Top US diplomat in China quits over Trump climate policy

2017-06-06

Updated: 2017-06-06 10:10

WASHINGTON - David Rank, the chargé d'affaires of the US Embassy in Beijing, has left the State Department over the Trump administration's decision to quit the 2015 Paris agreement to fight climate change, a senior US official said on Monday.  
A State Department spokeswoman confirmed Rank's departure, but said she was unable to verify Twitter posts that said he resigned as he felt unable to deliver a formal notification to China of the US decision last week to quit the agreement.  
"He has retired from the foreign service," said Anna Richey-Allen, a spokeswoman for the department's East Asia Bureau. "Mr Rank has made a personal decision. We appreciate his years of dedicated service to the State Department."  
Iowa Governor Terry Branstad, US President Donald Trump's pick as the next US ambassador to Beijing, is expected to take up the post later this month.  
On June 1, the US State Department accepted the resignation of its top personnel officer, who had been among its few remaining senior Obama administration political appointees, another US official said.  
Arnold Chacon had served as the director general of the foreign service and director of human resources.  
The official said Chacon had tendered his resignation when Trump was inaugurated on Jan 20, along with all presidential appointees, who serve at the pleasure of the president and secretary of state.  
The acceptance of Chacon's resignation was first reported by the DiploPundit website.  
It was not immediately clear whether he would be offered another post at the department.  
Other than Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, his deputy John Sullivan and Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs Tom Shannon, the third-ranking US diplomat, most of the State Department's senior posts are currently vacant or filled by acting officials.  
Jonathan Fritz, the embassy's economics councilor, would serve as chargé in his place, Richey-Allen said.  
Rank had been with the department for 27 years and served as the political councilor at the US Embassy in Afghanistan from 2011 to 2012.  
Trump's announcement on Thursday that he would withdraw the United States from the Paris climate accord, saying the agreement would undermine the US economy and cost jobs, drew anger and condemnation from world leaders and heads of industry.  
Reuters

http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/201706/06/WS59bbe2fca310ded8ac189bc7.html