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Estoril Political Forum

Ladies and gentlemen

It is my privilege to welcome his Excellency the Ambassador Robert Sherman to the George Washington Memorial Lunch, as part of the current Estoril Political Forum 2014 under the theme "Reconsidering the Third Wave of Democratization".

Personally I have to congratulate the Institute for Political Studies for such an outstanding program and to thank its director, Prof. Espada for having invited me for being part of this event in memorial of one of my most admired heroes – George Washington. So allow me to say a few words about him.

In fact, I learned to appreciate very much the first *President of the United States and Commander in Chief of the Continental Army during the American Revolutionary War, and one of the Founding Fathers of the United States. He presided over the convention that drafted the United States Constitution, which replaced the Articles of Confederation and remains the supreme law of the land.*

Washington was elected president as the unanimous choice of the electors in the elections of both 1788–1789 and 1792. He oversaw the creation of a strong, well-financed national government that maintained neutrality in the wars raging in Europe, suppressed rebellion, and won acceptance among Americans of all types. His leadership style established many forms and rituals of government that have been used since, such as using a cabinet system and delivering an inaugural address. Further, his retirement after two terms and the peaceful transition from his presidency to that of John Adams established a tradition that continued up until Franklin D. Roosevelt

was elected to a third term. Washington was hailed as "father of his country" even during his lifetime.

Washington proclaimed the United States neutral in the wars raging in Europe after 1793. He avoided war with Great Britain and guaranteed a decade of peace and profitable trade by securing the Jay Treaty in 1795, despite intense opposition from the Jeffersonians. Although he never officially joined the Federalist Party, he supported its programs. Washington's Farewell Address was an influential primer on republican virtue and a warning against partisanship, sectionalism, and involvement in foreign wars. He retired from the presidency in 1797 and returned to his home, Mount Vernon, and his domestic life where he managed a variety of enterprises. He freed all his slaves by his final will.

At his death, Washington was eulogized as "first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen" by Henry Lee.

However I'm not the today's lunch speaker and so I must pass the floor or the chair to Mrs. Anne Taylor, for introducing the honorable Ambassador Robert Sherman who I welcome again to this event and also to Portugal, a country I'm sure he will enjoy, as well as his wife, Mrs. Kim Sawyer. Both I saw on a video clip at the Embassy's site and learned that they know already a lot about our country including that there are one thousand and one ways to cook dry cod fish.

Mrs. Anne Taylor, please, the floor is yours.