

Joint Statement from the U.S.-Paraguay Political and Economic Dialogue

Joint Statement

**Office of the Spokesperson
Washington, DC**

June 18, 2015

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The text of the following statement was released by the Governments of the United States of America and the Republic of Paraguay on the occasion of the U.S. – Paraguay Political and Economic Dialogue.

Begin Text

On June 18, Deputy Secretary of State Heather Higginbottom and Paraguayan Minister of External Relations Eladio Loizaga held a United States – Paraguay Political and Economic Dialogue in Washington, D.C. The dialogue was an opportunity for our two nations to discuss strong bilateral relations, regional and global cooperation, and a comprehensive partnership to strengthen democratic institutions, expand economic growth, and to develop new opportunities for Paraguayans and Americans.

The partnership between the United States and Paraguay encompasses a broad array of programs with the government, civil society, and the private sector to achieve sustainable, inclusive development for Paraguayans and Americans. The United States-Paraguay partnership is founded upon a long history of cooperation, strong common interests, an important bilateral trade relationship, and mutual respect between our governments and our people.

The June 18 Political and Economic Dialogue marked recent progress in trade relations, to agree on proposals for future bilateral cooperation, and to advance our regional and global efforts. Notably:

- The United States and Paraguay have signed an Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) MOU to improve the protection of copyrights and trademarks in Paraguay and to strengthen IPR enforcement. These improvements will help support innovation, creativity, exports, and access to diverse goods and services in Paraguay.
 - The United States has agreed, as a result, that pursuant to an Out-of-Cycle Review, Paraguay will be removed from the Office of the United States Trade Representative's 2015 301 Watch List.
 - We signed an MOU Additional to the General Economic and Technical Assistance Agreement of 1961 for a proposed U.S. Army Corps of Engineers contract that, under Paraguayan direction, and within its jurisdiction, will maximize commercial use of the Paraguay – Parana waterway.

- We agreed to hold a meeting of the Joint Council on Trade and Investment (JCTI) Targeted later this year in order to increase-and to re-engage on bilateral trade and investment issues.
- We agreed to a \$6 million Department of Labor program to fight child labor in Paraguay as part of our shared commitment to protect children.
- We agreed to continue strengthening our cooperation on human rights.
- We agreed to continue our cooperation combatting drug trafficking, transnational crime, money laundering, and terrorism, under the principle of shared responsibility.
- Paraguay reaffirmed its commitment to support and expand peacekeeping operations.
- We celebrated the selection of an exchange program between the National University of Asuncion and the University of West Virginia as part of the 100,000 Strong in the Americas initiative. We agreed to pursue additional opportunities for educational partnerships, including English language learning, as agreed in the February 2015 memorandum of understanding with the Paraguayan Ministry of Education and Culture.
- We agreed to continue high level visits between the two countries to strengthen bilateral relations.

Our delegations also committed to continued cooperation on human rights in international fora such as the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and the UN Human Rights Council. Paraguay took the opportunity as well to brief the United States on its vision as it assumes the presidency of Mercosur in July 2015.

We look forward to continuing regular consultations on a broad range of bilateral, regional, and global issues to underscore our strong and constructive partnership.