



July 30, 2014

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

Dear Majority Leader Reid:

I am writing on behalf of the 31,000 members of the American Foreign Service Association to urge the U.S. Senate once again to confirm Ambassador Arnold Chacon as Director General of the Foreign Service and Director of Human Resources before the August recess.

AFSA believes it is important that our career ambassadors be confirmed so the U.S. has the leadership it needs and deserves at our missions overseas. We appreciate your efforts to confirm many of our career colleagues before the recess, but feel compelled to request a full Senate vote on Ambassador Chacon because he will provide leadership for all members of the Foreign Service, whether they serve in Washington or abroad.

If confirmed, Ambassador Chacon would be responsible for some 14,000 Foreign Service and 11,000 Civil Service personnel, as well as 45,000 locally employed staff, both in the U.S. and in 275 diplomatic missions abroad. He would have his thumb on the pulse of the lifeblood of American diplomacy – our men and women who serve.

The State Department has been without a Director General for over one year. The Director General of the Foreign Service has statutory responsibility for the entire Foreign Service, across all foreign affairs agencies. With the position standing vacant, all new initiatives are on hold pending arrival of a new Director General. The Director also chairs the committee that selects the Deputy Chiefs of Mission and Principal Officers, and is the Executive Secretary to the Deputies Committee that recommends career ambassadorial appointments. The Service needs Ambassador Chacon – a senior leader with over 32 years of service to his country – to help develop, cultivate, and identify talent for our missions overseas.

AFSA respectfully requests that the Senate expeditiously confirm Ambassador Arnold Chacon as Director General of the Foreign Service before the August recess.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Robert J. Silverman".

Robert J. Silverman
President