

AMERICAN DIPLOMACY PROJECT

# A U.S. Diplomatic Service for the 21st Century

Ambassador Nicholas Burns

Ambassador Marc Grossman

Ambassador Marcie Ries




HARVARD Kennedy School

**BELFER CENTER**

for Science and International Affairs

**REPORT**

NOVEMBER 2020



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**A U.S. Diplomatic Service for the 21st Century**  
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# American Diplomacy Project

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## Note from the Authors

This report focuses on the future of the Foreign Service of the United States. It is not a comprehensive reform plan for the State Department. The vital Civil Service component of the State Department needs to be freed from its antiquated personnel system and other constraints; the Department should be a test bed for Civil Service reform. The Department's courageous Locally Employed Staff are crucial to America's overseas diplomacy and their needs must be a priority for the next administration. There are proud members of the Foreign Service at the U.S. Agency for International Development, Foreign Agricultural Service, Foreign Commercial Service, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, and U.S. Agency for Global Media who we hope will benefit from ideas in this report. We trust the future will hold more contact and collaboration among these groups.

The three of us are retired members of the Foreign Service who served at every rank from Junior Officer to Ambassador in our careers. We hope this nonpartisan report will contribute to a national debate to support an irreplaceable instrument of American power and effectiveness around the world.

# Executive Summary

The United States Foreign Service is confronting one of the most profound crises in its long and proud history. At a time of pandemic, recession, and mounting global challenges, our nation's career diplomats find themselves without the support, funding, training, and leadership they need to represent the American people effectively overseas and in Washington, D.C.

We argue in this report that the United States needs a strong and high performing Foreign Service to defend our country and advance its interests in the 21st century. That is why President-elect Biden and Congress should launch a major bipartisan initiative to revive, reform, and reimagine the Foreign Service.

Many of the most serious challenges the United States will face in 2021 and beyond will require our diplomats to take the lead. These include the return of great power competition, leading a global response to the pandemic and its consequences, supporting American companies overseas during a devastating recession, mounting a major effort on climate change, negotiating an end to the Afghan and Iraq wars, and helping American citizens in every corner of the world who need the support of their government. Morale in the State Department, however, is at an all-time low and efforts to promote greater racial and ethnic diversity have failed just when the country needs women and men of all backgrounds as our primary link to nearly every country in the world. There are challenges to be met inside the Foreign Service, including an honest self-assessment of the Service's internal culture.

Just as the United States succeeded in renewing both the military and intelligence agencies in recent decades, we must now do the same for our diplomats and diplomacy.

Under the auspices of the nonpartisan American Diplomacy Project at the Harvard Kennedy School, we met during the past year in 40 workshops and meetings with more than 200 people. They included serving State Department Officers, retired Foreign Service members, foreign diplomats, business leaders, and senior U.S. military officers, including two former Chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, as well as two former CIA Directors and retired intelligence officials.

We sought the advice of senior Trump administration officials, members of the Biden transition team, former National Security Advisors and Secretaries of State, as well as members of Congress and their staffs from both parties.

In addition, we met more than 800 Americans in virtual conferences with think tanks, the University of Nebraska–Lincoln, and with World Affairs Councils in one national meeting and with chapters in Dallas/Fort Worth, Texas; Peoria, Illinois; Nashville, Tennessee; Cleveland, Ohio; and Boston, Massachusetts.

In every meeting, we listened to, and benefited from, the advice of concerned citizens who agree it is time to elevate diplomacy as a major national priority. To accomplish this, we must reimagine the Foreign Service for the current generation and those to come.

Finally, we hope to honor with this call to action the women and men of the Service who work each day to promote and protect our great nation in difficult and dangerous places around the world. They deserve our full support. The time has come to help them rebuild the U.S. Foreign Service and Department of State.

## **10 Actions to Reimagine American Diplomacy and Reinvent the Foreign Service**

Around the world, the face of the United States is embodied in the women and men of the U.S. Foreign Service. To ensure that we have the most robust and effective diplomatic corps in the world, we recommend these 10 actions:

1. **President-elect Biden and Congress should define a new mission and mandate for the Foreign Service**, and launch an urgent nonpartisan initiative to reform, rebuild, and reimagine the diplomatic corps.
  - Together, the President and Congress should restore the State Department's lead role in executing the nation's foreign policy and reaffirm the role of American Ambassadors overseas as the President's personal representatives.
  - They should strengthen budgetary support for the Foreign Service so that it is the strongest and most able diplomatic corps in the world.



2. **Congress should pass a new Foreign Service Act** to reshape the Service for the decades ahead and set the highest standards for diplomatic readiness, expertise, and leadership.
  - There have been only three such acts in the previous 100 years and the most recent was 40 years ago. A new act would establish a new strategic mandate and mission for a strengthened Foreign Service and guidelines for many of the actions proposed below. A new act, based upon what is best about the 1980 act, is essential to catalyze the transformational change that is needed.
  - Just as past Presidents and Congress undertook successful initiatives to renew the armed forces after Vietnam and the intelligence agencies after 9/11 and the Iraq War, a new act could serve as the foundation for a true 21st century Foreign Service.
3. **Challenge the Foreign Service to transform its internal culture** by incentivizing greater innovation, smart risk taking, individual accountability, inclusive management, and visionary leadership.
  - Establish institutional service requirements for promotion to include participation in recruiting, service on promotion panels, teaching assignments at the Foreign Service Institute, and mentoring.
  - Instill an ethos of stewardship of the profession of diplomacy by creating a Seniors Panel of all diplomats with the rank of Career Ambassador charged with promoting resilience, readiness, and inclusion for the diplomatic service.
4. **Direct a relentless focus on diversity as a first-order strategic priority.** Diversity is an essential element of producing high performance. America's diplomats should be representative of the American people, their values, and their aspirations.

The next Secretary and Deputy Secretary of State must lead this effort. They should:

- Take personal responsibility to achieve this goal.
- Appoint a Chief Diversity Officer and be transparent about progress.

- Seek legislation to establish and fund a large-scale diplomatic ROTC program for under-represented college students seeking a career in the Foreign and Civil Services.
  - Eliminate structural and procedural bias within recruitment, entry, assignment, and promotion processes.
  - Enforce accountability for diversity, inclusion, and mentoring by all managers.
  - Make promotions from junior to mid-level to senior ranks dependent on success in helping to create a more diverse Foreign Service.
5. **Strengthen the professionalization of our diplomats** through a vastly expanded career-long program of education and training that focuses on mastery of substantive foreign policy issues, diplomatic expertise, and leadership.
- Seek congressional authorization and funding for a 15 percent increase in Foreign Service personnel levels to create a training float like that maintained by the U.S. military. We recommend an increase of 2,000 positions over three years to meet this goal.
6. **Initiate a wholesale overhaul of the personnel system** to make it more modern, flexible, transparent, and strategically oriented to future challenges and workforce needs.
- Make multifunctional competence in political, economic, public diplomacy, consular, and management skills the standard for professional success and promotion by eliminating the individual “cones,” which separate Officers into job categories.
  - After the 15 percent increase in positions is achieved, launch a four-year commitment to increase the size of the Foreign Service by another 1,400-1,800 positions to fill current and projected staffing gaps.
  - Reduce the size of the massive embassies created to support the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and other large overseas outposts.
  - Prioritize development of regional and linguistic expertise through mandatory multiple tours using languages studied.
  - Instill more flexibility in personnel policies to address the needs of a globally deployed workforce and their family members.

7. **Create a defined mid-level entry program** so that the Foreign Service can recruit and employ Americans with critical or unique skills in areas such as technology, science, business, and engineering. This program must have rigorous, transparent, nonpolitical entry and retention requirements, including worldwide availability. It can also be a vehicle to expand the diversity of the Foreign Service and provide for the return of some who left the Service in recent years.
8. **Seek legislative authorization and funding for a Diplomatic Reserve Corps**, like the military, with annual training requirements and activation commitments. This will create a surge capacity in the event of a national emergency or international crisis and open opportunities for citizens with special skills to support American diplomacy.
  - Reservists would provide a positive connection between their communities and the Foreign Service.
9. **Create a stronger and more nonpartisan Foreign Service** by expanding the number of ambassadorial and senior Washington assignments for career professionals. The Department of State has more Senate-confirmed political appointee positions than any other Executive Branch agency.<sup>1</sup> Currently, there is not a single serving career official in the 23 Senate-confirmed Assistant Secretary positions, which is unprecedented in the modern history of the State Department.<sup>2</sup>
  - The next administration should seek by 2025 to:
    - Appoint career professionals to 90 percent of all ambassadorial positions.
    - Appoint a career professional to the position of Under Secretary for Political Affairs and one of the other five Under Secretaries of State.
    - Appoint career professionals to 75 percent of all Assistant Secretary of State positions.
    - Mandate these guidelines in legislation to promote a strengthened and more nonpartisan Foreign Service.
  - This would bring the Foreign Service into symmetry with the small number of political appointee positions in the senior ranks of the military, the Central Intelligence Agency, and the National Security Agency.

10. **Rename the Foreign Service of the United States as the “United States Diplomatic Service”** to signal transformation and to reinforce the vital role our diplomats perform in service to our nation. A name that begins with the term “foreign” and ends with “United States” is the reverse of how we should view America’s diplomats.



The C Street lobby of the U.S. Department of State

## Action 1

# Redefine the Mission and Mandate of the U.S. Foreign Service

The President and Congress should launch in early 2021 an urgent nonpartisan initiative to revive, reform, rebuild, and reimagine the Foreign Service of the United States.

The President should designate the State Department, and with it the U.S. Foreign Service, as the lead U.S. government agency in executing relations with every country and international organization on the full range of diplomatic, political, security, and other issues.

The mission of the Foreign Service is to represent the interests of the American people overseas through the 275 U.S. embassies and consulates<sup>3</sup> in every part of the world and to provide foreign policy expertise in Washington. This central mission will be increasingly vital in the decade ahead as our nation confronts the return of great power competition, especially an increasingly assertive China; the COVID-19 pandemic; a global recession, which makes economic diplomacy an ever increasing requirement; and the threats produced by climate change, terrorism, and trying to end wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, and elsewhere in ways that support American interests and values.



All Americans should want their Foreign Service to be the strongest, most knowledgeable, and highest performing diplomatic corps in the world. America's diplomats should be the U.S. government's deepest substantive experts on the world outside our borders – the politics, economics, security, culture, and languages of each country on every continent.



U.S. embassies (clockwise from top left) New Delhi, London, Berlin, and Tunis

The Foreign Service, however, is facing one of the most profound crises in its long and proud history. It is underfunded and understaffed and in need of stronger career and non-career leadership. In recent years, it has lost key personnel at the ambassadorial and junior ranks. Its record on diversity is not acceptable. There are also crucial challenges that must be met inside the Foreign Service, including an honest self-assessment of the Service's internal culture. Morale is at an all-time low. The Service is in danger of losing its capacity to serve the American people effectively.

That is why major reform is so urgent in 2021. We believe:

- The State Department should have a major role in formulating U.S. foreign policy along with other Cabinet agencies and the National Security Council. It should be clearly designated as the lead in executing the nation's foreign policy through our Ambassadors and their embassy staffs.
- The next President should clearly reaffirm and reinforce the Ambassador's lead role as the President's personal representative. This remains the keystone to the successful coordination and functioning of America's relationships with the rest of the world. Before taking up their duties, all Ambassadors receive a letter from the President detailing their authorities over U.S. government policies and personnel. While many government agencies have representatives stationed overseas in U.S. embassies and consulates, the President should ensure that the Ambassador's role is clear, paramount, safeguarded, and unassailable. Since 9/11, the role and authority of Ambassadors has too often been challenged or overridden leading to confusion and a lack of cohesiveness in some of our embassies. Our embassy country teams – the representatives of various federal agencies led by the Ambassador – work remarkably well as long as the Ambassador's authority is acknowledged and respected.

Together, the President and Congress should also expand the size of the Foreign Service and provide it with far greater budgetary support. To start, the budget should be increased to create a 15 percent training float to radically increase opportunities for professional education and training, which we recommend in Action 5. Fifteen percent is the number the military has used successfully. This increase would be 2,000 personnel at a cost of approximately \$400 million to be accomplished over three years, which would allow that percentage of employees to be in training at any given time. We believe it must be authorized and funded into the future in the new Foreign Service Act we propose in Action 2. The act must also specify that these positions are for professional education and training and not for filling other personnel shortfalls.

- After the 15 percent increase in positions is achieved, the President and Congress should launch a four-year commitment to increase the size of the Foreign Service by another 1,400-1,800 positions to fill current and projected staffing gaps.



- The next President and Congress should also improve integration, both in Washington and overseas, between the State Department and other agencies with foreign affairs officers, such as the U.S. Agency for International Development, the Commerce Department, and the Agriculture Department. Closer integration will provide greater and more effective strategic alignment of the men and women who represent us overseas.
- In Washington, the State Department and Foreign Service should chair or co-chair the interagency working groups below the Deputies Committee organized by the National Security Council as some administrations have done in the past.

America needs a nonpartisan Foreign Service, like the U.S. military and intelligence community, that provides expertise and continuity no matter which political party is in power in the White House.

America also needs a stronger Foreign Service because diplomacy will be more important for our security in the next decade. Many of the most difficult challenges we face are transnational – problems that know no borders and will require our diplomats to take the lead for the United States. Few of these challenges can be resolved by the United States acting alone. For the country to meet these threats to our security and freedom, our Foreign Service Officers will need to be the nation's experts in the diplomacy required to sustain alliances such as NATO, create coalitions to fight future pandemics, counter terrorists and drug cartels, and represent us on the front lines all over the world.

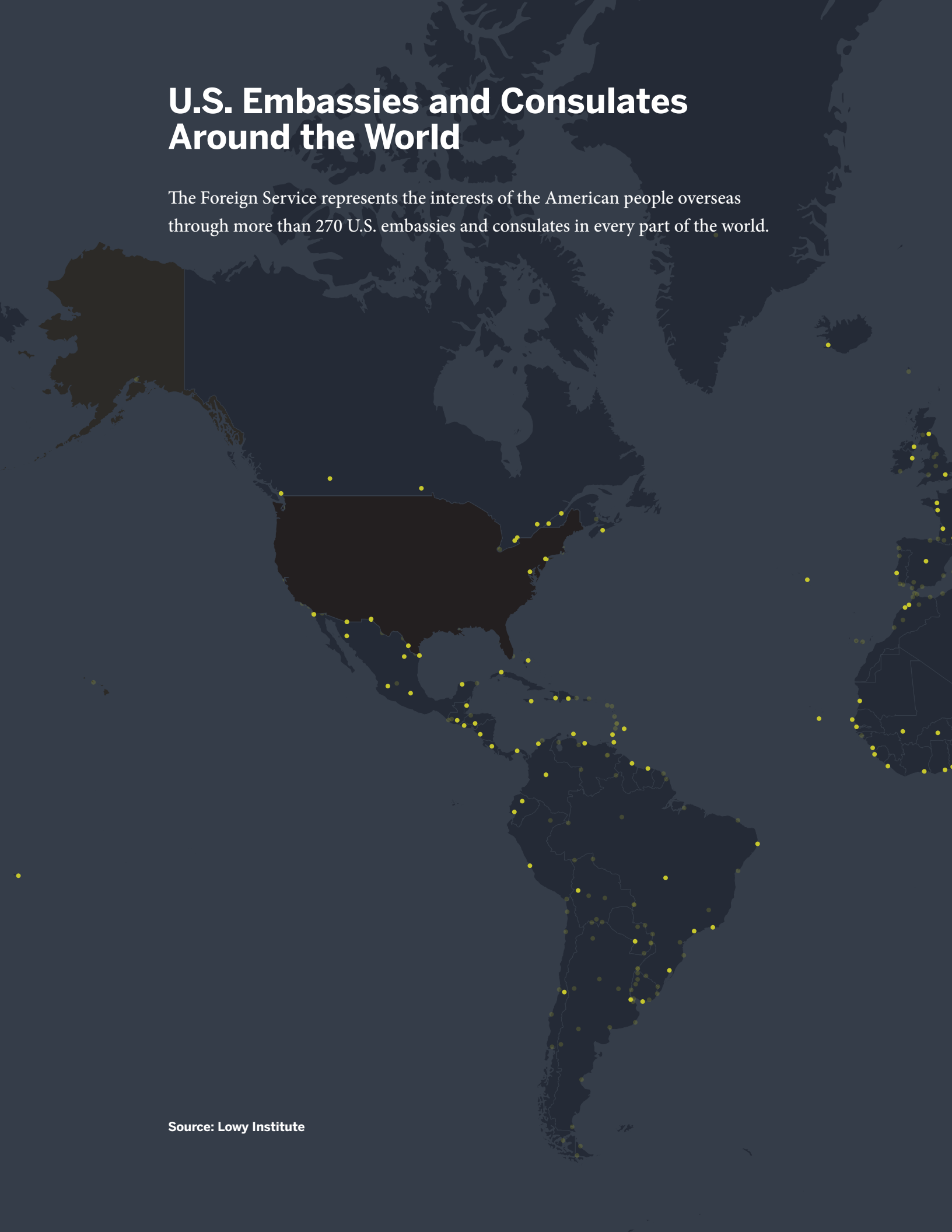
Our career diplomats also need to be connected more directly to the American people they serve. Since the United States first sent diplomats overseas at the beginning of the republic, a core mission has been to help American citizens in distress, to issue birth certificates and passports, to help American businesses succeed in promoting exports and services, and to assist American universities and service and civic organizations to achieve their own aims in every country.

Renewing their mission and mandate would support and honor the men and women of the Foreign Service who deserve no less.

# U.S. Embassies and Consulates Around the World

The Foreign Service represents the interests of the American people overseas through more than 270 U.S. embassies and consulates in every part of the world.

Source: Lowy Institute





## Action 2

# Revise the Foreign Service Act

It is time for a new Foreign Service Act.

The world has changed profoundly since 1980 when the last Foreign Service Act was passed by Congress.

Forty years on, the U.S. faces an entirely new set of diplomatic challenges – great power rivalry with China and Russia, the global COVID-19 pandemic, the global recession, the attacks of 9/11, the continuing threat of terrorism, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the systems to deliver them.

There is also an urgent need to address the effects of a globalized economy that has benefitted millions at home and abroad but has simultaneously left behind too many of our fellow citizens who have lost their communities, jobs, respect, health, and belief in the future. Other opportunities and challenges abound: the existential threat of climate change and the radical disruption brought on by technology, scientific breakthroughs, the Internet, social media, and artificial intelligence. The foundations we knew, or thought we knew, of a democratic approach to governance – pluralism, skepticism, a belief in science and progress, the rule of law, and the sanctity of the individual – have come under attack and need to be reaffirmed.

Each of these changes has an impact on how the U.S. conducts its diplomacy. When we joined the Service, much of our time was spent observing and reporting back to Washington. These skills are still vital, but America's diplomats must also have the knowledge and tools to work faster, smarter, more nimbly, and



Acting Consul General Bill Bent assists U.S. citizens to evacuate at El Salvador International Airport in March 2020. More than 100,000 American citizens worldwide were brought home by the State Department early in the pandemic. (*Foreign Service Journal*)

efficiently to confront today's challenges. The Foreign Service needs a renewed mission from Congress so that it can better represent the American people overseas in the world of 2020 and 2030.

Calling for a new Foreign Service Act is not without risk. New legislation must retain the best of the 1980 act, including, crucially, the fundamental mission of creating the strongest, most effective diplomatic service in the world, the vital leadership role of Ambassadors, the requirement that the Service be based on merit principles with admission through impartial and rigorous examination, ratings and rank ordering by peer promotion boards, worldwide availability, and the separation of those who do not meet standards of performance. The act also contains clear but consistently ignored criteria for political appointee Ambassadors that should be reaffirmed. Other parts of the 1980 act to keep include: the idea



Ambassador Jean Manes discusses U.S. security cooperation in Latin America and the Caribbean. (State Department Photo)

that a corps of senior professional experts will be the primary advisors on policy formation and implementation for the elected political leadership; that the professional corps should be structured through rank-in-person, rather than rank being designated by position<sup>3</sup>; clear provisions for ensuring diversity; the distinctive pay and benefits that should be earned by those willing to meet the demands and risks of serving their country overseas; a separate and fully funded retirement system; and the recognized role of the American Foreign Service Association in the employee-management system.<sup>4</sup> We would oppose new legislation that does not retain what is right about the current act.

We believe that the administration should partner with Congress to seek new legislation to catalyze transformational change in the Foreign Service and set the highest standards for diplomatic performance, readiness, expertise, and leadership. Our country has launched major efforts in the recent past to renew the military and intelligence agencies. For the U.S. military that was the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986. For the intelligence community (IC) it was the Intelligence Reform and Terrorist Prevention Act of 2004. Now is the time to reform American diplomacy.

One point we heard from our military and intelligence colleagues was that a brutally honest self-examination of their own cultures was the foundation of the legislative reforms that followed. The Goldwater-Nichols Act made many significant changes to the nation's military structures and procedures. They included mandating ways to improve the advice provided to the President, the National Security Council, and the Secretary of Defense. It also placed clear responsibility on commanders to accomplish assigned missions and ensured they had the authority to carry them out. Additionally, the act called for increased attention to the formulation of strategy and contingency planning. Crucially, the act demanded a culture of “jointness” or unity in the military services, especially among senior career officers, by requiring them to have professional experience outside their service to advance their careers.<sup>5</sup> Each of these ideas has direct relevance to a reform of America's diplomatic corps.

In 2004, Congress passed the Intelligence Reform and Terrorist Prevention Act (IRTPA), which significantly changed the way the intelligence community operates. Particularly relevant to our effort are the personnel reforms pursued by the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) after passage of the IRTPA. For example, a planning effort was designed specifically to broaden the IC's talent pool. The ODNI created the Joint Duty Program, which mirrors the “jointness” concept in Goldwater-Nichols. IC employees need to complete a 12-month rotation in another agency as a prerequisite to joining senior ranks.<sup>6</sup>

Of our 10 actions to reimagine American diplomacy and reinvent the Foreign Service, most would benefit from inclusion in new legislation. There are more details about each of them in their respective sections of this report.

Here are several examples of how they would form the core of a new act:

- The new mission and mandate for the Foreign Service would be most powerful if they were agreed to by both the President and Congress. In turn, Congress should require annual accountability for diplomatic readiness and a review of the State Department's efforts to engage in strategic foresight and plan for future needs. (Action 1)
- The principle of a nonpartisan diplomatic service would be powerfully reinvigorated by mandating a 10 percent limit on non-career Chief of Mission appointments overseas to be phased in over five years, requiring that the Under Secretary for Political Affairs be a career professional, and further requiring that one of the remaining four Under Secretary positions be filled by a career professional. The new act should mandate that 75 percent of Assistant Secretary level positions also be career appointees. (Action 9)
- The promotion of a diverse and inclusive diplomatic service would be encouraged by establishing and permanently authorizing funding for a diplomatic ROTC program for underrepresented college students seeking a career of public service and authorizing paid internships that are also securely funded into the future. (Action 6)
- The further professionalization of America's diplomats would be enabled by overhauling the personnel system to include legislative authorization and secure funding into the future for a 15 percent increase (2,000 positions) in Foreign Service personnel levels to create a training float like that maintained by the U.S. military. The law should also mandate as requirements for promotion assignments for diplomats with defense, intelligence, and economic agencies to encourage greater collaboration and demonstrated commitment to diversity. A new act should also set key milestones for training, education, and institutional service. (Actions 1 and 5)
- Readiness to meet future challenges would be enhanced by authorizing and securely funding into the future a Diplomatic Reserve Corps with annual training requirements and activation commitments to create both a surge capacity in the event of a national emergency or international crisis and the opportunity for Americans who are not in the Foreign Service to serve their nation. (Action 8)
- The vital core function our diplomats perform in service to our nation's citizens and interests needs to be reflected in a new name: The United States Diplomatic Service. (Action 10)

## Action 3

# Change the Culture

This report makes clear the importance of changing the Foreign Service's mindset if our recommendations for professionalization in Action 5 are to be successful. The near unanimous verdict in our workshops and personal conversations is that the serious problems in the Service's internal culture contribute substantially to the crisis it faces today.

Senior military and intelligence colleagues told us that an intensive self-examination was the foundation of their own internal reform. If the Foreign Service is to meet the present and future needs of the American people, our nation's diplomats must look rigorously into their own culture and commit to reform the Service itself.

It is important to start by recognizing what is best about Foreign Service culture. People join and stay in the Service because they are deeply patriotic and believe in service to the nation. Foreign Service Officers and their families make great sacrifices to promote America's interests. America's diplomats are dedicated to



U.S. Ambassador Thomas Pickering addresses the United Nations Security Council during debate on a resolution concerning the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait, which was adopted on October 29, 1990. (United Nations Photo)



living up daily to their oath of office: “to protect and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies foreign and domestic and to bear true faith and allegiance to the same.” The best U.S. diplomats are optimistic and hard-working, care about the welfare of their colleagues, are curious about other cultures, and are highly professional.

What parts of the culture make our diplomats’ job more difficult? Many examples were described vividly in our workshops and conversations, including:

- There is a reluctance to speak truth to power, a lack of individual accountability, and the pursuit of risk avoidance over risk management.
- There is an aversion to professional education and training. Lifelong learning is seen at worst as a diversion from career advancement and at best as a respite from work.
- There is insufficient emphasis on strategic program development and execution.
- Because career success depends heavily on personal mentorship and sponsorship, the requirement to advance the goals of diversity and inclusion are too often ignored. The existing informal mentorship and sponsorship culture benefits those “who look like you.”
- An internal caste system ranks some job categories as more important than others. This includes the Foreign Service “cone” system, which assigns Officers to an economic, public diplomacy, political, consular, or management cone. That creates distrust both inside the Foreign Service and between the Foreign Service and the Civil Service.
- There is a debilitating lack of diversity and absence of a culture of inclusion. This has a direct, negative impact on the performance of the Service.
- Despite recent efforts to change, inflexible personnel policies make it hard to meet the needs of some employees and their partners and families.

**Changing culture is probably the most difficult and time consuming to achieve.**

The Service must commit to transforming its internal culture by incentivizing a commitment to reform, innovation, smart risk taking, individual accountability, inclusive and caring management, loyalty to the institution, career-long learning, and visionary internal leadership. And it must be encouraged, supported, and held accountable by those outside the Service who wish it well and need it to succeed.

Of the 10 actions we propose in this report, changing the culture is probably the most difficult and time consuming, but it has the most promise to unleash the potential that we believe is in America's diplomats. There is no "one size fits all" package of policies to achieve this most elusive but necessary goal. The Service should review what has worked and what has failed in the government and private sectors. As we argue in Action 2, a new Foreign Service Act will encourage and help discipline the effort to create a culture to serve as the foundation for a diplomatic service of the future.

What would reflect a successfully changing culture?

- Career and non-career leadership make it a priority to get the culture right by relentlessly articulating a vision and then acting as role models of desired behavior.
- Business practices and, crucially, organizational rituals are created and adopted that bend the curve toward transformative cultural change and then are consolidated into everyday habits.
- Systematic efforts are made to devolve responsibility to the lowest possible levels, including a dramatic streamlining of clearance processes and a flattened organizational structure with fewer bureaus and enforceable limits on the number of Deputy Assistant Secretaries.
- Institutional service is honored because it is the right thing to do and then is made a requirement for promotion. This service would include participation in recruiting and promotion panels, mentoring colleagues, teaching assignments at the Foreign Service Institute, and actively and demonstrably focusing on increasing the Service's diversity and practicing real inclusion.

- Stewardship of the profession of diplomacy is encouraged through creation of a Seniors Panel of all diplomats with the rank of Career Ambassador charged with promoting the resilience, readiness, diversity, and inclusion of the diplomatic service.
- New personnel policies are adopted that provide increased flexibility for Foreign Service employees to balance their careers and the needs of family members.
- There is accountable and enthusiastic participation at all levels in a program of career-long education and adoption of educational achievement as a positive norm for promotion and the best assignments. (Action 5)
- There is respect for diversity and real inclusion based on race, gender, identity, and different kinds of skills and thought. (Action 4).
- Expand the Innovation Channel the Director General established in 2017 in the Bureau of Global Talent Management to all members of the Service to make suggestions on both policy and management matters. Leadership would be required to answer in a short, prescribed period. It would be modeled on the Dissent Channel, an existing method for Foreign Service Officers to comment on government policies with which they disagree.
- A Service that recognizes that it must earn its way back to leadership in the creation and execution of U.S. foreign policy by increasing professionalization, rewarding strategic thinking, and a rigorous and honest effort to incorporate lessons learned from success and failure.

No conversation about Foreign Service culture can or should avoid the issue of risk and risk taking. Three points are key:

- First, America's diplomats and their families take physical risks every day by serving in some of the most dangerous places on the planet. As one of our workshop participants said, "I reject the idea that our diplomats are not risk takers. Just look at the names inscribed on the Memorial Plaques at the Department's entrance. Since the earliest days of the republic, our people have drowned, died of disease, and been murdered by terrorists in the service of our nation."

- Second, while their physical courage is not in doubt, the State Department culture does not encourage risk taking or speaking truth to power when it comes to policymaking. The Dissent Channel and annual American Foreign Service Association awards for dissent are important institutional signals that there is honor in honesty and that individuals have stood strongly by their convictions and their oath of office. But leadership needs to find ways to encourage and incorporate diverse thought and lessons learned in policy formulation and execution.

- Third, there is an important distinction between risk avoidance and risk management. Diplomatic service will never be risk free, nor should it be. Doing everything possible to keep our embassy and consulate communities safe will always be a top priority. But America's diplomats must be deployed to do their jobs for America's citizens, which is what they signed up for. Too many of our



Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Todd Robinson discusses law enforcement cooperation in Jordan in 2012. (State Department Photo)

diplomats are not permitted to leave the protective walls of our heavily fortified embassies in many parts of the world. Managing risk should be the goal. We support the effort by the American Academy of Diplomacy to seek bipartisan support in Congress to reform the Accountability Review Board (ARB) system, which reviews security-related incidents. When there is loss of life or property, the objective of an ARB should be to determine whether leaders made reasonable choices in pursuit of the national interest rather than seeking someone to blame.<sup>7</sup>

## Action 4

# Focus Relentlessly on Diversity as a First-Order Strategic Priority

A revived, rebuilt, and high performing Foreign Service must reflect the diversity and inclusivity of America. But it is failing at this most vital mission.

During the 40 workshops and meetings we held in 2020 with hundreds of current and former State Department officials and many others, we heard more about the debilitating lack of inclusion and diversity – in ethnicity, identity, and thought – in the Foreign Service than any other subject. People with whom we spoke highlighted that diversity and inclusion need to be a priority not just because it is right thing to do, but because diverse groups of American diplomats will be the most credible and highest performing.

The diversity crisis demands the attention and action of the next Secretary of State, Congress and, crucially, all the members of the Service itself. Several of the senior people we interviewed believe that the problem of diversity is more acute now than it was even three to four decades ago. This is a problem of all recent administrations, Democratic and Republican.

We recognize and applaud the effort of the current Director General of the Foreign Service to promote an open conversation in the Department about this crisis. But the facts show that urgent attention is needed:

- There are no senior women, African American or Latinxs Officers in the current State Department leadership, including the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, and all the Under Secretaries.
- Of the current confirmed or acting Assistant Secretaries of State, only two are people of color or women.
- There are only five African American Ambassadors in the Trump administration of 189 Ambassadors the President has appointed.<sup>8</sup> This compares unfavorably to the 46 African American Ambassadors who served in the Obama administration<sup>9</sup> and the 44 African American Ambassadors who served in the George W. Bush administration.<sup>10</sup>

- In 2020, the Senior Foreign Service is comprised of only 4 percent African American Officers, 3.6 percent Asian-American Officers, and 0.2 percent American Indian Officers. Also, 5.3 percent identify as Hispanic and 94.7% identify as not Hispanic.<sup>11</sup>

We were very impressed by the tremendous energy, ideas, and commitment among minority employees, affinity groups, and members of Congress focused on the issue of diversity and inclusion. This collective focus and determination can be an extraordinary base of support and encouragement for the next Secretary.

To improve diversity and inclusion:

- The President and Secretary of State, working with both parties in Congress, must promote radical change in the way the United States recruits, educates and trains, retains, and promotes members of the Foreign Service. This is the surest way to produce a stronger, more effective, and more diverse Service for the future.
- The Secretary of State and the Deputy Secretary of State must take personal responsibility to make this a top priority. While many people advocate appointing a Chief Diversity Officer, such a person could succeed only if the Secretary considers herself/himself the actual chief diversity promoter.
- There must be accountability, including making specific examples of promoting and attaining diversity and inclusion a requirement for promotion for each member of the Foreign Service at every level as recommended in the November 10 statement by the Association of Black American Ambassadors.<sup>12</sup> Good intentions are no longer sufficient. Tangible action by each Officer must now be the norm. As many Officers told us, “Structural problems require structural reforms.”
- There must be increased transparency by making public statistics about diversity of the Service at regular intervals. In this way, all will know whether there is real progress.

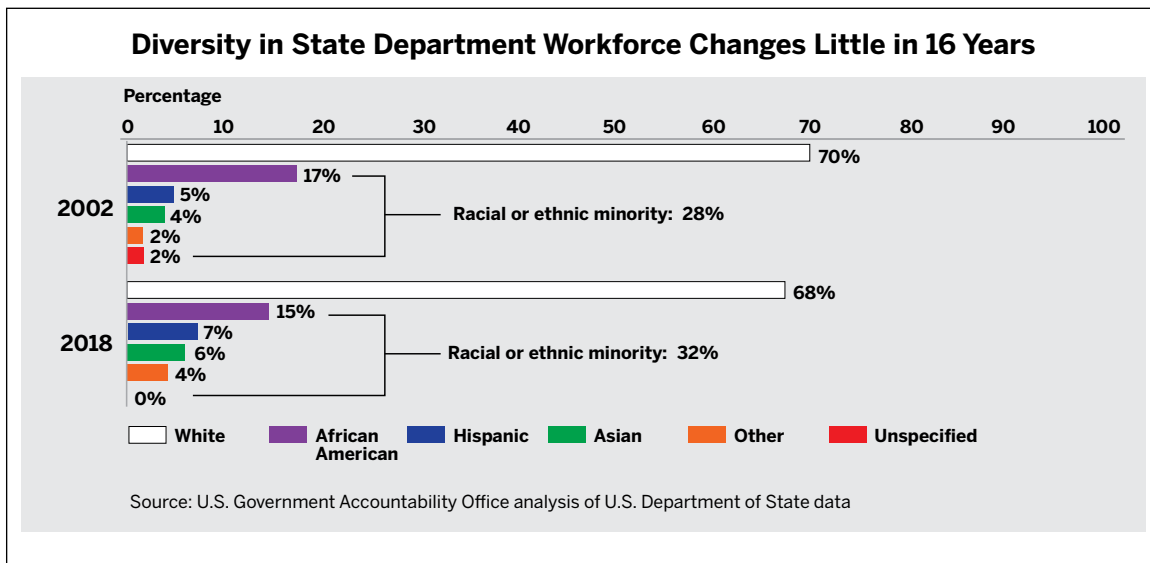
- There needs to be far greater focus on recruitment of minority diplomats. The Pickering, Rangel, and Payne fellowship programs<sup>13</sup> provide a vital channel for young people from underrepresented communities to combine graduate school training with a Foreign Service career. These programs should be expanded as the Trump administration has recently proposed. In addition, much needs to be done to change the internal State Department and Foreign Service culture to remove the stigma that these Officers often feel is associated with these programs.
- Many of the experts with whom we talked believe that recruitment must begin at the high school and college levels. The State Department must thus expand the number of minority diplomats who speak at both high schools and colleges, including historically Black colleges and universities throughout the 50 states to familiarize students with the Foreign Service as a career.
- Creating meaningful paid internships for candidates at American embassies and consulates overseas is another path to recruiting outstanding students, which the State Department is currently exploring with Congress. Building more established links between the State Department and a geographically diverse group of graduate schools of government and public policy also could strengthen the recruitment of young people who have many different career opportunities to choose from. This is a key objective of our proposed ROTC program. (Action 6) There must be a relentless focus on retention as part of any successful diversity effort.
- The Foreign Service Institute should develop intensified training to confront conscious and unconscious bias of every kind among all employees at the State Department.
- Mentorship programs should be established for all minority employees to help them feel accepted and connected to the wider institution and culture of the Foreign Service. Mentors should be recruited from all ranks, including Ambassadors and Assistant Secretaries.
- We applaud the Director General for instituting a systematic written exit interview process for Foreign Service and Civil Service employees who depart. Our workshops and meetings lead us to recommend that the Department begin personally to interview departing employees to ensure that key questions about diversity and inclusion, and other important retention issues, are explored. This data will be key to determining and implementing measures to encourage people to stay for a full career.

## Promoting Change Short- and Long-Term

Another strong theme from our workshops and meetings was that the type of radical change the Department needs to address the diversity and inclusion crisis cannot depend on the currently serving Officers of color and other underrepresented groups, who are today at junior or mid-levels, attaining more senior ranks.

As highlighted above, the Secretary of State should implement an ROTC-type program for young minority candidates seeking a career in public service.

As we suggest in Actions 7 and 8, adopting a defined mid-level entry program and a reserve corps would also be vehicles to increase diversity and make it possible for some Officers to return who left during the last several years. Indeed, a goal should be to ensure that the same underrepresented communities with engineering, science, and technology skills are aware of the mid-level opportunity.





## Action 5

# Professional Education and Training Should Be Top Priorities

Another aspect of rebuilding the Foreign Service is to ensure that all its people are at the top of their game. As one of our senior military colleagues reminded us, the Service does not have tanks, ships, or fighter aircraft. Its most valuable asset and the source of its great strength and resilience are the people who volunteer to serve as America's diplomats. Development of our diplomats, their education and training, their "professionalization," she added, must be among the State Department's highest priorities.

The United States military requires its officers to spend an extended period in residential training upon entry and at each career milestone. Former Secretary of State Colin Powell recalled to us that he spent seven years of a 35-year career in training. For many Foreign Service Officers, the amount of time in training, exclusive of language study over a full career, can probably be counted in months.

This is in stark contrast to friends and rivals in other diplomatic services, which provide significant training upon entry and throughout diplomats' careers. Chinese junior diplomats receive six months training upon entry, "designed to familiarize them with the Foreign Ministry and the Chinese diplomatic system."<sup>14</sup> The Chinese employ an incentive-based system of education that includes credits for training, with a certain number of such credits required for promotion.<sup>15</sup> In 2011 the French introduced formal mid-career training, which "aims in particular to strengthen the managerial skills and leadership capacities of diplomats, as well as to deepen their knowledge in priority areas of international action (including economic diplomacy, soft power, security and defense, European affairs, and climate change)."<sup>16</sup> Other nations put special emphasis on training in multilateral diplomacy, which requires a unique set of skills.

Kishan Rana, an Indian diplomat and author, asserts that for modern diplomats globally, "continuous learning is a fact of life."<sup>17</sup> He defines the key elements of a successful education program as lifelong, incorporating variety. By this he means learning from other institutions such as nongovernmental organizations, honing skills training for Ambassadors and Deputy Chiefs of Mission, year-long sabbaticals, and inclusiveness, incorporating other personnel in the embassy community such as local staff.<sup>18</sup>

In contrast, the Foreign Service has traditionally believed in an apprenticeship, “on the job training,” or the “you’ll figure it out” model. This lack of commitment to systematic professionalization is also a product of a time when the Service was smaller, life was slower, and senior people had more time to teach others professional skills.

Kori Schake, in her book *State of Disrepair*, emphasizes the need for proper education and describes the body of knowledge that all diplomats should master as “understanding of the major diplomatic achievements and disasters in our country’s history; evaluating the statesmanship of historically significant Secretaries, Ambassadors, and envoys; economic trends that strengthened or weakened countries in the international order; the effect of various treaties on economic livelihood and strategic stability; instances of drastic change precipitated by technological innovation; and the effect of immigration on labor markets and national power.”<sup>19</sup>

We applaud the efforts that have been made in recent decades to increase the opportunities for the Foreign Service to receive additional education and training. Recent Secretaries of State have demanded that a modern facility devoted to



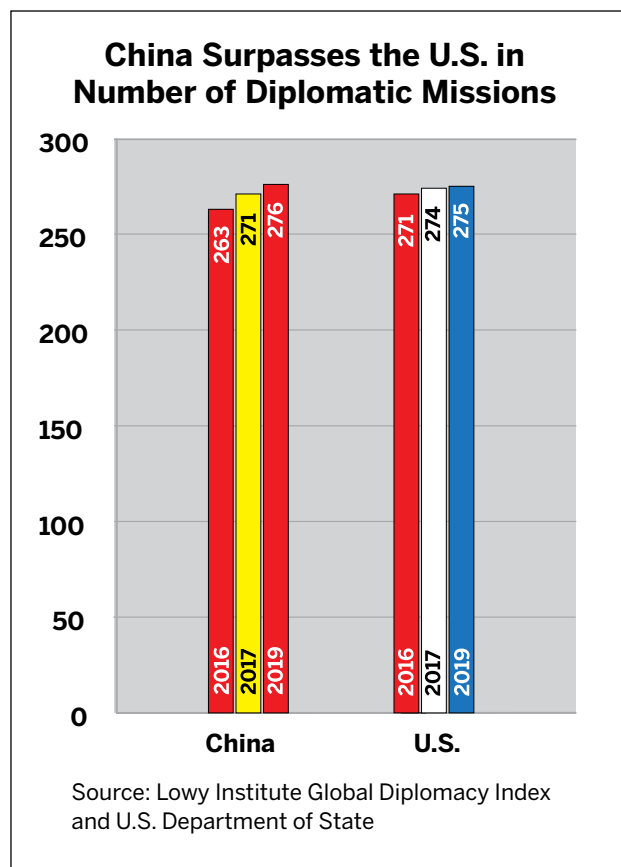
Yezidi refugees recall their harrowing escape from ISIS and the plight of their loved ones at a meeting in Mardin, Turkey, December 2014, with FSO Matt Johnson, at right. As the Embassy Refugee Coordinator, Johnson helped to set up programs aimed at educating Yazidi youth so they could begin to live a normal life. (*Foreign Service Journal*)

education and training be built and fully-funded, that the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) establish a school for leadership and management training, and that a Center for the Study of the Conduct of Diplomacy, which studies “lessons learned” from diplomatic activities, be established and make its research available for study.

Today’s FSI is a part of the Department to be proud of and will be the foundation for the future emphasis on professionalization that we recommend. The effort must shift from providing training for specific jobs and functions to making investments in a comprehensive, career-long program of professional education.

Like the mistaken but ingrained belief that diplomacy is learned by osmosis, the Service’s own culture remains at best indifferent, and in some cases resistant, to a substantial commitment of time to education. The perception persists that training is “not career-enhancing” and that taking individuals away from “real” work can damage their promotion prospects.

Relatively few opportunities exist for study at outside academic institutions or for the pursuit of advanced degrees. The Harvard Kennedy School currently has over 50 military and intelligence officers enrolled and just two Foreign Service Officers. There have even been cases of Officers who were accepted to prestigious doctoral programs who requested a two- or three-year leave of absence but were told that if they took that much time away they would not be able to return. (The State Department has recently announced that it will grant two or three years of leave without pay, which is a step in the right direction.)



In the complex world of the 21st century, China, our most formidable competitor, has recently surpassed the United States in its number of diplomatic missions. The United States should have significantly enhanced educational opportunities to develop the level of diplomatic skills and intellectual capacity that will be needed in a much more competitive global diplomatic environment.

Our vision for the Foreign Service is an organization where all its Officers not only have deep expertise in their areas of specialization, including a deep knowledge of culture, religion, and languages. They should also be skilled leaders, thoughtful and persuasive analysts of contemporary foreign policy issues, policy leaders within the U.S. government, effective advocates for U.S. business, and even if they are not experts, conversant with science and new technologies. They should be able to speak knowledgeably and proudly about their own country's diplomatic history and argue persuasively for its values. And they should be the finest group of language experts in government. Before they begin an assignment, they should know what interests American business has in their country of assignment, the pitfalls for American tourists, the risk of terrorism, and the opportunities for American universities, nonprofits, and fraternal organizations to build bridges for America.

To achieve this level of professionalism for all, regardless of their job or area of specialty, we will need a comprehensive approach to professional education for the Foreign Service, one that replaces the concept of mostly job-related training with a required, rigorous program of career-long learning.

Here are some examples of what is required:

- Six months of residential training at each of four career milestones – upon entry, before promotion to mid-level, at promotion to the level at which they can choose to compete for the senior service or retire, and upon becoming a senior officer, or the military equivalent of a flag officer. This should form the educational framework, which could be supplemented by courses in specific areas, many of which exist already. The objective should be to develop three main areas of expertise: leadership and management, current and emerging policy issues and strategic foresight, and diplomatic skills and tradecraft.

- Professional education should begin on the first day that new hires enter the State Department. We recommend replacing the current too short and fragmented entry arrangements with a rigorous six-month course for generalists, specialists, and diplomatic security agents that includes a substantial segment on United States diplomatic history and practice to foster the idea of “one team, one fight,” and the idea that all who represent the United States abroad, regardless of their function, are diplomats. New Civil Service employees should also be a part of this six-month orientation.
- As Officers enter the mid-level, emphasis should be on management training. First-time managers regularly supervise entry-level Officers, who often need the closest and most supportive oversight. This six-month course should provide the first-time manager with the skills and tools she or he needs to provide the best possible experience to our new Officers.
- Officers entering the senior level will benefit from instruction in all three areas of competence during their six-month training, which should include officers from other foreign affairs agencies and the military services. Diplomatic lessons learned should be part of the curriculum, along with a sharp focus on strategic thinking and policy analysis. Travel within the United States should also be included to give Officers who have been abroad for consecutive tours the opportunity to reconnect with American culture and society, and, at the same time, give Americans who are far from Washington the opportunity to meet the people who represent them overseas. (Foreign Service Officers have some interaction with military colleagues when they participate in courses at the war colleges, as political advisors, and working together with military colleagues in conflict areas. It would be valuable to turn this around and have military officers participate in State Department education programs.)
- Hard language training should be linked to at least two assignments and include a rigorous, graded area studies seminar. Among the things that make Foreign Service Officers unique is their capacity to bring to the development and implementation of foreign policy their knowledge and experience with foreign countries, leaders, culture, and languages.
- To support greater emphasis on developing intellectual capital, the mission of the Foreign Service Institute should expand to make it the coordinator of relationships with American universities and think tanks, the repository of expertise on U.S. diplomatic history, and a place for diplomats to examine

lessons learned. Such a process has already begun with the presence on the FSI campus of the Historian's Office and the Association for Diplomatic Studies, which collects diplomats' oral histories, as well as the establishment of a new Lessons Learned Center. These centers, if fully utilized, could provide the intellectual underpinning and support for deepening the Service's capacity for strategic thinking and planning. Partnerships with other institutions of learning, the business community, and think tanks could provide additional opportunities for students and cross-fertilization of ideas.

- Study at a geographically broad group of American graduate schools should be encouraged and a flexible approach to leave without pay for educational purposes should be adopted. We applaud the fact that the Department has taken a step in this direction by allowing up to two- to three-year leaves of absence, but why not be more ambitious and encourage those whose professional work would benefit from it to take a sabbatical, even work in the private sector, or earn a PhD?
- These new professional education and training programs should be part of a larger shift in approach to evaluation, promotion, and assignments to include consideration of educational achievement. Managers and career development personnel should be held responsible for ensuring that those they supervise attend required training. All classes should be graded, and the results included in the students' performance files. In making assignments, consideration should be given to relevant educational achievement, including programs and degrees taken and acquired outside the Department.

This is an ambitious program that will require an adjustment of Foreign Service culture and mindset to succeed. A commitment will be needed by leadership and management at every level to encourage and value educational achievement. For members of the Foreign Service, the opportunity to receive high-value education should be seen as part of a reciprocal relationship they have with the State Department<sup>20</sup> from which they derive significant benefits that could lead to top-level leadership or be a credential for a future, second career.

There is one other key point. None of these reforms will be possible without the 15 percent increase in the number of Foreign Service employees we recommend in Action 1.



The sign at an entrance to the U.S. Department of State describes the agency's purpose and reads:

The Department of State is the nation's oldest and senior cabinet agency. It was established by Congress in 1789 to conduct America's diplomatic relations.

The State Department represents U.S. interests to foreign governments, promotes peace, security, and freedom, pursues economic opportunity abroad to create jobs at home, protects the American people from the dangers posed by drug trafficking, weapons proliferation, and harm to the environment, and assists Americans traveling or living overseas.

The Secretary of State directs operations here at Department headquarters, at 250 diplomatic and consular posts in over 180 countries, at international organizations like the United Nations, and at passport agencies and other regional offices in the United States.

This building, built in 1960, is the Department's worldwide communications hub and houses America's diplomatic corps — the career Foreign and Civil Service. It also contains in its eighth floor diplomatic reception rooms one of the finest collections of early American antiques.

## Action 6

# Make the Personnel System More Modern and Flexible

For the Foreign Service to become the forward-looking organization we seek, new thinking is needed to ensure that it finds, recruits, and retains the best people, and puts them to the best use.

What qualifications do U.S. diplomats need? How do they acquire them? Are the current skills we expect members of the Foreign Service to have still relevant? What should be done to improve or change recruitment and training, especially as needs change, careers develop, and job markets evolve?

Beyond the crucial aspect of patriotism and service, what motivates U.S. diplomats? What is special or unique about the Foreign Service? What performance incentives and disincentives exist? Do they work? Are they clear, fair, and transparent?

The recommendations in this section try to answer these questions.

We respect the work that has been done over the past 20 years to reform the human resources systems that govern the Foreign Service, including by the current Under Secretary for Management and the Director General.<sup>21</sup> But we believe the time has come to transform the personnel system to make it more modern, flexible, transparent, and focused on future foreign policy challenges and workforce needs.

A foundational issue for a new personnel system is the overall size of the Service. Today there are 13,790 Foreign Service generalists and specialists.<sup>22</sup> Many argue that the Service is too small to help shape and execute the nation's diplomacy successfully, and our instinct is that they are right. But we believe any consideration of how much to increase the overall numbers of personnel must begin with two urgent decisions:





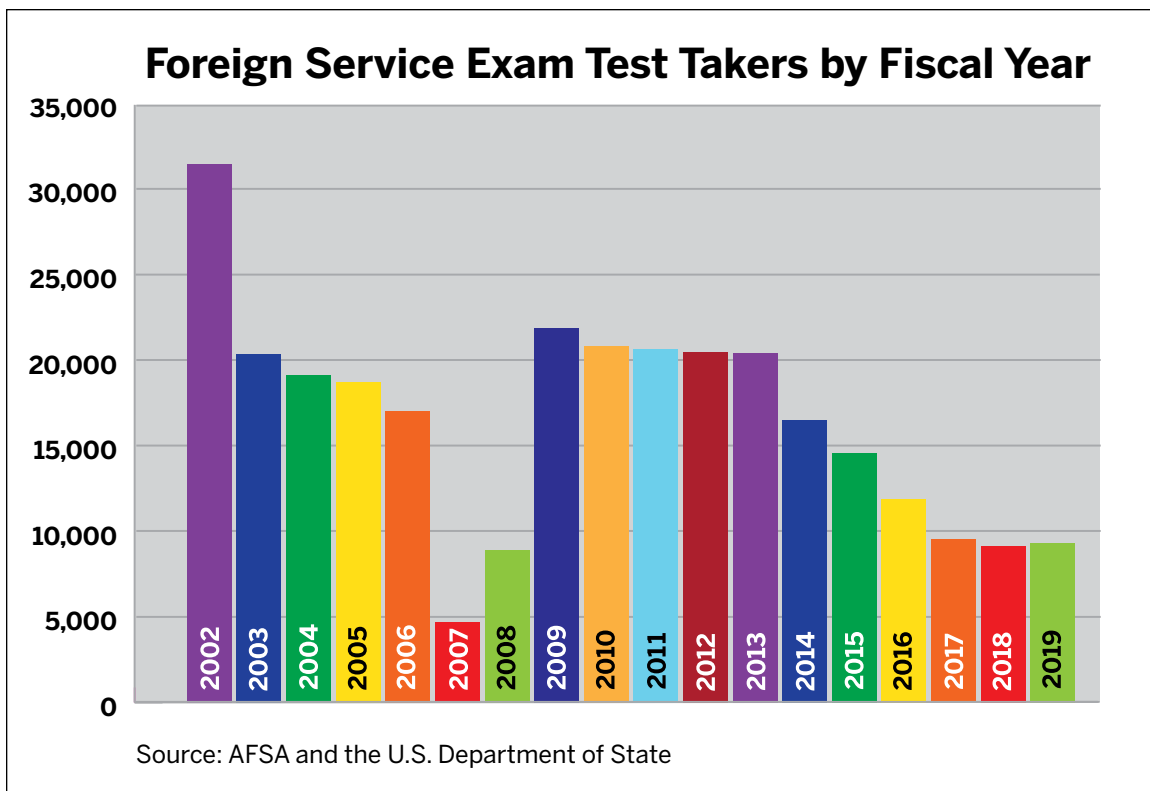
- First, an integral component of the new Foreign Service Act we recommend in Action 2 is a requirement to permanently authorize funding for a 15 percent increase in Foreign Service personnel levels to guarantee opportunities for professional education and training like those maintained by the U.S. military. These approximately 2,000 new employees should be hired first at an estimated cost of \$400 million over three years.
- Second, there should be an urgent, serious, and enforceable assessment of where our diplomats now serve, starting with two assumptions:
- That most Foreign Service employees should serve abroad, with only a minority in Washington.
- That the massive embassies created during the land wars of the 2000s, along with other enormous outposts of U.S. government presence, should be reduced in size and their diplomats and some other government representatives redeployed to meet new challenges. We believe it is important to maintain representation in all countries where we have diplomatic relations. Because it will require a “whole of government” effort to reduce and redeploy, this reappraisal, to be led by the State Department, will require active and sustained leadership from the President, the Secretary of State, and Congress.

Once these two tasks are accomplished, it will become clear by how much the Service should grow beyond the 15 percent. The creation of our proposed defined mid-level entry program (Action 7), the Diplomatic Reserve Corps (Action 8), and the ROTC program introduced in this chapter, will have an impact on the right overall size of the Service.

There are many views on what the right number is for an effective, achievable, increase in the size of the FS above the 15 percent augmentation for education and training. We recommend that after the 15 percent increase is achieved over three years, the State Department should launch an effort to increase its overall number by an additional 1,400–1,800 positions over another four years. It is important to note that, based on the current pattern of vacancies, this number should be focused on specialists, especially office management specialists, information technology experts, and medical personnel. Based on today’s costs, this increase above the 15 percent is estimated to be \$600 million-\$800 million.

What might a new personnel system result in?

- A Service that recruits broadly for excellence. Our exploration of the need for the Service to have a relentless focus on diversity and inclusion is discussed in Action 4. One key suggestion we heard from our workshops was that serving the nation as a diplomat is an idea that needs to be introduced to students as early as high school. We recommend a well-publicized and well-funded initiative to get the word out, especially in under-represented communities, about opportunities in the diplomatic service and the support available in return for defined service. This program, modeled on the military’s Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) would augment the Pickering, Rangel, and Payne programs, which are focused primarily at the graduate school level.
- A Service that identifies and then eliminates structural and procedural bias within recruitment, entry, assignment, and promotion processes.
- A Service that rigorously enforces accountability for inclusion, mentoring, and empowerment by all managers.



- A Service committed to retaining the best employees through an enhanced emphasis on professionalization in all its aspects (Action 5), protection of its nonpartisan nature and expansion of senior leadership positions open to its best Officers (Action 9), a transparent, effective, accountable focus on diversity and inclusion (Action 4), a defined mid-level entry program (Action 7), and a Diplomatic Reserve Corps (Action 8).
- A Service ready to combat its internal cultural caste structure by ending the “cone” system in which people perpetuate the false notion that consular, economic, management, public diplomacy, and political officers do separate and unequally valued work. Foreign Service Officers should enter the Service as one team, without distinction by cone. After they pass the tenure threshold, they should seek jobs that expand their competencies in substantive policy creation, promotion and analysis, management, public diplomacy and outreach, and leadership. All promotions should be multifunctional. Those who compete to be senior Officers should be able to demonstrate the capacity to lead broad, diverse, high performing teams at home and abroad in service of the United States.



FSO Anna Boulose, winner of the 2019 William R. Rivkin Award for a Mid-Level Officer for Constructive Dissent. She identified problems and solutions that led to changes in visa processing. She is pictured in Tijuana, Mexico, with a diplomatic pouch. (*Foreign Service Journal*)

- A Service with a workforce skills bank of language, regional, political, and economic knowledge, and functional expertise to execute the objective of multifunctional competence.
- A Service that makes a priority of the development of regional and linguistic expertise through mandatory multiple tours using languages studied.
- A Service with the self-perception that diplomacy is a profession that needs to be learned, practiced, and improved.

- A Service that makes it a priority to meet the needs of a globally deployed workforce and their family members. For example, qualified spouses and partners should be able to find meaningful employment opportunities.
- A Service with an unbiased, honest appraisal system that retains and promotes based on each employees' accountable commitment to leadership, substantive performance, diversity and inclusion, professional education, mentorship, and the many other key goals we have highlighted in this report.
- A Service with a systematic approach to knowledge management and transmission, the identification of best practices, and a rigorous effort to capture and learn from lessons encountered or learned.
- A Service with a sustainable way to fully fund vital consular work. The Department provides consular services to millions of American citizens through the provision of passports, documentation for American citizens who are born or die abroad, and assistance in medical, family, and legal emergencies. Consular officers rigorously screen and issue visas to people who seek to visit the United States for business, tourism, medical care, study and, in specified cases, to immigrate.
- Fees are charged for all services except for assistance in emergencies, so the Department receives no taxpayer funding for this work. But current law allows the Department to keep only a portion of the fees. (The rest goes to the U.S. Treasury). The Department can no longer continue consular operations without a funding stream that fully covers operating costs.

We agree with the American Academy of Diplomacy that legislation is needed to authorize the Department to retain all fees received for consular work. These funds should be put into the Consular and Border Security Programs account. The State Department will then be able to provide consular services to those who need them without adding to either the debt or requesting annual congressional funding.

## Action 7

# Adapt to the New World of Work with Mid-Level Entry

Among the foundational questions a future Foreign Service must answer is how to adapt to a new world defined by younger employees expecting multiple jobs in their careers and the growth of the “gig,” contract, and alliance economies.<sup>23</sup> An aim should be, as suggested by colleagues at Duke University’s Rethinking Diplomacy Program, to integrate science and technology into diplomacy, to recruit people with expertise in cyber, artificial intelligence, data analytics, and financial technologies.<sup>24</sup>

In this new world, we believe the Service must maintain a rigorously selected and professionally educated cadre of individuals committed to a full career of worldwide public service so that, like the U.S. military, it can develop an experienced corps with advanced professional skills, including leadership, language, and negotiating, along with deep knowledge of foreign governments and cultures. The successful conduct of American diplomacy will rely on a Service in which hierarchy, discipline, and experience still bring critical benefits.

We support a defined mid-level entry program so that the Service can accommodate these realities. As quantum computing, biotechnology, and other digital technologies radically reshape the world, the State Department and the Foreign Service must be able to build a modern corps that can represent our government most effectively overseas. This program can also expand the diversity of the Foreign Service and provide for the return of some who left it in recent years.

Mid-level entry is not a new idea. The Foreign Service Act of 1946 first called for lateral entry into the Foreign Service because, after World War II, the Service needed to grow to meet the challenges of the United States’ more expansive leadership commitments. This effort opened the door to several women who joined the male-dominated Service as economic specialists.<sup>25</sup> The Foreign Service Act of 1980 allowed the Secretary of State to appoint people into the mid ranks through a mid-level candidate program.<sup>26</sup>

There are pros and cons to creating a new, better-defined mid-level entry program.

Advantages include:

- Offering service to the nation to people who have developed specialized expertise and experience in business, civil society, the military, or politics.
- Creating flexibility to address quickly the constantly changing international environment. For example, people with information technology, cybersecurity, science, and public health expertise could strengthen the capacity of the Foreign Service to adapt to new challenges.
- Opening the Service at mid-levels to increased diversity of talent, including ethnicity, life choices, geography, professional capacities, and thought.

There are also serious and legitimate arguments against a mid-level entry program. They include:

- Mid-level entry could easily be subject to partisan political influence in recruitment and retention.
- Mid-level entry is not compatible with the Service's current promotion system.
- According to some analysts, there is no deficit in mid-level personnel.
- Expanding the Pickering, Rangel, and Payne fellowship programs, which seek to recruit underrepresented populations to the Foreign Service, and paying interns may be more effective ways to increase diversity.<sup>27</sup>

There are also some who believe that the Foreign Service should become a loose network of people moving in and out over their working lives. For example, Anne-Marie Slaughter, former Director of Policy Planning at the State Department, suggests “de-professionalizing” the Service by creating a “global service” that would recruit people from all sectors for five to 10 years and incorporate them into all levels.<sup>28</sup>

We strongly oppose this view. The many workshops we have held to prepare this report, our teaching in graduate programs focused on diplomacy, and the mentoring we have done for hundreds of students and others interested in the Foreign Service tell us that many young Americans are eager to pursue a full career in public service. The fact that thousands of people still take the Foreign Service exam to secure one of a few hundred positions is testament to that desire. We

**There are many young people who value and are eager to pursue a full career in public service.**

also believe that offering a five-year “drop in” to the Foreign Service will lead to rampant politicization.

We also recognize that there are many who would like to serve the nation and have talents and skills that would benefit the State Department but who in the contemporary world of employer-employee relations are not willing to commit their whole careers to the Service as we did.

Our support for a well-defined mid-career entry program is integrated with the recommendations we make for a transformed personnel system, including the ROTC program (Action 6), a relentless, transparent, accountable focus on diversity and inclusion (Action 4), and the Diplomatic Reserve Corps (Action 8).

There are some crucial guidelines this program must follow:

- Recruits must have passed rigorous, transparent, nonpolitical entry and retention requirements, including security clearances.
- Recruits must be available for worldwide service.
- Employees should be fully integrated into the larger effort to require meaningful, regular, up to date, continuing professional education and training.
- Performance should be reviewed annually by the same review boards as full career employees, and participants must be subject to the same “up or out” requirements.
- These criteria should be legislated in the new Foreign Service Act we propose in Action 2.

After criteria are established by law and regulation, a pilot program should be launched by hiring 25 mid-career entrants in the program’s first year, with another 25 added in the second year, and 50 more in year three. The State Department and Congress can then evaluate the endeavor. If it is considered successful, the number of mid-level entrants should be increased over time to a level not to exceed 500.

It will also be crucial that the Department distinguish between those needs that can be met by offering a mid-level entry path and those best filled through the flexibility built into the Diplomatic Reserve Corps (Action 8). Used together, these two innovations can enhance the Service’s capacity to get the right people in the right place at the right time while balancing responsibilities to those who have chosen a full career of public service.

## Action 8

# Establish a Diplomatic Reserve Corps

In this time of lightning fast developments, speed and preparedness are key attributes sought by many organizations. This includes the Foreign Service, which must be able to respond quickly to crises anywhere in the world. For that mission, we propose creation of a Diplomatic Reserve Corps (DRC).

We propose that the State Department recruit 250 reservists as a pilot program in its first year and then add 250 each year for three years to create, over four years, an initial reserve component of 1,000. The President, the Secretary of State, and Congress can then consider whether the DRC needs to be expanded.

What will a DRC cost? This will require detailed study, but we have benefitted from a first order analysis based on reasonable assumptions that shows that a DRC would cost approximately \$20 million in year one, \$25 million in year two, \$30 million in year three, and \$35 million in years four and beyond. This estimate does not include deployment costs.<sup>29</sup>

Ever since the battles at Lexington and Concord, Americans have volunteered to serve the nation as part of a ready reserve. All branches of our military today maintain reserve or National Guard components. Their purpose is spelled out in Title 10, Subtitle E of the U.S. Code: “to provide trained units and qualified persons available for active duty in the armed forces, in time of war or national emergency, and at such other times as the national security may require, to fill the needs of the armed forces whenever more units and persons are needed than are in the regular components.”<sup>30</sup> Within the reserve services of all five branches of the U.S. military there is a force of full-time support personnel who manage and maintain daily operations.<sup>31</sup>

We recommend that the new Foreign Service Act, which we advocate in Action 2, should establish and permanently authorize funding for a DRC with annual training and activation requirements. This reserve corps would be the diplomatic counterpart to the military system and provide U.S. leaders with an available, trained, ready, deployable, diplomatic surge capacity in times of crisis or emergency. The lack of such a capability was a significant weakness during the Iraq and Afghan wars. In normal times, the DRC, like its military counterpart, would provide people to fill specific needs that the regular organization might be unable



to meet, including in the department in Washington, D.C. Like the military guard and reserve, American citizens who are properly screened and meet strict entry requirements, with safeguards against politicization, would be able to join the DRC without having served at the State Department. Unlike the military systems, the DRC would not be organized by state, and governors would not be in the chain of command.

A Diplomatic Reserve Corps would:

- Forge a strong, direct connection to a larger group of U.S. citizens willing to contribute to America's diplomatic capacity. These part-time citizen diplomats would serve as "Ambassadors" in their home communities, enhancing the understanding of America's role in the world and the importance of diplomacy as a crucial component of protecting and promoting U.S. security.
- Create the flexibility to adapt quickly to specialized short-term requirements as the profession of diplomacy evolves and the nation faces new threats and opportunities. For example, reservists with specialized scientific or technical expertise in areas such as quantum computing, data science, cybersecurity, refugees and migration, and climate change could be called upon to bolster the Department's and the Service's existing personnel.<sup>32</sup> There will be occasions when specific language skills are needed in civil emergencies such as earthquakes, flooding, and the evacuation of American citizens from war zones. As members of a reserve corps, experts could be employed for specified periods or specific occasions.
- Reduce reliance on outside contractors who are expensive and sometimes lack the necessary qualifications.
- Provide flexibility to fill vacant positions on a short- or longer-term temporary basis or meet sudden unanticipated needs. This flexibility would open more professional education opportunities for members of the regular career Service (Action 5).

**The Reserve Corps, like its military counterpart, would provide experts to fill specific needs that the State Department might be unable to meet.**

- Create a more transparent and centralized system than the current Re-Employed Annuitants (REA), which is used for former personnel who return to service. A unified program would cut administrative costs by centralizing and streamlining the hiring process.
- Enhance the opportunity to call on the skills and expertise of Department employees who may have retired but still have much to contribute to U.S. diplomacy.
- Build on the Foreign Service Family Reserve Corps (FSFRC). Foreign Service family members represent a talented pool of professionals from a variety of backgrounds that the Department can call upon quickly to fill skill gaps at missions overseas. The DRC can extend substantive employment opportunities for spouses; the lack thereof can impact culture and attrition.
- Maintain a cadre of “Expeditionary Diplomats” and experts in emergency response ready to surge to support those currently serving in short-term missions such as large-scale evacuations or earthquake response.
- Allow some reservists to come into the Foreign Service through a transparent, nonpolitical, qualifications-based reserve selection process. This option would be managed with the defined mid-level entry program we propose in Action 7.
- Meet the urgent need for increased diversity and inclusion in the Service and the Department by offering this to a broad group of citizens, along with the ROTC program highlighted in Action 6.

This is not a new idea. In 1990, Ted Wilkinson, then President of the American Foreign Service Association (AFSA), called for the formation of a Foreign Service reserve corps.<sup>33</sup>

In 2006, the bipartisan Iraq Study Group, co-chaired by former Secretary of State James A. Baker III and former chairman of the House Foreign Affairs and Intelligence committees, Lee H. Hamilton, recommended that the State Department train personnel to carry out civilian tasks associated with a complex stability operation outside the traditional embassy. The report called for a Foreign Service Reserve Corps with personnel and expertise to provide capacity for such an operation.<sup>34</sup> A member of the study group, former Secretary of State Lawrence S. Eagleburger, had long suggested such a reserve corps. The 2006 National Security Strategy called for developing a civilian reserve.<sup>35</sup>

In January 2011, then-AFSA President Susan R. Johnson again called for a Foreign Service Reserve Corps, proposing a “ready reserve” composed of qualified retirees and possibly former Foreign Service personnel with 10 years or more of experience.<sup>36</sup>

After the Iraq War in 2003, the Department of State established the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS), which became the Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations. A proposed Civilian Reserve Corps could call on U.S. civilians who had skills and experiences useful for stabilization and reconstruction operations.<sup>37</sup>

Getting the details right in law and practice will be critical. To be effective, the Diplomatic Reserve Corps must have:

- Rigorous, transparent, nonpolitical entry and retention requirements.
- Regular, up-to-date, continuing education and training requirements.
- Enforceable activation requirements, especially worldwide availability.
- Pay, benefit, promotion, and other incentives that are informed by and mirror the military’s reserve and guard programs, including providing and, crucially, protecting re-employment rights with the DRC member’s employer.
- Up-to-date computerized ways to identify skills.

A way to think about how this corps would support U.S. diplomacy is to imagine several examples of who might become reservists:

- A Foreign Service employee who has pursued an “expeditionary” career – repeated service in hard places and hot spots-- retires in her or his mid-50s but still wants to serve as needed.
- A senior officer with consular experience retires but is ready to use his or her skills to support unforeseen needs in American citizen services or visa adjudication.
- A senior Passport Agency employee retires but is ready to be called upon to meet contingencies in passport processing.
- An officer leaves the Service after only a few years for family reasons but wants to continue to be part of the U.S. diplomatic effort.

- An employee who specialized in promoting U.S. business decides in mid-career to move to the private sector but seeks to offer further service as a reservist.
- An employee with specialized language skills retires but is willing to use these languages in an emergency where they might be of critical importance to completing a mission.
- A member of the U.S. military leaves the Service and, seeking to broaden her or his experiences, looks to support the diplomatic arm of national security.
- A young data scientist, video game designer, or artificial intelligence expert cannot make a commitment to a lifetime of worldwide availability but is ready to support U.S. diplomacy part-time and is ready to deploy periodically.

We believe the Marine Corps Reserve might provide a useful model for how the DRC could work in practice:

- Reservists are paid per drill period (4 hours) ranging from \$60 to \$400 based on rank.
- To fulfill a satisfactory year, they must complete 12 weekend and one two-week long trainings per year.
- Reservists have opportunities to go to school for job-specific trainings, e.g. jump or water survival. Reservists attend school on temporary orders and are reimbursed for food, housing, and travel.
- Mobilization ranges from one year to 18 months of total time away from civilian duty.
- Once activated, reservists are paid normal active duty rates commensurate with rank and years of service.

## Action 9

# Create a Stronger, More Nonpartisan Foreign Service

The stronger and more effective Foreign Service we call for will be enabled by increasing the number of opportunities for career professionals to serve as Ambassadors and senior officials at the State Department in Washington. This would reinforce the nonpartisan nature of the Foreign Service.

The State Department and Foreign Service have become overly politicized in both Republican and Democratic administrations. The President and Congress should appoint a higher number of career officials to leadership positions at the Department in Washington and among America's Ambassadors overseas by 2025.

This is a long-standing issue. Every administration for seven decades has maintained a rough division of two-thirds career and one-third non-career for ambassadorial assignments abroad. President Trump appointed 42.9 percent political Ambassadors, a modern record.<sup>38</sup> Of the 23 Assistant Secretary of State positions, none is held by a confirmed, serving career professional. The American Foreign Service Association believes this is a first in the 100-year history of the modern Foreign Service. As these officials are the most important daily managers of American foreign policy in each region of the world, this is a particularly damaging development. Two of an additional four positions at the Assistant Secretary level, including the Director General of the Foreign Service, are career Officers.<sup>39</sup>

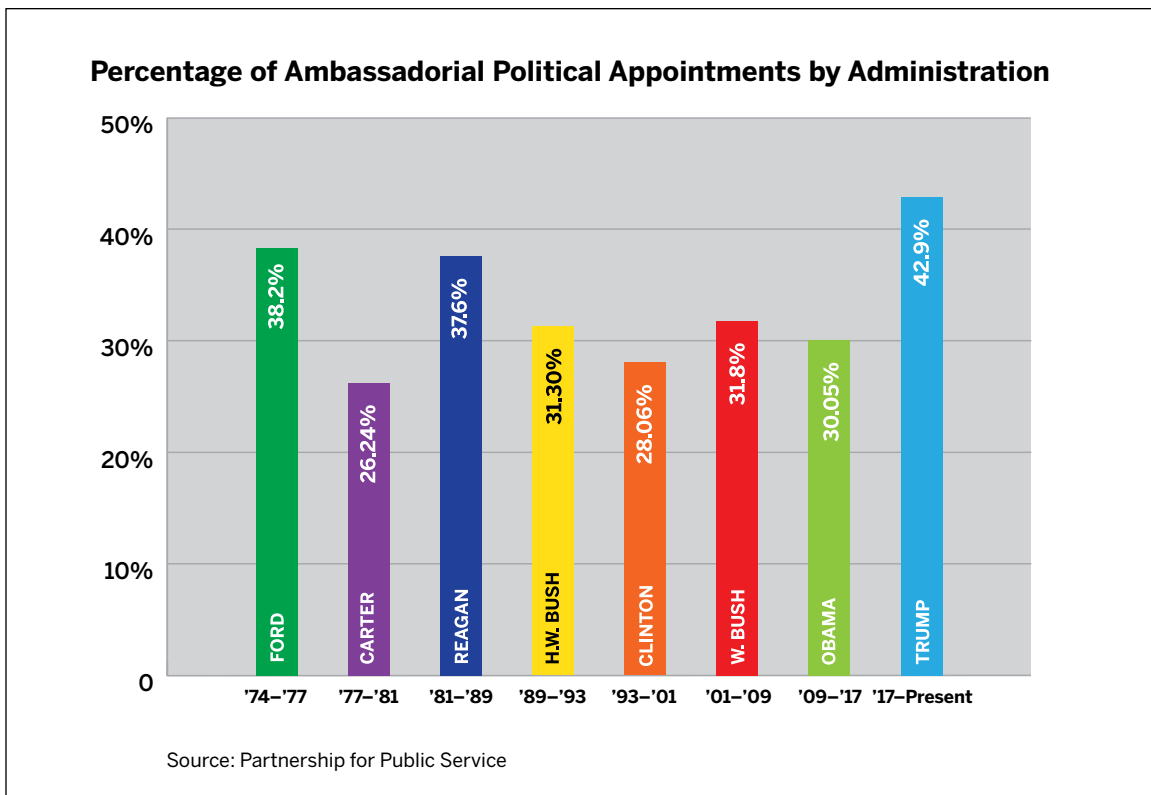
There is excessive politicization also in other senior domestic assignments at the State Department in Washington. The Partnership for Public Service calculates that the State Department has a greater number of Senate-confirmed non-career senior officials than any other Cabinet agency.<sup>40</sup>

We disagree with those who argue that all U.S. Ambassadors should be career officials. While the United States is the only major country that names a large number of political appointees to senior diplomatic positions, the United States has benefitted greatly from the service of private citizens with unique experience in the law, academia, business, the nonprofit sector, journalism and other professions. Many non-career appointees enrich our diplomacy at home and

abroad and bring new ideas and best practices to government. Presidents have the absolute right to ensure that their policies are carried out by people they know and trust.

It is the sheer number of political appointees and the absence of a list of required professional qualifications for them that we seek to change. The intensive politicization of the State Department has had a profoundly negative impact on the Foreign and Civil services. The current structure makes the State Department less nonpartisan in its mid-level and senior ranks than most Cabinet agencies. It also chokes off opportunities for career advancement and diminishes the strength of the Foreign Service and the attraction of a full Foreign Service career. This is a major problem for many who prepare through 20 or 30 years of service to find few opportunities at the ambassadorial, Deputy Assistant Secretary, or Assistant Secretary levels.

We also recognize, as we highlighted in other parts of this report, that the Service must do more to earn back the trust of the nation's elected leadership and to show it has the intellectual, strategically focused, and conceptual firepower and capacity to contribute meaningfully to the formulation and execution of American foreign policy at the ambassadorial and Assistant Secretary of State level.



To accomplish these aims, the President and the Congress should:

- Establish the goal of expanding ambassadorial positions for career professionals and thereby reduce the percentage of political appointee Ambassadors to 10 percent by 2025.
- Commit to having 75 percent of Assistant Secretary-level positions at the upper policy and management levels of the State Department filled by career officials by 2025.
- Commit to appointing a career professional as the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs as well as one of the other five Under Secretary of State positions (the highest-ranking officials after the Secretary and Deputy Secretary).
- These new targets and the timetable should be reflected in a new Foreign Service Act. The act should also endorse and repeat the clear qualifications for ambassadorial appointments that are listed in the 1980 act.<sup>41</sup> Congress should then ensure that the law is followed. (Action 2)

These changes should be phased in over five years to accommodate this major shift in how the United States staffs the leadership of the State Department.

We recognize that these changes will be opposed by many in both political parties and Congress. However, they would be among the most important steps to modernize and reimagine the Foreign Service, to attract the best candidates, and to send a signal to career Officers of the confidence our country has in them.

The United States can also compare its present appointment practices with those of other countries. China and Russia's diplomatic services are nearly entirely career as are the high performing diplomatic corps of our allies Japan, Germany, and the United Kingdom.

The President and Congress should set the same standards for the State Department that they do for the military and intelligence communities. Political appointees do not captain aircraft carriers. They do not lead teams of intelligence agents against terrorists. By the same logic, we should reserve the lion's share of the

State Department's senior policy and overseas leadership positions for the career Foreign Service and Civil Service.

Critics will say that the military has political oversight in each administration from the Secretaries of each of the services and that the State Department should have similar oversight. This is also true of the State Department where the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, and the majority of the Under Secretaries are normally political appointees.

These recommendations leave substantial room for a continued role by political appointees in the State Department. Ten percent of Ambassadors and at least four of the Under Secretaries other than the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs would be open to non-career appointments. This plan would still leave the United States with the highest number of political appointees in its diplomatic service of any major country.

There is a final change that the President and Congress should institute – establishing a far more rigorous set of qualifications for all ambassadorial appointees, both political and career, including a specific set of qualifications concerning language, knowledge of history, culture, and politics that all appointees should meet.<sup>42</sup> Such reforms will be particularly important to enable the Senate to judge the competence and suitability of political appointees for ambassadorships prior to confirmation.



## Action 10

# Find New Spirit in a New Name: The United States Diplomatic Service

Shakespeare famously asked, “What’s in a name?” In our view, the question, and the answer, could not be more timely. We propose that the “Foreign Service of the United States” be renamed the “United States Diplomatic Service.”

A new name would signal to American citizens, their leaders, and, crucially, to the women and men of the Service itself that there has been a break with the past and a decision to focus on the future. The transformational change we propose will create an organization very different from the Foreign Service of today.

The term “foreign service” has its origin in the decision by the first Secretary of State of the United States, Thomas Jefferson, to establish separate diplomatic and consular services to conduct the nation’s business overseas. Together, they were referred to as the “foreign services.”<sup>43</sup> This continued until the Rogers Act of 1924 amalgamated the two services into one, giving birth to the title “Foreign Service Officer”<sup>44</sup> and the name, “the Foreign Service of the United States.”

A name that begins with the term “foreign” and ends with “United States” is the reverse of the job we expect of America’s diplomats. It suggests an organization focused on foreigners, or worse, staffed by people who are somehow “foreign” to their fellow citizens, when the central purpose of American diplomacy is to advance the many interests and important values of Americans.

Former Secretary of State George Shultz remains a legend for making this point. When he met with U.S. Ambassadors, career and non-career, prior to their departure for their embassies, Shultz invited them into his office where there was a large globe. He would ask each to point to “their country.” Many would point to their country of assignment. “Oh, no,” the Secretary would say, “the United States of America is your country.”

Here are additional reasons why the “Foreign Service” needs to become “the United States Diplomatic Service”:

- The COVID-19 pandemic and the accompanying economic hardship have caused so much misery that the importance of showing the American people that there is a firm link between American diplomacy and advancing safety, well-being, and prosperity at home has arguably never been more important. In a new name the “United States” should come first.
- The name should also convey purpose. In the early years after independence, “the new republic regarded diplomacy with suspicion.”<sup>45</sup> Today, in our interconnected world, diplomacy should be seen as essential to protecting American interests, even to serve as a first line of defense in an interconnected world. Diplomacy in the title puts it up front.
- The word “service” should be maintained. America’s diplomats are sworn “to defend the Constitution against all enemies foreign and domestic” and that should not change. Those employees who are Officers in the Diplomatic Service must retain their status as commissioned Officers of the United States.

When we started this project, we did not have the goal of renaming the Foreign Service, but we did believe that an ambitious project of rebuilding and modernization was warranted. We recognize that the name “Foreign Service” has 96 years of proud and distinguished history. We honor that legacy. All three of us were proud to call ourselves FSOs for a total of 93 years among us.

But in the many discussions we had with former and current Officers and colleagues from the military and elsewhere in the foreign policy community we realized that a name should signal to the American people that their diplomats were working on their behalf. To test that proposition, we asked participants in our workshops and events what they thought of renaming our Service the “United States Diplomatic Service.” The response was overwhelmingly positive.

This name change is much more than what is known today as a branding exercise. It sends a forceful message that a transformative change has occurred. We believe “The United States Diplomatic Service” is a name worthy of a robust, modern, citizen-focused organization, proud of its heritage and accomplishments, and ready to meet the next challenges to our great nation.



## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Partnership for Public Service. *Political Appointee Tracker*, last modified November 9, 2020, <https://ourpublicservice.org/political-appointee-tracker/>.

<sup>2</sup> There are 4 other positions that hold the rank of Assistant Secretary: the Director General of the Foreign Service, the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, the Coordinator for International Information Programs, and the Director of the Foreign Service Institute. Currently only the Director General of the Foreign Service and the Director of the Foreign Service institute are Career Foreign Service.

<sup>3</sup> 2020 data obtained in authors' conversation with the American Foreign Service Association.

<sup>4</sup> A classification of employees based on their unique skills and abilities. U.S. Government Accountability Office, GAO-14-677.

<sup>5</sup> "The Foreign Service Act of 1980." Section 304, 101, chapter 4, chapter 9, chapter 8, and section 1001, (AFSA is not directly referenced; however, the act references "a labor organization" multiple times. As AFSA is the Foreign Service's sole labor organization, the act essentially outlines AFSA's established role in the employee management system.) <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/STATUTE-94/pdf/STATUTE-94-Pg2071.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> Ashton B. Carter. "Goldwater-Nichols at 30: An Agenda for Updating." Center for Strategic and International Studies [www.defense.gov/Newsroom/Transcripts/Transcript/Article/714145/remarks-on-goldwater-nichols-at-30-an-agenda-for-updating-center-for-strategic/](http://www.defense.gov/Newsroom/Transcripts/Transcript/Article/714145/remarks-on-goldwater-nichols-at-30-an-agenda-for-updating-center-for-strategic/).

<sup>7</sup> Eric Rosenbach and Aki J. Peritz. *Confrontation or Collaboration? Congress and the Intelligence Community*. Intelligence and Policy Project at Harvard Kennedy School's Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, 2009, 56–61. <https://www.belfercenter.org/publication/intelligence-reform>.

<sup>8</sup> *Changing the Risk Paradigm* for U.S. Diplomats. American Academy of Diplomacy and the Una Chapman Cox Foundation. Oct. 30, 2020, draft shared with the authors.

<sup>9</sup> American Foreign Service Association, *Appointments – Donald Trump*, last updated September 14, 2020. <https://afsa.org/appointments-donald-j-trump>.

<sup>10</sup> American Foreign Service Association, *Appointments – Barack Obama*, <https://afsa.org/appointments-barack-obama>.

<sup>11</sup> McLellan, Carlton. *America's Black Ambassadors: A Historical Snapshot*. Blackpast.org, August 31, 2015. <https://www.blackpast.org/global-african-history/perspectives-global-african-history/america-s-black-ambassadors-historical-snapshot/>.

<sup>12</sup> Foreign Service Statistics, American Foreign Service Association, March 2020, [http://afsa.org/sites/default/files/0320\\_diversity\\_data\\_for\\_web.pdf](http://afsa.org/sites/default/files/0320_diversity_data_for_web.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> *Recommendations from the Association of Black American Ambassadors Regarding Diversity and Inclusion in The Department of State and the United States Agency for International Development*. Distributed by the American Academy of Diplomacy, Nov. 10, 2020.

<sup>14</sup> The U.S. Department of State's Charles B. Rangel and Thomas R. Pickering Fellowship programs and USAID's Donald M. Payne Fellowship provide funding for graduate school, internships, mentorship, and professional development activities that lead to careers in the U.S. Foreign Service. The programs aim to enhance the excellence and diversity of the Foreign Service and encourage applications from members of minority groups historically underrepresented in the Foreign Service, women, and those with financial need.

- <sup>15</sup> Robert Hutchings and Jeremi Suri. *Modern Diplomacy in Practice*, University of Texas at Austin, 2020, 79.
- <sup>16</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>17</sup> Op.cit. 50.
- <sup>18</sup> Kishan Rana. *The Contemporary Embassy: Paths to Diplomatic Excellence*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2013, 4.
- <sup>19</sup> Ibid. 125.
- <sup>20</sup> Kori N. Schake. *State of Disrepair: Fixing the Culture and Practices of the State Department*, Hoover Institution Press, 2012, 120.
- <sup>21</sup> We are indebted to Chris Schroeder for acquainting us with the concept of “reciprocity” as the basis for trust between employers and employees and for bringing to our attention “*Tours of Duty: The New Employer-Employee Compact*” by Reid Hoffman, Ben Casnocha and Chris Yeh, *Harvard Business Review*, 2013.
- <sup>22</sup> *Diversity and Diplomacy: Assessing the State Department’s Record in Promoting Diversity and Inclusion*, 116th Congress (2019-2020), testimony of Carol Perez, <https://www.congress.gov/116/meeting/house/110956/witnesses/HHRG-116-FA17-Wstate-PerezC-20200922.pdf>
- <sup>23</sup> This is the number of Foreign Service members at the State Department. There are other Officers at USAID, the Foreign Commercial Service, Foreign Agriculture Service, and U.S. Agency for Global Media, bringing the total number of Foreign Service members to 15,600 forof fiscal year 2019. Julie Nutter. “The Foreign Service by the Numbers,” *The Foreign Service Journal*, Jan. 2020, [www.afsa.org/foreign-service-numbers](http://www.afsa.org/foreign-service-numbers)
- <sup>24</sup> Reid Hoffman, et al. *The Alliance: Managing Talent in the Networked Age*. Harvard Business Review Press, 2014.
- <sup>25</sup> Giovanni Zaldana, Bob Pearson, and Patrick Duddy (2020). *Meeting between Harvard University’s American Diplomacy Project and Duke University’s Rethinking Diplomacy Program*, July 14, 2020.
- <sup>26</sup> Although the 1946 act called for lateral entry, it was initially underutilized. Only after the Wriston Report in 1954 did the State Department implement the program in full. As a result of “Wristonization,” more women entered the Service through the lateral entry program as economic specialists. William Barnes and John H. Morgan. *The Foreign Service of the United States: Origins, Development, and Functions*. Government Printing Office, 1961.
- <sup>27</sup> 22 USC 3946. Section 306 of “The Foreign Service Act of 1980 § 306, 22 U.S.C. 3946.”
- <sup>28</sup> Tom Yazdgerdi. “Diversity and Inclusion: The Time to Act Is Now,” *The Foreign Service Journal*, Sept. 2020, 68.
- <sup>29</sup> Anne-Marie Slaughter. “Reinventing the State Department.” *Democracy Journal of Ideas*, Sept. 2020.
- <sup>30</sup> We are grateful to Ambassador Pat Kennedy for his guidance on this subject.
- <sup>31</sup> 10 U.S. Code § 10102.
- <sup>32</sup> “Joining the Military as a Reservist: Eligibility, Obligation and Benefits,” *Military OneSource*, last modified Sept. 14, 2020, <https://www.militaryonesource.mil/military-life-cycle/separation-transition/guard-and-reserves/joining-the-military-reserves>.

<sup>33</sup> W. Robert Pearson, Benjamin L. Schmitt and Giovanni Zanalda, "The State Department needs more scientists," *The Hill*, Oct. 16, 2020, <https://thehill.com/opinion/international/521444-the-state-department-needs-more-scientists>

<sup>34</sup> Ted Wilkinson, "AFSA Views: Calling Up Our Own Reserves," *Foreign Service Journal* 67, no. 11 (Nov. 1990): 2.

<sup>35</sup> Iraq Study Group (U.S.), James Addison Baker, Lee Hamilton, and Lawrence S. Eagleburger. *The Iraq Study Group Report*. New York: Vintage Books. 2006

<sup>36</sup> *National Security Strategy*. The White House, 2006. <https://nssarchive.us/national-security-strategy-2006/17>

<sup>37</sup> Susan R. Johnson, "President's Views: Time for the Foreign Service Reserve Corps," *Foreign Service Journal* 88, no. 1, Jan. 2011. 5.

<sup>38</sup> U.S. Government Accountability Office, *Stabilization and Reconstruction: Actions Are Needed to Develop a Planning and Coordination Framework and Establish the Civilian Reserve Corps*, GAO-08-39, 2007. <https://www.gao.gov/assets/270/269087.pdf>

<sup>39</sup> American Foreign Service Association, *Appointments – Donald Trump*, last updated September 14, 2020. <https://afsa.org/appointments-donald-j-trump>.

<sup>40</sup> Partnership for Public Service. *Political Appointee Tracker*, last modified November 9, 2020, <https://ourpublicservice.org/political-appointee-tracker/>.

<sup>41</sup> The Foreign Service Act of 1980 § 304, 22 USC 3944.

<sup>42</sup> There is already interest in Congress on this subject. On October 22, 2020, Senator Tim Kaine (VA) introduced S.4849: Ambassador Oversight and Transparency Act.

<sup>43</sup> The *Encyclopedia Britannica* says, "foreign service, also called, diplomatic service," the field force of a foreign office, comprising diplomatic and consular personnel engaged in representing the home government's interests abroad..."

<sup>44</sup> Robert J. Moskin. *American Statecraft: The Story of the U.S. Foreign Service*, St. Martin's Press 2013, 346.

<sup>45</sup> Harry Kopp. *The Voice of the Foreign Service: A History of the American Foreign Service Association*, American Foreign Service Association, 2015, 3.

# Appendix

## American Diplomacy Project

### List of Workshops, Meetings, and Public Events

Any individuals or organizations listed below do not represent endorsements of this report. All views expressed in this publication are solely those of the authors.

#### Research Workshops

1. Former Foreign Service Officers – April 16, 2020
2. Former Foreign Service Officers II – April 23, 2020
3. Former Foreign Service Officers III – May 1, 2020
4. Former Diplomats, Academics, Think Tank and Business Leaders I – May 6, 2020
5. Former Diplomats, Academics, Think Tank and Business Leaders II – May 8, 2020
6. Former Foreign Service Officers IV – May 19, 2020
7. Retired Senior Military Officers – May 29, 2020
8. Former U.S. Government Officials on Economic Diplomacy – June 12, 2020
9. Retired and Active Duty Intelligence Community Leaders – June 17, 2020
10. Former U.S. Government Agency Leaders – June 23, 2020
11. Former Senior Foreign Service Officers I – July 1, 2020
12. Former Foreign Service Officers V – July 9, 2020
13. Former Senior Foreign Service Officers II – July 14, 2020
14. Current and Former Foreign Government Officials and Observers – July 21, 2020
15. Current and Former Government Officials on Diversity – July 27, 2020
16. Former Directors General of the Foreign Service – September 4, 2020
17. Former Foreign Service Officers VI – October 1, 2020

#### Former U.S. Secretaries of State

1. General Colin Powell – October 22, 2020
2. Secretary Hillary Rodham Clinton – October 29, 2020
3. Secretary Condoleezza Rice – November 2, 2020
4. Secretary Madeleine Albright – November 12, 2020

#### Former U.S. National Security Advisors

1. Stephen Hadley, Thomas Donilon and Ambassador Susan Rice – October 15, 2020

## Other Research Meetings

1. Carol Perez, Director General of the Foreign Service – May 27, 2020
2. Vice Admiral Ann Rondeau – June 3, 2020
3. Ambassador Tom Fletcher CMG – June 4, 2020
4. Council on Foreign Relations Project with Ambassador Bill Burns, Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield, and Uzra Zeya – June 9, 2020
5. General Michael Hayden – June 26, 2020
6. Duke University's Rethinking Diplomacy Program – July 14, 2020
7. Michèle Flournoy – July 15, 2020
8. John Brennan – July 16, 2020
9. Ambassador Daniel Smith, Director of the Foreign Service Institute – July 23, 2020
10. Brian Bulatao, Under Secretary of State for Management – October 8, 2020
11. T. Ulrich Brechbuhl, Counselor of the Department – October 29, 2020
12. Biden Transition Team – October 30, 2020
13. Keith Krach, Under Secretary for Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment, – November 2, 2020
14. Democratic Members of Congress, House Foreign Relations Committee – September 8, 2020
15. Senior Democratic Staff, Senate Foreign Relations Committee – October 22, 2020
16. Senior Republican Staff, House Foreign Affairs Committee – October 29, 2020
17. Senior Republican Staff, Senate Foreign Relations Committee – October 30, 2020
18. Congressman Jeff Fortenberry (NE) – November 12, 2020

## Public Events

1. DACOR – April 21, 2020
2. World Affairs Council of Dallas/Fort Worth – May 7, 2020
3. Tennessee World Affairs Council – May 20, 2020
4. World Affairs Council of America – September 10, 2020
5. Peoria Area World Affairs Council – September 21, 2020
6. New America Foundation – October 19, 2020
7. Cleveland Council on World Affairs – October 26, 2020
8. University of Nebraska-Lincoln/University of Nebraska Public Policy Center – October 28, 2020
9. WorldBoston – November 16, 2020
10. Harvard Kennedy School – November 17, 2020
11. World Affairs Council of America National Conference – November 18, 2020
12. American Foreign Service Association – November 19, 2020



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Ambassador Burns served in the United States government as a career Foreign Service Officer. He was Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs from 2005 to 2008; the State Department's third-ranking official. He was U.S. Ambassador to NATO (2001-2005), U.S. Ambassador to Greece (1997-2001) and State Department Spokesman (1995-1997). He worked at the National Security Council as Senior Director for Russia, Ukraine, and Eurasia Affairs; Special Assistant to President Clinton; and Director for Soviet Affairs for President George H.W. Bush. Burns served in the American Consulate General in Jerusalem where he coordinated U.S. economic assistance to the Palestinian people in the West Bank and before that, at the American embassies in Egypt and Mauritania. He was a member of Secretary of State John Kerry's Foreign Affairs Policy Board from 2014-2017.

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During 37 years in the U.S. Foreign Service, she was a three-time Chief of Mission, serving as Head of the U.S. Office Pristina (2003-2004), U.S. Ambassador to Albania (2004-2007) and U.S. Ambassador to Bulgaria (2012-2015). Ambassador Ries was a senior member of the team that negotiated the 2010 New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START). She was Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for European and Eurasian Affairs (2008-2009) where she had responsibility for offices dealing with relations with NATO, the European Union and Western Europe, and strategic planning and personnel. From 2007-2008, Ambassador Ries served as Minister-Counselor for Political-Military Affairs in Baghdad, Iraq. She was Director of the State Department's Office of United Nations Political Affairs for the two years following the 9/11 attack. She also served overseas as Counselor in the U.S. Embassy in London, four years at the U.S. Mission to the European Union in Brussels, and tours in Turkey and the Dominican Republic.

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The authors gratefully acknowledge the extraordinary substantive contributions of our colleagues at Harvard who worked tirelessly on this report. It would not have been completed without them.

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