

New ambassador appointed to Guatemala in midst of insecurity



Newly appointed Ambassador to Guatemala Arnold Chacon will focus on working with the Guatemalan government, civil society, and the international community on reforms to Guatemalan rule of law. Photo: courtesy of La Prensa Libre.

"No country can overcome such challenges alone," [said Mr. Chacon](#). "The challenge is to achieve safety on the streets and to do that we need to work on many fronts. That requires a comprehensive regional strategy, because the threat is transactional."

Chacon will also [support](#) President Alvaro Colom's efforts to declassify almost 12,000 documents related to Guatemala's historic civil war crimes, and will reiterate to the private and public sectors the necessity to effectively enforce labor laws.

[According](#) to Milburn Line, executive director of the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice at the University of San Diego, while Guatemala has a legacy of weak state and justice agencies, "Ambassador Chacon has an equally historic opportunity to evolve our support towards a better partnership with Guatemala."

Arnold A. Chacon, a career diplomat, currently serves as the Deputy Chief of Mission at the Embassy in Madrid. [Prior to this assignment](#), Mr. Chacon served in various posts such as Director of Andean Affairs in the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, Deputy Chief of Mission in Ecuador, Political Counselor in Peru, Political Officer in Italy and Chile, Staff Assistant to the Chief of Mission in Mexico, and Political/Consular Officer in Honduras. Mr. Chacon also served as Deputy Director of Central American Affairs, and Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs.

On August 2, 2011 the U.S. Senate approved Arnold Chacon as the new ambassador to Guatemala. Ambassador Chacon will work alongside the government, civil society, and international community on reforms to rule of law in Guatemala, a country with one of the highest murder rates in the world, that which 98% of cases go unsolved.

This announcement was made not long after Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's visit to Guatemala City for the OAS summit on security in June.

Chacon [recognizes](#) drug trafficking, violence, impunity, corruption, chronic infant malnutrition, and lack of access to education and employment opportunities for young people as some of the biggest challenges facing Guatemala.