

RELEASE IN FULL

---

**From:** Reines, Philippe I <reinesp@state.gov>  
**Sent:** Monday, December 24, 2012 8:39 AM  
**To:** H  
**Subject:** Fw: Thank You

---

**From:** Secretary Clinton [mailto:SMSGS@state.gov]  
**Sent:** Friday, December 21, 2012 06:18 PM  
**Subject:** Thank You

**THE SECRETARY OF STATE**

**WASHINGTON**

Dear Colleagues –

I wanted to reach out to you directly after this challenging week, and express my gratitude for everything you do to advance our nation's interests and values. That is how we keep faith with those we serve and honor those we've lost. Even after four years, I continue to be amazed by your dedication, energy, and talent. It is a privilege to be part of your team.

I also want to thank everyone who is working so hard to provide all our people and posts with the best possible leadership, security and support. As Deputy Secretaries Burns and Nides told Congress on Thursday, our colleagues in Diplomatic Security, Near Eastern Affairs, and in every bureau across the Department, at home and abroad, get it right countless times a day, for years on end, in some of the toughest circumstances imaginable. We need to learn from the tragedy in Benghazi, and make every possible improvement -- and we will. We also need to recognize the extraordinary service of our security professionals. They are courageous patriots and consummate professionals. And like you, I trust them with my life.

I want to thank Ambassador Pickering, Admiral Mullen, and all the members of the Accountability Review Board. Their report takes a clear-eyed look at serious and systemic problems that we are already working to fix. I have accepted every one of the Board's recommendations. I asked the Deputy Secretary for Management and Resources to spearhead the effort to implement them, and to take those additional steps above and beyond those recommendations that make sense and make us stronger. To do this well, we need your help. All of us have to work together to take these reforms to heart and build on and improve the way we do business.

I am determined to leave the State Department and USAID stronger, safer, and more secure than I found them. I owe that to each of you. And I am delighted that President Obama has chosen Senator John Kerry to continue that work. Earlier today, I spoke with John and congratulated him on his nomination to be the next Secretary of State. I have been privileged to know him for many years, and to call him a friend, colleague, and partner. He is the son of a career Foreign Service Officer, a decorated war hero, and an accomplished statesman. I know that he shares our deep commitment to diplomacy and development. You deserve the highest caliber leadership, and that is exactly what you'll get with Senator Kerry.

It has been one of the great honors of my life to serve with you over the past four years. We have a lot more to do together in the coming days and weeks. So I hope you have a wonderful holiday and a joyous new year.

Sincerely,

Hillary Rodham Clinton