

Remarks by Professor Alexandra Huneus
U.S. Candidate for the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights
November 8, 2021

It has been the honor of a lifetime to be nominated for the Inter-American Commission.

Human rights work is not easy.

In human rights work, we see the cases of the greatest human suffering and injustice

- of people whose fundamental rights have been violated by those who should protect them;
- and whose lives or territories or families have been deeply harmed;
- of people whose dignity has been trampled.

But through human rights law and institutions, we also see the best side of our societies.

By building human rights systems, states have shown that they believe they can work together to make a more just world, and that they are willing to commit time and resources, and to submit to external, international review, to get there.

- Through the Inter-American Human Rights Systems, states and civil society and victims and scholars, lawyers, bureaucrats, all work together through the System because they believe that is the path to constructing a more just, equitable, democratic world.
- And while there are areas of disagreement around about what human rights and justice mean in particular cases, the system is premised on the idea that - overall - we have an important and fundamental shared sense of justice that we can best enact together – a belief in human rights, as declared in the American Declaration of 1948.

It is because I share this vision, and find it deeply inspiring, that I have devoted my life to work in human rights in the Americas.

And that is also why, were I to be elected commissioner, my abiding commitment would be:

- to make the Inter-American System as strong, rigorous, procedurally fair, efficient and impactful a system as possible;
- to shelter it from politics;
- And broaden and deepen its reach – including much greater engagement with the Caribbean;

and thus to bring us closer to that shared vision of a just, inclusive, democratic Americas.

Thank you for being here tonight. Thank you for your work in continually constructing the Inter-American System. Thank you for supporting human rights in the Americas.