

Why We Need to Keep Our Ambassador in Yemen

by [James Jeffrey \(/experts/james-jeffrey\)](/experts/james-jeffrey)

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS



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As in other countries, no U.S. official is better placed to evaluate Yemen's current situation and make the decision to evacuate than the ambassador, and no one else will pay the same price if the decision is wrong.

Yemen's increasing tumult recently led two members of Congress to call for the withdrawal of U.S. Ambassador Matthew Tueller. We appreciate the concern for Matt Tueller, someone we all know and esteem. Yet we disagree both that the decision should be made solely on the basis of danger and that it should be made primarily in Washington.

No group could take security more seriously than we do. Each of us in our own diplomatic service has been shot at, rocketed, and mortared. One survived a bombing and another missed a bomb by minutes. We have all buried colleagues who were less lucky than we. We know that even the best reasoned security decisions can be wrong. And yet we disagree. Yemen exemplifies why American diplomats need to take personal risks in our national interest. Yemen teeters on the edge of civil war...

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