

**Sonia Rodríguez-Disla**  
Email: [sonini50@gmail.com](mailto:sonini50@gmail.com)

### **Summary**

I worked for the U.S. Department of State in the Public Affairs Section at the American Embassy in Santo Domingo, for 29 and a half years. I held the position of Press Assistant for ten years and was Director of the Information Resource Center (IRC) for 19+ years. Under my direction the IRC became leader in the region because of its continuous innovation in using state of the art information technology. My main areas of expertise: special library management, information research, web design and content management, and creation of outreach programs. I am fully bilingual in English and Spanish with excellent writing skills in both languages and able to translate to and from both languages. In both positions held at the U.S. Embassy, I was responsible for the design and content of outreach materials such as brochures, newsletters, invitations, power-point presentations, etc. I have experience translating from Spanish-English and vice versa. My position in the press section included translation of the ambassador speeches and the various annual reports on the country issued by the U.S. Department of State and the Human Rights Watch. My writing abilities also include press releases, feature stories, funding proposals, employee performance evaluation, website content, among others. I am currently retired and doing documents and legal translations for a law firm in Virginia and Maryland.

**Education** : B.A. Communication Arts & Sciences, June 1977, Queens College, New York.

### **Experience**

: 1993 to 2012 - U.S. Department of State, American Embassy, Santo Domingo -- **DIRECTOR OF THE INFORMATION RESOURCE CENTER (IRC)**, Public Affairs Section, American Embassy.

The Center offered the only open-stack library in the country with a print and electronic collection focused on U.S. studies and Latin American affairs. I developed a selective dissemination of information service to target Dominican opinion makers, legislators, government officials and political leaders. I maintained a research service for key Dominican audience that included the Fernandez Administration's presidential office of research. I supervised the embassy's webpage. In 2004, I created and maintained a virtual library, the first of its kind set up by a U.S. embassy that set a new standard for IRC services. The success of the Virtual Library, which was receiving more than one million hits a month, was brought to the attention of then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and other high-level State Department officials. Besides offering access to reliable resources in Spanish, freely available on Internet, it offered online access to commercial databases, a resource out of reach for most Dominicans. Our IRC also became leader in the region for its use of social media for outreach activities. My last project was the creation of "Click & Read," an eBook-lending service. This project put the Public Affairs Section in Santo Domingo at the forefront of alternative solutions to offer new embassy services through evolving technology options. I also acted as backup translator for ambassador speeches and official reports.

: 1983 to 1993 - U.S. Department of State, American Embassy, Santo Domingo -- **PRESS ASSISTANT**, Public Affairs Section, American Embassy.

I was responsible for drafting and disseminating press releases and feature stories. I provided information on U.S. issues upon request by members of the Dominican media and the public in general. I was responsible for the translation of the ambassador's speeches, statements for the media and other important U.S. Government annual reports on the Dominican Republic, such as the human rights, trafficking in persons report and the Country Commercial Guide, among others. I also reviewed eight local newspapers and prepared a daily summary for key embassy officials. I coordinated the transmission via satellite of the WORLDNET program (interviews with U.S. government officials with the participation of Dominican press and personalities).

: 1981 to 1983 - Suzuki Dominicana -- **ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT**.

Maintained control of letters of credit, orders, and acted as personnel manager.

: 1979 to 1980 - Conklin Shows International, Toronto, Canada -- **ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT**.

Responsible for securing local legal, banking, insurance and other services in Santo Domingo, Panama, Venezuela, Puerto Rico and Miami. Translated legal documents and acted as interpreter during negotiations. Assisted in hiring local temporary staff. Maintained contact with promoters in Santo Domingo, Panama and Venezuela.

: 1977 to 1979 - Diamond, Hallinan & Polasek (legal firm), New York City -- **PARALEGAL**.

In charge of processing immigration cases; interview prospective clients, prepare witnesses before trials, among other duties. This firm represented 14 Latin American consulates. We frequently coordinated meetings, conferences and luncheons for diplomats and executives of Latin American companies.

: 1974 to 1977 - Police Department (24<sup>th</sup> Precinct), City of New York -- **POLICE OFFICE ASSOCIATE**.

Diversified secretarial and clerical responsibilities. Prepared reports of all incidents occurred during my tour; refer cases to appropriate department or agency; occasional 10-lines switchboard duty; notification of relatives of sick, injured or hospitalized persons.

**Highest U.S. State Department award for foreign national employees:**

: 1996 – Was awarded the **Foreign Service National of the Year Award** of the Office of Inter-American Affairs, for creating a state-of-the-art information center in the Dominican Republic (regional award).

: 2007 - Post Nominee for **Foreign Service National of the Year**

For conceiving and implementing the Virtual Library and continuing to innovate in creating a unique Public Affairs programming tool.

Many other awards were granted.

Note: recommendations and/or employee performance evaluations can be furnished upon request.