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September 3, 2021

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

Dear Mr. Secretary:

The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) is deeply disturbed by recent reports that Fritz Berggren remains employed as a U.S. Foreign Service Officer, despite continuing to run a website where he regularly admonishes Jews and the LGBTQ+ community and propagates hysteria of white “elimination.” The claims he pushes are detestable, for instance saying that “Jesus Christ came to save the whole world from the Jews—the founders of the original Anti-Christ religion, they who are the seed of the Serpent, that brood of vipers,” and that, “teaching the LGBTQ agenda in school is child abuse—they groom children for destruction.”<sup>1</sup>

When a swastika was found carved in an elevator at the Harry S. Truman building earlier this summer, we publicly applauded your historic message of reassurance to State Department staff that this vandalism “painfully reminds us, anti-Semitism isn’t a relic of the past. It’s still a force in the world, including close to home. And it’s abhorrent. It has no place in the United States, at the State Department, or anywhere else. And we must be relentless in standing up and rejecting it.”<sup>2</sup>

Fritz Berggren’s reported online posts, videos, and audio files are similarly antithetical to the mission and values of the U.S. Department of State. Indeed, we appreciate the Department’s reiteration that Berggren’s views “do not represent those of the State Department” and that “As a department, we embrace and champion diversity, equity, and inclusion as a source of strength.”<sup>3</sup> We also appreciate that you are the first Secretary of State to appoint a Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer, as we believe that Americans from all communities – including the Jewish community – have an equal right to pursue a career in federal service.

<sup>1</sup> Robbie Gramer, “We Feel His Presence in the Department is Threatening,” August 31, 2021.

(<https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/08/31/state-department-antisemitism-antisemitism-blinken-fritz-berggren>)

<sup>2</sup> @JGreenblattADL, *Twitter*, “In a powerful and heartfelt message to employees after the discovery of a swastika in the State Department building, Secretary Blinken tells Jewish colleagues to “know how grateful we are for your service.” @SecBlinken, please know how grateful we are for your leadership.” July 28, 2021. (<https://twitter.com/JGreenblattADL/status/1420422900839075845>)

<sup>3</sup> Gramer, “We Feel His Presence.”

Separate from those important efforts, however, we are deeply concerned that six months after Mr. Berggren's case came to light, he reportedly remains a State Department employee, exploiting that position as a representative of your agency to try to legitimize his outrageous antisemitism and other forms of bigotry.

We also note that this week more than 70 State Department staff reportedly sent a letter voicing personal concern about Mr. Berggren and his continued employment by the Department, stating that "Not only is his propagation of antisemitic ideas highly disturbing and offensive to Jewish and non-Jewish employees alike, but as Jewish employees, we feel his presence at the Department is threatening."<sup>4</sup>

We understand that the State Department is obligated to handle such matters in accordance with Department policy, federal regulations, and applicable law. Within that context, we strongly encourage you and your administrative team to do everything in your power to ensure Mr. Berggren faces the full consequences of his detestable actions and that Jewish Americans who serve as patriotic employees of the State Department are fully supported at this time.

Particularly at a time of rising antisemitic incidents both domestically and abroad, this issue is of deep concern to us and our community. We stand ready to assist the State Department and other federal agencies as you work to ensure that Jewish American employees are fully included, supported, and protected in government service, that our government strives to support a federal workforce that is more equitable and inclusive, and that hateful extremists are not unintentionally empowered by any U.S. government agencies.

Sincerely,



Jonathan Greenblatt  
CEO and National Director

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid.