

Executive Summary

America's diplomatic capacity is being decimated from within. Since January 2025, as many as one in four members of the U.S. Foreign Service—the career professionals who implement American foreign policy—have resigned, retired, seen their agencies dismantled, or been removed from their posts. This unprecedented loss of personnel and institutional capacity puts U.S. global leadership and the safety of American citizens at serious risk.

To assess the impact of these dramatic shifts, the American Foreign Service Association (AFSA), the union and professional association of the Foreign Service, surveyed more than 2,100 of its active-duty Foreign Service members worldwide.

The results are sobering:

86%

said changes in the workplace since January 2025 have affected their ability to advance U.S. diplomatic priorities.

98%

reported poor morale.

Nearly 1/3

reported changing their career plans since January 2025.

The following report underscores the urgent need to restore the resources, protections, and institutional integrity vital to support U.S. foreign policy interests.

AFSA's Policy Recommendations

The survey findings make clear that the U.S. Foreign Service is in crisis. To restore its effectiveness and protect independence, AFSA urges Congress to

- **Protect the Nonpartisan Career Foreign Service:** Reaffirm that career diplomats serve under presidents of either party and they must be able to offer their expertise shielded from political retaliation including reassignment or dismissal for political reasons.
- **Reassert Congressional Oversight:** Ensure transparency and accountability in executive actions affecting the Foreign Service and foreign policy institutions; exercise oversight of organizational and policy processes through congressional proceedings and data requests.
- **Strengthen and Modernize the Foreign Service:** Partner with AFSA on reforms that enhance training, leadership, and adaptability while safeguarding professionalism and integrity to meet 21st-century challenges.

These steps are essential to restore trust, morale, and the institutional foundations of American diplomacy.

Detailed analysis and recommendations can be found in the full report.