

3. Mission Goals and Objectives

Mission Goal 1 | The Czech Republic and the United States work together to advance common global and regional priorities.

Description | The Czech Republic is a strong NATO Ally and partner. The government is supportive of the Transatlantic relationship and willing to invest in it. The Czechs want to engage beyond Central Europe (e.g., Eastern Europe, Western Balkans, Sahel, and Indo-Pacific) and are looking for ways to advance their foreign policy goals, particularly in multilateral arenas. Embassy Prague seeks to advance regional and global cooperation, as well as press the Czechs to meet their defense spending and modernization commitments. The Embassy will work with the Czechs to advance joint priorities during their EU Council presidency in July – December 2022 and the V4 presidency in 2023-2024. It will also partner with the Czechs to improve their ability to identify and combat disinformation.

Objective 1.1 | The Czech government meets NATO spending and capability targets, supporting global stability and strengthening NATO.

- **Objective 1.1 Justification** | The United States needs well-resourced security partners and Allies to maintain peace and promote prosperity. This Mission Objective will contribute to the Czech Republic's reliability as an Ally and facilitate close collaboration across the spectrum of political and military contacts. Previous Czech governments have not succeeded in convincing the Czech people that meeting NATO spending and capability commitments is an essential national security investment. The Fiala government's stated intention to codify into law these commitments presents an opportunity to make tangible progress.
- **Objective 1.1 Linkages** | EUR JRS Goals 1 (Revitalize European Alliances and Partnerships) and 4 (Leverage Alliances and Partnerships to Address Global and Regional Threats and Challenges); Interim National Security Strategy (p. 9: "Lead and sustain a stable and open international system, underwritten by strong democratic alliances,

partnerships, multilateral institutions, and rules.”); White House Summit for Democracy goals to bolster democratic institutions.

- **Objective 1.1 Risks** | The Czechs face domestic political challenges, including delayed procurements, in reaching NATO budget and capability commitments. If NATO Allies such as the Czech Republic do not meet their Wales Pledge commitments, NATO cannot sustain its deterrence and defense posture against global threats and the effectiveness of NATO missions and operations is put at risk. These could diminish NATO’s role as the organizing actor for Transatlantic security and will undercut the government’s desire to play a larger role within the Alliance.

Objective 1.2 | The Czechs advocate for policies within the European Union and other multilateral organizations that strengthen the transatlantic relationship and combat global challenges.

- **Justification** | The Czech government’s foreign policy priorities include deepening the Transatlantic relationship; strengthening the EU’s contributions to rules-based multilateralism; building the tools and alliances needed to tackle global challenges such as climate change and democratic renewal; and setting international standards for new technologies.
- **Linkages** | EUR JRS Goals 1 (Revitalize European Alliances and Partnerships) and 4 (Leverage Alliances and Partnerships to Address Global and Regional Threats and Challenges); Interim National Security Strategy (p. 9: “Lead and sustain a stable and open international system, underwritten by strong democratic alliances, partnerships, multilateral institutions, and rules.” and p. 11: “We will move swiftly to earn back our position of leadership in international institutions, joining with the international community to tackle the climate crisis and other shared challenges.”); White House Summit for Democracy goals to bolster democratic institutions.
- **Risks** | Without the EU as a strong and like-minded partner to tackle global challenges, we risk not being able to address critical issues such as Russian aggression, PRC malign influence, climate change, pandemic recovery, and democratic renewal. The PRC and

Russia may seek to drive wedges in EU and NATO unity and promote their authoritarian world view in multilateral bodies, which would harm U.S. interests.

Objective 1.3 | The Czech government works in partnership with the United States to improve its ability to identify and combat disinformation.

- **Justification** | Rapid technological advancements and the digitization of society is driving the emergence of new threats, including the proliferation of disinformation. GEC research shows that Russian media outlets have exploited Czech media to produce disinformation and propaganda. Deficits in media literacy and critical thinking among the Czech public makes it susceptible to such Russian disinformation, which seeks to foment public skepticism of the United States, NATO, and the EU. The Fiala government is eager to partner with us on issues related to Russia and China, as well as creating resilience to hybrid threats, such as disinformation.
- **Linkages** | EUR JRS Goal 2 (Strengthen Democracy and Rule of Law Throughout Europe and Eurasia); Interim National Security Strategy (p. 19: “We will stand with our allies and partners to combat new threats aimed at our democracies, ranging from cross-border aggression, cyberattacks, disinformation, and digital authoritarianism to infrastructure and energy coercion.”); White House Summit for Democracy goals to bolster democratic institutions.
- **Risks** | If the Czech Republic is unsuccessful in building resilience and response to malign information operations, public confidence in the government and its institutions could lead to democratic backsliding. Such a development could undermine our relationship and damage our ability to collaborate on the promotion of accurate information and countering disinformation.

Mission Goal 2 | U.S. engagement fosters a stronger bilateral economic and scientific partnership that advances prosperity while respecting the needs of people and the planet.

Description | A strong economic and commercial relationship between the Czech Republic and United States promotes mutual prosperity in both countries, which creates new opportunities for employment and innovation. Public polling indicates that cooperation on science and technology also has a positive impact on the Czech perception of the United States given the prevailing view of the United States as the global leader on these issues. Deepening scientific cooperation will help both countries address climate change, end the COVID-19 pandemic, and promote the development and use of trustworthy and safe artificial intelligence and other emerging technologies.

Objective 2.1 | The Czech Republic ensures the security of its critical infrastructure, including through the development of a reliable and carbon-neutral energy sector.

- **Justification** | As the Czech Republic transitions away from coal, upgrades its nuclear energy infrastructure, and builds out advanced telecommunications networks, it will have to weigh competing national security, environmental, and economic concerns. This Mission Objective will contribute to the Czech Republic's ability to be a stable and reliable U.S. ally by reducing the vulnerability of Czech infrastructure to malign influence and hybrid threats. The Embassy will support energy security by encouraging greater diversity of clean domestic generation, which will contribute to American prosperity by increasing U.S. exports. Furthermore, by quickly shifting to carbon neutral sources of power and enhancing energy efficiency, the Czech Republic can meet its international climate change goals while further developing the country's economy.
- **Linkages** | EUR JRS Sub-Objective 1.1.4: Our Allies and partners are more resilient to hybrid and cyber threats; EUR JRS Sub-Objective 2.4.1: Diversify regional energy supply; Interim National Security Strategic guidance to "tack the climate crisis"; Interim National Security Strategy guidance to "renew our commitment to international engagement on cyber issues, working alongside our allies and partners to uphold existing and shape new global norms in cyberspace;" President Biden's Executive Order Catalyzing America's Clean Energy Economy Through Federal Sustainability.

- **Risks** | EU taxonomy considers nuclear energy transitional, potentially complicating Czech energy decisions. Rising energy prices and supply chain disruptions could have a negative effect on the Czech Republic's transition to cleaner energy. A significant portion of the population, as well as entrenched heavy industry and manufacturing, have signaled resistance to EU climate mitigation measures. U.S. domestic policies on energy and climate could cause the USG to be seen as non-credible on these issues, thereby weakening the effectiveness of our messaging.

Objective 2.2 | The United States facilitates deeper bilateral cooperation that increases fairness, prosperity, and innovation in both economies.

- **Justification** | There are particularly strong opportunities for increasing bilateral economic links in the defense, technology, agriculture, food, and tourism sectors. Increasing U.S. exports to the Czech Republic and Czech direct investment in the United States will create and maintain American jobs. Czech scientists produce world-class research in areas such as artificial intelligence, material science, nanotechnology, and emerging health technologies. Increasing scientific cooperation, as well as partnering on efforts to address climate change and COVID-19, will support innovation, prosperity, and health in the United States.
- **Linkages** | EUR JRS Sub-Objective 2.3.1: Foster small and medium enterprise (SME) growth, entrepreneurship, and innovation; EUR JRS Sub-Objective 2.1.1: Reduce barriers to trade and investment. EUR JRS Sub-Objective 1.4.2: EUR and E&E will support stable and sustainable health systems across Europe and Eurasia; EUR JRS Sub-Objective 2.3.1: Foster small and medium enterprise (SME) growth, entrepreneurship, and innovation; White House Press Statement on President Biden's Global COVID-19 Summit: Ending the Pandemic and Building Back Better.
- **Risks** | Negative developments in the COVID-19 pandemic could depress trade, investment, and opportunities for scientific cooperation between the United States and Czech Republic. The enactment of new, restrictive EU digital regulations could harm U.S. digital exports to the Czech Republic. If the United States and EU cannot agree on a

framework to replace Privacy Shield, restrictions on transatlantic data flows could serve as a barrier to U.S.-Czech trade and investment. Restrictive EU regulations on artificial intelligence and transatlantic data flows could hinder commercial and research partnerships in emerging technologies.

Mission Goal 3 | Emphasis on shared values drives deeper cooperation on democracy, human rights, and rule of law.

Description | The Czech Republic is a stable democracy, with long-term ties to U.S. democratic models dating back to the establishment of Czechoslovakia's first constitution based on the U.S. constitution. This shared history and commitment to human rights and rule of law strengthens the U.S.-Czech bilateral relationship. The Fiala government has pledged to implement a foreign policy based on the values of the first Czech president, Vaclav Havel, focused on human rights, a strong civil society, and multilateral cooperation. This commitment presents an opportunity to renew cooperation in promoting democracy, anti-corruption, and transparency in countries where democratic backsliding is a mutual concern.

Objective 3.1 | With support from the United States, the Czech Republic reinforces its domestic democratic institutions and civil society.

- **Justification |** Strengthening a free and independent media, social resiliency to disinformation, and a vibrant civil society sector are necessary to bolster democracy. International metrics have shown a declining or stagnating Czech media freedom ranking, disinformation and misinformation weaken trust in public institutions, and trust for civil society organizations engaged in public advocacy work is low among both the public and Czech government officials. The Embassy will work with the government, media, and NGO sector to provide training programs, grants, and other support to help strengthen these sectors.
- **Linkages |** White House Summit for Democracy goals to bolster democratic institutions; EUR Joint Regional Goal 2: Strengthen Democracy and the Rule of Law Throughout Europe and Eurasia; 2020 Public Diplomacy Strategic Plan Goal 2: Foster global

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information environments where truth can thrive and lead the global dissemination of accurate information about U.S. policy and American values.

- **Risks** | Weakened democratic institutions and civil society lead to democratic backsliding and support for more extremist political partners, which threatens cooperation on policy goals, especially with respect to human rights, transparency, and media freedom.

Objective 3.2 | The Czech Republic advances policies to combat corruption, boost transparency, and create a more inclusive society domestically.

- **Justification** | The Czech Republic's place on international rankings related to transparency and good governance has declined slightly in recent years, though the current government has indicated a focus on addressing corruption and bolstering human rights. The Mission will support these efforts through training events and exchanges, small grants, and public diplomacy programs.
- **Linkages** | White House Summit for Democracy goals to bolster democratic institutions; EUR Joint Regional Goal 2: Strengthen Democracy and the Rule of Law Throughout Europe and Eurasia.
- **Risks** | Corruption and perceptions of a non-transparent government, along with a non-inclusive government, weakens government effectiveness at meeting our shared policy goals. It also weakens public support for the government, thus damaging public support for democracy and risking an increase in support for extremist political parties.

Objective 3.3 | Embassy programs reinforce the Czech population's affinity for Transatlantic relations and deepen its understanding of the people, culture, and policies of the United States.

- **Justification** | U.S.-Czech relations are viewed as very strong according to local public opinion polling, which also shows that cooperation in education, business, and culture are popular and effective. Public opinion of the United States is particularly high among those who have visited the United States, though the number of Czechs who have traveled there is relatively low. Maintaining a high level of cultural and educational

programming, programming that highlights our shared history and security cooperation, and increasing travel to the United States strengthens our relationship and deepens Czech understanding of U.S. policy goals.

- **Linkages** | 2020 Public Diplomacy Strategic Plan Goal 1: Build and activate networks of individuals, organizations, and states who share and advance American values and support U.S. policies.
- **Risks** | Support for the bilateral relationship and public opinion of the United States is weakest in smaller cities outside the capital region of Prague where support for more extremist political parties is higher. Erosion of public support for the relationship risks our ability to achieve cooperation on meaningful policy goals.

Mission Goal 4 | The U.S. Embassy protects the lives and interests of U.S. citizens in the Czech Republic and strengthens U.S. border security while facilitating legitimate travel.

Description | The Consular Section serves approximately 7,500 U.S. citizens resident in the Czech Republic and an additional 500,000 visitors each year. Many are dual nationals with frequent travel between the two countries. The pandemic has complicated travel between the United States and the Czech Republic. Czech citizens and third country nationals (TCNs) in the Czech Republic continue to demonstrate a high demand for travel; staffing shortages and COVID-19 mitigation requirements have limited the ability of the consular section to provide visa interview appointments. Maximizing service options that do not require the applicant to be physically present in the section will ensure the volume and range of services provided is maintained while protecting the health and safety of staff and applicants.

The Embassy has positive and professional working relationships with local law-enforcement entities and immigration officials. The consular section will further develop these contacts to ensure it is prepared to support U.S. citizens with routine and emergency needs. The current staffing schedule in which both consular managers depart post at the same time every three

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years makes contact-building challenging. Staggering the consular managers' assignment cycles is essential to preserving contacts and institutional knowledge.

Objective 4.1 | The Mission protects and supports the welfare and interests of U.S. citizens in the Czech Republic.

- **Justification** | Protecting the lives and interests of U.S. citizens has been the Department's highest priority since 1790. The Consular Section assists U.S. citizens overseas, documenting life's milestones from birth to death. Consular professionals assist U.S. citizens affected by crises, including but not limited to, natural disasters, political strife, and medical emergencies. Advances in technology have created new opportunities and challenges related to the way an Embassy interacts with U.S. citizens. Increasing STEP enrollment will increase the efficiency of communication with American citizens. The Embassy will continue to improve access to safety and security information, find more efficient ways to quickly disseminate information, and reach those traveling and residing abroad.
- **Linkages** | From the Interim National Security Strategic Guidance: Protect the security of the American people. Consular Affairs Bureau FY 2018-2022 functional bureau strategy goals 1 and 3.
- **Risks** | Embassy Prague has a relatively small USDH staff and a relatively high number of Americans – both residents and travelers – in its consular district. In times of crisis, it may lack the capacity to provide services needed and requested. The Czech Republic is a relatively safe country, but the threats of natural disaster, crime, and terrorism exist everywhere.

Objective 4.2 | The Embassy provides timely immigrant and nonimmigrant visa services to Czech citizens and third country nationals present in the Czech Republic.

- **Justification** | Travelers require and expect quick service in response to visa applications. However, the Consular Section's ability to process visas is limited by the size of the waiting room and workspace. Maximizing the use of the interview waiver

program will allow for more applications without applicants setting foot in the Embassy. Timely access to visa services ensures continued contributions to the U.S. economy and critical infrastructure sectors, as well as ongoing bilateral educational and cultural exchange.

- **Linkages** | Mission Goal 2, Mission Objective 3.3. Interim National Security Strategic guidance to reinvigorate and modernize our alliances and partnerships around the world.
- **Risks** | If travelers interested in an exchange or educational program, investing, or working in the United States are met with significant delays in visa processing, they could choose to go elsewhere with easier access.

4. Management Objectives

Management Objective 1 | The Mission builds a strong and sustainable management platform to support and advance our goals in the Czech Republic

Description | U.S. Embassy Prague's ambitious and appropriate Integrated Country Strategy will advance and strengthen the bilateral and regional relationships in Central Europe. The lack of ICASS support necessary to propel those goals forward is a significant risk to success. Nearly two decades of under-funding, staffing cuts, a local salary scale that lags 30% or more behind the market rate, and infrastructure challenges have eroded the foundation of the ICASS platform at Embassy Prague. Since 2015, USDH positions have grown from 67 to 81, including adding a new agency and an office within State Programs, while ICASS USDH have shrunk from 12 to 9 positions.

The Embassy identified five key areas to build back our infrastructure to meet current and future demands of U.S. foreign policy goals in the Czech Republic: staffing; communication and teamwork; training and development; relationship building; and physical infrastructure. Mission Prague is at a crucial inflection point and must invest in the creation of a sustainable management platform.

- **Justification | Staffing:** Since 2007, the Management section has shrunk while the rest of the mission has grown. Embassy Prague attempted to mitigate these imbalances through outsourcing, contracts, and EFM and EPAP positions, however these solutions are not sustainable and did not bring to bear the impact or cost savings anticipated in the previous two decades. Instead, the lack of sufficient, appropriately graded USDH staffing has led to gaps in management controls; inadequate mentoring, training, and development of local staff; and a lack of continuity of knowledge and relationship building. The Embassy is facing its second gap of at least a year in the Medical Provider position, who has played a critical role in addressing public health needs, particularly during the pandemic.

Local positions in Management also have taken a huge hit through the years, particularly from staffing cuts and a salary scale that continues to lag behind the local market. The result is significant, long-term staffing gaps, with some sections experiencing a vacancy rate of 60%, leading to overwork, low morale, and burnout. The dearth of institutional knowledge is particularly acute in the ICASS FSN cadre. The Mission is requesting funding sufficient to increase local staff positions across the Management section to fill key gaps in current facilities and human resources responsibilities.

Communication and Teamwork: During a Strategic Planning Workshop, the Management section identified communication and teamwork as the second most important challenge. Years of brain drain, physical stove-piping due to the Chancery's layout, a disruptive and lingering Compound Security Upgrade project, and physical distancing required by the ongoing pandemic complicate communication and understanding among the Management sections and the Embassy. Feedback from the Mission indicated a need for clearer Management section communication, consistent application of regulations, and better defined and published Standard Operating Procedures for routine work.

Training and Development: The creation of a standard training plan for every position within the Management section will provide a clear outline of expectations for the employee, supervisor, and team members. It also creates a consistent and trackable training budget for each section, removing any appearance of preferential treatment. To supplement the job-specific training programs available through various Department of State resources, Embassy Prague identified local Czech-language opportunities for relational development courses, coaching, and mentoring. This documentable ladder of professional development opportunities will help with recruitment and retention of the Embassy's most valuable resource, the local staff cadre. The Management section will also promote opportunities for its employees to provide training to other sections in the embassy, thus increasing communication and teamwork through mutual understanding.

Relationship Building: Strong relationships are the most crucial aspect of successful foreign policy. The Management section will on rebuilding the internal and external relationships pivotal to success. Seemingly routine business, such as car registrations, are challenging, time consuming, and frustrating to GSO staff and customers. Each basic ICASS service for a new arrival involves navigating a complex and labyrinthine bureaucracy that spans multiple ministries. Not having the contacts or established relationships makes every service appear a crisis, rather than a regular process. A systematic approach to deepening and expanding relationships with counterparts in government ministries and private organizations will ease the administrative burden of basic diplomatic business. The section will nurture an internal culture of consistent contact management and development.

Physical Infrastructure: The Embassy and CMR are premiere properties listed in the Secretary's Registry of Culturally Significant Properties. The Czech people place great historical value on the U.S. Embassy remaining at its current location. In 2025, the United States will mark 100 years at Schoenborn Palace. This seventeenth-century chancery building is showing its age in rather dramatic fashion. While the building is a tremendous asset to diplomatic efforts, the four distinct wings built in the 1600s create physical and IT infrastructure challenges that limit communication and collaboration between Embassy sections. The aging infrastructure is also energy inefficient and filled with a patchwork of short-term band-aids, running the gamut from roofing, electric, IT, plumbing, drainage, phone systems, heating, cooling, and physical security. The Embassy will use its late spring 2022 rightsizing exercise to determine the most effective and efficient use of existing space. The Mission will develop a long-range staged plan in concert with OBO to gain secure and modern office space on the existing Embassy compound. Post does not believe a NEC is the right solution to address the issues facing the Embassy. Instead, investing now in the existing historic and culturally significant property will allow the U.S. government to leverage its unique history, culture, and location to support Mission goals.

The United States acquired the historic CMR compound (Petschek Villa) in 1948. The compound holds the CMR, the DCMR, the Gate House, and two staff houses. All buildings are over 100 years old and suffer from the ravages of time and a lack of funding for needed renovations despite efforts at upgrades and ongoing requests. The most critical needs are roof repairs, waterproofing the foundations and exterior walls, replacement or repair of failing window frames and windows, waterproofing the terrace at the CMR, and resolving the moisture issues from the abandoned 1920s basement swimming pool.

Many government-owned residences face the same structural issues as the CMR and Chancery due to similar construction methods. Following a thorough review and assessment of all 30+ government-owned residences, the Embassy will develop a ten-year plan to address structural, infrastructure, and cosmetic issues. It will prioritize those residences that will be vacant during the summer transfer season, scheduling future residences to be offline for assignment as occupants rotate to minimize disruptions to occupants and maximize planned funding requests. As appropriate, it will discuss the potential sale of government-owned residences that are no longer appropriate to keep in the housing pool.

- **Linkages** | EUR JRS Goal 1, Revitalize European alliances and partnerships
EUR JRS Management Goal, Recruit, develop, and detain a cadre of EUR officers who represent the diversity of the United States and have the set of skills necessary to advance the Bureau's goals.
- **Risks** | Embassy Prague's ICASS platform has reached critical USDH and local staff levels and is employing increasingly creative ways to maximize current resources to comply with the Department's mandates. Post delayed implementation of the Department's Annual Inventory Modernization project, delayed the start of annual inventory, and increased use of contract labor to maintain day-to-day operations, achieving goals but increasing costs. Post funded long-term TDYers to cover staffing gaps in critical Management sections at the expense of the training budget for remaining Management staff. A persistent lack of sufficient local guard force staff limits the ability to use the

new Consular entrance, defeating the purpose of a separate entrance for Consular customers. In addition, the new Service CAC cannot be fully opened without sufficient local guard staff to operate it. Health care for USDH and EFM's may be diminished due to an upcoming gap of an uncertain length in the Medical Provider position.

Morale will continue to suffer because of stagnant LE Staff wages, increased staffing vacancies, and overburdened remaining staff. The Embassy continues to lose institutional knowledge, reinforcing a crisis mindset. The high percentage (35%) of current LE staff who hold second and third jobs due to low wages at the Embassy will continue to increase, exposing the mission to security risks.

Without a dedicated OBO Project Manager to oversee the many desperately needed renovation and construction projects at the historic Chancery, CMR compound, and government-owned residences, the Facilities Manager will continue to lack the time and resources to manage crucial day-to-day operations, local staff mentoring and development, and POSHO oversight. The potential for water degradation in residential buildings and the Chancery is also high.

Management Objective 2 | The Mission achieves a safe and secure environment for its workforce.

- **Justification |** Serving as the principal diplomatic platforms, the Chancery, Chief of Mission Residence, and American Center require modern and well-staffed security resources to safely facilitate foreign policy objectives. Ensuring the Mission's safety and security is critical to achieving U.S. policy goals.
- **Linkages |** The Omnibus Diplomatic Security and Antiterrorism Act of 1986 and National Security Policy Directive 1 (NSPD-1) provide authority for the Overseas Security Policy Board (OSPB). 12 FAH-6, Overseas Security Policy Board (OSPB) Security Standards and Policy Handbook. 12 FAM 420 POST SECURITY MANAGEMENT

- **Risks** | The historic diplomatic platforms of the mission require security modernization and enhancements to meet the needs of 21st century diplomacy that will allow continued operations in the center of Czech governing institutions.