



Office of Inspector General
United States Department of State

June 4, 2020

The Honorable Carolyn B. Maloney
Chairwoman
House Committee on Oversight and Reform

The Honorable Eliot L. Engel
Chairman
House Committee on Foreign Affairs

The Honorable Gerald E. Connolly
Chairman
House Oversight and Reform Subcommittee on Government Operations

The Honorable Joaquin Castro
Chairman
House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations

Dear Chairwoman and Chairmen:

This letter is in response to your May 21, 2020, letter requesting information on the work of the U.S. Department of State Office of Inspector General. In that letter, you listed four requests for documents and information. We are working diligently to provide you with responses to requests 1, 2 and 3. However, I am prepared to provide you with a response to request 4 at this time.

You have asked whether I agree to resign as Director of the Office of Foreign Missions (OFM) and recuse myself from all matters involving that office and the Office of Secretary if I remain Acting State Department Inspector General. I can confirm that I have stepped away from the operations of OFM and, while Acting Inspector General, will not exercise the authorities or duties associated with the Director of OFM position. Additionally, having come from the Department, I understand that I will need to recuse myself from certain matters. At a minimum, I will be recused from all matters related to OFM. I will also be recused from matters I worked on, in a substantive way, at the Department prior to my tenure as the Director of OFM. Furthermore, I will be recused from matters involving individuals with whom I have a personal relationship such that my objectivity could be impaired. I am working expeditiously with OIG's Office of General Counsel to finalize and formalize these recusals. In addition, I am working with leadership at the Council of Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (CIGIE) and OIG's senior leadership to assist me in navigating and mitigating the challenges inherent in transitioning from the Department to OIG.

I fully appreciate the importance of OIG's mission and the critical role independence plays in providing the Department and Congress with objective and meaningful reports. During my tenure as Acting Inspector General, OIG will continue its audits, inspections, evaluations, and investigations and I will execute my duties in accordance with the laws, policies, and standards governing my position and OIG's work.

I hope you find this response useful as you work to fulfill your important congressional oversight responsibilities. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or the Director of Congressional Affairs, Ryan Holden, at (571) 349-9259 or ryan.d.holden@stateoig.gov

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen J. Akard". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Ambassador Stephen J. Akard
Acting Inspector General
U.S Department of State Office of Inspector General

Cc:

The Honorable Jim Jordan, Ranking Member
House Committee on Oversight and Reform

The Honorable Michael McCaul, Ranking Member
House Committee on Foreign Affairs

The Honorable Jody. B. Hice, Ranking Member
House Oversight and Reform Subcommittee on Government Operations

The Honorable Lee Zeldin, Ranking Member
House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations