

**Opening Statement of Jason S. Evans  
Under Secretary of State for Management  
House Foreign Affairs Committee  
Hearing: “Restoring Mission Focus at the State Department: Authority,  
Accountability, and the Role of the Foreign Service”  
March 18, 2026**

Chairman Mast, Ranking Member Meeks, and distinguished Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today on the topic of restoring mission focus at the Department and to discuss the authority, accountability, and role of the Foreign Service in advancing America’s interests abroad.

The Foreign Service is the backbone of American diplomacy, and its officers represent our nation’s values and interests across the globe. As a 24-year career Foreign Service Officer, having spent time at overseas assignments in places like Afghanistan, Hong Kong, and Brazil, I am acutely aware of the role of the Foreign Service and the management operations that support it.

As the Under Secretary for Management, one of my mandates is to ensure that our policies and systems for recruiting, training, assigning, and evaluating the Department’s entire workforce, including Foreign Service Officers, are thorough, fair, and mission driven, and are in alignment with the Administration’s federal workforce priorities and guidance. I combine this role with performing the duties of the Director General of the Foreign Service, illustrating that an effective Foreign Service is at the center of this Administration's vision for America First foreign policy.

The Department long struggled to perform basic diplomatic functions due to its former organizational structure and management operations. To begin to address these flaws, the Department underwent a reorganization last year that restored mission focus and realigned domestic functions to better support its global mission, driving resources towards our 275 posts worldwide. The actions taken by the Department over the last year to reorganize have positioned us to implement much-needed workforce reforms and identify improvements to the Foreign Service Act.

The reorganization refocused the authorities associated with each of the domestic bureaus and offices and better aligned our resources with the policy priorities we face in modern era. It eliminated redundant functions, enhanced accountability, and empowered our people to deliver results. There is now a better foundation to

address the current and future needs of the Foreign Service as a result of the reorganization and new strategic priorities from the Administration.

The Foreign Service Act has been in place for nearly 46 years. Although our national security and foreign policy needs have changed significantly during that time, the Department's focus of executing in the national interests of Americans remains the same. It is imperative that the Foreign Service be staffed with skilled officers to meet these new demands. I am especially focused on ensuring that our management authorities are used to restore and enhance a global workforce — including the Foreign Service—that is agile, disciplined, and responsive to the needs of this country and the American people.

Given recent developments, I would like to take a moment to discuss the Department's role in the Middle East, as the embassy security and the evacuation of American citizens fall under my authority. The safety and security of our personnel and facilities remains our highest priority. I have provided direction to Chiefs of Missions and Deputy Chiefs of Missions around the world on the security of our facilities. In addition to the usual global operations, Department employees are working 24/7 on task forces to assist American citizens including their colleagues. As security incidents have occurred at our overseas posts, the Department has taken action to ensure the safety of our personnel. This includes following legal mandates to conduct security reviews to ensure the safety of our people and facilities now and in the future. The Department has directed authorized and ordered departures from posts, the process where diplomats and their families temporarily return to safe havens away from their overseas assignments, and provided guidance and resources to support employees during these transitions.

The Department continues to execute its mission throughout these actions while prioritizing support to American citizens. Over the last few weeks, the Department has assisted tens of thousands of American citizens. I want to thank our dedicated professionals throughout the world, which includes the Department's Foreign Service Officers, and our colleagues from other federal agencies for their commitment to the safety and support of Americans.

I look forward to working with this Committee and with the dedicated professionals at the Department to advance reforms that will strengthen our Foreign Service and ensure that America's interests are effectively represented abroad. I welcome your questions and look forward to our discussion. Thank you for your time and attention.