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From: Abedin, Huma <AbedinH@state.gov>
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From: Simmons, Krista M
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Subject: Obama names ambassadors to Syria, Turkey, Azerbaijan, Czech Republic (Reuters)

HONOLULU (Reuters) - President Obama took the rare step on December 29 of temporarily appointing U.S. ambassadors to Syria, Turkey and Azerbaijan, restoring a top U.S. envoy to Damascus after an absence of nearly six years.

The White House announced Obama would make "recess appointments" of Robert Stephen Ford as ambassador to Syria, Francis "Frank" Ricciardone as ambassador to Turkey and Matthew Bryza as ambassador to Azerbaijan. Obama, who is on holiday in Hawaii, also named Norman Eisen to be ambassador to the Czech Republic. Eisen had worked as an assistant to Obama on ethics and government reform since the beginning of the president's term in January 2009.

A Senate source who spoke on condition of anonymity said the recess appointments for the three ambassadors were likely to last for a year.