



**Obama Administration Relations with Central America:
A Conversation with Seven U.S. Ambassadors**

Tuesday, February 1, 2011
8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.
Fifth Floor Conference Room

Speakers' Biographies

Ambassador Anne Slaughter Andrew became the first woman to serve as U.S. Ambassador to Costa Rica in December 2009. Prior to her service as Ambassador, she founded New Energy Nexus, LLC. She also co-founded Anson Group LLC and served as co-owner and Director until 2007. Ambassador Andrew was previously a partner at the Patton & Boggs law firm and Co-Chair of the Environment/Energy Team at Baker & Daniels. Ambassador Andrew received a Bachelor of Arts from Georgetown University and a Juris Doctorate from Indiana University School of Law at Indianapolis.

Ambassador Mari Carmen Aponte began her service as U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of El Salvador in December 2009. She had served as a consultant and solo law practitioner since 2005 and has been a member of the Council on Foreign Relations since 1995. From 1979 to 1980 Ambassador Aponte served as a White House Fellow assigned to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. She has also worked on the state level as Executive Director of the Puerto Rico Federal Affairs Administration. Ambassador Aponte holds a Bachelor of Arts from Rosemont College, a Master of Arts Degree from Villanova University, and a law degree from Temple University.

Ambassador Robert J. Callahan was sworn in as U.S. Ambassador to Nicaragua in July 2008. He was the first public diplomacy fellow at the School of Media and Public Affairs at the George Washington University. Ambassador Callahan previously served as Director of Public Affairs at the Office of the Director of National Intelligence in Washington, DC. Ambassador Callahan joined the Foreign Service in 1979 and has since served in Costa Rica, Honduras, London, Bolivia, Athens, Rome, and Baghdad. He has also taught at the National War College in Washington, D.C. and worked as an editor at Loyola University Press. Ambassador Callahan holds a Bachelor of Arts in Modern European History from Loyola University in Chicago and a Master of Arts in American History from DePaul University in Chicago.

Ambassador Hugo Llorens was confirmed as U.S. Ambassador to Honduras in April 2008. Prior to this position, he served as the Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassies in Madrid and Buenos Aires. From 2002-2003, Ambassador Llorens served as the Director of Andean Affairs at the National Security Council. Past experience includes the position of Principal Officer at the U.S. Consulate General in Vancouver, Canada; Deputy Director of the Office of Economic Policy and Summit Coordination in the Bureau of Inter-American Affairs; and Assistant Treasurer at the Chase Manhattan Bank, International Division. Ambassador Llorens received a Bachelor of Science in Foreign Service from Georgetown University, a Master of Science degree in National Security Studies from the National War College, and a Master of Arts in Economics from the University of Kent, Canterbury, England.

Ambassador Stephen G. McFarland was sworn in as U.S. Ambassador to Guatemala in June 2008. He recently served as Director of Stability Operations Training at the Foreign Service Institute. In 2007, he set up and led one of the initial “surge” Provincial Reconstruction Teams embedded with the U.S. military in Iraq; his prior service includes tours as Deputy Chief of Mission in Venezuela, and as Deputy Chief of Mission and Chargé d’affaires ad interim in Guatemala and Paraguay. Ambassador McFarland has also served as political counselor in El Salvador and Peru, and was the U.S. representative on the 1995 interim cease-fire monitoring group at the Peru-Ecuador border. He was the human rights and terrorism reporting officer in Peru, a vice-consul in Maracaibo, Director of Cuban Affairs, and Nicaragua desk officer. Ambassador McFarland graduated from Yale University and the Air War College and attended the Marine Corps Platoon Leaders Course.

Ambassador Phyllis M. Powers serves as the United States Ambassador to the Republic of Panama, following her previous assignment as the Director of the Office of Provincial Affairs at the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad, Iraq. Ambassador Powers was Deputy Chief of Mission of the U.S. Embassy in Peru from 2005 to 2007. Prior to her service in Peru, she was the Director of the Narcotics Affairs Section responsible for Plan Colombia and Management Counselor for the U.S. Embassy in Colombia. She has also served as Senior Post Management Officer for the Bureau of Near East and South Asia with oversight responsibility for Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and the Persian Gulf countries and as Deputy Director of the Office of Travel Support in the Bureau of Administration. Ambassador Powers holds a Bachelor’s Degree in Biology from Pennsylvania State University and is certified by the American Society of Clinical Pathologists as a Medical Technologist.

Ambassador Vinai K. Thummalapally was unanimously confirmed as U.S. Ambassador to Belize in July 2009. He was previously the President of MAM-A Inc., formerly Mitsui Advanced Media, and plant manager for WEA Manufacturing, a division of Time Warner. Ambassador Thummalapally has also served as Managing Director for Clines Printing and Office Products, Manufacturing Manager of Disc Manufacturing, Inc., and has held two U.S. patents for design of optical disc manufacturing. He received a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering from California State University and completed post graduate Business Administration courses at California State University and the University of Tennessee.