

3-19-2014

From Law School to Diplomacy in Libya: Threading a Path Through the Foreign Service

William Roebuck
U.S. Department of State

Repository Citation

Roebuck, William, "From Law School to Diplomacy in Libya: Threading a Path Through the Foreign Service" (2014). *Other Lectures and Presentations*. 75.
https://digitalcommons.law.uga.edu/lectures_pre_arch_lectures_other/75

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Lectures and Presentations at Digital Commons @ Georgia Law. It has been accepted for inclusion in Other Lectures and Presentations by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Georgia Law. [Please share how you have benefited from this access](#) For more information, please contact tstriepe@uga.edu.



From Law School to Diplomacy in Libya: Threading a Path Through the Foreign Service



William Roebuck, U.S. Department of State
March 2014



- Part I: Ariadne's Thread: A few opening observations, to serve as a guide.
 - Part II: The Foreign Service – Libya and Beyond
 - Part III: The Arab Spring: Some Lessons Learned
-



Diplomacy 101: A Lawyer Abroad



**Represent America
to the World with the
U.S. Department of State**





Who We Are

Approximately

- 8,000 Officers in the Foreign Service
- U.S. Military marching Bands outnumber us





Where We Are



- More than 270 posts abroad in 190 countries
 - Headquarters in Washington, D.C.
-



Fellowships

- Presidential Management Fellowship (PMF):
www.pmf.opm.gov
- Thomas R. Pickering Foreign Affairs/Graduate Foreign Affairs Fellowship Program:
www.woodrow.org
- Charles B. Rangel Fellowship Program:
www.howard.edu/rjb/rangelprogram.htm



Foreign Service

- Foreign Service Officers promote U.S. interests and protect U.S. citizens at U.S. embassies and consulate posts overseas and in Washington, DC
 - 50,000 Foreign Service Nationals (local employees)
 - Most of the Foreign Service career is spent overseas
-



Foreign Service Officers

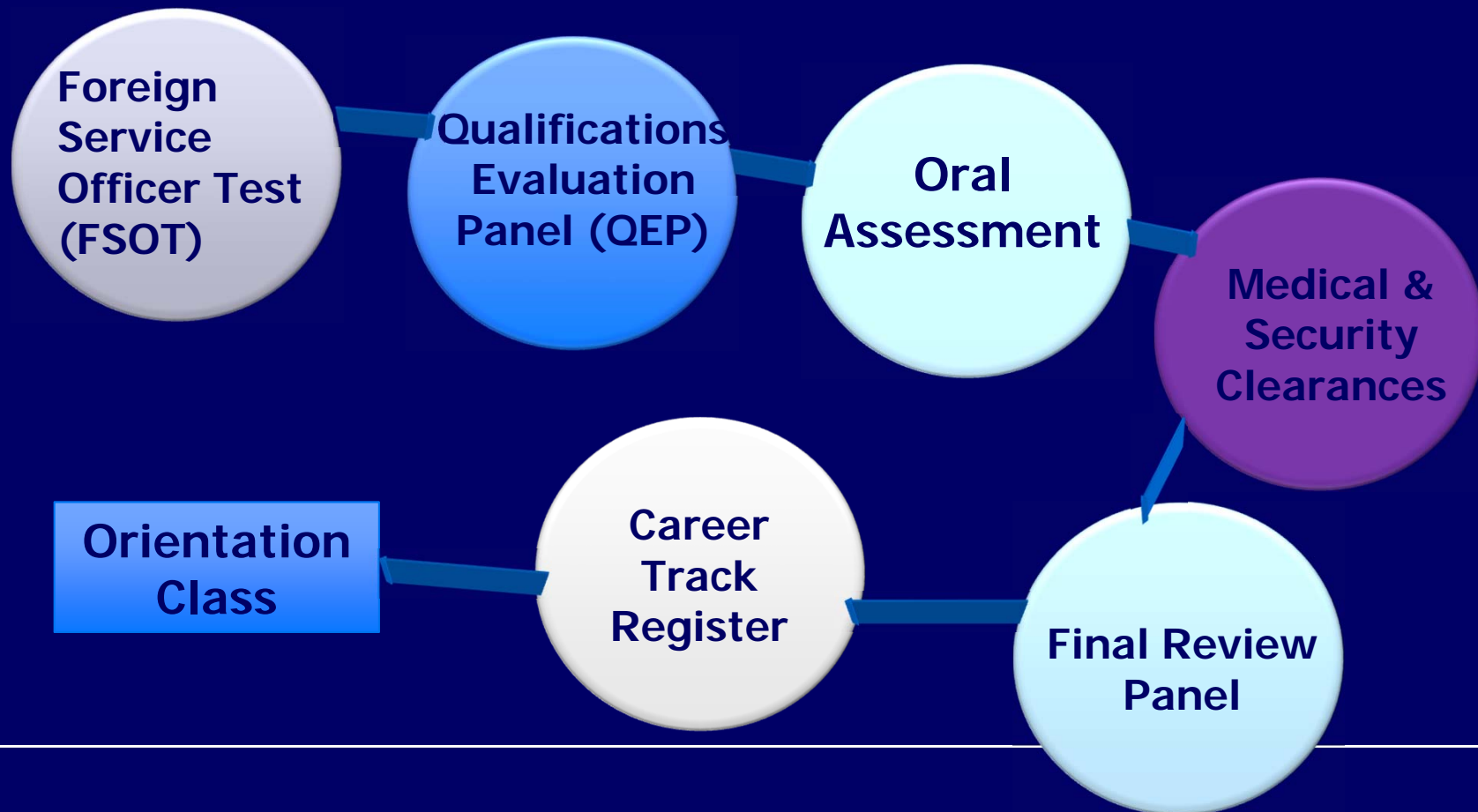
FSOs declare one of the following career tracks when applying:

- Political Affairs
- Economic Affairs
- Consular Affairs
- Public Diplomacy
- Management Affairs
- Protecting American Citizens

11,000 Civil Service Employees



How Do I Become an FSO?





Key Reasons to Join the Foreign Service

- Public service
 - Overseas lifestyle
 - Challenging work
 - Lifelong learning
 - Constant variety and change
 - Learn foreign languages
-



Questions?

- careers.state.gov
 - iOS and Android mobile app - DOSCareers
 - Diplomats in Residence
 - Facebook Careers in Foreign Affairs Group
 - Facebook U.S. Department of State – Careers Fan Page
 - [Twitter.com/doscareers](https://twitter.com/doscareers) or @doscareers
 - LinkedIn Careers in Diplomacy Group
-



Three Americans Killed in Gaza Blast



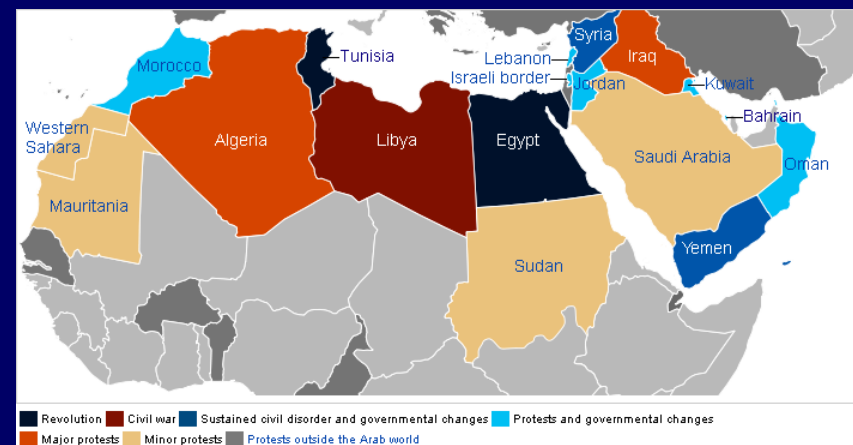




Defining Arab Spring



- The series of revolutionary or near revolutionary developments that erupted in North Africa in early 2011.





My Work over Past Three Years, Focusing on North Africa and Arab Spring



Causes:

- Unemployment, corruption and
- lack of basic
- freedom as drivers
- instability;





Working on Libya, in Tripoli, Benghazi (and Washington)



- Charge d'Affaires at U.S. Embassy in Tripoli
- Meeting with Libyan Prime Minister Zeidan at his Tripoli office





Liberation Day – Benghazi, October 2011, with Chris Stevens



- 50,000 Libyans out celebrating their freedom.





Working with Senior U.S. Officials



- Working with U.S. officials to shape the USG diplomatic response post-Arab Spring:
 - Developing assistance for Libya and Tunisia (helping them build their militaries; offering scholarships and education)
 - Briefing members of Congress on our work with Libyans to collect weapons.





America's role post-Arab Spring? Right Side of History?



- These revolutions are not ours.
 - But we can offer support for peaceful, democratic reform.
 - Need to be smart in how we go about it: Help societies economically to create jobs, fight corruption, restructure debt.
 - And help them to strengthen political parties, electoral institutions, and civil society.
 - U.S. does not fund particular parties or candidates.
 - Support forces of reconciliation and tolerance.
 - Encourage countries undergoing reform to move faster and more robustly.
-



Could we have responded differently?



- Sided with Mubarak or Ben Ali? Yes, but at enormous risk and cost to our interests and values.
 - The wrong side of history?
 - Then? or Now?
 - No crystal ball; just a rearview mirror;
 - Limits to our ability to shape events
-





Support for Democracy: Is it Enough?



- Elections are key; Peaceful, periodic transfer of power and protection of rights of women and minorities.
 - Respect for the rule of law, independent institutions, free expression, and a free press.
 - Why does America promote democracy one way in some countries and another way in others?
 - Our choices reflect other U.S. interests in the region: our fight against al-Qaida, defense of our allies, and a secure supply of energy. No “one size fits all” model.
-



What about the Islamists? Can U.S. work with them?



- Not all Islamists are alike. Turkey and Iran are both governed by parties with religious roots.
 - But, Islamist parties committed to democracy must reject violence,
 - Abide by the rule of law and respect the freedoms of speech, religion, association, and assembly;
 - Respect the rights of women and minorities;
 - Must let go of power if defeated at the polls;
 - What parties call themselves is less important to us than what they actually do.
 - In Tunisia, U.S. has worked with an-Nahda.
-



Other tools: Support for Education and Civil Society

