

Under Secretary for Political Affairs Allison M. Hooker
Opening Statement on FY26 State Department Posture: Bureau of Political Affairs
House Foreign Affairs Committee
July 23, 2025

Good morning, Chairman Mast, Ranking Member Meeks, and distinguished Members of the Committee.

It is an honor to appear before you today as Under Secretary for Political Affairs. Since stepping into this role just over six weeks ago, I've had the opportunity to accompany Secretary Rubio on three overseas missions, two of which were in support of President Trump. These early engagements were not ceremonial—they were urgent, high-level diplomatic efforts demanding precision, speed, and strategic focus. They reflect the President's clear directive: that our diplomacy be focused, effective, and firmly grounded in America First principles.

The President's bold approach could not be more timely. The United States faces a global landscape defined by intensifying strategic competition, destabilizing mass migration, transnational crime, unfair trade practices, and the challenge of forging durable partnerships in a rapidly shifting world. Meeting these challenges requires a Department of State that is leaner, sharper, and more responsive — an institution built not for bureaucracy, but for results. Unfortunately, that is not the Department we inherited.

Let me be clear: as a former civil servant with over two decades of service, I have deep and abiding respect for the dedication and talent of the Department's workforce — Foreign Service, Civil Service, Locally Employed Staff, and others. But even the most skilled workforce cannot thrive within a system that is structurally flawed.

For too long, our organization has been burdened by overlapping mandates, unclear chains of command, and a proliferation of single-issue offices detached from our broader national priorities. As the Deputy Secretary for Management and Resources testified before this Committee last week, when Secretary Rubio unveiled the reorganization plan on April 22, the Department had more than 1,500 domestic office units. That is an astonishing figure for an agency whose central mission is to represent American interests overseas.

With this complexity has come a lack of accountability — to the President and, ultimately, to the American people. When lines of responsibility blur and decision-making is spread across multiple actors, it becomes harder to ensure that the Department's work is fully aligned with the priorities of the elected leadership. This undermines not only efficiency but also the most essential democratic principle: that our government agencies must be responsive and accountable to those they serve.

Calls for reform are nothing new. But this time, reform is not theoretical. It is happening. Under the leadership of President Trump and Secretary Rubio, we are executing a

fundamental transformation of the Department—one rooted in achieving operational effectiveness and institutional accountability.

This reorganization was never about individual people or positions. It was about structure and strategic alignment. And at the heart of this transformation is the empowerment of our regional bureaus and, through them, our posts overseas.

By consolidating policy tools under our regional bureaus, we are creating single lines of accountability that will allow us to move faster, speak with greater clarity, and deliver more impactful results. These changes will ensure that our diplomacy is no longer driven by dozens of different offices with competing priorities and authorities, but by a mission-focused core fully empowered and aligned with the President's priorities.

As part of this effort, we are also taking bold action on foreign assistance. For too long, development projects have lacked local buy-in, delivered limited impact, or reflected ideological agendas rather than U.S. strategic interests. In the process, we've alienated potential partners and created openings for our competitors to expand their influence. That era is over.

As of July 1, ongoing foreign assistance programs of the United States Agency for International Development have been transitioned to the State Department. This historic transition brings us into alignment with how most of our allies operate and enables us to treat foreign assistance not as a siloed enterprise, but as a core tool of U.S. foreign policy.

This does not mean the United States is stepping back from the world. On the contrary: we remain the largest provider of foreign assistance globally. But moving forward, every dollar we invest abroad will be treated as exactly that — an investment. An investment in American security. An investment in American jobs. And an investment in our great nation's strength.

Under President Trump's leadership, and with Secretary Rubio's clear direction, we are executing an America First foreign policy that is principled, pragmatic, and unapologetically focused on delivering for the American people. The challenges are immense but so is our resolve. And now, we have an institution designed to triumph in our time.

I am deeply honored to serve in this role and to help drive this transformation forward. I look forward to working with Congress in our shared mission to safeguard U.S. interests on the global stage.

Thank you — and I welcome your questions.