

Written by Joseph G. Lariosa

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By JOSEPH G. LARIOSA

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## **U. S. Cabinet Official Named to Represent President Obama at Philippine Presidential Inaugural**

President Barack Obama named Friday (June 25) Trade Representative Ron Kirk to lead the presidential delegation to Manila, Philippines, to attend the inauguration of President Benigno S. Aquino II and Vice President Jejomar Binay on Wednesday (June 30).

Also named part of the delegation is U.S Ambassador to the Philippines, Harry K. Thomas, Jr., according to a press release received by this reporter from the White House in Washington

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D.C.

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As United States Trade Representative (USTR), Ambassador Kirk is a member of President Obama's Cabinet and serves as the President's principal trade advisor, negotiator and spokesperson on trade issues.

A mbassador Kirk was nominated to be United States Trade Representative by President Barack Obama and was confirmed by the United States Senate on March 18, 2009. During his tenure at

USTR

, Ambassador Kirk has led the office in developing trade policies that are proactive, responsible, and more responsive to American families' interests - recognizing that trade can be a job-creating pillar of economic recovery in the

United States

and around the world. Highlights have included a new focus on trade policy that assists America

's small- and medium-sized businesses, increased enforcement efforts to bring home the benefits of existing trade agreements, and changes to move forward the Doha Round of world trade negotiations.

Ambassador Kirk draws upon more than 25 years of diverse legislative and economic experience on local, state and federal levels. As the first African-American mayor of Dallas from 1995 to 2001, Ambassador Kirk expanded

Dallas

' reach to the world through a range of trade programs, including numerous trade missions.

Previously, he served as Texas Secretary of State under Governor Ann Richards; as a legislative aide to U.S. Senator Lloyd Bentsen (D-Tex.) and as chair of

Texas

' General Service Commission. Ambassador Kirk also served as a City of

Dallas

assistant city attorney.

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Prior to joining USTR, Ambassador Kirk was a partner at Vinson & Elkins LLP. He was named one of "The 50 Most Influential Minority Lawyers in America" by The National Law Journal in 2008, and one of the nation's top government relations lawyers by The Best Lawyers in America from 2007-2009.

Ambassador Kirk was born and raised in Austin, Texas. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree in political science and sociology from

Austin  
College  
in  
Sherman

,  
Texas

. He received his law degree from the University of Texas School of Law in 1979. He is married to Matrice Ellis-Kirk. He and his wife have two daughters, Elizabeth Alexandra and Catherine Victoria.

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