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# U.S. Department of State and Marine Corps reaffirm embassy security partnership

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DSS Marine Security Guard liaisons and DS leadership pose with the signed Memorandum of Agreement between the U.S. Department of State and the United State Marine Corps. (Left to right) Acting Assistant Director for the DSS International Programs Directorate Cornell Chasten, Jr., Marine Security Guard Program Analyst Michael E. Johnson, Marine Security Guard Program Branch Chief David H. Walden, and Acting Assistant Secretary for Diplomatic Security Todd J. Brown. (U.S. Department of State photo)

U.S. Marine Security Guards have **worked closely** with the U.S. Department of State and the Diplomatic Security Service (DSS) for more than 70 years to protect U.S. citizens and property and prevent the compromise of classified U.S. government information at U.S. embassies and consulates around the world.

The roles and responsibilities of this relationship were reaffirmed on October 13, 2020, with the signing of a new Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the U.S. Department of State and the United States Marine Corps.

The MOA is traditionally reaffirmed with a signing ceremony, but a formal event was not held this year due to COVID-19. The agreement, however, was signed separately at the Pentagon and at the U.S. Department of State. Cornell Chasten, Jr., acting assistant director for the International Programs Directorate, Bureau of Diplomatic Security, Diplomatic Security Service, presented the signed MOA to Acting Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of Diplomatic Security Todd J. Brown, on November 2, 2020. Brown has statutory authority for overseas security programs, and Chasten oversees the policy, planning, coordination and implementation of Department of State security programs at non-high threat posts abroad.

“I want to thank the International Program Directorate’s Office of Overseas Protective Operations and Marine Security Guard Program team for their hard work coordinating the signing of the agreement during these challenging times,” said Brown.

The **Marine Corps Embassy Security Group**  (MCESG) is the Marine Corps command responsible for screening, training, and supporting Marine Security Guards. On November 10, 2020, MCESG held a cake-cutting ceremony at their headquarters in Quantico, VA, to celebrate the 245th birthday of the U.S. Marines. Marine Security Guard Program Analyst Michael E. Johnson and Marine Security Guard Program Branch Chief David H. Walden were on hand to pay tribute to the enduring partnership between DSS and the Marine Corps.

“On behalf of DSS, I would like to thank our Marine Corps partners for their service, and wish them a very happy birthday,” said Chasten.





Col. Keith Parrella, Commanding Officer of Marine Corps Embassy Security Group (far right), participates in the traditional cake cutting ceremony celebrating the 245th birthday of the U.S. Marine Corps, Quantico, Va., November 10, 2020. (Photo courtesy U.S. Marine Corps)

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