



U.S. Embassy in Guyana

## Ambassador Lynch remarks to observe 246th Independence Day of the United States of America

Thank you so much, Ben!

His Excellency, Dr. Mohammed Irfaan Ali, President of the Co-Operative Republic of Guyana and First Lady Arya Ali;

Honorable Brigadier (Ret'd) Mark Phillips, Prime Minister of the Co-Operative Republic of Guyana and Second Lady, Mrs. Mignon Bowen Philips;

Honorable Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo, Vice President of the Co-Operative Republic of Guyana;

Honorable Hugh Todd, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation;

Honorable Ministers;

Honorable Yonnette Cummings-Edwards, Chancellor of the Judiciary, and Members of the Judiciary;

Honorable Manzoor Nadir, Speaker of the National Assembly;

Honorable Aubrey Norton, Leader of the Opposition and Members of the Opposition;

Her Excellency, Dr. Carla Barnett, Secretary General of CARICOM;

His Worship, Mayor Ubraj Narine;

Members of the Diplomatic Corps;

Members of the Private Sector, Civil Society and Uniformed Services;

Our Wonderful Corporate Sponsors for tonight's event;

Esteemed guests;

Members of the media;

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is my great honor to welcome you all to America's House in Guyana to celebrate the 246<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Independence of the United States of America and 56 years of official diplomatic relations between the United States and Guyana!

Kevin and I are honored to have you, your Excellency, and all of you to join us here tonight to mark this very special occasion. And, we are thrilled to see you in person especially as the pandemic prevented us from having this event in person in both 2020 and 2021. Sadly, during this unprecedented time, many of us lost colleagues, friends and family members and I know that their memories will be a blessing to all of us.

But, as we remember those difficult days in the past, we must also look forward. The Fourth of July is a day in the United States for both – it's a day of history and remembrance; it's also a day of hope and resolve; and, a day of promise and possibilities. Across the United States on this day, Americans will come together to celebrate our independence with food, family and fireworks, but also to renew our commitment to the values that shaped our country – self-governance, equality, justice, liberty and the pursuit of happiness – and, to share those values with other nations around the world. The family members of many of our guests this evening will join in these celebrations justifiably proud of the contributions made by Guyanese-Americans to the rich fabric of the United States of America.

In looking forward, we must recognize that the world is truly at an inflection point right now with multiple interlocking crises impacting our daily lives, causing concern and worry for people around the globe compelling us to focus on critical long-term disruptions caused by climate change, energy insecurity, mass migration, the global pandemic and global food insecurity exacerbated by the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Russia's unprovoked war on Ukraine has also raised the important question of a country's right to sovereignty – to develop and join alliances how it sees fit.

Sovereignty, democracy, pandemic management, migration, climate change, energy and food security – are all issues that are immensely important to the United States as well as Guyana. These are complex issues that no one country can solve alone. These are problems that require partners to come together to discuss, to debate and to solve. And, that's exactly what the United States and Guyana are doing – addressing these issues together both in Guyana and in the region, all while strengthening and deepening our partnership.

At the recent Summit of the Americas, hosted by the United States, multiple countries in the Americas came together to discuss shared concerns. Key declarations were made on migration, post-pandemic economic recovery, health care and medical training, clean energy, and climate change. The Biden Administration's new U.S.-Caribbean Partnership to Address the Climate Crisis 2030 (PACC 2030) involves new commitments and the integration of climate adaptation and resilience and clean energy programs across the Caribbean. President Biden also announced the Americas Partnership for Economic Prosperity as part of our efforts to promote an equitable recovery in a hemisphere still reeling from the impacts of the pandemic. At the Summit, Guyana was one of more than 20 countries in the hemisphere to sign onto the Los Angeles Declaration, a regional declaration to address the root causes of irregular migration and create a common framework for legal pathways, protection, and humane border management. And, importantly, three working groups were formed to drill down on regional concerns in the critical areas of financial security, energy security and food security. Due to Guyana's leadership role within CARICOM on agriculture and food security, President Ali will serve as a co-chair of the food security working group along with U.S. Assistant Secretary for Western Hemisphere Affairs, Brian Nichols. Related to this critical issue of food insecurity, at the Summit, the U.S. announced its commitment to a Caribbean Zero Hunger Plan

with initial funding of \$28 million USD in food security assistance for the Caribbean. We applaud Guyana's vision to work on this issue and to be the breadbasket for the region, and the U.S. is ready to partner in this regard.

Guyana is clearly on a unique journey. The United States has been on this journey with you, and we will continue to be with you. Evidence of our enduring relationship lies in both the public and private sectors.

The numbers speak for themselves. In 2021, the U.S. exported \$565 million USD worth of goods to Guyana; and the U.S. imported a whopping \$1.7 billion USD worth of goods from Guyana. As important as the oil and gas sector has been to those numbers, U.S. companies are also partnering in infrastructure, agriculture, health care, education, services, and tourism. And, these partnerships span into the public sector to help build the government's capacity to serve its people. For example, USAID's Economic Development Accelerator program is helping entrepreneurs in Guyana's agriculture sector grow their agro-processing businesses. And on the security front, we just concluded a critical multi-month port security training for Guyana with inter-agency participation from Guyana's police, the Revenue Authority, the Customs and Anti-Narcotics Unit, the Maritime Administration, and the Coast Guard. This training provided the tools to strengthen container security protocols and increase knowledge of narcotics smuggling typologies, in collaboration with the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime.

Going forward, we will continue to partner with you on inclusive democracy, economic development, and citizen security for all Guyanese, and to promote the public values of – transparency, diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility – values that inform policies reflecting good governance and a participatory democracy where all voices are heard.

Our commitment to Guyana is to continue to collaborate with you along this fascinating journey and to reinforce your aspirations to realize a safe and prosperous Guyana for all the people of this beautiful country. As such, our partnership will continue to thrive and grow during these historic times in Guyana.

Before I make my toast, I want to give special thanks to the wonderful sponsors of tonight's event. Without your very generous contributions, we would not be having this lovely party. Thank you for your collaboration, kindness and generosity and I look forward to hosting you all at future events at the U.S. Residence in Guyana.

I would also like to thank the U.S. Embassy's extremely hard-working staff for their many months of intense effort on this event. I would like to thank the following amazing Marines for the Presentation of the Colors tonight:

Staff Sergeant Jonatan Lopez from Rio Rico, Arizona,  
Sergeant Percy Palmalanza from Miami, Florida,

Sergeant Kevin Perezquiros from San Juan, Puerto Rico,  
Corporal Aidan Kelly, from Foxborough, Massachusetts (and Boston sports fan!)  
And, Lance Corporal Christian Swayne, from Dallas, Texas.

Finally, a huge thank you to Violeta Talandis for taking the lead on this event and Marcia Bosshardt for her never-ending energy and devotion to all event details. And, thank you to MC, Ben Hulefeld for a wonderful job tonight. Thank you all so very much.

If you would indulge me just one last minute, I want to note that we are saying goodbye to Marcia tonight as well as her husband, Deputy Chief of Mission, Mark Cullinane, known to almost everyone here. This couple has done more to deepen bilateral relations than most of our staff put together. They have worked tirelessly on behalf of the U.S. Embassy to advance relations, programs and yes, progress here in Guyana. Mark and Marcia, the U.S. Embassy will miss you, I will miss you, and I'm guessing that most of Guyana will miss you. We wish you the best of luck on your next adventure in the foreign service, and I know that our paths will cross again. On behalf of the U.S. Government, thank you for all that you did to strengthen the U.S.-Guyana relationship during the past three very challenging years.

And with that, ladies and gentlemen, please raise your glasses, to what was, what is, and what can be, in our U.S. Guyanese relationship. The future is bright and let us all be a part of making it even brighter.  
Cheers!

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