

**Press Release
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**Embassy of the United States of America
100 Duke & Young Streets, Kingston, Georgetown, Guyana**

Ambassador Hardt Participates in New Amsterdam Rotary Club “World Understanding and Peace” Dinner

GEORGETOWN – U.S. Ambassador D. Brent Hardt delivered remarks at the New Amsterdam Rotary Club’s “World Understanding and Peace” dinner on Saturday, February 25. Ambassador Hardt discussed how the U.S. government promotes Rotary Club’s philosophy of “service above self” as the pathway towards changing the world and achieving international peace and understanding. In his remarks, Ambassador Hardt discussed ways that the United States and Guyana could work together to advance peace and understanding globally, within the Hemisphere, and in Guyana. He highlighted the four pillars of President Obama’s vision the region, which include effective and accountable institutions of governance; economic prosperity, health, and social equality; strengthened citizen security; and a future of clean energy and respect for our environment.

Ambassador Hardt emphasized the United States’ desire to build a “forward-looking and mutually beneficial partnership” with Guyana rooted in our shared values, of democracy, liberty, justice, and opportunity. He praised the many dedicated Guyanese he has met from government and civil society who have been working in partnership with the U.S. to enhance prosperity, strengthen security, and enrich democracy.

For example, he noted that the U.S. and Guyana had been able to work hand in hand through the Government, GECOM, the Elections Assistance Bureau, media and civil society “to promote free, fair, transparent, and peaceful elections in 2011. He noted that such partnerships with government and civil society, the United States would seek “to prepare the groundwork for local government elections, which are essential to bring democracy to the local communities where people feel the impact of government most directly.” The Ambassador welcomed the “revitalized dialogue and debate between the executive and legislative branches of government” as “the very essence of a vigorous democracy.”

Ambassador Hardt highlighted the critical role that expanding economic opportunity can play in boosting democracy by creating “open space for individual opportunity.” He reiterated the United States’ “firm commitment to supporting a prosperous Guyana,” citing trade initiatives such as the Caribbean Basin Trade Partnership Act and entrepreneurial promotion efforts such as the Caribbean Idea Marketplace (CIM). The CIM, launched by Secretary of State Hillary

Clinton in 2011 in Jamaica, will offer grants to members of the Caribbean Diaspora to support development in Guyana and elsewhere in the region.

To complement democratic governance and economic prosperity, Ambassador Hardt observed that citizen security was a top priority to build a peaceful world. To this end, President Obama had created the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI), a partnership to enhance the capacity of Caribbean countries to address the full range of security challenges facing the region. “One of the strengths of CBSI is that it not only seeks to deal with the consequences of crime, but actively seeks to address the root causes of lack of jobs, skills, and opportunity for young people,” he said.

Ambassador Hardt also urged the Rotarians to better understand the challenges posed by “the brutal crime” of human trafficking. He noted that Guyana and the United States were working together to build understanding, capacity and commitment to combat this crime. He praised the recent Counter Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Conference as an important local effort to combat a global problem.

Ambassador Hardt also highlighted the U.S.-Guyana partnership to advance public health through the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). Through PEPFAR, the U.S. had supported the efforts of the Ministry of Health and an array of non-governmental organizations to provide greater access to healthcare. The Ambassador congratulated the Rotary Club for its highly successful efforts to eliminate polio worldwide and to donate essential medical support services to various communities in Guyana.

Ambassador Hardt concluded that the United States values its relationship with Guyana, stating that, “the partnerships I have outlined in democracy and governance, economic development, citizen security, and public health represent the pathway we are walking together with the Government and people of Guyana to make the world better for our children and promote international understanding and peace.” After the speech, Richard A. David received a Vocational Award for his dedication to the sugarcane sector, and Ambassador Hardt presented Stephanie Bowry with a Vocational Award for her literary works.

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