

Mari Carmen Aponte

Mari Carmen Aponte is former acting assistant secretary of state for western hemisphere affairs. Previously, she served as U.S. ambassador to El Salvador. Prior to the Obama administration, Aponte practiced law for over twenty-five years. Her clients included a U.S. based Spanish-speaking national public service television network, as well as a major insurance company, and national nonprofits. At the turn of the century, she was the executive director of the Puerto Rican Federal Affairs Administration (PRFAA), the national mainland office of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. PRFAA managed all aspects of the Federal funding flow to Puerto Rico as well provide community services to Puerto Rican communities through a network of thirteen offices nationwide.

Aponte arrived in Washington, DC, in 1979 as a White House Fellow, where she served as special assistant to U.S. Housing and Urban Secretary Moon Landrieu.

Aponte has served as member of the board of directors of influential Hispanic organizations such as Unidos U.S., the Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund, the first woman to preside the Hispanic National Bar Association, and served on the board of a publicly traded corporation Oriental Financial Group (NYSE-OFG). She has been a member of the board of the University of the District of Columbia, as well as Rosemont College in Pennsylvania. Presently, she is a member of the board of visitors of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia.

Aponte has a bachelor's degree from Rosemont College, a master's in Theatre from Villanova University, and a JD from Temple University, and has honorary degrees from the University of the District of Columbia School of Law and Temple University in Philadelphia.