



Integrated Country Strategy

THE ORIENTAL REPUBLIC OF URUGUAY

FOR PUBLIC RELEASE

Approved: March 24, 2022

Reviewed and Updated: December 19, 2022

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1. Chief of Mission Priorities

Uruguay's profound political consensus around its most important values has turned it into a beacon of democratic principles, human rights protections, and progressive social policies.

Uruguay is powered by its agricultural export engine, a deep-water port that serves the region, its growing IT sector, and macro-economic stability. The Government is focused on confronting the challenges of the day, from climate change and public health to transnational organized crime and citizen security. In many ways, our relationship with Uruguay can be seen through two lenses – working with Uruguay to defend democratic principles in a region and world where democracy is under threat; and ensuring that Uruguay sees the United States government, companies, and civil society as important partners in Uruguay's development.

We celebrate Uruguay's successful management of its economy, and work to support increased U.S. investment to encourage diversification of the economy, to emphasize emerging sectors such as (but not limited to) technology, health, entertainment/video production, and commercial services. We will serve as a resource to support collaborative and productive management of the regional waterways and ports which represent some of Uruguay's greatest natural and logistical resources. We will encourage policies and trade practices that promote environmental protection and carbon neutrality, labor rights, human rights, migrant protections, and diversity and inclusion. We will support Uruguay's efforts to modernize its education system, and share our successful models through speakers, IVLPs, and teacher training. Meanwhile, we will expose Uruguayan students to global educational opportunities through Fulbright and other academic exchange programs, English-language programs, and youth exchanges. In all the Mission's work and in recruitment for all programs and exchanges, we will advocate for representation and inclusion of marginalized groups and ensure Mission activities and events are likewise inclusive and diverse.

Uruguay's record on democratic principles and social issues has been robust for decades. Uruguay is a strong voice in multilateral fora, condemning human rights abuses and violations of democratic principles. While it avoids condemnation of isolated member states within multilateral fora, Uruguay will make strong independent statements condemning non-

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democratic behavior in public fora. We will work to encourage Uruguay to take a leadership role in multilateral fora as an exemplar and leader on democratic principles and work bilaterally to support democratic initiatives. We will also collaborate with Uruguay as a leader and model on the environment – to include carbon neutrality, and sustainable agriculture. We will work with Uruguay to examine ways to improve waste management and carbon-neutral transportation and expand protection of oceans and waterways. We will also hold Uruguay as a model on human rights and labor practices. Uruguay is a leader in the region with its strong laws on diversity and inclusion to include protected communities such as race, gender, LGBTI, disabilities, and migrants, and we will look to partner with them to exchange best practices on implementation of these laws. We will offer advice from American efforts to confront our own prison crisis as Uruguay works to reform its prison system, widely recognized as a bubble of deplorable human rights conditions in a sea of human rights protections.

On local and global security, Uruguay is increasingly serving as a transshipment point for narcotics and is feeling the knock-on effects of street crime, money laundering, and the erosion of social networks and opportunities for those left behind by the faltering education system's inability to prepare them for the modern economy. As Transnational Criminal Organizations enter Uruguay to take advantage of new smuggling routes, we will continue to work closely with our Uruguayan partners to share information, promote regional investigations, and provide training. We applaud Uruguay's shift to community-based, active policing that is showing results in crime statistics. Finally, we will continue to provide support to Uruguay's vital contribution to UN peacekeeping efforts, which we applaud as a model for the region and the world. The United States will continue engaging with Uruguay to find ways to support the government's policy of recapitalizing the armed forces by providing modernized equipment to increase patrol capabilities on the air, sea, and land. Our donation of three Marine Protector-class patrol boats to the Navy shows the ongoing commitment of the United States to close military collaboration. We will encourage Uruguay to increase its participation in regional military exercises and to maintain our close training relationship.

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Finally, we will work to maintain the recent improvement in public views of the United States. We will seek to de-politicize opinions of the United States so that they remain stable regardless of political changes and emphasize people-to-people engagement and friendship. Inclusion, diversity, and representation of under-served populations is a priority for all programmatic recruitment and selection, including for all educational and cultural exchange programs as well as for the Embassy's small grants initiatives and funding opportunities. Visa services will remain an opportunity to reinforce positive public opinion as the first touchpoint with the United States. We will continue volunteerism efforts to engage with the community and show who we are with actions in direct contact with the Uruguayan people. We will approach Uruguay as a successful and innovative partner with a great deal to offer in terms of advice and collaboration. We will applaud its successful transition to high-income nation status, and its careful management of regional challenges such as transnational crime and trade in globally sought-after agricultural riches.

In sum, we need to both reinforce and rely on Uruguay's economic and democratic stability and establish the United States as a preferred and like-minded partner for the long run, in ways that will be sustained into and beyond the next administration.

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2. Mission Strategic Framework

Mission Goal 1: Uruguay's economy is diverse, resilient, and environmentally sensitive while expanding equal access to economic opportunities to marginalized groups with a workforce that values everyone and reflects the ethnic diversity of the country.

- **Mission Objective 1.1:** Uruguay's economy is strengthened, including in communications, technology, health, and science; and the value of U.S. partnership in these sectors is highlighted.
- **Mission Objective 1.2:** Uruguay serves as a regional leader and actively supports joint environmental and climate change, and diversity and inclusion priorities.
- **Mission Objective 1.3:** Increase bilateral collaboration on agricultural challenges, including reducing climate impact, improving mutual market access, and applying scientific solutions to joint challenges.
- **Mission Objective 1.4:** Increase opportunities for U.S. firms competing in Uruguay and increase Uruguayan investment in the United States.

Mission Goal 2: Uruguay is a reliable partner and champion for strong democratic institutions and values.

- **Mission Objective 2.1:** Increased collaboration with Uruguay in regional and multilateral fora.
- **Mission Objective 2.2:** Uruguay embraces global leadership in the promotion and defense of democratic values beyond a regional context.

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Mission Goal 3: Uruguay partners with the United States to increase local and global security.

- **Mission Objective 3.1:** Uruguay strengthens its ability to maintain public order and safety, and its ability to investigate, interdict, and prosecute drug trafficking.
- **Mission Objective 3.2:** Bilateral and regional cooperation on border security and transnational criminal organizations is improved and successes are publicized.
- **Mission Objective 3.3:** Defense cooperation and support for peacekeeping operations are strengthened.
- **Mission Objective 3.4:** Crisis preparedness for U.S. citizens in Uruguay is strengthened.

Management Objective 1: Build a diverse, inclusive, and dynamic workforce. Proactively focus on the recruitment and retention of disadvantaged communities while complying with equal employment opportunity (EEO) principles.

Management Objective 2: Communicate and collaborate with rehabilitation project decision makers to mitigate the impact to mission activities to the extent possible during the on-going Chancery renovation. With infrastructure improvements, increase effectiveness through the deployment of technology to facilitate and expand cross-section and interagency collaboration.

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3. Mission Goals and Objectives

Mission Goal 1 | Uruguay's economy is diverse, resilient, and environmentally sensitive while expanding equal access to economic opportunities to marginalized groups with a workforce that values everyone and reflects the ethnic diversity of the country.

Description | The United States supports a stable, inclusive, and sustainable global economy. In an interconnected world, the stability and wealth of every country is tied to that of its trade and investment partners. Our bilateral trade relationship is robust and supports many jobs in both our countries while promoting economic resiliency and dynamism. Around 120 U.S. companies present in the country employ over 20,000 Uruguayans. The Embassy's work to support Uruguay's overall economic growth and resiliency, increase bilateral commercial ties, and support adaption to climate change will benefit both of our economies and global economic stability. **Objective 1.1** | Uruguay's economy is strengthened, including in communications, technology, health, and science; and the value of U.S. partnership in these sectors is highlighted.

- **Justification** | The United States is one of Uruguay's leading trade partners, and is Uruguay's main destination for IT services exports. Diversifying economic production from the traditional agricultural sector to include other economic areas in the high-tech and services sectors promotes greater economic resilience and opportunities for growth. Based on its political and economic stability, Uruguay seeks to be a corporate and logistics regional hub, offering a stable environment for U.S. businesses and investment. Promoting awareness of U.S. trade and commercial ties will foster greater understanding of the scale and importance of the bilateral relationship.
- **Linkages** | JSP Strategic Objective 2.1 and 2.2, Interim National Security Strategic Guidance

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- **Risks** | The pandemic has created numerous challenges and could continue to constrain economic growth in Uruguay. High costs of doing business and competitiveness could also hamper bilateral economic growth potential. To address these risks, the mission will need to identify and harness creative programming and funding sources.

Objective 1.2 | Uruguay serves as a regional leader and actively supports joint environmental and climate change, and diversity and inclusion priorities.

- **Justification** | The United States is committed to tackling the climate crisis and driving green energy and a green economy. Uruguay sees the long-term threat of climate change as potentially harmful to its agriculture-based economy. Uruguay was one of the first countries to announce plans to reach CO2 neutrality by 2030 and is on track to achieve net zero emissions by 2050. Uruguay is a leader in the adoption of renewable energy sources and is prioritizing environmental considerations across government and private sector operations. The United States needs partners like Uruguay to cooperate bilaterally and globally on a priority that requires a community of nations to solve.
- **Linkages** | JSP Strategic Objective 1.2, Interim National Security Strategic Guidance
- **Risks** | Developing and implementing green energy goals or other environmental goals can be costly. Due to Uruguay's "high-income" designation, assistance and programmatic resources available to Uruguay are limited. While continuing to pursue U.S. funding opportunities, we will maximize technical exchanges, regional engagements, and bilateral engagement on climate change.

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Objective 1.3 | Increase bilateral collaboration on agricultural challenges, including reducing climate impact, improving mutual market access, and applying scientific solutions to joint challenges.

- **Justification** | Uruguay's economy relies heavily on agricultural production, which accounts for 80 percent of the country's goods exports. There are opportunities for further growth and diversification of trade partners within its key sectors of wood pulp, beef, soy, and dairy, as well as other value-added products. There is a significant exchange of knowledge between U.S. and Uruguayan experts through U.S. universities, and this helps to strengthen the ties between our countries, and the Embassy will work to strengthen these relationships in all relevant fields.
- **Linkages** | JSP Strategic Objective 2.2, Interim National Security Strategic Guidance
- **Risks** | Commodity prices are always subject to fluctuation and dependencies could develop or deepen based on trade. Mercosur rules could also constrain Uruguay's ability to negotiate access to new markets.

Objective 1.4 | Increase opportunities for U.S. firms competing in Uruguay and increase Uruguayan investment in the United States.

- **Justification** | Export promotion and foreign direct investment into the United States directly support U.S. job creation. Focusing activities on specific strategic sectors achieves administration priorities while also playing to the strengths of specific U.S. industry sectors.
- **Linkages** | JSP Strategic Objectives 2.1 and 2.2, Foreign Commercial Service's Uruguay Strategic Plan, FY2022-2023, Interim National Security Strategic Guidance
- **Risks** | Preferential trade agreements between competitor countries and Uruguay make third-country exports more competitive in Uruguay's market. Additionally, inflationary pressures and higher logistical costs increase the price of U.S. products which could reduce their competitiveness to an already cost-conscious Uruguayan consumer.

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Mission Goal 2 | Uruguay is a reliable partner and champion for strong democratic institutions and values

Description | Uruguay is a natural partner for the United States to advance democracy and rule of law both globally and in the region. Uruguay is consistently recognized as being among the most democratic countries in the world and tops the lists of countries with the greatest respect for rule of law in the region. The attendant principles of consent of the governed, limits on executive authority, transparency and accountability, and the rule of law, are strongly shared values between our two countries and continue to underpin the peaceful advancement of societies, especially in terms of global stability and prosperity. The Embassy will work with Uruguay, to promote and protect democracy, elevate human rights, combat corruption, and humanely manage migration.

Objective 2.1 | Increased collaboration with Uruguay in regional and multilateral fora

- **Justification |** Through U.S. leadership, the international community can collectively address and mitigate threats to democracy, state sovereignty, the rule of law, and human rights. Given our shared values around democracy, human rights, and rule of law, Uruguay's global leadership on these issues in multilateral fora will assist us in achieving important policy objectives and strengthen the credibility of our efforts by attracting additional support from third countries.
- **Linkages |** JSP Objective 3.1, Interim National Security Strategic Guidance
- **Risks |** While Uruguay has shown exemplary leadership on democracy issues in Latin America, it is less focused on global issues, though it has taken increasingly strong positions on some issues of importance to the United States in recent years. Uruguay also does not agree with the United States on all issues and has a policy of not voting on single country resolutions which is at variance with U.S. policy. Also, given the limited resources available to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, it may not be reasonable to expect Uruguay to engage on all global issues. Public diplomacy programs should demonstrate how global democratic governance tangibly leads to improvements in citizens' daily

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lives; bolster judicial and legislative oversight; empower civil society to play a crucial watchdog role; and train and fund local media organizations to address disinformation and lack of thorough analysis in local and national contexts.

Objective 2.2 | Uruguay embraces global leadership in the promotion and defense of democratic values beyond a regional context.

- **Justification** | Building understanding and support for U.S. policies and values among foreign publics and their governments furthers U.S. foreign policy goals, advances U.S. interests and values, and enhances U.S. national security. Uruguay is a natural partner for the United States to promote democracy, the rule of law, and human rights, and that address global challenges like climate change.
- **Linkages** | JSP Objective 1.5, Interim National Security Strategic Guidance
- **Risks** | Uruguayan public perception of U.S. credibility on key issues—including democracy, inclusion, equity, tolerance, and representative forms of government—remains a risk. The Uruguayan public has observed U.S. withdrawal from international fora and demonstrate weaker commitment to domestic human rights initiatives under the previous administration and has become more wary of the long-term reliability of the United States. Listening to public opinions is as important as informing audiences with relevant content. Breaking through the “noise” of false or distorted views of the United States, will be a priority for the Embassy.

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Mission Goal 3 | Uruguay partners with the United States to increase local and global security.

Description | The United States supports the Western Hemisphere's desire for greater U.S. engagement to promote democracy and human rights in the region. Key to this effort is restoring effective Inter-American collaboration through the OAS and other multilateral organizations. Among the major threats facing the entire region is the growth of transnational crime, drug trafficking and gang violence, resulting in increased citizen insecurity. Supporting Uruguay's capacity to deliver increased rule of law and security will reinforce citizens' confidence in democracy and mutually-beneficial international cooperation.

Objective 3.1 | Uruguay strengthens its ability to maintain public order and safety, and its ability to investigate, interdict, and prosecute drug trafficking.

- **Justification |** Advance Uruguay's public order and safety through diplomatic partnership. Security cooperation, from law enforcement to defense, helps promote a rules-based international order and addresses security challenges vital to U.S. interests at home and abroad. A trustworthy partnership with Uruguay on its public security challenges will deter common threats and address growing challenges that ignore international borders such as money laundering, port security, and cybercrime.

- **Linkages |** JSP Strategic Objective 1.4 and 1.5, Interim National Security Strategic Guidance

- **Risks |** Uruguay has become a sought-after trafficking route to Europe, bringing local, regional, and transnational organized crime groups into Uruguay.

If we do not provide effective support to Uruguay's efforts to counter this threat, the criminal challenge to the state will become more sophisticated, better armed, and able to infiltrate the state through corruption, as we have seen in many countries in the region. This risks a significant increase in crime that might undermine economic stability, and weaken support for human rights, rule of law, and democracy. Money laundering represents a major threat that is not yet being adequately confronted, and if the

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legitimate economy become dependent on narco money it could lead to a loss of national sovereignty. A rise in Uruguay's prison population further strains resources and can increase crime incidences and social inequality, exacerbating an already deteriorating public security situation.

Objective 3.2 | Bilateral and regional cooperation on border security and transnational criminal organizations is improved and successes are publicized.

- **Justification** | Revitalize bilateral and regional cooperation with Uruguay, a like-minded partner, to address international security challenges such as human trafficking and irregular migration. Partnership with Uruguay will deter common threats and address growing challenges that ignore international borders such as transnational crime and cybercrime.
- **Linkages** | JSP Strategic Objectives 1.4 and 1.5, Interim National Security Strategic Guidance
- **Risks** | Limited funding mechanisms available to Uruguay as a high-income country may delay implementation of sustainable programs and equipment delivery to achieve shared security objectives.

Objective 3.3 | Defense cooperation and support for peacekeeping operations are strengthened.

- **Justification** | Uruguay's participation in bilateral defense cooperation with the U.S. and in multilateral efforts such as U.N. peacekeeping are essential to advancing our values abroad and ensuring the American people can live in peace and security at home. Post will lead with diplomatic engagement, supported by building the core capacities of Uruguay to prevent, mitigate, and respond to conflict and insecurity, including via support for peacebuilding; effective civil-military cooperation; and the meaningful participation and leadership of women using guidance from the Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2017 and U.S. Strategy on Women, Peace, and Security.

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- **Linkages** | JSP Strategic Objectives 1.4 and 1.5, Interim National Security Strategic Guidance
- **Risks** | Risks to achieving shared objectives include deteriorated equipment and violent conflict in PKOs that endanger the lives of military personnel, lack of public support to investing resources in international peacekeeping in light of domestic concerns, and potential sexual abuse incidents committed by peacekeepers overseas. Uruguay's aerial interdiction law enacted in December 2020 precludes defense cooperation on certain aerial capabilities.

Objective 3.4 | Crisis preparedness for U.S. citizens in Uruguay is heightened.

- **Justification** | Protecting U.S. citizens abroad is among the highest priorities of the Department of State as stated by the Secretary of State and as outlined in the Joint Strategic Plan.
- **Linkages** | JSP Strategic Objectives 1.5
- **Risks** | Building contacts in the private sector may incur travel and representational costs at a time when the Consular Affairs bureau is not yet recovered from the financial burdens brought forth following the world-wide COVID-19 pandemic shutdown of and slow return to visa services. Funds and staffing resources may be stressed covering routine visa services, leaving little time for significant contact-building.

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4. Management Objectives

Management Objective 1 | Build a diverse, inclusive, and dynamic workforce.

Proactively focus on the recruitment and retention of disadvantaged communities while complying with equal employment opportunity (EEO) principles.

- **Justification |** Equity for marginalized people and communities has been prioritized for all federal agencies as demonstrated through Executive Order (EO) 13985, EO 14020, and National Security Memorandum/NSM-4. This is in addition to ongoing commitments to the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and the Americans with Disability Act (ADA). Executing effective diplomatic, development, and humanitarian strategies requires expertise, experience, creativity, and informed judgement. Drawing on the full diversity of the United States and Uruguay as we recruit, rebuild, and retain our diverse and inclusive workforce is paramount to ensuring our organizations can leverage a broad set of knowledge and experiences to solve this country's, and the world's, most pressing problems. Having a diverse and empowered workforce makes us a competitive employer and supports high performance and high morale.
- **Linkages |** JSP Strategic Objective 3.2, JSP Goal 4, JSP Strategic Objective 4.1, Interim National Security Strategic Guidance
- **Risks |** Risks which may prevent achieving the objective include lack of funding for recruiting initiatives or to hire subject matter experts, not receiving HR/OE approval to move forward with paid internships, civil society advocacy groups which are disengaged and lack political power and resources to assist in recruiting, and lower levels of education, professional experience, and English language skills in disadvantaged communities. Traditional recruiting methods have not historically elicited candidates that fully represent Uruguay's diverse population.

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Management Objective 2 | Communicate and collaborate with rehabilitation project decision makers to mitigate the impact to mission activities to the extent possible during the on-going Chancery renovation. With infrastructure improvements, increase effectiveness through the deployment of technology to facilitate and expand cross-section and interagency collaboration.

- **Justification** | Protecting the Department of State personnel, data, physical, and IT infrastructure from 21st century threats is inextricably linked to the overall success of national security priorities and foreign policy objectives. The United States' first guarantor of international security and prosperity is American leadership in diplomacy, development, and humanitarian assistance that leverages the country's powerful network of global partnerships. Foundational to renewal of our work is empowering, rebuilding, and protecting the federal workforce, especially our embassy staff. The Chancery building serves as a symbol of our bilateral relationship. The Mission must continue to operate and be able to work towards achieving its goals but, at the same time, the rehabilitation of the Embassy must also continue in order to have a modern, safe workplace. A successful workplace requires not only safe space but also secure technology which facilitates internal and external communications on classified and unclassified systems. This technology includes modern wired and wireless networks, hardware including Enterprise Mobile Desktops (EMD), and cellular phones and videoconferencing equipment.
- **Linkages:** JSP Goal 4, JSP Strategic Objective 4.3
- **Risks** | Risks which may prevent achieving the objective are delays due to labor strikes, illnesses or travel hindrances related to the COVID-19 pandemic, and not filling OBO Project Director position. This retrofit project has continued to increase in complexity as additional problems with existing construction are discovered. The addition of new technology, especially in secure areas, requires close coordination between systems and security. The addition of WiFi capability in unclassified areas and cameras and other equipment in secure areas opens the embassy to additional cyber-security risks.

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