



## About the American Foreign Service Association

The American Foreign Service Association, established in 1924, is both professional association and exclusive representative for the U.S. Foreign Service. AFSA's close to 16,800 members include active-duty and retired members of the Foreign Service at the Department of State, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), Foreign Commercial Service, Foreign Agricultural Service, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service and U.S. Agency for Global Media.

AFSA is both the principal advocate for the long-term institutional wellbeing of the professional career Foreign Service and responsible for safeguarding the interests of AFSA members. AFSA also seeks to increase understanding among the American people about the vital role of the U.S. Foreign Service in sustaining American global leadership.

AFSA exists to support the United States Foreign Service, which deploys worldwide to protect and serve America's people, interests and values. The Foreign Service is the only U.S. government entity that is globally deployed with an enduring physical presence in almost every country in the world, creating an enormous competitive advantage for America and for Americans from all walks of life.

Nearly 80 percent of active-duty members of the Foreign Service choose to join AFSA, the voice of the Foreign Service. AFSA's members are career professionals who volunteer to live and work abroad for roughly two-thirds of their careers—usually serving abroad with their families, but sometimes unable to—representing America to the people and leaders of other countries. Members of the Foreign Service are posted to more than 270 U.S. embassies, consulates and other missions that are scattered across the globe—most in difficult and many in dangerous environments.

The Foreign Service Act of 1980, the legal foundation for the Foreign Service, opens by declaring that “a career Foreign Service, characterized by excellence and professionalism, is essential in the national interest.” AFSA speaks for its members individually, ensuring that the law is upheld and due process followed, but also, crucially, for the long-term health and vigor of the Foreign Service as an institution, certain in the conviction that a career Foreign Service, characterized by excellence and professionalism, is in America's national interest.