

Fundamental Equity and Inclusion For U.S. National Security and Global Engagement

An Open Letter from Foreign Policy and National Security Practitioners

When Career Ambassador Tom Shannon announced he would retire from the U.S. Department of State earlier this year, then-Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said, “Thirty-five years of experience is not something you replace overnight.”

Similarly, expertise from America’s tapestry of diverse communities is irreplaceable as a strategic contribution to durable national security outcomes. As many senior civil servants depart their roles in government, it is essential that practitioners in foreign policy and national security reinforce America’s capacity to constructively engage with the world.

We find ourselves at a critical juncture where our institutions are challenged with new, emerging threats, and more than ever, must be reinforced with service-minded individuals that reflect the full spectrum of American strength and ingenuity. Such strength can only be advanced through inclusion, not token attempts or quotas.

Diverse cultural, linguistic, and religious lived experiences among professionals offer powerful insight and cultural competency for foreign policy in an increasingly globalized world. We must assert American leadership to prevent the erosion of confidence in international values while establishing an inclusive infrastructure, which carries on hope for a world order based on democracy, human rights, and justice for all. This starts with the multi-faceted, wide spectrum of the voices of America.

Our national security institutions have made some progress over the past century in becoming more diverse, yet substantial deficiencies remain.

- As of 2015, people of color represented only 22 percent of the overall officer corps and 40 percent of the enlisted force in the military.
- Only 24 percent are people of color and only 11 percent lead in senior ranking positions in the intelligence community.
- As of 2016 at the State Department, minorities made up 24 percent of Foreign Service Officer Corps and 42 percent of the Civil Service workforce.

These gains, however, have rarely translated to racial and ethnic inclusion beyond entry-level and mid-career achievement. Similar challenges remain for gender inclusion efforts at the State Department. Women make up only 38 percent of the Senior Executive Service and 36 percent of the Senior Foreign Service with a critical distinction of the pronounced disenfranchisement and disproportionality for women of color sector-wide. This deficiency remains despite extensive research demonstrating that gender parity helps resolve and prevent conflict, while building more lasting peace.

To move forward in creating a stronger, and more durable national security and foreign policy, we need a broad commitment to more inclusive practices and pipelines. As practitioners, experts, and professionals in foreign policy and national security, we call on leaders and policymakers to

reinforce policy development and institutions with the strength of America's diversity. To achieve this, policymakers should expand access and inclusive professional development toward career advancement for professionals currently representing America's interests at foreign policy and national security entities in government and partners outside of government. Such an effort must entail:

- Demanding high-level agency leadership and accountability to integrate strategic inclusion as a national security imperative in policy development and workforce management;
- Collecting, analyzing, and disseminating workforce demographic data;
- Increasing access to careers of service through entry-level and mid-career pipeline opportunities for underrepresented communities;
- Translating pipeline initiatives into senior-level achievement and appointments for an expanded pool of senior mentors and sponsors;
- Conducting stay and exit interviews and surveys, while analyzing demographics of career transitions among professionals from underrepresented communities;
- Encouraging the policy formulation community outside of government to serve as a partner and resource for advancing strategic inclusion.

Equitable inclusion in national security cannot be an afterthought. Diverse contributions to public service is a strong feature of American power. To not invest in this need fails our country, communities, and future. We urge community leaders, academics, advocates, policy professionals, and political leaders to affirm the motto of the United States "E Pluribus Unum." Out of our many voices, we must forge inclusive foreign policy to succeed at home and abroad.

Maram Abdelhamid

President and Founder
Liberty and Access For All

Travis L. Adkins

Director, Global Governance & Civic Engagement, InterAction

Bunmi Akinnusotu

Chief of Staff
Young Professionals in Foreign Policy

Robert C. Bacon

International Public Policy Consultant, Duco & Former Special Assistant
U.S. Department of State

Francisco Bencosme

Former President of Congressional Hispanic Staff Association, U.S. Senate

Lora Berg

Senior Fellow
German Marshall Fund of the United States & Member of the Senior Executive Service (ret.), U.S. Department of State

Chidi Blyden

Former Director and Policy Advisor for Africa
U.S. Department of Defense

Salih Booker

Executive Director
Center for International Policy

Spencer P. Boyer

Former Deputy Assistant Secretary for European and Eurasian Affairs
U.S. Department of State

Allyn Brooks-LaSure

*Former Foreign Service Officer &
Vice President for Communications Leadership
Conference on Civil and Human Rights.*

Pamela Campos

*Veteran (U.S. Air Force) &
Executive Director, Common Defense*

Maria Pinto Carland

Michael Carpenter

*Senior Director
Penn Biden Center for Diplomacy and Global
Engagement*

Asha C. Castleberry

*Veteran (U.S. Army) & Board Member
Women of Color Advancing Peace, Security
and Conflict Transformation (WCAPS)*

Luis C.deBaca

*Former U.S. Ambassador at Large to Monitor
and Combat Trafficking in Persons U.S.
Department of State*

Chen-Lun Chang

Katelyn Choe

*Foreign Service Officer
U.S. Department of State*

Desiree Cormier

*Former Foreign Service Officer
U.S. Department of State*

Leo Cruz

*Veteran (U.S. Navy) & Former Obama
Administration Political Appointee
U.S. Department of Defense*

Alexia D'Arco

*President
Young Professionals in Foreign Policy*

Chandrima Das

*President
International Career Advancement Program
Alumni Association (ICAPAA)*

Linda Etim

*Former Assistant Administrator for Africa
USAID*

Yaya J. Fanusie

*Former Counterterrorism Analyst
Central Intelligence Agency*

Latanya Mapp Frett

*Foreign Service Officer; Retired
USAID*

Simone Gbolo

*Executive Director
Public Policy and International Affairs
Fellowship Program*

DK Gurung

*International Development Expert
International Commission for Dalit Rights*

Gail Harris

Veteran (U.S. Navy)

Eric J Henderson

*Former Chief Editor, "Markets For Good"
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation*

Bonnie Jenkins

*Former Ambassador, Coordinator for Threat
Reduction Programs, U.S. Department of State
& Founder and President
Women of Color Advancing Peace, Security
and Conflict Transformation (WCAPS)*

Marguerite Jimenez, PhD

*Former Senior Advisor to U.S. Secretary of
Commerce & Director for Cuba
Washington Office on Latin America*

Anthony L. Johnson

Veteran (U.S. Navy) & National Security Professional

Alex T. Johnson

*Senior Policy Advisor for Europe and Eurasia
Open Society Policy Center*

Jennifer Jun

*Director, Fellowships and Research Partnerships
Chicago Council on Global Affairs*

Mark Hanis

Former National Security Special Advisor to the Vice President for South America, Africa, and Human Rights

Zeinab Khalil

*Presidential Fellow
Open Society Foundations*

Harrison Koh

Veteran (U.S. Marine Corps) & Presidential Management Fellow

Laura Kupe

*Former Special Assistant
U.S. Department of Homeland Security*

Reta Jo Lewis , Esq.

*Former Special Representative for Global Intergovernmental Affairs
U.S. Department of State*

Eric Lundy

Inclusv

Justin McFarlin

Veteran (U.S. Army)

Tyrik McKeiver

Former Senior Advisor to the Deputy Secretary of State, U.S. Department of State

Ana Janaina Nelson

*Former Southern Cone Desk Officer
U.S. Department of State*

Rashida Petersen

*Chief Executive Officer
1847 Philanthropic*

Jalina Porter

Rikkia Ramsey

Former U.S. Senate Staff

Dr. Sandra A. Rivera

*Vice President of Finance
International Career Advancement Program Alumni Association (ICAPAA)*

Anthony Robinson

*Veteran (U.S. Marine Corps) & Former Obama Administration Political Appointee
U.S. Department of Defense*

Cynthia Romero

Former Strategic Communications Advisor for the Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance, USAID

Edward Thomas Rowe

*Director of International Career Advancement Program & Associate Professor
University of Denver*

Soledad Roybal

*Technology Access Consultant
U.S. Department of State*

Marlene Sallo

*Former DOJ/DHS CVE Task Force Member
U.S. Department of Justice*

Nicole Bibbins Sedaca

*Professor and Chair,
Global Politics and Security
Georgetown University*

Angana Shah
Senior Advisor
World Bank Group

Rudy Soto
Veteran (U.S. Army)

Camille Stewart
*Former Senior Policy Advisor for Cyber,
Infrastructure & Resilience Policy*
U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Daniel Stewart

David Bruce Wharton
Former U.S. Ambassador to Zimbabwe
U.S. Department of State

Marie Williams
*Former Advisor to the Assistant Administrator
for Africa, USAID*

Taylor Winkleman
Veteran (U.S. Army)

Gina Abercrombie-Winstanley
*Former U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of
Malta, U.S. Department of State*

Brent C. Woolfork
Former Managing Director
Overseas Private Investment Corporation