The people of Peru shaped a different future.

Today, the Republic of Peru is one of America's strongest partners in the hemisphere. In 2012, our two nations shared nearly \$16 billion in bilateral trade. Over the last decade, our exports to Peru have increased fourfold. Peru tops South America in terms of economic growth over the last two decades. It is a nation with ambition and a vision for free markets, inclusive democracy, respect for the environment, and energy security. It is a country with enormous pride, great

people, and a resolute determination to advance the causes of security, prosperity, and human rights. Peruvians are championing these causes domestically, regionally, and globally.

Peru is also an unwavering partner of the United States in the fight against terrorism, transnational crime, and the scourge of cocaine trafficking. Peru's success in delivering serious blows to the Shining Path insurgency, including most recently against its second and third highest leaders in August, underscores its remarkable commitment to fighting transnational crime and drug trafficking.

Peru has done this all the while working vigorously to create licit economic opportunities and safe communities for its people.

My two most recent Foreign Service assignments will be particularly helpful, should the Senate confirm me to serve as Ambassador to Peru. As Deputy Chief of Mission at our neighboring Embassy in Bogota from 2007 to 2010, I had the privilege to lead an Embassy staff of more than 4,000 people who worked tirelessly to support a shared vision for security and economic goals. When I departed post, our locally engaged staff was more diverse than ever in terms of background and expertise, morale was high, management controls tight, and our relationships with the people of Colombia the strongest they had ever been.

In the three years since, I have helped to direct the State Department's rule of law, anti-crime, and counternarcotics programming around the world, including in Peru. As the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, I've been humbled to lead a team of nearly 7,000 professionals who work every day to expand access to justice, protect civilians, and combat crime around the world. We are most successful when our efforts support the plans of the governments we are assisting. Partner governments must be in the driver's seat for planning, achieving, and sustaining a vision. This is an important principle that I will carry with me for the rest of my career.

Senators, thank you sincerely for your time today and for your support. Should the Senate confirm me, I pledge to serve with the utmost respect for the burgeoning ties that bind our countries. I will aim to always exemplify the highest standards of our great nation while doing so. I look forward to partnering with you to advance America's interests in Peru and stand ready to answer any questions you might have now and in the future.