

President Biden Announces Seven Key Nominations

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Briefing Room

• Statements and Releases

WASHINGTON – Today, President Joe Biden announced his intent to nominate the following seven individuals to serve in key roles:

- Rachel Jacobson, Nominee for Assistant Secretary of the Army for Installations and Environment, Department of Defense
- Jose Javier Rodriguez, Nominee for Assistant Secretary for Employment and Training, Department of Labor
- Mallory Stewart, Nominee for Assistant Secretary for Arms Control, Verification and Compliance, Department of State
- Chantale Wong, Nominee for United States Director of the Asian Development Bank, with the rank of Ambassador
- Amy Gutmann, Nominee for Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the Federal Republic of Germany
- Jeffrey M. Hovenier, Nominee for Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the Republic of Kosovo
- Virginia E. Palmer, Nominee for Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the Republic of Ghana

Rachel Jacobson, Nominee for Assistant Secretary of the Army for Installations and Environment, Department of Defense

Rachel Jacobson is an attorney who served at the Department of Defense during the Obama-Biden Administration as the Deputy General Counsel for Environment, Energy and Installations. Prior to joining DoD, Jacobson served for five years as an appointee at the Department of the Interior, as Principal Deputy Solicitor and acting Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks.

Jacobson, who ran a conservation program at the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation before joining the Obama-Biden Administration, is currently in private practice in the Energy, Environment and Natural Resources group of the law firm WilmerHale in Washington, D.C. Jacobson spent the majority of her career at the U.S. Department of Justice in the Environment and Natural Resources Division. A member of the American College of Environmental Lawyers, Jacobson received an undergraduate degree in economics from Washington University in St. Louis, and a law degree from Boston University School of Law. A native of Chicago, Jacobson resides in Washington, D.C.

Jose Javier Rodriguez, Nominee for Assistant Secretary for Employment and Training, Department of Labor

Jose Javier Rodriguez is a litigator and partner at Sugarman & Susskind, PA in Miami, Florida, representing employees and labor unions as well as pension and benefit funds in a diverse litigation practice. Rodríguez has served on the faculty of South Florida law schools as adjunct professor and adjunct clinical professor.

Rodriguez served for eight years in the Florida Legislature after being elected in 2012 to represent District 112 in the Florida House of Representatives and in 2016 to represent District 37 in the Florida Senate. He has received numerous awards and recognitions for his work as a community leader and as policymaker, particularly in the areas of employment and the environment. Rodriguez served as vice-chair of the Senate's Judiciary Committee while in the Florida Senate.

Raised in Miami, Rodriguez's father left Cuba at the age of 15 through Operation Pedro Pan. Rodriguez served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Senegal after earning a B.A. from Brown University and prior to earning a J.D. from Harvard Law School and returning to Florida to begin his legal career at Florida Legal Services. Along with his wife Sonia and two young sons, Rodriguez lives in Miami.

Mallory Stewart, Nominee for Assistant Secretary of State (Arms Control, Verification and Compliance)

Mallory Stewart currently serves as a Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Arms Control, Disarmament, and Nonproliferation on the National Security Council. Previously, Ms. Stewart was Senior Manager for Global Nuclear Security and Nonproliferation as Sandia National Laboratories. She also has served as a Nonresident Fellow in the WMD, Nonproliferation and Security Program at the Stimson Center, as an Adjunct Professor at Georgetown University's Center for Security Studies and as a Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Emerging Security Challenges and Defense Policy in the Bureau of Arms Control, Verification and Compliance. She worked in the State Department Legal Advisor's Office on arms control issues and, among other roles, served as the lead lawyer and one of the primary architects of the U.S.-Russia Framework to eliminate Syria's declared chemical weapons stockpile.

Ms. Stewart earned an A.B degree from Harvard College and her J.D. degree from Stanford Law School. She has written extensively on issues related to arms control and verification and was the recipient of the Secretary of State's Award for Excellence in International Security Affairs among other honors.

Chantale Wong, Nominee for United States Director of the Asian Development Bank, with the rank of Ambassador

Chantale Yokmin Wong is a leading authority in international development policy with over 30 years of experience in the multi-disciplinary field that includes finance, technology, and the environment. She has been recognized throughout her career for transforming critical processes affecting the whole of government. Chantale was appointed by President Obama to serve as Vice President for Administration and Finance and Chief Financial Officer at the Millennium Challenge Corporation where she led

change in financial, human capital, and information technology management. She was appointed by President Bill Clinton to the Board of Directors at the Asian Development Bank, representing the United States as the Alternate Executive Director, and overseeing policies and operations. She has held senior career appointments in the Office of Management and Budget, Treasury, NASA, and the Environmental Protection Agency.

Among her personal passions are photography and videography, with which she has chronicled the annual Congressional Civil Rights pilgrimages in Alabama with the late Congressman John Lewis. In Asian American and Pacific Islander community, Chantale is known for establishing the Conference on APA Leadership, where she has guided young AAPIs for 32 years to seek careers in public service. She holds a Master's in Public Administration from Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government, and a Master's in Environmental Engineering from the University of California, Berkeley. Her undergraduate degree is in Civil and Structural Engineering from the University of Hawaii.

Amy Gutmann, Nominee for Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the Federal Republic of Germany

Amy Gutmann is the eighth President of the University of Pennsylvania, serving since 2004. She is also the Christopher H. Browne Distinguished Professor of Political Science, and a Professor of Communication at the Annenberg School for Communication. Her focus on global engagement fueled the creation of Penn's Perry World House on campus, Penn Wharton China Center in Beijing, and the Penn Biden Center for Diplomacy and Global Engagement in Washington, D.C. Previously, at Princeton University, Gutmann was Provost, Dean of the Faculty, Founding Director of The University Center for Human Values, Laurance S. Rockefeller University Professor of Politics, and Director of the Program in Ethics and Public Affairs. She also worked at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government and at the University of Maryland. Gutmann is an award-winning author and editor of 17 books, many centered on understanding and defending constitutional democracy and human rights. The daughter of a German Jewish refugee, and first in her family to graduate college, she earned a B.A. at Harvard-Radcliffe College, an M.S. at the London School of Economics, and a Ph.D. at Harvard. She was named by Fortune in 2018 as one of the "World's 50 Greatest Leaders."

Jeffrey M. Hovenier, Nominee for Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the Republic of Kosovo

Jeffrey M. Hovenier, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service with the rank of Minister Counselor, currently serves as Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy in Ankara, Turkey, where he served as Chargé d'Affaires a.i. from August 2018 through July 2019. Prior to that, he was Acting Deputy Chief of Mission and Minister Counselor for Political Affairs at the U.S. Embassy in Berlin, Germany. He also served at U.S. missions in Croatia, Greece, Panama, Paraguay, and Peru; at the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE); and on the staff of the UN Special Envoy for Kosovo Status. His Washington assignments include service as Director for Central and Southeastern European Affairs at the National Security Council and in the State

Department's Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs with responsibility for NATO and Central European Affairs. He has a Master's degree from Georgetown University and a Bachelor's degree from Brigham Young University. He speaks German, Greek, Croatian, and Spanish.

Virginia E. Palmer, Nominee for Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the Republic of Ghana

Virginia E. Palmer, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service with the rank of Minister Counselor, is Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for the State Department's Bureau of Energy Resources. She has served as Acting Assistant Secretary since January 20, 2021, overseeing U.S. foreign policy engagement at the critical intersection of our energy, climate and national security goals. Before assuming her current position, Palmer was the Deputy Commandant and International Affairs Advisor at the Dwight D. Eisenhower School for National Security and Resource Strategy at the National Defense University. She served as U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Malawi from 2015 until 2019. Prior to that, she was Deputy Chief of Mission and Chargé d'Affaires a.i., at the U.S. Embassy in South Africa; Deputy Chief of Mission and Chargé d'Affaires a.i. at the U.S. Embassy in Vietnam; the State Department's Deputy Coordinator for Counterterrorism; and Director of the Bureau of East Asia's Office of Economic Policy and the alternate U.S. Senior Official for the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation forum (APEC). Other postings include assignments in Canada, Zimbabwe, the People's Republic of China, Hong Kong, and Kenya. Palmer obtained her M.A. from the University of Virginia and a BSFS from Georgetown University. She also attended Washington University in St. Louis. She speaks Chinese and French.

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