



Integrated Country Strategy

Uruguay

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1. Chief of Mission Priorities

Uruguay's democratic institutions are well established; its strong economic growth over the last ten years has pushed it into the ranks of high-income countries; and it is a global leader in areas such as renewable energy, United Nations (UN) Peacekeeping Operations (PKO), and low levels of corruption. At the same time, Uruguay is struggling to counter rising crime rates, modernize its economy for the 21st century, extend its social programs to the most vulnerable populations, and reform its faltering educational system. Our Mission goals and objectives align with U.S. regional priorities. The U.S. Mission in Montevideo has three overarching goals: 1) enhance U.S., Uruguayan and global security, 2) build economic prosperity for the U.S. and Uruguay, and 3) defend the U.S. values of democracy and social justice. We will accomplish these goals by effectively focusing the finite human and other resources available to us.



To advance global security, U.S. Embassy Montevideo team members will work with host-nation counterparts to secure the southern and cyberspace approaches to the United States. We will work against threat networks through U.S.-sponsored training, exchanges and material support. We will enable our host's efforts to control illicit cross-border flows, to engage in peacekeeping abroad, and to secure Uruguay's borders and resources. When requested by Uruguayan authorities, the U.S. will cooperate to help Uruguay combat drug trafficking, spot trafficking in persons, address trade-based money laundering, dismantle illicit financial

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operations in the region, mitigate vulnerabilities in the cyber domain, protect critical infrastructure, monitor potential terrorism, and increase Uruguayan resistance to interference by threat networks.

To build U.S. and Uruguayan economic prosperity, we will engage local partners and U.S. businesses to identify opportunities to expand the bilateral economic relationship. Uruguay's strategic location as a gateway to regional distribution and to the "hydro route" which extends into South America, its relatively liberal trade regime, and its membership in MERCOSUR make it a practical hub for U.S. exports to the region. From the end of the country's 2002 economic crisis to the present, Uruguay has experienced the longest period of economic growth in its history. Bilateral trade and investment has grown significantly and has diversified away from traditional agricultural trade to encompass new areas such as medical and information technologies. We will continue to work with government and industry leaders to promote export opportunities for U.S. companies and highlight the positive engagement of U.S. companies, especially in comparison to the exploitative mercantilism of other great powers. Through creative programming, we will help nurture an emerging culture of entrepreneurship, especially among youth and women. We will bolster support for science and technology exchanges between the United States and Uruguayan institutions to open the door to increased commercial and educational opportunities for U.S. organizations.

Uruguay's historically strong public-education system has deteriorated in recent years, possibly putting Uruguay's economic growth at risk. Approximately 17 percent (141,000) of Uruguay's young people between 14 and 29 years of age do not study or work and 30 percent (about 40,000) are not looking for employment. The NGO community is relatively weak. Uruguayans prefer to have government solve social problems. We will support the GOU's efforts to modernize its educational system. Fulbright and other academic exchange programs, teacher training, English-language programs, and youth exchanges will continue to be our principal tools to help Uruguay's educational system, to create opportunities for U.S. citizens in this interconnected world, and to help Uruguay's youth to prosper through association with U.S. citizens and organizations.

We will join Uruguay and other countries in the region to help Venezuelans recover their own democratic institutions and political-civil rights. We will advocate for democracy across the hemisphere. We will support Uruguay's transition to an accusatory system of criminal justice and its reform of the correctional system to promote safe, secure, transparent and humane prisons with the help of U.S. training and exchanges. Embassy support of skills-building programs for disadvantaged, at-risk youth and women will demonstrate U.S. values of equal opportunities for all citizens, regardless of background.

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2. Mission Strategic Framework

MISSION GOAL 1: GLOBAL SECURITY – Weakened transnational threat networks operating through Uruguay and capable Uruguayan peacekeepers for UN PKO missions.

Objective 1.1: Disrupt transnational threat networks and illicit flows (including from terrorists) and strengthen borders by bolstering the capabilities of Uruguayan law enforcement, military and civilian authorities.

Objective 1.2: Sustain Uruguayan military capacity to conduct peacekeeping.

MISSION GOAL 2: ECONOMIC PROSPERITY - Greater trade, travel, education, investment, and job creation between the United States and Uruguay.

Objective 2.1: Promote U.S. trade, investment, science, and technology to create economic opportunities and jobs in the United States and Uruguay.

Objective 2.2: Promote entrepreneurship, 21st century education, English language ability, and other skills to create economic opportunities and jobs for American and Uruguay citizens.

MISSION GOAL 3: DEMOCRACY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE – More assertive Uruguayan defense of democracy in the hemisphere, stronger Uruguayan democratic institutions of criminal justice, greater gender equality and opportunities for underserved youth.

Objective 3.1: Encourage Uruguay to defend democracy and human rights in Venezuela and elsewhere in the hemisphere.

Objective 3.2: Help strengthen Uruguay's democratic institutions of criminal justice (and enable Uruguayan law enforcement to address crime more effectively) by assisting in Uruguay's justice system reforms.

Objective 3.3: Address gender inequality and help disadvantaged youth to advocate for themselves and gain more skills.

Management Objective 1: Services provided are the highest quality, most cost-effective, safe, and secure. The Embassy work environment is collaborative, innovative, respectful, welcoming, promotes professional development, and complies with equal employment opportunity (EEO) principles.

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Management Objective 2: The Embassy continues uninterrupted operations with minimal disruption to staff, while the ongoing major rehabilitation project improves Embassy facilities and infrastructure.

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3. Mission Goals and Objectives

MISSION GOAL 1: GLOBAL SECURITY – Strengthened GOU institutions to counter transnational threat networks operating through Uruguay and capable Uruguayan peacekeepers for UN PKO missions.

Description and Linkages: Uruguay’s relatively open terrestrial and riverine borders make it attractive to threat networks as a transit point for illicit flows. Resource scarcity and personnel shortages make it challenging for the GOU to control effectively the flow of people, goods, and equipment across its borders. While it appears most illicit flows through Uruguay are bound for Africa and/or Europe, some materials or people likely make their way to the U.S. homeland.

Mission Objective 1.1: Disrupt transnational threat networks and illicit flows (including from terrorists) and strengthen borders by bolstering the capabilities of Uruguayan law enforcement, military and civilian authorities.

Justification: Securing Uruguayan borders will allow the GOU to monitor illicit flows, illuminating and disrupting threat networks. To this end, working closely with the Uruguayans will bolster information sharing and interoperability with the U.S. government. Disrupting transnational threat networks will have the added benefit of increasing security within the region and globally.

Mission Objective 1.2: Sustain Uruguayan military capacity to conduct peacekeeping.

Justification: Enabling Uruguay to continue its role as one of the world’s most avid peacekeepers will lessen the need for U.S. troops to conduct peacekeeping and will increase security in the world’s hot spots.

MISSION GOAL 2: ECONOMIC PROSPERITY - Greater trade, travel, education, job creation, and investment between the United States and Uruguay.

Description and Linkages: Growth in U.S. exports and visitors to our homeland are key to our economic prosperity. By increasing exports of goods and services to Uruguay from the United States, and by encouraging Uruguayans to study, vacation, and invest in the United States, we directly support U.S. businesses and job creation. As a member of MERCOSUR, Uruguay’s strategic location and relatively liberal trade regime make it an attractive base for regional operations in the Southern Cone. From the end of the country’s 2002 economic crisis to the present time, Uruguay has experienced the longest sustained period of economic growth in the country’s history. Uruguay has diversified its economic production from traditional agricultural trade to encompass new economic areas such as e-commerce solutions, software development, and information technology services. Uruguay’s exports of services to the United States now rival its export of goods.

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Mission Objective 2.1: Promote U.S. trade, investment, and commercial science and technology to create economic opportunities and jobs in the U.S. and Uruguay.

Justification: The United States is the largest export market for Uruguayan software, as well as the largest investor in the Uruguayan information technology (IT) sector. Uruguay's economy is expected to slow in the short-term, reducing opportunities for U.S. trade and investment. Encouraging bilateral investment and trade in goods and services is necessary to spur future economic growth and ensure continued opportunities for U.S. businesses. To attract foreign investment, Uruguay will need to reduce structural impediments to growth (i.e. public finances, government-owned enterprise management, labor market rules and regulations, the social safety net, and institutions), and clear the way raising its economic growth potential. The greater the number of Uruguayans who visit the United States, the more we will find support for our nation and our policies among Uruguayans.

Mission Objective 2.2: Promote entrepreneurship, 21st century education, English language ability, and other skills to create economic opportunities and jobs for American and Uruguay citizens.

Justification: Such support contributes to workforce development that has bilateral benefits, prepares an increasingly mobile workforce for work in both countries, with skill sets for the 21st Century.

MISSION GOAL 3: DEMOCRACY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE - More assertive Uruguayan defense of democracy in the hemisphere, stronger Uruguayan democratic institutions of criminal justice, greater gender equality and opportunities for underserved youth.

Description and Linkages: Uruguay was founded on democratic principles. It has had political parties for almost 200 years; it has had legitimate elections for decades. The black stain on modern Uruguay's democratic traditions was the military dictatorship from 1973 to 1985. Since then Uruguay's democracy has been strong with protections for human rights. Uruguay has been historically reticent to lead efforts to protect democracy and human rights in the hemisphere. The most recent example is the GOU's hesitation to engage in regional debates about how to return democracy to Venezuela. We will continue to encourage Uruguay to help Venezuelans and Nicaraguans recover their democratic institutions and human rights. Regarding Uruguay's own democratic system, in the past decade Uruguay has embarked on reforming two of its key institutions of democracy: the criminal justice system and the correctional system. When requested by the GOU, we will support training in these areas. Regarding equality of opportunity for underserved Uruguayan groups, we will engage in issues of gender equality and marginalized youth.

Mission Objective 3.1: Encourage Uruguay to defend democracy and human rights in Venezuela and elsewhere in the hemisphere

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Justification: The United States stands with the Western Hemisphere in support of the Venezuelan people and their right to have a voice in their government through free, fair, and internationally validated elections.

Mission Objective 3.2: Help strengthen Uruguay's democratic institutions of criminal justice (and enable Uruguayan law enforcement to address crime more effectively) by assisting in Uruguay's justice system reforms.

Justification: The United States stands for democracy and helps strengthen democratic institutions around the world. Uruguay has a strong democratic tradition. It has embarked on ambitious reforms of two key democratic institutions: The criminal-justice system and its correctional-penal system. When requested, we will provide training to ensure that these reforms strengthen those key components of Uruguay's democracy.

Mission Objective 3.3: Address gender inequality and help disadvantaged youth to advocate for themselves and gain more skills.

Justification: We reflect the American experience of striving for a more just society when we support the aspirations for greater equality overseas. We have chosen women's equality and marginalized youth, in particular, as areas of focus.

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4. Management Objectives

Management Objective 1: Services provided are the highest quality, most cost-effective, safe, and secure. The Embassy work environment is collaborative, innovative, respectful, welcoming, promotes professional development, and complies with equal employment opportunity (EEO) principles.

Justification: The effective delivery of quality management services depends on a fully staffed, motivated, skilled and appropriately compensated workforce. To achieve success we need a highly trained workforce; training covering customer service techniques and processes, collaborative approaches, and professional technical skills are required for a motivated, top-rate workforce. The Embassy intends to fund training to supplement lower-graded locally employed staff (LES) English language skills. Improved language skills contributes significantly to the quality of service delivery, allows staff to better anticipate customer needs, and improves career prospects. To address more effectively U.S. economic and commercial challenges, the Embassy supports establishing a Senior Commercial Officer position.

In terms of the Embassy's information infrastructure requirements, a cloud-based computing environment enables a secure, reliable, and user-friendly operational environment. Such an environment also gives staff flexible remote access to DOS OpenNet systems. Additionally, the Embassy's Wi-Fi network will also require continuous reconfiguration as the Chancery rehabilitation project progresses. The PCS Travel Portal, while implemented, still requires enhancement for better local and worldwide applicability.

Management Objective 2: The Embassy continues uninterrupted operations with minimal disruption to staff while the major rehabilitation project improves Embassy facilities, security, and infrastructure.

Justification: OBO began a 40-month major rehabilitation of the Embassy (Chancery) in January 2018. Planned upgrades will bring Embassy infrastructure to current building codes, improve security and life safety measures, as well as increase energy efficiency. OBO will more clearly define Controlled Access Areas and general work areas and the new design will improve the traffic flow of Consular section clients.