

The Honorable Harry Reid  
U.S. Senate Majority Leader  
522 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
U.S. Senate Minority Leader  
317 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

November 19, 2014

Dear Senator Reid and Senator McConnell:

The American Foreign Service Association and the undersigned military associations are writing to support swift Senate confirmation *en bloc* of career Foreign Service officers nominated for the position of ambassador. We believe the presence of United States ambassadors in host countries is critically important to U.S. security interests overseas.

The members of our associations have a deep appreciation of the role of the American ambassador in representing the President, the Congress and the people of the United States to host governments. The presence of an American ambassador abroad demonstrates the commitment of the United States to diplomatic engagement on many levels including military, status of forces, and national security issues. The absence of an ambassador risks conveying the unintended message that the United States does not value a bilateral relationship with the country.

Having an incumbent ambassador allows the mission to have the access to meet with and convey messages to the highest levels of the host government, as well as to deal with issues that directly affect the ability of United States military forces to function abroad effectively. Ambassadorial vacancies send a negative message to friends and foes alike. Just as in the military, an orderly transition from commander to commander is imperative.

We urge you to ensure the expeditious Senate confirmation of nominees after they are voted out of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee by returning to the previous practice of *en bloc* confirmation of career Foreign Service officers.

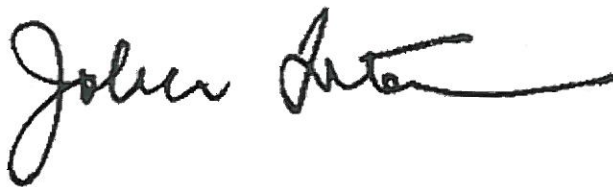
Sincerely,



ROBERT J. SILVERMAN  
President, American Foreign Service Association



GORDON R. SULLIVAN  
General, USA Retired  
President & CEO, Association of the US Army



JOHN TOTUSHEK  
Vice Admiral  
Executive Director, Association of the US Navy