



NZIIA Auckland

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in association with the Latin American New Zealand Business Council, presents the following Public Address:

Ambassador Mario Alzugaray Rodríguez

(Cuban Ambassador to New Zealand)

**“Economic and political relations between Cuba
and the USA in a time of upheaval”**



Time, Date & Venue:

6.00 pm-7.30 pm,

Thursday, 11th August 2016

Lecture Theatre: OGHLeCTh/102-G36

Old Government House

The University of Auckland, Princes Street

Abstract:

The current warming in the relations between Cuba and the United States might not provide the best prediction of the long-term relationship. International relations everywhere are in a condition of flux. A very recent development of critical importance to foreign policies is the widespread disillusionment among the citizenry in the United States (as shown in the Primaries for both political parties) and in Europe (as shown in Brexit). An unease exists that national sovereignty, local democracy, and living standards, are shrinking in the shadow of international trade agreements and other measures favoured in the so-called Washington Consensus.

The larger context dates back to the arrival of the colonial powers in the Caribbean from 1492. Colonisation included the marginalisation of the indigenous people, and the shipment in of Africans for plantation labour. Cuban Independence in the 19th century led to a growth in Cuban national consciousness, which in the 20th century clashed with United States' foreign policy objectives in the Caribbean. The Revolution in 1959 marked a significant change in the relations between the two nations. An adversarial political and economic policy towards Cuba still appears in an agenda in the US Congress. By contrast, Cuba and New Zealand maintain amiable diplomatic and trade relations. The major export from New Zealand has so far been dairy products. The tourist industry in Cuba may provide opportunities for joint investment, particularly given New Zealand's long experience in tourism.

About the Speaker:

Ambassador Alzugaray presented his credentials as the Ambassador of Cuba to New Zealand in 2015, and is now accredited also to Fiji, Tuvalu, the Cook Islands, and Niue. A career diplomat, he joined the Cuban Foreign Service after graduating in international relations at the Higher Institute of International Relations in Havana in 1994. From 1997 to 1999 he studied the Chinese language at Peking University. He has had three diplomatic postings to China: two at the Embassy of Cuba in Beijing, and one in Shanghai as the Consul-General. His posting before his present position was as the Deputy Director of the Department of Asia Pacific, in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Havana.

Transport Options:

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