

Deputy Assistant Secretary Kenneth Merten
Haiti Special Coordinator - Deputy Assistant Secretary
in the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs



Kenneth H. Merten (born 1961) is an American diplomat and the current Haiti Special Coordinator as well as Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs. He acted as Ambassador to Croatia from 2012-2015 and U.S. Ambassador to Haiti from 2009-2012.

Merten was born in St. Louis, Missouri, but moved to Hudson, Ohio when he was twelve, and considers Hudson his home.

He attended Hudson Junior High School and the Walsh Jesuit High School and credits a history teacher named Mark Massa with being influential in his choice of career. Merten graduated from Walsh Jesuit in 1979, and went to Miami University, where he graduated from in 1983 with a BA in diplomacy and foreign affairs. He has also studied at the Aix-Marseille University, the University of Graz and the American University.

In 1987, Merten joined the United States Foreign Service. Since then, he has served both at Department of State facilities in Washington, DC and international assignments. Prior to his appointment as ambassador to Haiti,

his international experience consisted of assignments in Paris, Brussels and Bonn. He also served in Haiti as vice consul and economic counselor between 1988 and 1990 and between 1998 and 2000 respectively. In 2009, he was appointed to the position of ambassador to Haiti, and began his duties as such on 24 August 2009. In 2012, he was appointed to the position of ambassador to Croatia and began his duties as such on 30 October 2012.

As Haiti Special Coordinator during the 2015-2016 Haitian presidential election Merten traveled to Haiti and spoke about an upcoming verification commission report on fraud in the election, saying "We hope it is very, very quick and does not change the results of the election" in April 2016. He was joined by other U.S. officials pushing for quickly accepted elections.

In July 2012, President Michel Martelly of Haiti awarded Merten with the National Order of Honour and Merit to the rank of Grand Cross for his diplomatic excellence and all his works done for Haiti.