

U.S.-Cuba Trade and Economic Council, Inc.

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**United States Department of State
Washington DC
18 January 2021**

Diplomatic Corps Order of Precedence: In accordance with relevant Articles of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, heads of diplomatic missions appear on the Diplomatic Corps Order of Precedence list in their respective classes and in the order of the date and time of assuming their duties.

ORDER OF PRECEDENCE Reported to the Office of the Chief of Protocol as of January 18, 2021. CHARGE D’AFFAIRES AD INTERIM FOR BILATERAL MISSIONS

Republic of Cuba: Rodney Amaury Gonzalez Maestrey (12/21/20)

Listing by Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cuba as of 11 February 2021:

ESTADOS UNIDOS DE AMERICA

Excmo. Sr. José R. Cabañas Rodríguez

Embajador Extraordinario y Plenipotenciario

Fecha de acreditación: 17/09/2015

Listing by Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cuba as of 11 February 2021:

CHARGÉ D’AFFAIRES- Mrs. Lianys Torres Rivera, Ambassador.

The Biden Administration is expected to promptly approve in 2021 **H.E. Lianys Torres Rivera**, former Ambassador of the Republic of Cuba to Vietnam, as Ambassador of the Republic of Cuba to the United States and be included among the first groups to the Oval Office at The White House to present (in person or virtually) their credentials to The Honorable Joseph Biden, President of the United States.

Ambassador Torres arrived to the United States in early January 2021 during the Trump Administration.

The United States Department of State has no information to *provide on-the-record* or *on background* as to if Ambassador Torres is now recognized as Ambassador of the Republic of Cuba to the United States or when Ambassador Torres will present her credentials to President Biden.

The decision by the Biden Administration to accept and to accept promptly a replacement to manage the Embassy of the Republic of Cuba in Washington DC should not be mischaracterized, misunderstood by those who support a return to the commercial, economic, and political bilateral landscape in existence prior to 20 January 2017.

The symbolism will represent more about what can be rather than what was in the bilateral relationship. The Biden Administration message- there can and should be official dialogue, but

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that dialogue needs to amount to more than more dialogue and, critically, the Republic of Cuba must address internal issues and issues relating to Venezuela.

The Biden Administration has also not reported publicly if it intends to nominate an Ambassador of the United States to the Republic of Cuba. [LINK To Post](#)

United States companies remain hopeful for a change in bilateral atmospherics, telemetry and, importantly, for the government of the Republic of Cuba to continue with its commercial, economic, and political transformation which may provide opportunities for United States companies to have more than a presence in the marketplace for incoming visitors.

There remain from 2015 commercial opportunities for product and service importation, product and service exportation, product and service offerings, and direct participation (including investment, loans, etc.) in the self-employed sectors authorized during the Obama Administration which the government of the Republic of Cuba neither encouraged nor approved. Recent decisions by the government of the Republic of Cuba to merge its two currencies and to expand the range of self-employed categories may provide additional opportunities for United States companies. There also remain for the Biden Administration the issue of the 5,913 certified claims valued at approximately US\$1.9 billion.

Crucial for the new Ambassador of the Republic of Cuba to the United States to embark upon a structured outreach to those who do not support a functioning bilateral relationship between the United States and the Republic of Cuba. Resist the natural gravitational pull to engage solely with individuals (public sector and private sector) and companies and organizations who provide positive messaging reinforcement.

Diplomatic Background

Ambassador Jose Ramon Cabanas Rodriguez from 2012 to 2015 served as Chief of the Cuban Interests Section in Washington DC. He retained the title of ambassador due to posting in Austria from 2001 to 2005. On 17 September 2015, he presented credentials to The Honorable Barack Obama (D), President of the United States (2009-2017) and became *Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary* of the Republic of Cuba to the United States.

The last United States ambassador to the Republic of Cuba was The Honorable Philip Bonsal (1903-1995) who arrived 3 March 1959 and departed 28 October 1960. There had been twenty ambassadors from 1902 to 1960.

Since 1960, according to the United States Department of State, there has been one Chargé d’Affaires ad interim, fourteen Principal Officers, and two Chargé d’Affaires.

There are approximately 11.3 million Republic of Cuba nationals residing on 780-mile-long archipelago ninety-three miles south of from Key West, Florida. There are approximately 2.3 million individuals of Cuban descent residing in the United States with the majority in Florida and New Jersey.

PREVIOUS POST:

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December 22, 2020](#)