



United States Department of State
and the Broadcasting Board of Governors

Inspector General

December 7, 2007

Dear Mr. President:

I want to advise you of my decision to retire from Government service and as Inspector General of the Department of State and of the Broadcasting Board of Governors as of the close of business on January 15, 2008.

As I said at my swearing-in in 2005, over which Secretary Rice was so gracious to preside, my community and my country have been wonderful to me and I had an obligation to pay that back. I have been honored to do public service, and I thank you very much for giving me that opportunity. I leave with a feeling of satisfaction and accomplishment at having promoted efficiency, accountability and positive change at the Department of State and the BBG. I have also been pleased to serve effectively, at the request of the U.S. Government, as Chair of the Board of External Auditors of the Organization of American States.

I also leave office with concerns regarding inherent structural and conceptual defects in the inspector general position. Of even greater concern to me is the grave threat to public service posed by the current rancor and distrust between and among the political parties, the legislative and executive branches of government, the media, and various interest groups. I believe very strongly in the obligation of all good citizens to do public service at some point in their lives. I was pleased this year to create the Howard J. Krongard Scholars in the Nation's Service at Princeton University and its Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs in conjunction with their Scholars in the Nation's Service Initiative. This Initiative is designed to provide an opportunity for outstanding students to put their skills and energy at the service of the federal government and to instill in them a desire to do public service over at

The President
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

least part of their future careers after a six-year work and study program. I remain deeply committed to these objectives, but I fear that if the current environment in Washington persists, too many of the most qualified prospective public servants across the country will be dissuaded from serving.

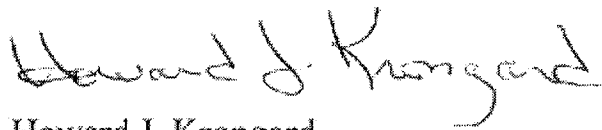
My January 15, 2008, retirement date will provide adequate time for an orderly transition of my responsibilities. More important, it will enable me to see through to completion one of the most ambitious and successful projects of my tenure as Inspector General: the launching of the Department of State Office of Inspector General (OIG) Middle East Regional Office (MERO). It was obvious to me from my earliest days in office in the summer of 2005 that OIG could not provide the highest level of oversight in Iraq and Afghanistan, or in future conflict or crisis areas in that region, without "boots on the ground". Yet, as far as anyone can recall, in the 100 years that the State Department inspection and then Inspector General function has existed, it has never had a permanent presence outside the Washington area. My vision was for an agile and able team to be present in the broader Middle East, not just for the existing critical State Department activities there but also for the next crisis response and even to be embedded in the earliest response activities, which experience has taught us is the time when oversight is most needed but has been least available. However, lack of funding and of people willing to serve in that region, as well as resistance both outside and within OIG, led some to refer to this as my "impossible dream".

Significant efforts resulted in the appropriation in the FY '07 Emergency Supplemental in June 2007 of funding for the establishment of the MERO. Following that, I successfully recruited the very best people I could find to lead the MERO. I visited prospective permanent locations for the MERO, as well as Afghanistan and Iraq to arrange for MERO temporary space and support there, and I concluded that Amman, Jordan, as a permanent location, offered the best prospects for success of the MERO to provide oversight in the conflict and potential crisis areas. I persuaded various constituencies that the merits and benefits of an OIG presence in Amman outweighed the costs, impositions on space and supportive resources in short supply, security, and other concerns. An impressive MERO work plan for 2008 has been developed that focuses on high-risk, high-value, high-cost Department programs, and the office will include an investigative capability. A few issues remain that I expect to complete in the coming weeks, but success is in view and the MERO is to be launched in Amman not later than January 15, 2008. It will be with great pride

in the creation of the MERO that I will retire at that time. I am likewise gratified to have assisted the Iraqi Inspectors General, who are a new concept in their country, and to have initiated and implemented the idea of a U.S. Advisor to the Iraqi IGs in Baghdad. The person I recruited for that position has been in Baghdad for nearly a year making notable advances in training and mentoring them.

Thank you again, Mr. President, for giving me this opportunity. I also want to express my gratitude to Secretary Rice who was enormously supportive, while always being respectful of my independence as the Inspector General.

Respectfully,



Howard J. Krongard
Inspector General

cc:

The Honorable Condoleezza Rice
Secretary of State

The Honorable James K. Glassman
Chairman
Broadcasting Board of Governors

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
Chairman
Committee on Foreign Relations
United States Senate

The Honorable Richard G. Lugar
Ranking Member
Committee on Foreign Relations
United States Senate

The Honorable Joseph I. Lieberman
Chairman
Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
United States Senate

The Honorable Susan Collins
Ranking Member
Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
United States Senate

The Honorable Tom Lantos
Chairman
Committee on Foreign Affairs
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Ileana Ros-Lehtinen
Ranking Member
Committee on Foreign Affairs
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Henry A. Waxman
Chairman
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Tom Davis
Ranking Member
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
U.S. House of Representatives