

**STATEMENT BY  
Gregory B. Starr  
Department of State  
Assistant Secretary for Diplomatic Security**

BEFORE THE HOUSE OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM  
COMMITTEE  
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Chairman Chaffetz, Ranking Member Cummings, and distinguished Committee members – Good Morning. Thank you for your invitation to appear today to discuss the construction of the U.S. Embassy in London. I, along with my colleagues at the Department of State, look forward to working with you to examine this issue and illustrate how we are collectively supporting the men and women who serve at this mission with a safer, more secure facility.

As the Assistant Secretary for Diplomatic Security, I work every day with my colleagues to ensure a safe environment for our people. Environments in which we operate today require comprehensive planning, agile decision making, and deft diplomacy. Most of all, they require us to be present, fully engaged, and 100 percent committed to the security of our people and facilities.

The U.S. Embassy in London is an exceptionally important platform for diplomatic and consular engagement to advance our national interests in this country. As you know, I work closely with my colleagues in the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations (OBO) as the Department builds diplomatic missions that increase safety and security as well as meet rigorous security standards. Concerning the U.S. Embassy in London, DS has worked with OBO throughout the design and construction process to ensure this project would be executed while meeting the security standards.

As you know the threats faced by the Department are ever evolving. In response to this changing environment, DS commits a significant amount of time, effort, and energy towards research and evaluation in order to ensure our facilities are able to combat such threats. The outcome of this innovation provides DS with different designs and different building methodologies that accommodate the Department in these environments.

We owe it to our diplomats, along with our security professionals, in the field to provide them with safe, secure platforms from which they operate. I want to thank Congress for the resources and support that you have provided, and look forward to your continued support in years ahead. Thank you and I will be glad to answer any questions you have.



**Gregory B. Starr**  
**Assistant Secretary for Diplomatic Security**

Gregory B. Starr became Assistant Secretary of State for Diplomatic Security on November 18, 2013. In this capacity, Mr. Starr is in charge of the security and law enforcement arm of the U.S. Department of State.

Diplomatic Security is responsible for providing a safe and secure environment for the conduct of U.S. foreign policy throughout the world. Mr. Starr leads a force of Special Agents, Diplomatic Couriers, Security Engineering Officers, Security Technical Specialists, general service staff, and other specialists.

He previously served as Director of the Diplomatic Security Service from April 2007 until his retirement in May 2009. He returned to Diplomatic Security on February 1, 2013 as Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Diplomatic Security, Director of the Diplomatic Security Service, and acting Assistant Secretary.

From May 2009 until January 2013, Mr. Starr served as United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Safety and Security. In that capacity, he oversaw the formulation of security policies and the implementation of programs to ensure the conduct of activities in a secure environment at U.N. headquarters and overseas locations around the globe.

Other domestic assignments for Mr. Starr have included Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Countermeasures (2004-2007), the Director of the Office of Physical Security Programs (2000-2004), Division Chief for worldwide local guard and residential security programs (1995-1997), and assignments to the Secretary's detail, technical security operations, and the New York Field Office.

His overseas assignments have included Senior Regional Security Officer at the U.S. Embassy Tel Aviv (1997-2000), as well as Senior Regional Security Officer position in Tunis, Tunisia and Dakar, Senegal; and was assigned to the Regional Security Office in Kinshasa, Zaire (presently the Democratic Republic of the Congo).

Mr. Starr is the recipient of Department of State awards including Senior Foreign Service Performance awards, and Superior and Meritorious Honor awards. He began his career as a Special Agent in July 1980 and joined the ranks of the Senior Foreign Service in 2001. Before his retirement from the U.S. Department of State in 2009, Mr. Starr held the rank of Minister Counselor in the Senior Foreign Service.

A New York native, Mr. Starr received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science and a Masters degree in Forensic Science from the George Washington University.