



American Citizen Services

U.S. Embassy • Quito, Ecuador

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ECUADOR BY THE NUMBERS:

Exports: \$22 billion

Top Commodities

- petroleum, bananas, cut flowers, shrimp, cacao, coffee, wood, fish

Export Partners:

- US 45%, Peru 7.7%, Venezuela 6.5%, Colombia 4.6%, Panama 4.6%, Chile 4.2%

Imports: \$23.5 billion

Top Commodities:

- industrial materials, fuels and lubricants, nondurable consumer goods

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A Message to U.S. Citizens From Ambassador Adam Namm

It is a tremendous privilege and honor to be the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Ecuador. I arrived in Quito on May 30 and presented my credentials to Vice President Lenin Moreno on June 21. I follow in the footsteps of Ambassador Heather Hodges and many other talented and distinguished diplomats who have held this position before me.

This is not my first time in Ecuador. I came here several times in the 1990s when I was working as the regional Human Resources Officer in our embassy in Bogota, Colombia, and I returned in 2008, as Deputy Director of the Department of State's Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, to help inaugurate our new embassy compound in Quito. Some of you will come to our state-of-the-art embassy to renew passports, register your newborn children as American citizens, and file applications for Social Security benefits. Construction is nearly complete on a new compound for our Consulate General in Guayaquil, further tangible proof of the United States' commitment to its relationship with Ecuador. Now that I am resident

in Ecuador, I look forward to getting to know this wonderful country, including visiting some of the places American citizens call home.

As Ambassador, I will do my best to improve U.S.-Ecuadorian relations while always defending and promoting U.S. values and interests. Despite any differences between our governments, our people-to-people relations have never been stronger, with two million Ecuadorians living in the United States and more than 30,000 Americans living in Ecuador. Our economies are closely linked: U.S. businesses are active in Ecuador and the United States is Ecuador's largest trading partner. Thousands of Ecuadorians travel each year to study in the United States, many of them on U.S. Government scholarships, and many more Americans and Ecuadorians visit each others' countries for tourism.

The most important role of the U.S. Embassy in Quito and Consulate General in Guayaquil is to provide assistance to U.S. citizens living or traveling abroad, and as Ambassador it is my responsibility to ensure that U.S. citizens who interact



with the U.S. mission are treated with the highest level of professionalism. Consular officers providing American Citizen Services are here to provide not only emergency assistance but also non-emergency services such as information on absentee voting, Selective Service registration, notarizing documents, and issuing U.S. passports.

Whether you are in Ecuador temporarily as a tourist or living here long-term, I urge you to enroll in the U.S. State Department's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) to receive the latest updates and information on travel in Ecuador. By connecting with us on STEP, which you can do at travelregistration.state.gov, we will be better able to assist you in the case of an emergency.

I wish you safe travels and success in your endeavors.

Best Regards,
Adam E. Namm

Embassy Quito is Looking for a New Warden in Esmeraldas

A warden is a private U.S. citizen who volunteers to assist the American Citizen Services unit by communicating with Americans in Ecuador, preparing for disasters and alerting Americans to emergency situations. Wardens provide updates on ongoing events to Americans in their district and assist in the enrollment of newcomers in the Department of State's [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\) program](#). In emergencies, wardens may be called upon to help locate missing Americans, or visit an American citizen in a jail or hospital.

If you are interested in becoming a warden, please contact us at ACSQuito@state.gov.

Other Warden responsibilities include:

Preparing, updating and maintaining a list of phone numbers and addresses (including email addresses) of U.S. citizens residing in the warden's area.

Assisting the American Citizens Services unit of the U.S. Embassy in selecting assembly areas and routes for use in the event of an evacuation in the warden's area.

In remote areas where Internet access is limited, Wardens can provide instructions and forms for routine consular services.

Wardens can also perform some functions on behalf of the Embassy to assist Americans in distress. For example, if the Consular Section receives a report that an American has been injured far from the capital, the Consular Section could ask a warden in the

area to visit the injured person in the hospital and report back on his/her condition.



As local residents, some Wardens may have useful contacts that they can call on for information and/or assistance in their areas. They can provide advice or information on local conditions to the Consular Office or perform specific services, such as taking possession of a deceased's American's belongings.



Don't Forget to Vote!

Have a say in our country's future. One of our most treasured values is the right and the privilege to vote – to participate actively in our country's democratic process. This November, U.S. citizens will elect a President, a Vice President, one-third of the Senate, and the entire House of Representatives. The U.S. Embassy in Ecuador encourages all U.S. citizens to participate in this year's elections, and stands ready to help you vote.

Almost all overseas U.S. citizens can vote. Twenty-two states and the District of Columbia now allow adult children who have never resided in the United States to vote using their parents' state of voting residence. Details are available on the FVAP website at <http://www.fvap.gov/reference/nvr-res.html>.

Register and request a ballot. To vote, new laws require you to complete and submit a Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) this calendar year. The FPCA allows you to register to vote and request an absentee ballot. If you haven't yet done so, we urge you to do so now. The easiest way to complete it is online at www.FVAP.gov. Depending on your State's rules, you then send it to your local election officials electronically or by mail.

Make your vote count! Follow your State's absentee voting procedures carefully. Send in your FPCA before the registration deadline. When you get your ballot, vote and mail it promptly so it reaches local election officials by your State's absentee ballot receipt deadline.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION: New absentee voting laws are in effect for the 2012 elections. You may no longer automatically receive ballots based on a previous absentee ballot request. All U.S. citizens outside the United States who want to vote by absentee ballot in U.S. elections should complete a new Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) every year. States are now required to send out ballots 45 days before an election. No matter what State you vote in, you can now ask your local election officials to provide your blank ballots to you electronically (by email, internet download, or fax, depending on your State). You can now also confirm your registration and ballot delivery online. Be sure to include your email address on the form to take advantage of the electronic ballot delivery option. This is the fastest and most reliable way to receive your ballot on time, and we strongly recommend every voter take advantage of it. Learn more at the Federal Voting Assistance Program's (FVAP) website at www.FVAP.gov.

Safe Travel in Ecuador

Ecuador is a beautiful country offering uncountable opportunities for excitement and adventure. An estimated 200,000 U.S. citizens visit each year while a smaller but significant number reside here permanently. Below are some suggestions to help U.S. citizens travel safer.

“ Enroll in the Department of State’s Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) and update your itinerary as you travel so that if you need an emergency service we are better able to serve you.”

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Whenever possible, leave your passport in a secure place at your hotel or place of residence (such as a safe or lock box) and travel with photocopies. When you must travel with your passport, keep it on your person. If using public transportation, keep your backpack in your lap.

Consider having a back-up credit card (and not relying only on cash, traveler’s checks or a single debit card) when traveling in Ecuador. This will come in handy if your primary source of funds is lost or stolen.

Find out before traveling if your health insurance covers care outside the United States and consider purchasing a supplementary traveler’s insurance for your trip (one that provides medical evacuation). Ecuadorian hospitals will not wait for an insurance payment; you will have to pay the entire cost up front and request reimbursement from your insurance company.

If you are considering adventurous activities such as hiking, bike riding, mountain climbing, zip-lining, or riding in off-road vehicles, consider some of these safety tips:

Make sure you are properly acclimated before attempting high altitude physical activities; remember that weather in the mountains can change dra-

matically, so be prepared for rain or cold, even if it is warm and sunny when you begin your ascent.

Carry sufficient food and water and make sure you are traveling with the proper safety equipment. Make back-up plans in case of poor weather or medical emergencies.

Consider using a travel guide and make sure he or she knows the area well where you will be hiking or climbing. Keep in mind, particularly for adventure activities, that guides may not be as well trained and equipment not as dependable as what you would expect back home in the United States. Ask for references from previous customers.

Since cell phone coverage is often non-existent when traveling outside of major cities, think about how you will communicate for help if something goes wrong (e.g. how far away is the base camp or travel lodge and do they have a two-way radio?).

Leave your travel plans and itinerary with someone (such as a hostel manager, host family, or a relative back in the United States), particularly when traveling “off the grid.”

Finally, keep up to date with current travel conditions in whichever country you are traveling through or residing in at travel.state.gov.



Outreach at Cotacachi Town Hall

On Thursday April 26th, 2012 members of the American Citizens Services unit conducted a town hall event in Cotacachi, Ecuador. In recent years Cotacachi has become a popular retirement and tourist destination for American citizens. The members of the Embassy team briefed citizens in attendance on the

types of routine and emergency services provided by the Embassy. Additionally a representative from the Federal Benefits unit gave a detailed presentation on how to manage one's social security benefits while living in Ecuador. Following the meeting, staff was available for personal questions, social security and

benefits processing, as well as to receive passport applications.

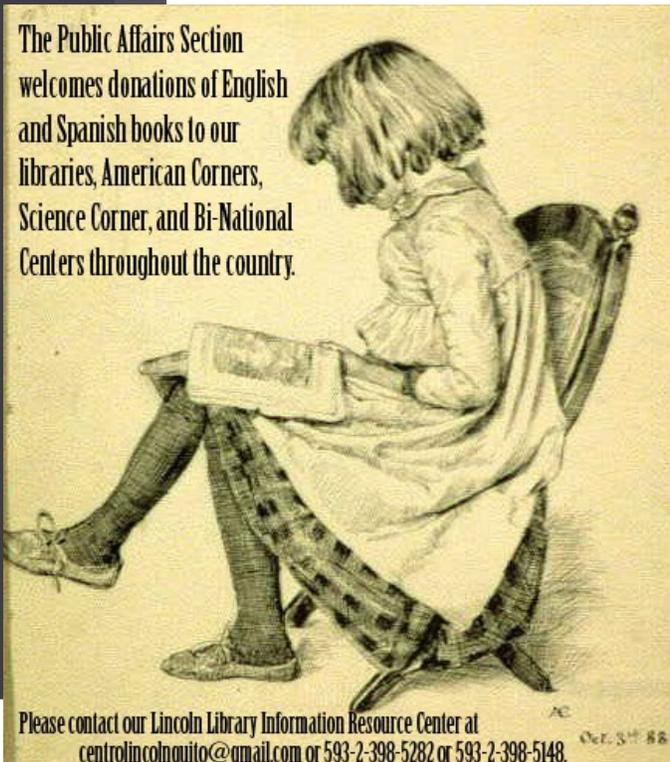
Special thanks to Warden Jack Moss and Den Delgado, for without their invaluable logistical assistance this event would not have taken place.

New ACS Handbook Available Online

The American Citizen Services unit has completed a new handbook for U.S. citizens traveling or living in Ecuador. It has information on the laws of Ecuador, what to do if you are the victim of crime, how to handle Ecuadorian visa issues and more. We will soon have printed copies available, but you can access it now online. As always, we appreciate your feedback.

Access the new ACS Handbook:
<http://ecuador.usembassy.gov/security-and-safety/american-citizen-services-handbook.html>

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Contact Us

Bureau of Consular Affairs: Secure Borders, Open Doors"

Embassy website: <http://ecuador.usembassy.gov>

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The telephone number for American Citizen Service inquiries is **(011 593-2) 398-5000**. Public call-in hours are Monday through Thursday 8:00 to 10:00 a.m. and Friday 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. For after-hours emergencies, call **(011 593-2) 398-5200**.

ADDRESS: Avigiras E12-170 y Eloy Alfaro

EMAIL: ACSQuito@state.gov