POSITION DESCRIPTION

# undersecretary for arms control and international security, department of state

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| **OVERVIEW** |
| Senate Committee | Foreign Relations |
| Agency Mission | The Department of State is the lead institution for the conduct of American diplomacy and the secretary is the president’s principal foreign policy advisor. |
| Position Overview | The Undersecretary of State for Arms Control and International Security serves as senior advisor to the President and the Secretary of State for Arms Control, Nonproliferation and Disarmament. In this role, he or she leads the interagency policy process and manages global U.S. security policy in the areas of nonproliferation, arms control, regional security and defense relations, and arms transfers and security assistance. The role also entails overseeing the negotiation, implementation and verification of international arms control and security agreements. |
| Compensation | Level III $168,400 (5 U.S.C. § 5314)[[1]](#endnote-1) |
| Position Reports to | Secretary and Deputy Secretary of the Department of State |
| **RESPONSIBILITIES** |
| Management Scope | In fiscal 2020, the Department of State had $34,803 million in outlays, and 77,000 total global employment. Three bureaus (Bureau of Arms Control, Verification, and Compliance; Bureau of International Security and Nonproliferation; and Bureau of Political-Military Affairs) report to the undersecretary along with an immediate staff of approximately 10 people. |
| Primary Responsibilities | * Serves as principal policy advisor to the President and the Secretary on all matters concerning arms control, nonproliferation and disarmament matters.
* Oversees the negotiation, implementation and verification of international agreements in arms control and international security.
* Directs and coordinates export control policies and policies to prevent missile, nuclear, chemical, biological and conventional weapons proliferation.
* Leads the interagency policy process on nonproliferation and manages global U.S. security policy, principally in the areas of nonproliferation, arms control, regional security and defense relations, and arms transfers and security assistance under the authority of the Foreign Assistance Act, Arms Export Control Act and related legislation.
* Integrating and prioritizing the full range of arms control, nonproliferation and international security issues, such as coordinating diplomatic and international efforts related to such policies and programs and exercising various authorities related to the imposition of proliferation sanctions as required by U.S. law.
* Testifies before congressional committees and appears in the media.
* Reconciles policy differences among assistant secretaries. before presenting unified proposals to the secretary and deputy secretaries.
* Coordinates closely with senior officials from other national security departments and agencies.
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| Strategic Goals and Priorities | [Depends on the policy priorities of the administration.]  |
| **REQUIREMENTS AND COMPETENCIES** |
| Requirements | * Substantive expertise in international security affairs.
* Effective public relations and speaking abilities.
* Highly resilient in navigating complex, interdependent relationships.
* High level of energy for extensive foreign travel and interaction, often without advance notice and for extended periods of time.
* Close working relationship with the Department of Defense, congressional committees and other agencies such as the Departments of Energy and Homeland Security and the CIA.
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| Competencies | * *Collaboration:* Must have the ability to effectively drive consensus and work with peers, partners, superiors and those not in the line of command: should have the ability to create and maintain diverse relationships that facilitate consensus-building and collaborative decision-making.
* *Influencing:* must have the ability to facilitate collaboration and accomplish goals, even without having direct authority; should be able to reassess and renegotiate, as necessary.
* *Proven Negotiation Skills:* must have the ability to use interpersonal and business skills to drive results, including policy improvements and treaty negotiations; should have a proven track record of improving processes and policies through a focus on achieving set goals.
* *Global Mindset and Perspective:* must be able to view decisions through multiple, diverse points of view; must have the ability to engage and collaborate with groups with varying perspectives and backgrounds; must consider the cultures of others in day-to-day activities.
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| **PAST APPOINTEES** |
| Andrea Thompson (2018 to 2019) – National Security Advisor, Office of the Vice President Pence; Director, McChrystal Group; National Security Advisor, House Committee on Homeland Security |
| Rose Gottemoeller (2012 to 2016) – Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of Arms Control, Verification and Compliance, Department of State; Director, Carnegie Moscow Center; Deputy Undersecretary of Energy for Nuclear Nonproliferation, Department of Defense |
| Ellen Tauscher (2009 to 2012) – Congresswoman, California; Democratic Party fundraiser and campaign coordinator  |
| John Rood (2007 to 2009) – Assistant Secretary for Arms Control and International Security, Department of State, Special Assistant to the President for Counterproliferation Strategy; Deputy Assistant Secretary for Forces Policy (DOD)  |

# Endnotes

This position description was created with the help of Egon Zehnder, a global executive search firm.

1. The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 (Public Law 116-260, December 27 ,2020), contains a provision that continues the freeze on the payable pay rates for certain senior political officials through January 1, 2022. The compensation information is based on guidance from the Office of Personnel Management and can be accessed here. If you are selected for this position, please consult the agency’s HR representative for further guidance on compensation. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)