

Press Releases: United States and Belize Sign Open Skies Air Transport Agreement

Media Note
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
October 16, 2018

Today the United States and Belize signed a new Air Transport Agreement. This Open Skies Agreement expands the two countries' already strong commercial and economic ties by facilitating greater air travel and commerce. It will benefit airlines, travelers, businesses, shippers, airports, and localities by permitting unrestricted reciprocal market access for passenger and all-cargo airlines to fly between our two countries and beyond. The Agreement further commits both governments to high standards of safety and security. The Agreement entered into force today upon signature, superceding the U.S.-UK Air Services Agreement that has applied to U.S.-Belize air services since 1977.

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Press Releases: EU-U.S. Cyber Dialogue Joint Elements Statement

Media Note
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Washington, DC
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Begin text:

On the occasion of the fifth meeting of the EU-U.S. Cyber Dialogue in Brussels on 10 September 2018, the European Union (EU) and United States reaffirmed their strong partnership in favour of a global, open, stable and secure cyberspace where the rule of law fully applies, where the same rights that individuals have offline are protected online, and where the security, economic growth, prosperity, and integrity of free and democratic societies is promoted and preserved.

During the dialogue, the EU and United States shared information on developments in their respective cyber strategies, policies, and legislation, including the EU Joint Communication on “Resilience, Deterrence and Defence: Building Strong Cybersecurity for the EU” and the U.S. recommendations on deterrence and international engagement pursuant to the U.S. Executive Order 13800 on “Strengthening the Cybersecurity of Federal Networks and Critical Infrastructure.” Both sides welcomed progress made to increase global capabilities to protect against, detect, deter, and respond to malicious cyber activities and underlined the need for coordination and cooperation in order to safeguard a global, open, stable, and secure cyberspace.

The EU and United States reaffirmed their strong commitment to human rights and fundamental freedoms online and condemned undue restrictions on freedom of expression and censorship in violation of international human rights law. The EU and United States also reaffirmed their strong support for the multi-stakeholder approach to Internet governance and encourage all stakeholders to strengthen existing Internet governance mechanisms, including the Internet Governance Forum as the premier multi-stakeholder venue for dialogue on Internet-related public policy issues. The EU and United States also underlined the need to address the digital divide to enable economic growth, social development, and increasing cyber resilience towards cyber threats and stressed their commitment to continued capacity building assistance to this end, including through the Global Forum for Cyber Expertise.

The EU and United States endorsed the work to date by the UN Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security (UNGGE), including its landmark 2013 and 2015 reports, and look forward to a new UNGGE to take that work forward, including on the issue of how existing international law applies to State behaviour in cyberspace. The EU and United States reaffirmed their adherence to certain voluntary, non-binding norms of responsible State behaviour in cyberspace during peacetime. In addition, both sides welcomed important, ongoing work and progress on the development and implementation of cyber confidence building measures to reduce misperceptions

and the risk of escalation stemming from the use of information and communications technologies. The EU and United States reaffirmed the importance of the Budapest Convention as a basis for national legislation and international cooperation in fighting cybercrime.

In order to keep cyberspace stable and secure, the EU and United States are committed to hold States accountable for actions that are contrary to the growing consensus on responsible state behaviour in cyberspace. The EU and United States affirmed the need to strengthen their cooperation in this regard, through both continued dialogue and practical collaborative efforts.

End text.

The fifth EU-U.S. Cyber Dialogue took place on 10 September 2018 in Brussels, co-chaired by the EEAS Acting Head of Division for Security Policy Rory Domm and the U.S. Department of State Deputy Coordinator for Cyber Issues Michele Markoff. Both were joined by a number of directorates-general, departments, and other bodies. In addition, a number of EU Member States took part as observers. A stakeholder outreach event was also held in the margins of the dialogue. The next EU-U.S. Cyber Dialogue will take place in Washington in 2019.

For updates on U.S. cyber policy, follow the State Department's Office of the Coordinator for Cyber Issues at [@State_Cyber](https://twitter.com/State_Cyber) on Twitter. Please send interview requests to SCCI_Press@state.gov.

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[Press Releases: Secretary Pompeo's Meeting With Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman](#)

Readout
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
October 16, 2018

The below is attributable to Spokesperson Heather Nauert:

Secretary of State Michael R. Pompeo met today with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in Riyadh. The Secretary reiterated the President's concern with respect to Jamal Khashoggi's disappearance, as well as the President's desire to determine what happened. The Secretary welcomed Saudi Arabia's support of the Turkish authorities' investigation. The Secretary and the Crown Prince agreed on the importance of a thorough, transparent, and timely investigation that provides answers. The two also discussed regional and bilateral issues.

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[Press Releases: U.S. Assistance to Ethnic and Religious Minorities in Iraq](#)

Fact Sheet
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
October 16, 2018

As part of the continued commitment by Vice President Pence, Secretary Pompeo, and USAID Administrator Green to support ethnic and religious minorities in Iraq as highlighted earlier this year at the first-ever Ministerial to Advance Religious Freedom, the United States is proud to announce over \$178 million in U.S. foreign assistance to support these

vulnerable communities in Iraq. This brings total U.S. assistance for this population to nearly \$300 million since Fiscal Year 2017, implemented by both the State Department and USAID.

The preservation of Iraq's rich historical pluralism is critical to reintegrating persecuted ethnic and religious minority communities into a peaceful Iraq. U.S. efforts to meet this objective span government agencies and are being implemented urgently, in close partnership with local faith and community leaders. Our efforts focus on the following areas:

Genocide Recovery and Persecution Response (GRPR)

- Over \$133 million in recently launched activities supporting the four pillars of USAID's GRPR Program, bringing total funding for GRPR to \$239 million.
 - Meeting Immediate Needs: Over \$51 million in life-saving humanitarian assistance to populations from the Ninewa Plain and western Ninewa, includes safe drinking water, food, shelter materials and household items, medical care, and psychosocial support.
 - Helping Restore Communities: \$9 million in funding to support early recovery needs and restore access to services like health and education.
 - Promoting Economic Recovery: \$68 million in funding to improve access to jobs and markets, support local businesses, and revive the local economy.
 - Preventing Future Atrocities: \$5 million to address systemic issues affecting minority populations and prevent future atrocities.

Clearing the Explosive Remnants of War

- Approximately \$37 million in funding to support explosive remnants of war (ERW) survey, clearance, and risk education in and around minority communities. This support has enabled the Department to significantly expand the number of U.S.-funded ERW survey, clearance, and risk education teams across Ninewa and fulfills the Secretary's pledge to expand ERW clearance efforts in Iraqi minority communities made at the July 2018 Ministerial to Advance Religious Freedom.

Social, Economic, and Political Empowerment

- \$8.5 million in additional assistance to projects that provide psychosocial services, legal support, and initiatives to help collect evidence of human rights abuses; increase minority representation in local and provincial government; increase access to justice for children; strengthen rule of law; and provide livelihoods support and access to economic opportunities for vulnerable groups bringing the FY 2017 total to \$18.5 million.

Preservation of Historic and Cultural Heritage Sites

- \$2 million in ongoing programming to support the preservation of

cultural heritage sites in Northern Iraq that were targeted for destruction by ISIS and other terrorist groups, safeguarding, preserving, and restoring access to significant cultural heritage sites of minority communities.

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[Press Releases: Deputy Secretary John J. Sullivan's Lunch With Religious Leaders](#)

Readout
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
October 16, 2018

The below is attributable to Spokesperson Heather Nauert:

In Baghdad on October 14, Deputy Secretary Sullivan participated in a working lunch with Iraqi religious leaders. The Deputy Secretary was accompanied by U.S. Ambassador to Iraq Doug Silliman, Assistant to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Major General Ricky Waddell, National Security Council Director for Iraq Matthew Zais, and Deputy Assistant Secretary of Near Eastern Affairs Andrew Peek.

The Deputy Secretary underlined that the United States is deeply committed to assisting persecuted religious groups, including Christian and Yazidi communities in Iraq who suffered genocide at the hands of ISIS. He emphasized the United States' view that ensuring people of all beliefs have a secure future in Iraq is integral to the region's stability and peace.

The United States has provided nearly \$1 billion since FY 2017 in development

and security assistance in Iraq, of which nearly \$300 million is specifically prioritized in geographic regions with concentrations of religious component communities, such as the Ninewa Plains. A significant amount of that funding is also benefitting displaced and other conflict-affected populations in Northern Iraq, an area that hosts the majority of the country's displaced ethnic and religious minorities.

The Deputy Secretary of State reaffirmed the U.S. government's commitment to continued support for religious and ethnic minority communities in Iraq.

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