



[View in Browser](#)

AFSA Supports Racial and Social Justice

Dear colleagues,

Our nation is in an unprecedented situation. The COVID-19 global pandemic has disrupted all of our lives, both personal and professional. And now, we bear witness to the understandable sadness and rage over yet another unnecessary death of an African American – George Floyd – in Minneapolis.

As American diplomats, it is our job to explain America to the world. We have always pointed to our story as being worthy of emulation, whether it is human and civil rights, fighting against corruption, the power of our culture – much of it fueled by African American artists – or the strength of our democratic institutions. This week, we have been forcefully reminded that we still have a long way to go as a nation.

AFSA fully supports non-violent demonstrations to protest injustice, especially social and racial injustice. They are the cornerstone of any democracy, including America's, and are often the harbinger of much-needed reform.

We have also heard from many within the Foreign Service community about their own experiences with systemic racism, both within and outside of our agencies. These stories are distressing and vividly demonstrate that our own community is not immune to the injustices of American society.

I am sad to say that AFSA's history on these issues is checkered. As an institution, we often took the wrong side on issues of racial and social justice. We were not full-throated in our demands for racial equality during the civil rights era. We did not come to the support of our LGBTQ colleagues in the 1990s when we should have. I think it is important to acknowledge these shortcomings.

Today, AFSA is strongly devoted to equality and diversity in all aspects. We push the

management of all foreign affairs agencies to do more and to do better. We work hand in hand with the Pickering, Rangel and Payne Fellows programs to ensure a steady intake of diverse Foreign Service candidates. We have worked to address unconscious bias. We have long working relationships with minority employee affinity groups. I am proud of this work and feel privileged that AFSA can help push us towards a more representative Foreign Service.

AFSA will continue to support all of our members on these issues. We will support and defend you so that you can continue to safeguard America's interests, assist Americans overseas, and promote the ideals of democracy and the protection of human rights everywhere.

If you believe AFSA can play a role in better supporting our shared community, please let us know. We will be there.

Sincerely,

Ambassador Eric Rubin
AFSA President

American Foreign Service Association
2101 E Street NW
Washington DC 20037
[Email us](#) | (202)338-4045 | [Visit our website](#)
Problem viewing this email? [View in browser.](#)