

Statement of Noah B. Mamet
Ambassador-Designate to Argentina
Senate Foreign Relations Committee

February 6, 2014

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

It is a privilege and an honor to be here today, as the President's nominee to be the Ambassador of the United States to the Argentine Republic. I am deeply grateful to President Obama and Secretary Kerry for their confidence and trust, and for sending my name to the Senate for your consideration. If confirmed, it will be my privilege to work closely with this Committee and with your distinguished colleagues on our partnership with Argentina.

I'd like to thank Senator Bennet for his kind introduction. On a personal note, growing up in California, I was lucky to have two wonderful and supportive parents, Bryan and Millie, who instilled in me the values of hard work, dedication, and love of country. I'm thrilled my mother was able to fly here today and is visiting the U.S. Senate for the first time. Although my father is no longer with us, he would be proud beyond belief that I am here today in front of this distinguished committee. Rather uniquely, both my father and grandfather volunteered and served together as enlisted servicemen in WWII at the same time. In fact, I believe my grandfather was one of the oldest enlisted men in the Navy at one point.

Through them, I was raised to believe that public service, in any capacity, is the highest calling, so I am deeply honored to be here today.

After spending many years in Washington, I founded my own company a decade ago. During these years, I've built a successful business, consulting for many companies and leaders in various sectors. I've also worked with many NGOs including the Clinton Global Initiative and the National Democratic Institute (NDI), as well as with numerous national and international political leaders, including President Bill Clinton, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, and Secretary of State Madeleine Albright. This experience has taught me the power of partnership, the truth that no one sector alone can be as effective as the combined efforts of the public sector, the private sector, and civil society. If confirmed, I look forward to putting all of my experience into furthering our bilateral relationship with Argentina.

The people of the United States and Argentina have a long history of friendship and close collaboration that stretches back nearly two centuries. The guiding principles for today's relationship are based on core democratic values, shared interests, and natural affinity between two societies. In fact, just over a month ago, Argentina celebrated the thirtieth anniversary of its return to democracy, a very important milestone for the people of Argentina. If confirmed, I will work to expand cooperation with Argentina on mutually important issues,

including energy, human rights, nuclear nonproliferation, and educational exchanges.

I have always believed in the importance of public diplomacy and people-to-people relationships. Like much of the world, many Argentines maintain a great interest in American culture, and if confirmed, I look forward to drawing on my extensive experience working with NGOs in the United States to strengthen current relationships and build new ones with a vibrant Argentine civil society.

Considering that nearly half of Argentina's population is under the age of 35, I will be committed to expanding educational exchange programs for students from both Argentina and the United States. If confirmed, I will broaden our ties through our 14 Binational Centers, English language programs, and exchanges.

Expanding scientific discovery and technological innovations is another promising area for greater cooperation. Our two countries have more than 60 joint projects under way in energy, health, science, and technology. In fact, a successful trip to Argentina by NASA Administrator Charles Bolden highlighted our longstanding cooperation on earth observation satellites.

In addition to our bilateral partnership, the United States has strong cooperation with Argentina in multilateral fora such as the UN and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), where Argentina is a strong voice in support of human rights and nuclear nonproliferation. If confirmed, I look forward

to continuing cooperation with Argentina on these critical issues of mutual concern.

Argentina's highly educated population and diversified industrial base have attracted more than 500 U.S. companies. The United States is strongly committed to working with Argentina to increase two-way trade that creates jobs in both countries. However, the United States and other governments remain concerned over some protectionist policies. If confirmed, I will continue the Administration's efforts to address these concerns. I will also urge Argentine officials at the highest levels to resolve such economic legacy issues as Argentina's Paris Club arrears and its remaining debts to U.S. bondholders.

Although there are some challenges that have been well documented in the media recently, I am optimistic and confident that the future of our relationship with Argentina is bright. As Secretary Kerry has expressed, the United States has a vested and shared interest in a vibrant, strong, and prosperous Argentina. If confirmed, I look forward to a productive dialogue with Argentine government officials, as well as the private sector and civil society as we seek to further our bilateral relationship and strengthen the longstanding ties between our two great nations.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with you and your distinguished colleagues and staff to advance U.S. objectives in Argentina.

Thank you, and I look forward to your questions.