

Statement of the Honorable Ken Salazar
Nominee for United States Ambassador to Mexico
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
July 28, 2021

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member and Members of the Committee:

I am proud and humbled to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee to serve as United States Ambassador to Mexico.

My history is deeply rooted in Mexico and the United States. My forebearers came from Mexico and Spain in the early 1600s and settled along the banks of the Rio Grande del Norte near Santa Fe, New Mexico. Following the end of the Mexican-American War, they migrated north and established the settlement of Los Rincones in the San Luis Valley. Today, we still ranch and farm the same lands along the tributaries of the Rio Grande.

My father was a proud soldier in World War II. My mother helped open the Pentagon as a public servant. After the war, they returned home. At home, our native language was Spanish. We were poor and worked in the fields and home alongside our parents. We were taught to dream big dreams and the timeless values of faith, hard work and education. All eight of their children became first generation college graduates.

Like my parents, I am a proud American. If confirmed, I will work tirelessly to advance the interests of the United States and to strengthen the common bonds between the United States and Mexico. I recognize the difficult and enormous challenges ahead. I also am optimistic about the opportunities ahead for our two nations.

In my view, it is time to create transformative change in the United States-Mexico relationship by ushering in a new era of partnership with our southern neighbor. That partnership must:

- 1) address jobs and economic opportunity for the people of the United States and Mexico through trade, infrastructure, tourism, and investment;

2) secure our shared borders and create an orderly, safe, and humane framework for migration;

3) identify partnerships that address the scourge of violence and respects the rule of law; and

4) engage in a global sustainability transformation for a viable planet while respecting the sovereignty of both nations.

If confirmed, I will seek the advice and guidance of this Committee and its Members in my service to the United States. I look forward to working with President Biden and Vice President Harris and the United States Congress to advance the interests of the United States in Mexico. I also look forward to working with the Mexican government to advance our shared interests in Mexico and here in the United States.

Thank you.