



Karen Lezny
2010 – 2014 Deputy Director General of IICA

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Karen M. Lezny, an expert in the field of international negotiations, took up her post as the Deputy Director General of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) for 2010 – 2014.

IICA, headquartered in Costa Rica, specializes in agriculture and rural well-being and has 34 Member States. The current Director General of the Institute is Victor M. Villalobos, from Mexico.

Villalobos called attention to her thorough knowledge of the Latin America and Caribbean region. He added that “She has had a highly successful career as the Deputy Assistant U.S. Trade Representative for the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA).”

He went on to say that IICA will benefit greatly from her many professional contacts with international institutions and government officials throughout the western hemisphere.

Experience and background

With almost 20 years at the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR), Ms. Lezny has extensive experience leading policy making on initiatives related to all aspects of trade negotiations, food security, economic and development policies, and small and medium enterprises (SMEs), among many others.

She has achieved successful implementation of trade-related initiatives as a result of close collaboration with senior officials in organizations such as the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the Organization of American States (OAS), and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), among others.

She is a graduate of the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, with a Master’s Degree in International Economics and Russian Studies. Her Bachelor’s Degree was in International Studies, also at the Johns Hopkins University.

Among other honors she has received the Meritorious Service Medal from the United States Environmental Protection Agency.

She is fluent in English and Spanish and has a working knowledge of French, Portuguese and Russian.

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