



**Exclusive Interview with  
Casey Mace  
American Embassy  
Luxembourg**

Dear AMCHAM members and friends,

Welcome to the 28 January 2021 AMCHAM NEWSLETTER! We are delighted in this issue to welcome and introduce to you all via an exclusive interview, Casey Mace, the “Chargé d’Affaires” of the U.S. Embassy in Luxembourg. Mr Mace will serve in this capacity as the Acting US Ambassador until a new Ambassador is confirmed and presents credentials to the Luxembourg Government. We in AMCHAM have had an excellent relationship with our new Chargé d’Affaires during his service as the American Embassy Deputy Chief of Mission and look forward to working with him and the Embassy to continue the process of strengthening US/Luxembourg bilateral relations across the full range of political, economic and cultural connections which bind us as allies together! Please read and enjoy his interview with me.

Please also find and enjoy an audio link to my interview with ARA radio 100.7 during which I discussed with Natasha Ehrmann the economic and political road ahead as a result of the election of Joe Biden as US President and Kamala Harris as Vice President of the United States.

Also concerning trade policies and relations, we have included an article by our AMCHAM colleague Kateryna Bordun reporting on the recent public meeting of the EU Commission Director General on Trade, Sabine Weyand, during her visit of last week to Luxembourg.

Likewise, we have included an excellent article written by Carlo Thelen, the Director General of the Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce, who writes about the economic challenges and opportunities which we must face in the coming future.

And as always, a great recipe for you to enjoy!

Enjoy this issue. Tell us what you like and don’t like and what you want more of in future issues. Always remember, we are here to serve you!

With respect and very best regards,

Paul Michael Schonenberg  
Chairman and CEO

\*\*\*\*\*

## **1. Interview with Casey Mace, Chargé d’Affaires for the American Embassy Luxembourg**

**AMCHAM: You are assuming the responsibility to run the U.S. Embassy in Luxembourg. Please clarify for us and our readers your title and duties.**

**Casey Mace:** I now serve as the “Chargé d’Affaires” of the U.S. Embassy until a new Ambassador is confirmed and presents credentials to the Luxembourg Government. The “Chargé d’Affaires” is the traditional title given to a diplomat who serves as an Embassy's Chief of Mission in the absence of the Ambassador. I have actually served in this position every time the Ambassador previously left Luxembourg for official or personal business. Essentially, I’ll be acting in the capacity of the head of the Embassy, representing the United States’ interests in Luxembourg. In this role, I look forward to getting to know

more AmCham members and supporting your members' efforts to strengthen the economic ties between the U.S. and Luxembourg.

**AMCHAM: Now that there has been a change of administration, what changes in policies do you anticipate related to the change of administration to a new President and new Secretary of State?**

**Casey Mace:** President Biden, Vice President Harris, and their Cabinet nominees have emphasized a focus on our core values— a commitment to democracy, human rights, religious freedom and regional cooperation and defence. In his own words, President Biden said, “America has been tested and we have come out stronger for it. We will repair our alliances and engage with the world once again. Not to meet yesterday’s challenges, but today’s and tomorrows. We will lead not merely by the example of our power but by the power of our example. We will be a strong and trusted partner for peace, progress, and security.” President Biden and his new Administration have hit the ground running with a series of new policies that stake out more engagement and leadership for the United States on the international stage, from taking steps to resuming U.S. membership in the World Health Organization to re-joining the Paris Climate Agreement.

More generally, the new Administration seems poised to continue to promote democracy at home and abroad; focus on infrastructure investments in the United States; re-assess current trade relationships abroad; increase spending on clean energy; mitigate climate change; enhance security and non-proliferation; speak out against trafficking in persons; and solidify historic partnerships with long-time allies. Many of these focus areas present great opportunities for U.S. business interests in Luxembourg and Europe.

**AMCHAM: What current projects, issues and challenges are under active discussion between the US and Luxembourg and how will this change of administration impact these discussions?**

**Casey Mace:** The U.S. Embassy has a strong team with extensive relationships throughout Luxembourg that will continue to allow us to promote U.S. interests and strengthen ties between our countries. We have worked very closely with Luxembourg on space cooperation, with Luxembourg becoming one of the first nations to sign the Artemis Accords – a framework of principles for the return of humans to the moon. The Embassy has promoted Luxembourg investment in the U.S. space economy, and U.S. firms have invested in Luxembourg’s burgeoning space industry as well. Space is an important foreign policy priority moving forward, and we will continue to focus on these efforts in the coming years.

We continue to engage Luxembourg on ways to adapt the U.S.-EU relationship to ensure our U.S. economic interests can thrive and grow in Europe. In addition, we will continue to work with Luxembourg on promoting religious freedom and congratulate Luxembourg’s government on signing an Agreement with the Grand Duchy’s Jewish Community on Outstanding Holocaust Assets. We also have a number of projects related to our alliance activities to ensure that NATO remains the premier defensive alliance in the world.

**AMCHAM: What is the risk that the U.S. Embassy in Luxembourg will experience budget reductions or a descoping of activities and become more subordinate to the U.S. Embassy in Brussels?**

**Casey Mace:** The United States began diplomatic relations with Luxembourg in 1903. Since then, we have had U.S. Ambassadors to Luxembourg and the Netherlands, to the Luxembourg Government in Exile, and to Belgium and Luxembourg, but from 1956, we have had Ambassadors accredited only to the Grand Duchy. There is no indication that our diplomatic posture will change. Luxembourg is an important EU member and NATO Ally, and the Government of the United States believes it is important to retain diplomatic relations with an Ambassador and Embassy in the country.

**AMCHAM: To what extent is the U.S. Embassy in Luxembourg involved with issues related to European Commission activities in Brussels, Strasbourg or Luxembourg?**

**Casey Mace:** The U.S. Embassy works closely with our colleagues at the U.S. Embassy to the European Union in Brussels regarding all EU institutions, including those based in Luxembourg. Though our meeting schedules have been altered due to the pandemic, the Embassy engages directly with these institutions to further U.S. foreign policy goals.

**AMCHAM: Please introduce yourself to our audience both personally and professionally: Who are you? Where are you from? What is your career and education background?**

**Casey Mace:** I am a product of the expat private sector life. After spending the first part of my childhood in Chicago and Texas, my family and I moved to London for my high school years. My father ran the European division of a U.S. property development company and my mother worked for an architecture firm. I loved the experiences that I gained from living in the city, enjoying a multi-cultural friend-set at school, traveling around Europe, and appreciating the opportunity to see my country from the outside in – its strengths, its values, and its role in the world. This led me to pursue academic studies in international affairs at Georgetown University, where I developed an even stronger interest in diplomacy. Never wanting to stray far from the private sector, I spent the first two years of my professional life with a consulting firm conducting market analysis for the space and telecom sectors. When I ultimately joined the State Department, I joined with a career-focus on America's economic affairs.

In all of my varied assignments with the State Department, I have always sought out and facilitated opportunities to strengthen economic ties for the United States – to generate opportunities for the American business community.

**AMCHAM: Please tell us about your family?**

**Casey Mace:** After initially starting my foreign service career in China, I accepted a position in Africa, which proved the most consequential for my life as it is where I met my wife, Anne! She had been working for a number of years throughout East Africa for a U.S. consulting firm, managing USAID programs focused on agribusiness development. We married in the U.S., moved together to Australia for our next posting, where she represented a U.S. agribusiness company which sourced raw materials from Australia and New Zealand, earned a Master's degree in business and law, and gave birth to our first child. Over the intervening years in Asia and Washington, DC, we've been blessed with four children – two boys and two girls – all of whom attend ISL. As a family, we love travel adventures and cheering on our favorite American sports teams. Some of our favorite weekend family

outings here are spent enjoying Luxembourg's many festivals and markets, exploring its many castles, and hiking its many beautiful trails.

**AMCHAM: Please share with our readers your current impression of Luxembourg?**

**Casey Mace:** Luxembourg abounds with opportunities for the United States and our business community. I have not lived in a more welcoming country. Bonds of our shared sacrifice still animate a great warmth towards America; there is a prevailing appreciation for working with other countries and cultures; the government and people work hard to innovate and "make it happen," and the economy is fundamentally strong and growing. Moreover, it offers the best of everything, including beautiful countryside, vibrant urban life, and rich history. Luxembourg's size makes all these features more readily accessible than any other country. I have lived in Luxembourg for two years, and there is still much for me to see and enjoy!



**2. EU Commissioned Director General Trade meeting on the 19th January,** as Amcham members were present Kateryna Reitsma-Bordun kindly did the minutes of the meeting for our members. Thanks, Kateryna!

On January 19 the representation of European commission in Luxembourg hosted a webinar on changes in European trade policy where the Luxembourgish guests, amongst which AMCHAM, could meet on-line Ms. Sabine Weyand, EU Director-General for Trade.

The meeting started with the video-message of Minister of Foreign and European affairs of Grand Duchy of Luxembourg Mr. Jean Asselborn. He emphasized the importance of the revision of European trade policy, currently being made by the Commission. According to Minister Asselborn, we should draw a lesson from the difficult situation at the beginning of the last year, when the suppliers could not follow the demand, global supply chains could not function normally and the whole nations were desperate to get the medical equipment, even the collapse of entire supply chains was feared. This pandemic induced shock clearly demonstrated the fragility of the supply chain systems and have led to a re-thinking of advantages, but now also risks of off shoring of production. In his view it is time to re-think the global eco-system also in the light of the effects of human activity to the environment. Minister Asselborn in that context gave as the view of the Luxembourg Government that such a re-thinking of the economy should be a combination of a more durable and sustainable economy whilst at the same time being more competitive.

Ms. Weyand after this introduction by Minister Asselborn said that it was clear that Luxembourg and the European Commission were entirely on the same line and that a re-thinking of the EU economic policy was called for in a world where unilateralism and

protectionism have become ever more present. In this framework the EU Commission has launched a project to involve all economic actors in the definition of its policies and goals and received lots of valuable feed-back, which will lead to a position paper that may be expected in February.

As things stand now, three main themes of the new strategy have been identified:

- 1- To reinforce the stability and predictability of the rules;
- 2- To provide the opportunities for both employers, enterprises as well as employees;
- 3- To achieve a transformation into a durable and digital economy.

An important tool in this respect in her view is the “Brussels effect”, the fact that European standards force third nation producers that wish to export to the EU to adhere to European norms. This is a hard norm. Where it becomes more difficult though is the production methods to produce the products destined (also) for the EU. Any pressure by the EU to impose its rules in this respect, would be seen by the other nations as an infringement on their national sovereignty and will be considered as unacceptable. Here, she said, only the game of persuasion can offer remedy and the best is to do this with partners. The EU has already extended viewpoints on such a collaboration with the incoming Biden Presidency.

A notable communal challenge in this respect is China, a country in so many ways different from the Western Civilizations that putting pressure is extremely difficult. The only element that binds us all, though, is that we all live on the same planet and in that aspect have the same interests.

In this context she also dealt with the Mercosur agreement pending ratification. The problems of de-forestation in Amazonia are known, but will the fact that the EU will open its borders for 1% of the Brazilian beef production give the EU a forceful voice on the matter? Most certainly not, but not having an agreement would leave the EU totally without voice, for which reason 9 Member States have already asked for ratification. Also, the fact that China is an upcoming trading partner of Latin America is in this context to be considered as it is not to be expected that environmental issues would then be better safeguarded.

In her discourse Ms. Weyand provided a fascinating insight in the realities and practicalities of European Policies in this field, the trade-offs between what is desirable and what is achievable within the political instruments the EU has at its disposal to achieve its goals of adherence of the Paris Climate Treaty Accord, the Carbon Emissions Reduction Goals and the adherence of the Universal Human Rights for all.

All in all a “peek into the kitchen” of a European Commission “on the move” with its Foreign Trade policies that will crystallize in the coming 6 months.

Well over time and after the audience had been able to ask its questions, the chairman of the meeting Stephan Koppelberg and the audience thanked Director-General Weyland for her insights.



### 3. **2021: A decisive year of decisions**

By Carlo Thelen, *reproduced by kind permission of the Chamber of Commerce Luxembourg*

*At the beginning of 2020, the shock was as sudden as it was unexpected and the past year continued to be exceptional in many ways: healthcare systems and hospitals overwhelmed because of the virus, health measures, population lockdowns, massive use of teleworking in sectors where it is possible, administrative closures of businesses, etc. Countless unprecedented measures. Read the rest here :*

<https://www.carlothelenblog.lu/2021/01/22/2021-a-decisive-year-of-decisions/#more-1110>

### 4. **Amcham Upcoming Events & Save the Date**

30<sup>th</sup> January, 2021 – Opportunities for 2021- Are your Presentations Sexy? Register here!

<https://www.amcham.lu/events/opportunities-for-2021-are-your-presentations-sexy/>

10<sup>th</sup> February, 2021 – US Post Election Impact on Luxembourg & Europe. Register here!

<https://www.amcham.lu/events/us-post-election-impact-on-luxembourg-and-europe/>

8<sup>th</sup> March, 2021 – International Women’s Day -IWD 2021 with PWC Luxembourg. More details to follow.

5. **Audio Link Interview** by Radio 100,7 ,Natasha Ehrmann and our Chairman Paul Schonenberg on the Impact of Economical & Political relations between the US & Luxembourg

<https://www.100komma7.lu/program/episode/334827/202101221910-202101221930>



6. **Greek Yoghurt Cake – Tried & Tested recipe, my friends’ picture is above!**

## Ingredients

12 tablespoons unsalted butter, room temperature

1 cup granulated sugar

3 large eggs, room temperature

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

2 cups all-purpose flour

2 teaspoons baking powder

1/2 teaspoon baking soda

1/2 teaspoon coarse salt

1 cup fat-free Greek yogurt

1/4 cup honey

Orange supremes, for garnish

Toasted walnuts, for garnish

## Instructions

Preheat oven to 350 degrees with rack in middle position. Butter and flour a 9-by-3-inch springform pan.

In a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and sugar until pale and fluffy. Beat in eggs, one at a time, until fully incorporated. Beat in vanilla extract.

In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. In a separate bowl, stir together yogurt and honey.

Alternately add flour mixture and yogurt to stand mixer bowl in three additions, beginning and ending with flour mixture.

Transfer batter to prepared pan, smooth top, and bake until top is golden brown and a toothpick inserted into centre of cake comes out clean, 35 to 40 minutes.

Cool cake in pan for 10 minutes. Transfer cake to wire rack to cool completely. Slice and serve with orange supremes and walnuts.

.....

AMCHAM offers to each of you and your families our best wishes for your health and happiness. Be strong. Stay connected with your families and friends by phone and email. Use this time wisely and productively so you come out of this crisis stronger than when you started. For all those who don't know AMCHAM yet, please find our website here: <https://www.amcham.lu> and particularly our mission statement here: <https://www.amcham.lu/about-us/mission-statement/> and how you can join AMCHAM here: <https://www.amcham.lu/membership/> If you need us, we are here and will do all we can do to help. Feel free to pass on our newsletter to your colleagues and friends.

© Amcham Luxembourg