

GREGORY W. MEEKS, NEW YORK
CHAIRMAN

SOPHIA A. LAFARGUE
STAFF DIRECTOR



MICHAEL T. MCCAUL, TEXAS
RANKING REPUBLICAN MEMBER

BRENDAN P. SHIELDS
REPUBLICAN STAFF DIRECTOR

One Hundred Seventeenth Congress
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Foreign Affairs
2170 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
www.foreignaffairs.house.gov

January 27, 2021

The Honorable Antony Blinken
Secretary
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Blinken:

Congratulations on your confirmation as the 71st Secretary of State of our great nation. You are taking office at a time of great uncertainty and great opportunity. It is a time when the rest of the world once again looks to the United States in anticipation—to see if we are a nation that still strives to live up to its fundamental values; that champions democracy and human rights for all people regardless of background or creed; that stands with allies and stands up to dictators; and that believes in science, diplomacy, and in building coalitions to tackle some of the most complex questions facing humanity.

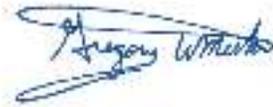
It is hard to overstate the gravity of the challenges that await you, or the confidence that I have that you, your team, and the career staff of the State Department will be able to meet them head on. Accordingly, I was heartened when you noted during your confirmation hearing the importance of “restor[ing] Congress’ traditional role” in foreign policy making. I completely agree and look forward to a productive partnership between this Committee and the Department of State that is based on constructive dialogue, transparency, and mutual respect.

America’s democratic institutions and processes have long served as a model and inspiration to people around the world. Our joint task now is to re-energize the United States’ global engagement based on democratic and human rights values—not just with our longstanding allies but also with areas of the world historically overlooked. And we must revitalize the State Department to be a more effective, resilient institution that reflects the diversity of our country. It is time to pivot from America first to America forward.

The Honorable Antony Blinken
January 27, 2021
Page Two

To that end, on behalf of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, I look forward to working with you and hope you will be a regular guest of ours on Capitol Hill. I also warmly welcome you to testify before the Committee on Thursday, March 18th at 10:00am about the priorities the Biden Administration will pursue for U.S. foreign policy and the Department of State. My staff will be happy to work with yours to finalize preparations and logistics for this testimony. In the meantime, I send you my warmest wishes and support as you hit the ground running this week.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Gregory W. MEEKS", with a stylized flourish underneath.

GREGORY W. MEEKS
Chairman