



**U.S. OFFICE OF SPECIAL COUNSEL**

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**The Special Counsel**

June 8, 2016

The President  
The White House  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Re: OSC File No. DI-14-0679

Dear Mr. President:

Pursuant to my duties as Special Counsel, I am forwarding the Department of State's report based on disclosures of wrongdoing at the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations (OBO), Arlington Virginia, made to the U.S. Office of Special Counsel (OSC). OSC has reviewed the report and provides the following summary of the allegations and my findings.

The whistleblower, Leonard Y. Cooper, who consented to the release of his name, alleged that OBO management failed to address serious design flaws in systems intended to protect occupants of U.S. diplomatic facilities from attack. Mr. Cooper alleged that the Environmental Security Protection System (ESPS) design at U.S. diplomatic facilities worldwide, as well as the design of stand-alone safe haven structures at the U.S. Embassy in Tripoli, Libya, featured vulnerabilities making them susceptible to certain kinds of attacks.

The agency did not substantiate Mr. Cooper's allegations. The report explained that OBO takes a layered security approach that has proven capable of withstanding attacks. The report noted that ESPSs were developed in accordance with appropriate criteria for reducing the likelihood of successful attacks, and that Compound Emergency Sanctuaries for the U.S. Embassy in Tripoli met appropriate building codes and standards. The report asserted that qualified industry experts reviewed Mr. Cooper's proposed modifications to these systems and determined the modifications did not meet industry standards and did not substantially upgrade the performance of existing systems.

I referred Mr. Cooper's allegations to Secretary of State John F. Kerry pursuant to 5 U.S.C. §1213(g)(1). Secretary Kerry delegated authority to review and sign the agency response to Patrick F. Kennedy, Under Secretary for Management. On September 9, 2014, Under Secretary Kennedy submitted the agency's response to OSC. Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. §1213(g)(1), Mr. Cooper was informed of the agency report and provided

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comments on December 4, 2014. The Department of State has marked the report sensitive but unclassified. I am now transmitting the report to you.<sup>1</sup>

I have also sent copies of this letter and the report to the Chairmen and Ranking Members of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations and the House Committee on Foreign Affairs. I have filed copies of this letter and the redacted agency report in our public file, which is available at [www.osc.gov](http://www.osc.gov). OSC has now closed this file.

Respectfully,



Carolyn N. Lerner

Enclosure

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<sup>1</sup>The U.S. Office of Special Counsel (OSC) is authorized by law to receive disclosures of information from federal employees alleging violations of law, rule, or regulation, gross mismanagement, a gross waste of funds, an abuse of authority, or a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety. 5 U.S.C. § 1213(a) and (b). These allegations were transmitted under 5 U.S.C. § 1213(g)(1), which provides that the Special Counsel may transmit information received from an individual other than those described in 5 U.S.C. § 1213 (c)(2)(A) and (B) to the head of the agency which the information concerns. Within a reasonable time, the agency head must inform the Special Counsel in writing of what action has been or is being taken and when such action will be completed. The Special Counsel will then inform the individual of the report.