



Integrated Country Strategy

TURKMENISTAN

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1. Chief of Mission Priorities

Embassy Ashgabat will prioritize its engagement with the Government of Turkmenistan (GoTM) to encourage regional stability, promote the reduction of methane emissions, increase Turkmenistan's resilience against malign foreign influence, advocate for democratic principles and human rights, stem the spread of contagious disease, contribute to Turkmenistan's push toward increased digitalization, improve the business environment for U.S. companies, and spread U.S. values in the realm of good, governance, health, education, and gender equality.

Post will increase bilateral engagement to enable Turkmenistan to better identify and protect itself against terrorist threats emanating across its border with Afghanistan, mainly through information sharing, targeted bilateral investments, and training and education on modern military best practices.

Post prioritizes assisting the GoTM to curb methane emissions. As a first step, Post will explore all available resources to provide the GoTM with an independent expert assessment of its methane emissions and a technical mitigation plan to reduce them. In the medium and longer term, Post will use this assessment as a basis to convince the GoTM that using U.S. technologies it is neither cost prohibitive or technically infeasible to reduce methane emissions.

Post sees the possibility for future human rights progress through strategic, persistent engagement with the GoTM. Post will continue to coordinate across the USG to advocate for progress in key human rights areas, with particular attention to labor rights and the rights of the disabled, while encouraging the growth of Turkmenistan's nascent civil society.

Notwithstanding considerable preventative measures and vaccination efforts, the GoTM retains a health care infrastructure that is ill-equipped and ill-trained to treat those with COVID-19 and TB. Post will continue to work with the GoTM to increase its ability to prevent the spread of COVID-19 through vaccinations and better treat those who have the disease.

Post intends to respond to the GoTM's request for assistance in meeting its strategic goal of further digitizing its economy and security infrastructure – particularly through technological

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advances in connectivity, cybersecurity, and artificial intelligence. Making inroads in these important areas will also counter Chinese influence in the digital technology sector.

Post will also expand advocacy for U.S. companies seeking to export goods and services to Turkmenistan and for eliminating the myriad of bureaucratic and regulatory challenges facing foreign investors. Post will continue to facilitate regular high-level videoconferences between U.S.-Turkmenistan Business Council members and GoTM officials, including the Foreign Minister, to address these challenges and develop more direct communication between U.S. businesses and appropriate Turkmen agencies. Post will also support establishing a U.S. Chamber of Commerce, or something similar, to allow U.S. and Turkmen companies to build connections. The GoTM's desire for WTO membership presents an opportunity, largely through USAID programming, to promote important economic reforms.

Maintaining and expanding cultural and educational programming is vital to building connections with average Turkmen and propagating a positive view of the United States and its values. Post will work toward re-activating the robust activities of the American Center and the three American Corners to promote critical thinking, English language learning, and to counter malign misinformation. Post will also advocate for either a fourth American Corner or English language classes in Balkan province, the only area without a U.S. presence. PAS and USAID programming promoting English language skills, critical thinking, and soft skills counterbalances Turkmenistan's weak education system and Russian and Chinese disinformation.

Post will also push to re-establish exchange programs that were postponed during the COVID-19 pandemic and related travel restrictions. Although we are seeing signs that the GoTM is relaxing these restrictions and allowing students to leave on academic exchanges, we will advocate for allowing all students accepted to U.S. educational institutions to depart for studies in a timely manner. We will also push to increase the number of students the GoTM allows to study in the United States, particularly through the FLEX program.

Post will continue to seek Washington's assistance to address poor connectivity and the GoTM's strict COVID-19 travel and quarantine measures. It is a mission priority to procure modern technology to offset Turkmenistan's slow and restricted internet. Post will continue to

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work with NEA-SCA/EX to ensure sufficient charter flights are available until COVID-19-related travel restrictions are lifted to provide staffing rotations, medical care, and pouch. Post will also work with the Ashgabat International School to support its operations when and however possible. Post also prioritizes greater collaboration between our LE Staff and those of other C5 missions to share best practices.

Post will continue efforts to build positive relations with the MFA's consular authorities and Turkmen Migration Services to respond to the needs of U.S. citizens in Turkmenistan – a fundamental mission priority. Developing a positive relationship with these entities will also advance Post's pursuit of a sustainable, workable solution for ensuring that U.S. citizen family members and other immigrant visa holders can exit the country within the validity of their visa.

Finally, but importantly, through its Diversity and Inclusion Council, post will instill Department best practices to recruit a diverse workforce and promote a work environment that establishes a sense of belonging among all employees. Post will also engage in public outreach programming to explain the diversity of the United States to the people of Turkmenistan.

2. Mission Strategic Framework

Mission Goal 1: Promote a fair, transparent, and modern investment climate for U.S. companies that helps Turkmenistan diversify its economy.

- **Mission Objective 1.1:** Reduce trade and investment barriers and improve the business environment for U.S. companies and Turkmen small and medium business owners.
- **Mission Objective 1.2:** Contribute to GoTM digitalization and modernization efforts to improve Turkmenistan's economy, government, and society.

Mission Goal 2: Promote significant action to mitigate climate change.

- **Mission Objective 2.1:** Contribute to the reduction of emissions of methane gas consistent with the Global Methane Pledge.
- **Mission Objective 2.2:** Advance the development of alternative energy sources within Turkmenistan, and promote better water management, including the resolution of regional water sharing issues.

Mission Goal 3: Strengthen bilateral and regional security cooperation, particularly along the border with Afghanistan.

- **Mission Objective 3.1:** Increase capabilities and effectiveness of national and regional security forces, particularly vis-à-vis Afghanistan, through bilateral and multilateral cooperation.
- **Mission Objective 3.2:** Improve the strategic and operational view of contributions the West can make to the Defense and Security Services of Turkmenistan (mainly but not exclusively MoD and SBS).

Mission Goal 4: Advancing human rights, health care, and U.S. values within Turkmen government and society.

- **Mission Objective 4.1:** Advance basic freedoms, effective governance, and democratic values throughout Turkmenistan's government and society.
- **Mission Objective 4.2:** Enhance the GoTM's ability to manage infectious diseases including tuberculosis and COVID-19.
- **Mission Objective 4.3:** Maximize U.S. cultural and educational programming throughout Turkmenistan, with particular engagement on public outreach that explains and highlights individual freedoms and the diversity of the United States to the people of Turkmenistan.
- **Mission Objective 4.4:** Promote the work of civil society organizations and creation of new civil society organizations, particularly those that support women's rights and the rights of the disabled.

Management Objective 1: Collaborate closely with OBO to take full advantage of New Embassy Compound (NEC) facilities that will become available in Phase I, advance completion of the chancery (NOB) in Phase II, and maintain current facilities until the move into the NOB.

Management Objective 2: Promote continuity of operations through greater internet connectivity for staff and family members and by cross-training employees on core functions, including diversity training.

Management Objective 3: Develop cost-effective, sustainable approaches, which are efficient and transparent, to ensure staff and family members can travel to and from post safely and expeditiously.

3. Mission Goals and Objectives

Mission Goal 1 | Promote a fair, transparent, and modern investment climate for U.S. companies that helps Turkmenistan diversify its economy.

Description | This goal directly supports our policy priority to create investment opportunities for American firms in developing countries, per the Interim National Security Strategic Guidance. It advances this priority by promoting a business environment in Turkmenistan that is transparent, open, fair, and attractive to U.S. businesses.

Objective 1.1 | Reduce trade and investment barriers and improve the business environment for U.S. companies and Turkmen small and medium business owners.

- **Justification** | Turkmenistan's business climate is hampered by a myriad of non-tariff barriers to trade – including excessive bureaucracy, opaque laws and regulations, corruption, and difficulty in converting Turkmen manat to U.S. dollars. Representatives of U.S. companies regularly tell Post that these are the major reasons they are reluctant to invest in Turkmenistan. This Mission Objective will promote the removal of these barriers, paving the way for greater U.S. investment in Turkmenistan through regular programmatic engagement and advocacy by USAID, Pol-Econ, and the Department of Commerce.
- **Linkages** | This objective directly supports Policy Objective #6 of the Department of State's 2019-25 Strategy for Central Asia – Promoting U.S. investment in and development of Central Asia. It also advances the State-USAID's Joint Regional Strategy for SCA/ASIA Goal 2, Objective 3.3 – improving the policy-enabling environment to expand equitable economic growth and cooperation, Objective 2.1 of the FY 2022-2026 State-USAID Joint Strategic Plan (JSP) – promoting a global economy that creates opportunities for all Americans, the core U.S. national security interest in NSSM-1 on the fight against corruption, and Objective 3.3 of the State-USAID JSP – to prevent, expose, and reduce corruption. Finally, this objective advances the Interim National Security

Strategic Guidance policy priority to promote a business environment that is transparent, open, fair, and attractive to U.S. businesses.

- **Risks** | Failure to achieve this objective would result in a relatively small U.S. commercial footprint in Turkmenistan, thereby diminishing mission and U.S. influence, and the continued dominance of a small group of well-connected regime-associated elites over the economy. Post would mitigate this risk through exchange programs that expose businesspeople, entrepreneurs, and officials to western-style transparent business models and by leveraging support from other foreign missions to improve the investment climate. Post will also continue to work with young entrepreneurs to advocate within the Turkmen system for a cleaner business environment in the long-term.

Objective 1.2 | Contribute to GoTM digitalization and modernization efforts to improve Turkmenistan's economy, government, and society.

- **Justification** | Turkmenistan's internet speed is ranked among the slowest in the world and is heavily restricted. Few government services are offered online, meaning most are done in person and on a cash transaction basis, where bribery and corruption are most likely to occur. This objective is aimed at improving the ability of the Turkmen people to access information and government services online and decreasing the opportunities for corrupt government officials to solicit bribes or refuse services. Digitalization will also propel economic growth and inclusion. The country is starting from a very low base of digitalization but has the possibility of taking best practices from around the world to leapfrog over many steps in development and quickly catch up to neighboring countries. Digitalization will also improve the quality of data and statistics available to the Turkmen government when making decisions, as well as businesses seeking to invest in Turkmenistan, should the government make the data available.
- **Linkages** | This objective directly supports Policy Objective #5 of the Department of State's 2019-25 Strategy for Central Asia – Promote rule of law reform and respect for human rights by making government services that are ripe for corruption more

transparent and accessible through digitalization, as well as #6 - Promote United States investment in and development of Central Asia by enabling the environment for business in Central Asia to be transparent, open, fair, attractive to U.S. businesses, and supportive of broader development goals. It also advances Objective 2.1 of the State/USAID Joint Regional Strategy for South and Central Asia – Reduce corruption; increase transparency, accountability, and efficacy in governance (including the legislative, judicial, and executive branches). Finally, this objective advances the Interim National Security Strategic Guidance policy priority to promote a business environment that is transparent, open, fair, and attractive to U.S. businesses.

- **Risks** | Failure to achieve this objective would negatively affect the ability of U.S. businesses to invest in Turkmenistan while perpetuating long-standing opportunities for institutional corruption. Post will help to mitigate this risk by encouraging the GoTM to continue using rating services such as Fitch, which require access to data, introducing the benefits of ISO certification, and assisting in their bid for full WTO status.

Mission Goal 2 | Promote significant action to mitigate climate change.

Description | This goal directly advances one of the presidential administration’s main global priorities – to address worldwide climate change. It advances this priority by providing direct expert support and technical assistance to the GoTM in achieving its own stated goals of reducing methane emissions.

Objective 2.1 | Contribute to the reduction of emissions of methane gas, including through the development of alternative energy, consistent with the Global Methane Pledge.

- **Justification** | Turkmenistan is one of the top methane emitters in the world, a byproduct of its reliance on oil and gas extraction – mainly through inefficient and outdated equipment – to drive its economy. Achievement of this objective would contribute to the Biden Administration’s overarching priority to mitigate climate change worldwide. The embassy will invite climate change experts specializing in methane reduction to visit Turkmenistan and arrange briefings with State Department experts.

We will also promote U.S. companies who specialize in green energy to promote solar power.

- **Linkages** | This objective advances the President's Executive Order from January 27, 2021, on Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad, and the Host Nation Engagement portion of the Department of State's Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan.
- **Risks** | Failure to achieve this objective would result in continued large-scale methane emissions that will contribute to climate change. Post will mitigate this risk by ramping up efforts through the C5+1 and other diplomatic partners to provide diplomatic pressure on the GoTM to adequately address its methane issue.

Objective 2.2 | Promote better water management, including the resolution of regional water sharing issues.

- **Justification** | Turkmenistan consumes a tremendous amount of water from the Amu Darya and other rivers to irrigate its cotton fields and the verdant capital city of Ashgabat. As a result, downstream countries are deprived of vital water sources, a major factor in the Aral Sea catastrophe. This also contributes to political tensions among downstream and upstream users and providers of limited water sources. The embassy will arrange technical support on water management to help Turkmenistan more efficiently utilize water.
- **Linkages** | This objective advances the President's Executive Order from January 27, 2021, on Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad, and the Host Nation Engagement portion of the Department of State's Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan.
- **Risks** | Failure to achieve this objective could result in climate change effects pertaining to drought and the lack of water. Post will mitigate this risk by ramping up efforts through the C5+1 and the United Nations Regional Center for Preventive Diplomacy in Central Asia to provide diplomatic pressure on Turkmenistan to address this issue.

Mission Goal 3 | Strengthening bilateral and regional security cooperation, particularly along the border with Afghanistan.

Description | This goal directly advances our policy priority to maintain robust counterterrorism capabilities in the Central Asian region to neutralize the terrorist threat from Afghanistan. It advances this priority by increasing the knowledge and capabilities of the security forces of Turkmenistan mainly through information exchange and training.

Objective 3.1 | Increase capabilities and effectiveness of national and regional security forces, particularly vis-à-vis Afghanistan, through bilateral and multilateral cooperation.

- **Justification** | Turkmenistan shares a 500-mile border with Afghanistan which is almost entirely desert or riverine. Taliban forces do not appear able (or willing) to adequately patrol the border and ensure that terrorist forces (or malign Taliban) do not infiltrate Turkmen territory. Additionally, Turkmen national and regional security forces are not sufficiently equipped and trained to patrol the border. Achievement of this mission objective would advance our overall goal of tightening bilateral security cooperation along the border with the aim of keeping terrorist elements out of Turkmenistan. Post will facilitate regular security-related discussions, information sharing, equipment sales or donations, and training, both directly and via the C5+1.
- **Linkages** | This objective directly supports Policy Objectives #1 (Support and strengthen the sovereignty and independence of the Central Asian States, individually and as a region) and #2 (Reduce terrorist threats in Central Asia) of the Department of State's 2019-25 Strategy for Central Asia. This objective links to the White House's Interim National Security Strategy Guidance that identifies terrorism and violent extremism as profound and existential dangers. It also advances Goal 4, Objective 4.2 of the State-USAID Joint Regional Strategy for South and Central Asia – to strengthen the capacity of South and Central Asian allies and partners to counter and manage threats from violent extremist organizations, legitimate non-state actors, cyberattacks, and protect the free flow of information.

- **Risks** | Failure to achieve this objective could result in terrorist organizations based in Afghanistan launching attacks in Central Asia either through Turkmenistan or on its territory. Post will work to mitigate this risk by supporting Turkmenistan's engagement in broader regional security trainings through the C5+1 format and by fostering increased information and intelligence sharing.

Objective 3.2 | Improve the strategic and operational view of contributions the West can make to the Defense and Security Services of Turkmenistan (mainly but not exclusively MoD and SBS).

- **Justification** | Turkmenistan's post-Soviet legacy lends inertia to outdated and demonstrably ineffective models of leadership and organization, while incentivizing corruption and inefficiency. At the same time, vulnerability is enhanced in that neighboring Taliban forces do not appear able (or willing) to adequately patrol the border to ensure that terrorist forces (or malign Taliban) and smuggling operations do not infiltrate Turkmen territory. Achievement of this mission objective would advance our overall goal of tightening bilateral security cooperation along the border with the aim of keeping terrorist elements out of Turkmenistan. Post will promote and facilitate training and Western-cultural sensitizing conferences at operational and executive levels, both directly and via the C5+1.
- **Linkages** | This objective directly supports Policy Objectives #1 (Support and strengthen the sovereignty and independence of the Central Asian States, individually and as a region) and #2 (Reduce terrorist threats in Central Asia) of the Department of State's 2019-25 Strategy for Central Asia. This objective also links to the White House's Interim National Security Strategy Guidance that identifies terrorism and violent extremism as profound and existential dangers. Additionally, it advances Objective 2.1 of the State-USAID Joint Regional Strategy for South and Central Asia – Reduce corruption; increase transparency, accountability, and efficacy in governance (including the legislative, judicial, and executive branches).
- **Risks** | Failure to achieve this objective would result in the continued basis of the Turkmen military on a Soviet-style command and control structure that is ill-equipped to

face a major security threat emanating from Afghanistan, while more likely to prolong Russian dependence in security spheres. Post will work to mitigate this risk by aligning with like-minded nations to encourage Turkmenistan to adopt a more adaptable western model of security and defense.

Mission Goal 4 | Advancing human rights, U.S. values, and government that better represents the Turkmen people.

Description | This goal directly advances the presidential administration's overarching emphasis on advancing human rights and democratic values worldwide. It advances this priority in Turkmenistan through programming that advances key human rights priorities while promoting civil society, cultural exchanges, and improved health policy. Improvements in overall good governance and in these specific areas will also enhance Post's ability to facilitate legitimate travel to the United States and effectively serve American citizens in Turkmenistan.

Objective 4.1 | Advance basic freedoms, effective governance, and democratic values throughout Turkmenistan's government and society.

- **Justification |** Turkmenistan is an autocratic state featuring poor rule of law and restrictions on virtually all the freedoms that represent the core of U.S. values. Achievement of this objective will positively impact human rights in Turkmenistan, advance the rights and freedoms for which the United States is known and respected worldwide, expand legitimate travel of U.S. and Turkmen citizens between our two countries, and improve the extent to which the GoTM serves the Turkmen people. Post will use a combination of diplomatic engagement, technical assistance, trainings, and collaboration with key international partners to advance this objective.
- **Linkages |** This objective directly supports Policy Objective #5 of the Department of State's 2019-25 Strategy for Central Asia – Promoting rule of law reform and respect for human rights. This objective also directly supports Goal 2 of the State-USAID Joint Regional Strategy for Central Asia to strengthen transparent, accountable democratic governance and values, particularly Objective 2.3 to promote and protect the rights of

women, marginalized, and underrepresented populations as members of an inclusive democratic society. In addition, this objective supports the Bureau of Consular Affairs' strategic goals to provide consular services to U.S. citizens overseas effectively and efficiently (Bureau Goal 1), and to facilitate legitimate travel while ensuring secure U.S. borders (Bureau Goal 3).

- **Risks** | Failure to achieve this objective could result in a lack of progress on key human rights indicators within Turkmenistan. It could also negatively impact Post's ability to facilitate legitimate travel to the United States, including assisting U.S. citizens in urgent need to depart Turkmenistan. Post will mitigate this risk by working with international partners to apply appropriate diplomatic pressure on the GoTM to make important human rights reforms and advances and emphasize that a more open society ultimately leads to a more stable environment.

Objective 4.2 | Enhance the GoTM's ability to manage infectious diseases including tuberculosis and COVID-19.

- **Justification** | Turkmenistan is the only country in the world that officially denies COVID-19 has penetrated its borders. While the country's health care system has advanced a vaccination regime, its failure to properly train its health care workers and equip its hospitals led to what we estimate as thousands of preventable deaths. Achievement of this objective will promote the broader policy priority of preventing the spread of disease across the Central Asian region. Post will implement this objective through technical assistance programming and donations when appropriate.
- **Linkages** | This objective directly advances Strategic Objective 1.1 of the 2022-26 State-USAID Joint Strategic Plan – Strengthen global health security, combat infectious disease threats, and address priority global health challenges through bilateral engagement and within multilateral fora. This objective also will advance the strategic priority, as described in the current State-USAID Joint Strategic Plan, of reducing the spread of pandemic diseases. It also furthers the White House's policy priority, as outlined in the

Interim National Security Strategy Guidance, to combat the continuing threat posed by COVID-19 and other infectious diseases.

- **Risks** | Failure to achieve this objective could contribute to a major outbreak of COVID-19, tuberculosis, or other pandemic in Turkmenistan. Post will mitigate this risk by working with UN-affiliated bodies also involved in strengthening Turkmenistan's health care sector to apply the necessary pressure and support to the GoTM.

Objective 4.3 | Maximize U.S. cultural and educational programming throughout Turkmenistan, with particular engagement on public outreach that explains and highlights individual freedoms and the diversity of the United States to the people of Turkmenistan.

- **Justification** | As a country isolated by geography and by government controls over news and the Internet, it is relatively difficult for the people of Turkmenistan to learn about the United States. Turkmenistan's educational system is also rife with structural deficiencies. This objective will raise awareness and understanding of the United States in Turkmenistan, help strengthen Turkmenistan's educational system, contribute to the preservation of Turkmenistan's own rich culture, and draw young Turkmen toward the United States and away from the gravitational pull of Russia and China. Post will advance this objective through a wide-ranging set of cultural and educational programming, as well as targeted outreach around visa programming.
- **Linkages** | This objective directly advances the mission of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs to expand and strengthen the relationships between the people of the United States and citizens of other countries by seeking to engage, inform, and understand the perspectives of foreign audiences. It also contributes to the advancement of FY 2022-26 JSP Strategic Objective 1.5 – enhancing foreign publics' understanding of and support for the values and policies of the United States.
- **Risks** | Failure to achieve this objective could perpetuate a lack of understanding on the part of average Turkmen citizens regarding the United States. It would also prevent a younger generation of Turkmen from absorbing U.S. values and best practices and bringing them back to Turkmenistan. Post will mitigate these risks by sharing

programming ideas with like-minded European counterparts in Turkmenistan to propagate western views from a variety of angles.

Objective 4.4 | Promote the work of civil society organizations and creation of new civil society organizations, particularly those that support women’s rights and the rights of the disabled.

- **Justification** | Turkmenistan tightly controls the civil society sector, only allowing a select few organizations to operate somewhat independently. CSOs generally cannot act as vectors to advance human rights issues in Turkmenistan. Achievement of this objective would contribute to the overall policy priority to promote the rule of law reform and respect for human rights. Post will pursue this objective through a variety of programming that provides financial and technical support to Turkmenistan’s civil society sector.
- **Linkages** | This objective will directly advance Objective 2.2 of the State-USAID Joint Regional Strategy for Central Asia – to support the development, capacity, and resilience of civil society and independent media as safeguards of democracy. It also supports Objective 3.3 of the State-USAID Joint Regional Framework to increase partnerships with the private sector and civil society organizations to mobilize support and resources and shape foreign public opinion.
- **Risks** | Failure to achieve this objective could stymie the growth of Turkmenistan’s nascent, but extremely limited, civil society sector. Post will attempt to mitigate this risk by introducing incremental changes through its programs, and by working with like-minded international partners to promote civil society in Turkmenistan.

4. Management Objectives

Management Objective 1 | Collaborate closely with OBO to take full advantage of New Embassy Compound (NEC) facilities that will become available in Phase I, advance completion of the chancery (NOB) in Phase II, and maintain current facilities until the move into the NOB.

- **Justification** | Post will likely transition in 2022 from Phase I (relocation of maintenance and logistics facilities, opening of residential housing, and move of some Embassy office space) to Phase II (construction of the chancery) of NEC development. Achievement of this objective will allow for Phase I completion by mid to late 2022, construction of Phase II to begin before the end of 2022, and sustained upkeep of the current chancery until the NOB is ready (likely in 2024 at the earliest). Post will achieve this objective through regular engagement with OBO to make sure all construction personnel arrive in a timely manner and the GoTM to make sure all licenses and permits are obtained properly and on schedule.
- **Linkages** | This objective is consistent with the State Department's overall strategic priority to provide safe, secure, functional, and resilient facilities that represent the U.S. government to the host nation and support the Department's achievement of U.S. foreign policy objectives abroad. It also advances Objective 4.3 of the State-USAID JSP – to protect our personnel, information, and physical infrastructure from 21st century threats.
- **Risks** | Failure to achieve this objective would result in the further postponement of the Embassy's long-planned move into the NEC. Post will mitigate these risks by continuing to keep the current chancery in appropriate working condition.

Management Objective 2 | Promote continuity of operations through greater internet connectivity for staff and family members and by cross-training employees on core functions, including diversity training.

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- **Justification** | Turkmenistan has the second-slowest Internet speed in the world, which impacts Post morale and Embassy operations when conducted remotely. Achievement of this objective will contribute to the strategic priority of allowing operations to proceed remotely when employees do not have access to the Chancery for health-related or other reasons. Post will pursue this objective by working toward satellite Internet acquisition or by exploring alternative means with the GoTM.
- **Linkages:** This objective directly relates to the Department of State's COVID-19 Workplace Safety Plan, which stresses that the Department is currently utilizing telework and remote work schedules to align with OMB Memo M-21-25 and explains that the Department will transition to an operating posture optimized with telework to achieve mission objectives.
- **Risks** | Failure to achieve this objective could render Embassy staff poorly equipped to advance key mission goals, particularly if a pandemic outbreak forces staff to telework with substandard Internet. Post will work carefully with satellite providers to obtain Internet service that the GoTM will not be able to easily limit or block.

Management Objective 3 | Develop cost-effective, sustainable approaches, which are efficient and transparent, to ensure staff and family members can travel to and from post safely and expeditiously.

- **Justification** | Because the GoTM has closed Turkmenistan to all commercial flights due to the global pandemic, occasional charter and cargo flights are the only way to access the country by air. Achievement of this objective would contribute to the Bureau's overall goal of a fully staffed Embassy in Ashgabat that can advance our overall strategic goals. Post will achieve this objective through regular, strategic engagement with the GoTM to gain access to as many flights as possible to Turkmenistan.
- **Linkages** | This objective directly pertains to the JSP, specifically Strategic Objective 4.1. to build and equip a diverse, inclusive, resilient, and dynamic workforce.

- **Risks** | Failure to achieve this objective could make it prohibitively expensive or difficult for staff and their families to visit Turkmenistan, thereby lowering morale and contributing to curtailments. Post will mitigate this risk by regularly assessing our overall staffing posture and ensuring that it is appropriate for the travel restrictions currently imposed by the GoTM.