

Foreign Policy Association of Central PA  
May 23, 2025 Embassy Trip

This is from FPA Board Member, Molly **Howell** who made the following arrangements for our May 23 Embassy Trip.

Please find the schedule for the embassy trip and a write-up on the lunch participants below:

**10:00-11:30 a.m.** - meeting at the **Embassy of Finland**. We will be meeting with Col. Juha Helle, Defense Attaché, and Päivi Nevala, Head of the Political Section. I am hoping we will get a brief audience with Ambassador Mikko Hautala, but they won't know until closer to the time.

**12:00 - 2:00 p.m.** - lunch at **Pikio Taco**, screening of the Joel Seidman documentary "**Putin's Endgame: The Stakes Beyond Ukraine**," followed by a Q&A with Joel and Ambassador John Herbst from the Atlantic Council.

**2:30 - 4:00 p.m.** - meeting at the **Embassy of Estonia**. We will be meeting with Ambassador Kristjan Prikk, the Defense Attaché, General Taivo Rõkk, the Cyber/ Digital affairs Counsellor, Ms Anna-Maria Osula.

**Joel Seidman (documentary filmmaker):**

Joel is an Emmy-award winning journalist and documentary filmmaker. Previously a senior news producer with NBC, Joel launched his documentary film company in 2024. He teamed with fellow journalist Kevin Tibbles and the Atlantic Council to produce "**Putin's Endgame: The Stakes Beyond Ukraine**" to educate the public on the ramifications of Russian aggression against Ukraine and what this could mean for the broader region.

**Ambassador John Herbst:**

Ambassador Herbst is senior director of the Atlantic Council's Eurasia Center and served for thirty-one years as a foreign service officer in the US Department of State, retiring at the rank of career minister. He was US ambassador to Ukraine from 2003 to 2006. Prior to that, he was ambassador to Uzbekistan (2000-03). In his last four years at the State Department, he served as the coordinator for reconstruction and stabilization, leading the US government's civilian capacity in societies in transition from conflict or civil strife, and to provide support to countries at risk of instability. He oversaw the establishment of the Civilian Response Corps of the United States, the US civilian rapid response force for reconstruction and stabilization operations overseas. Ambassador Herbst previously served as US consul general in Jerusalem; principal deputy to the Ambassador-at-Large for the Newly Independent States; the director of the office of independent states and commonwealth affairs; director of regional affairs in the Near East Bureau; and at the embassies in Tel Aviv, Moscow, and Saudi Arabia.

He most recently served as director of the center for complex operations at National Defense University. He has received the Presidential Distinguished Service Award, the Secretary of State's Career Achievement Award, and the State Department's Distinguished Honor Award. Ambassador Herbst has written book chapters, articles, and op-eds on stability operations in Central Asia, Ukraine, and Russia. His writings have appeared in the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *Atlantic*, the *National Interest*, and *Foreign Policy*. He has been a frequent guest discussing the Ukraine crisis on television and radio.