

Howard Gutman

U.S. Ambassador to Belgium

U.S. affairs writer Philippe Paquet of La Libre decided to devote the daily page-two “personality of the day” article to U.S. Ambassador Howard Gutman.

“Hillary Clinton, who is finishing her mandate as Secretary of State, took advantage of what should be her last visit to Belgium in that capacity to meet with the staff of the three U.S. diplomatic Missions in Brussels. She especially saluted the balance sheet of Howard Gutman – a Democrat who is close to Obama – who has been unique in restoring the Belgian-U.S. relations which had seriously suffered under the Presidency of George W. Bush.

“Hillary Clinton pointed out that, in 2007, only 8 percent of Belgians surveyed had a favorable view of the United States and that, today, that percentage had gone up to 46 percent, which is the highest increase in the world.

“To obtain that result, Howard Gutman spared no effort, undertaking to visit each of the 589 communes and municipalities – of which he still only has a few to visit – and becoming such a well-known personality in Belgium that there is no doubt that he would be elected if he were to run at an election.

“But the Secretary also underlined that he would not have succeeded without the support of the locally employed staff whom Hillary Clinton praised for being ‘incredibly committed and talented.’ Journalists who work with the press person of the Embassy, Pierre Manderlier, will not contradict her.”