

(b)(3)

Jorge BATLLE
(Phonetic: BAHjay)

URUGUAY

President (since 1 March 2000)

Addressed as: Mr. President (b)(3)

I'm not going to change at this stage of my life: I'm going to go on saying what I think is good for the country. I'm not going to change because if I did, I'd surely do worse.

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Jorge Batlle comment, November 1999 (b)(3)



Lawyer and veteran politician Jorge Batlle in November 1999 fulfilled his lifelong dream of being elected president after running unsuccessfully four times since the mid-1960s. Batlle—representing the ruling Colorado Party (PC) and supported by the like-minded opposition National Party—defeated leftist candidate Tabare Vazquez in the runoff election late in 1999 following a tightly contested first round. Batlle, who brings an outward-looking economic perspective to the presidency, has pledged to increase international trade and foreign investment in Uruguay. He benefits from a coalition majority in congress, where he is likely to receive support for such key initiatives as addressing the negative effects of the struggling economies in neighboring Argentina and Brazil.

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(b)(3) Batlle is widely expected to continue former President (1985-90 and 1995-2000) Julio Maria Sanguinetti's domestic policies, including efforts to curb inflation and to lower unemployment. Embassy officials say that Batlle plans to play a more active role than Sanguinetti in regional and international affairs. (b)(3)

An Ally of the United States (b)(1)
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(b)(3) In contrast to the pro-European disposition of the Sanguinetti administration, Batlle— (b)(3) —is expected to pursue stronger bilateral relations with Washington.

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joining NAFTA and that he will place less emphasis on Southern Cone Common Market. He also prefers Uruguay's participation in the Free Trade Area of the Americas negotiations and is

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likely to advocate a bilateral tax or investment treaty with the United States [redacted]
[redacted] Battle, who is critical of EU agricultural subsidies, has called for the United States and other agricultural exporters to create a common front to challenge EU policies [redacted]

Career Politician (b)(3) (b)(1) (b)(3)

Battle was born on 25 October 1927 in Montevideo. He comes from a family of presidents that includes most recently his late father, former President (1947-51) Luis Battle Berres. Battle holds a law degree from the University of the Republic. He began his political career in 1945 when he joined List 15—a minority faction of the PC. During 1958-67 he was a deputy in the national Chamber of Deputies. He ran unsuccessfully for president in 1966, 1971, 1989, and 1994. During Uruguay's

military dictatorship (1973-84), Battle went underground as a representative of the PC in the Triumvirate, a clandestine party authority. With the restoration of civilian rule in 1984, Battle returned to the political arena as a senator until 1989. He was president of the PC from 1990 until 1995 when he was reelected senator, a post he held before his 1999 presidential bid [redacted]

Personal Data [redacted]

Battle is married to his second wife, Maria de las Mercedes Menafra; he has a daughter, a son, and three grandchildren from his first marriage. In his spare time, he enjoys reading, walking, and spending time in the countryside. Battle has a passion for old cars and is an avid fan of rowing and *Nacion*—one of the top soccer teams in Uruguay. Battle speaks fluent English, German, French, and Portuguese in addition to his native Spanish. [redacted] (b)(3)

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