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# About

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## About the U.S. Department of State

### Our Mission

The U.S. Department of State leads America's foreign policy through diplomacy, advocacy, and assistance by advancing the interests of the American people, their safety and economic prosperity.

## FOREIGN AFFAIRS MANUAL AND HANDBOOK

The FAM and FAH govern how we do our work.

### JOINT STRATEGIC PLAN

Guides how the State Department and USAID implement U.S. foreign policy and development assistance.

### WE ARE THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Watch career employees and ambassadors discuss our work in this video series.

## Leadership

### SECRETARY OF STATE

The Secretary of State, appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate, is the President's chief foreign affairs adviser. The Secretary carries out the President's foreign policies through the State Department, which includes the Foreign Service, Civil Service, and U.S. Agency for International Development.

## **DEPUTY SECRETARY OF STATE**

Serves as the principal deputy, adviser, and alter ego to the Secretary of State; and assists the Secretary in the formulation and conduct of U.S. foreign policy and in giving general supervision and direction to all elements of the Department.

## **BIOGRAPHIES OF SENIOR OFFICIALS**

Find biographies of officials serving in positions domestically from Deputy Assistant Secretaries up to the Secretary of State.

## Our History

The U.S. Department of State has grown significantly over the years. The first Secretary of State, Thomas Jefferson, oversaw a small staff of one chief clerk, three other clerks, a translator, and a messenger. They maintained only two diplomatic posts, in London and Paris, as well as 10 consular posts. More than 230 years later, the Department's workforce includes some 13,000 members of the Foreign Service, 11,000 Civil Service employees, and 45,000 locally employed staff at more than 270 diplomatic missions worldwide.

Our role has also changed in response to changing global circumstances. At one time, the State Department was responsible for a number of domestic duties ranging from publication of the census to control of copyright to management of the Mint. We now work to fight terrorism, protect U.S. interests abroad, and implement foreign policy initiatives while building a more free, prosperous, and secure world.

Explore our other websites for a more in-depth look at the State Department's history and the impact of our work through the years and today.

### **HISTORY.STATE.GOV**

Provides in-depth information to the public on the history of U.S. foreign policy. In addition to a **full text archive of the *Foreign Relations series***, the website includes valuable encyclopedic content on the history of **U.S. relations with states around the world**, and a

database of the **Department's principal officers and chiefs of mission.**

## **THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AMERICAN DIPLOMACY**

This new museum, located at our headquarters in Washington, DC, tells the story of the history, practice, and challenges of American diplomacy. Through exhibitions and programs, it inspires the American public to discover diplomacy and how it impacts their lives every day.

## **ART IN EMBASSIES**

Art in Embassies creates vital cross-cultural dialogue and mutual understanding through the visual arts and dynamic artist exchanges.

The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) initiated exhibitions of contemporary art for U.S. embassy residences in 1953. Ten years later, President John F. Kennedy established our Art in Embassies office.

## **DIPLOMATIC RECEPTION ROOMS**

For fifty years, the art of diplomacy has thrived in the Diplomatic Reception Rooms against a stunning backdrop of American art and architecture from the time of our country's founding and of its formative years. In these State Rooms, the United States signs treaties, conducts summit negotiations, hosts swearing-in ceremonies, facilitates trade agreements, and promotes peace.

## Resources

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### **ADMINISTRATIVE**

- **Department Reports and Publications**
- **Agency Financial Reports**

- **Form Finder**
- **Organization Chart**
- **Plans, Performance, Budget**
- **Partner With State**

## **DIRECTORIES**

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- **U.S. Ambassadors**
- **U.S. Embassies and Other Posts**
- **Country Offices Directory**
- **Key Officers of Foreign Service Posts**
- **Diplomats in Residence**

## **LEGAL**

- **Statutory Authority**
- **Information Quality Act**
- **Open Government Initiative**
- **Digital Government Strategy**
- **Plain Writing Program**

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