



## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **STATEMENT BY CHAIRMAN ELIOT L. ENGEL ON RECENT EVENTS IN BOLIVIA**

(Washington, D.C.) – Today, Congressman Eliot L. Engel, the Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere, made the following statement regarding Bolivian President Evo Morales’s speech yesterday declaring U.S. Ambassador to Bolivia Philip Goldberg persona non grata and announcing his intent to expel Ambassador Goldberg from the country.

“I am outraged by President Morales’s declaration that Ambassador Goldberg will be asked to leave Bolivia. All of us in Washington have tried to show restraint in responding to President Morales’s deeply offensive personal attacks on our fine U.S. Ambassador in Bolivia, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and all other things American. But, this time Mr. Morales has gone too far.

“As a result of yesterday’s events, I plan to suspend all contact with the Bolivian Ambassador in Washington. I have also asked my staff to do the same.

“Given the litany of attacks and actions against the United States, I believe we should review every aspect of U.S. policy toward Bolivia – from foreign aid to our trade relationship.

“On a personal note, I am saddened by the Bolivian government’s treatment of Ambassador Goldberg. Phil is a good friend who I have known for many years. He is also one of our nation’s finest career diplomats. It would be a mistake for President Morales to believe that his treatment of Ambassador Goldberg will be seen in any better light by the Democratic majority in Congress than it is being seen by the Bush Administration. I believe that we are all united in viewing Mr. Morales’s treatment of Ambassador Goldberg as both shameful and provocative.”