

Press Releases: Remarks at a Meeting With Employees and Family Members of U.S. Embassy New Delhi

Remarks

Rex W. Tillerson

Secretary of State

Roosevelt House

New Delhi, India

October 25, 2017

SECRETARY TILLERSON: Well, good afternoon. And it's such a pleasure to return to India, but I'm returning under a different hat. But I have been to India before, and it's been a while since I've been back, but I'm really pleased to be here and pleased to have the opportunity to see a few of the faces here at the mission and acknowledge the work that you do here as well as the important work of our consular offices around the country as well.

I think as you no doubt have heard from a number of important policy decisions that have been undertaken in the past few months by the Trump administration, first, the South Asia policy, which India has a very important role to play in stability and security for this region – Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, and beyond – and we've had a lot of discussions today in our conversations with our counterparts, and also I had conversations, obviously, with Prime Minister Modi's visit back in June to Washington, D.C. But we also then announced a new free and open Indo-Pacific policy and strategy as well recently, and again, India key to that important strategy as well.

So the importance of this relationship between the United States and India is clearly on the rise, but we've always had an important relationship. It dates back more than 70 years. But I think we have an opportunity at this time to take this relationship to a completely different character and commitment. And as we've said, it's really about securing the next 100 years for democratic processes, for other fledgling and emerging democracies in the region, to promote trade and economic development, using a rules-based order, maintaining countries' sovereignty – all of these are values that India and the United States share, and that is the strength of the relationship. So there's a lot of exciting things yet to come, and you are going to be right at the center of all of that in helping us carry out the policy of the United

States in this burgeoning relationship and growing relationship with India, both from a security standpoint, from an economic development standpoint.

We appreciate all of the work that you do here, and in particular, appreciate the work of the locally employed staff. Our diplomats and our civil servants, they come and go, and you're really the continuity of this place. And I know some of you have been here for a very long time, many years of service with us. You are so vital to our success because you do maintain that constant framework for us to have our people come and go, and we appreciate very much your long-term commitment and the commitment of others as well.

I certainly want to thank the families that are here. Thank you for supporting your spouse in the important work they do here on behalf of the American people. And I'm glad to see we've got a few of the young folks here in the front. My favorite – some of my favorite kids are in uniform down here, Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, and it's good to see you as well.

I know that overseas assignments are sometimes challenging, and I had a few during my prior life as well on a family-unaccompanied basis, so I really – I fully appreciate the sacrifices that people make. I know there's a lot of things that happen back home, and unfortunately, you're not there for them – some birthdays, some weddings, some graduations. Unfortunately, I missed my share of those. I know there's ways you make it up in other ways with your loved ones, but we do appreciate the fact that those are things that come with taking assignments overseas, far away from home and family. It is a terrific opportunity for yourself, though, and your families, and hopefully as the years go by and you reflect on the benefits against some of those costs, I think you'll find that it clearly comes out in the positive column for you and for your families.

I want to thank Charge d'Affaires MaryKay Carlson for her leadership here of the mission these last nine months. As you probably know, we have a new ambassador confirmed [\[1\]](#) that will be making his way over here soon. And I know this is going to be a terrific team between MaryKay and new Ambassador Juster to really begin to carry forward this important relationship for India and the United States.

I want to make just a couple of comments in closing on three important values that I talk about everywhere I go, and I talked about these the first day I joined the State Department and walked in the building. And the first is, your safety and security is the most important value that I think we have to share. And I don't call it a priority, because priorities can change. This is a value. We value you. We value your safety. We value your security. We want you to take care of yourself, but we want you to take care of your colleagues as well, and it's something that I'm committed to and I start every day in the State Department and every meeting with the question of: Are our people safe? So that's the most important thing to me, and I want it to be the most important thing to you as well.

The second value I said that I wanted to help people adopt is accountability. We need to hold ourselves accountable for the successes. We hold ourselves accountable when things don't go well. We learn from those things. We're all

going to make mistakes, but let's learn from it. If we hold ourselves accountable, then we can hold others accountable, in particular others in the countries where we're trying to advance our interests. But we have to hold ourselves accountable first and foremost.

And then third is that we treat each other with respect. No matter what your station in life is, no matter what your job is within the State Department, your job is important, doesn't matter what it is, because all of us are enabled to do what we do by others. None of us do it alone. None of us do it without the support of colleagues, the support staff. No matter who is around you, deserves to be treated with respect, and that's the way we're going to treat each other. If we do that and we practice it, we will treat others in our conduct of our policy with respect as well.

Your role is critical because you are the face of the American people, and how you conduct yourself conveys a lot about American values. So I appreciate the way you carry yourselves. I appreciate the way you conduct yourselves. I appreciate all of those folks in the back. Thank you very much for everything you do for us. And it's just a real pleasure to be in India. And we'll be back. We've got a lot work to do. You've already done a lot of work in facilitating this new administration coming into office, and we appreciate that, and I look forward to seeing all of you again. Thank you so much for everything you do. (Applause.)

The President nominated Kenneth Juster to be Ambassador to India on September 5. He has not yet been confirmed.

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[Press Releases: Office of the Historian, Bureau of Public Affairs](#)
[Release of Chapters on Argentina and the Latin America Region in Foreign](#)

Relations of the United States, 1977-1980, Volume XXIV, South America; Latin America Region

Media Note
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
October 25, 2017

The Department of State released today a portion of *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1977-1980, Volume XXIV, South America; Latin America Region*. The two compilations released today, on Argentina and the Latin America Region, were given priority in the declassification process as part of the National Security Council-led Argentina Declassification Project. Unedited versions of these documents were made available in April 2017, as part of an earlier release. Today's publication includes additional information on the provenance and context of the documents. The release of the complete volume in 2018 will include compilations on U.S. policy toward nine more countries in South America and the front matter of the volume.

This volume is part of a subseries of volumes in the *Foreign Relations* series that documents the foreign policy of the Carter administration. The compilations released today show high-level U.S. concern over human rights violations in the Southern Cone and policy debates within the U.S. Government over what exactly to do about those violations. Carter's policy toward Argentina sought to promote human rights, moderate the internal dynamics of the ruling *junta*, and encourage the reestablishment of electoral democracy and an orderly end to the military government that had taken power in March 1976. At the same time, U.S. officials tried to calm disputes between Argentina and its neighbors, limit the spread of developing nuclear technology, encourage the stabilization and growth of the Argentine economy, and, in 1980, ensure Argentine cooperation in the grain embargo that the United States had placed on the Soviet Union.

This volume was compiled and edited by Sara Berndt. The volume and this press release are available on the Office of the Historian website at <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v24>. Copies of the volume will be available for purchase from the U.S. Government Publishing Office online once the entire volume is released in 2018 at <http://bookstore.gpo.gov>, or by calling toll-free 1-866-512-1800 (D.C. area 202-512-1800). For further information, contact history@state.gov.

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Press Releases: Statement From Secretary Tillerson on Executive Order 13780, Section 6(a)

Press Statement
Rex W. Tillerson

Secretary of State

Washington, DC
October 25, 2017

President Trump's Executive Order (EO) 13780, Protecting the Nation From Foreign Terrorist Entry Into the United States, was issued in order to protect Americans by addressing weaknesses in our visa program and refugee vetting system. We are taking new steps to eliminate vulnerabilities in our refugee vetting process that those who would bring harm to our homeland can exploit for destructive ends.

The Trump Administration remains committed to a comprehensive and compassionate refugee policy, and these new measures will ensure the United States can continue to help some of the world's most vulnerable people without compromising the safety and security of the American people.

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Press Releases: Status of the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program

Fact Sheet
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
October 24, 2017

Based on Section 6(a) of Executive Order 13780, "Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States," the U.S. government undertook a 120-day review of the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) to identify and implement additional security screening processes in order to uphold the safety of the American people.

As a result, the President has issued a new Executive Order that provides for the general resumption of the USRAP.

While the Departments of State, Homeland Security, and Office of the Director of National Intelligence have jointly determined that the screening and vetting enhancements to the USRAP are generally adequate to ensure the security and welfare of the United States and therefore that the Secretary of State and Secretary of Homeland Security may resume that program, they have also concluded that additional in-depth review is needed with respect to refugees of 11 nationalities previously identified as potentially posing a higher risk to the United States. Admissions for applicants of those 11 potentially higher-risk nationalities will resume on a case-by-case basis during a new 90-day review period.

For family members who are "following-to-join" refugees that have already been resettled in the United States, additional security measures must also be implemented for all nationalities. Admissions of following-to-join refugees will resume once those enhancements have been implemented.

The United States will continue to resettle more refugees than any other country in the world, and we will continue to offer protection to the most vulnerable refugees while upholding the safety and security of the American people. The United States remains the world's leader in humanitarian assistance to refugees and displaced persons, providing more than \$8 billion in FY 2017.

For further information, please contact PRMPress@state.gov.

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[Press Releases: Briefing by Deputy Assistant Secretary for Southeast Asia W. Patrick Murphy on Burma](#)

Special Briefing
W. Patrick Murphy

Special Representative and Policy Coordinator for Burma

Washington, DC
October 24, 2017

MS NAUERT: Thank you, all of you, for coming today. I know a lot of you are interested in the issue of Burma and what is happening with the Rohingya there. We have talked about it a lot from this podium about our level of engagement at the State Department on that issue. We have been proud to have announced \$104 million in 2017 that has gone to both internally and externally displaced people. We've talked quite a bit about the good work that the Government of Bangladesh has done in accepting so many of those refugees.

So because of that, because of the focus on this and I know your intense interest, I brought our Deputy Assistant Secretary Patrick Murphy. He was on the Hill earlier today briefing the Senate Foreign Relations Committee with assessment of our U.S. policy toward Burma. That included the geopolitical, economic, and humanitarian considerations. He's going to join us for just a short briefing. He has a very tight schedule today. He'll take a couple of your questions, and then I'll handle the rest of the briefing from there.

So with that, I'd like to welcome Deputy Assistant Secretary Murphy. Thank you so much for coming on in today, sir. Go right ahead.

MR MURPHY: Thank you very much, Heather. Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. Indeed, Burma has preoccupied us quite significantly since August 25th when armed attacks took place on security forces, and the ensuing humanitarian crisis is of epic proportions. Many of the challenges in Burma have preoccupied us for decades, but this current crisis has been quite devastating. I had a very good morning joined by colleagues from our refugee bureau and USAID with the members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, as we did a couple of weeks ago with their counterparts on the House side of Congress.

Let me give you a few top lines of our discussion today, where we are with regards to our actions addressing the crisis, and then take your questions. Burma's long struggle defied authoritarian rule to transition to a democratic society. The terrible Rakhine State crisis has exacerbated longstanding suffering of Rohingya and other populations, and threatens this peaceful transition as do other challenges the elected civilian authority inherited just 16 months ago. Our efforts seek to end the violence, support the displaced and their return home, and address the conditions that sparked this colossal population movement. We also want accountability for atrocities.

As we announced here last night, we have identified new and ongoing actions to hold responsible those who have committed violence, including the following measures, and let me share them with you: suspending travel waivers for military leaders; assessing existing authorities to consider options to target individuals responsible for atrocities; finding that all units and officers involved in operations in northern Rakhine State are ineligible for U.S. assistance programs; rescinding invitations for Burmese security leaders to travel to U.S.-sponsored programs; maintaining a longstanding arms embargo; consulting on accountability options at the United Nations, the Human Rights Council, and other venues; and pressing for access for the UN Fact-Finding Mission – a mission that we helped support the establishment of.

There is also a need to address long-term causes of instability in Rakhine State. We support Burma in implementing the recommendations of the Kofi Annan Rakhine Advisory Commission to take on underdevelopment, lack of services, access to justice, and a citizenship process for all people in Rakhine State.

At the same time, Burma's overall success is very important for the peoples of Burma, for the region, indeed, for U.S. national interests. We will continue to work with the democratically-elected civilian leadership, Burma's diverse populations and other stakeholders inside the country, and the region on this crisis and other daunting challenges in the post-military era of that country.

Today, as I said, we testified before the Senate and several weeks ago before the House. There have been many questions there about how best to describe the appalling treatment of the Rohingya. I want to be very clear: We are not shying away from the use of any appropriate terminology. We have a deliberative process to examine facts and a policy to support the pursuit of

additional information to make such determinations, thus our support, for example, for the UN Fact-Finding Mission.

In the meantime, as Secretary of State Tillerson said, the violence has been characterized by many as ethnic cleansing. Our Ambassador to the United Nations Haley has said that action – actions appear to be a brutal, sustained campaign to cleanse the country of an ethnic minority.

There is no question in our minds that atrocities have been committed, and we will work with the international community and Burmese stakeholders to pursue all means available to hold accountable those responsible for these acts.

Thank you. With that, I'll take a few questions.

MS NAUERT: Thanks. We'll start with Josh Lederman from AP.

QUESTION: Thank you for being here. You mentioned the considerations about ethnic cleansing terminology. Are you also considering whether the terms "crimes against humanity" or "genocide" are appropriate in this case?

MR MURPHY: I refer in general terms to any terminology to best describe this human tragedy, disaster, and collective set of atrocities. There are a variety of terms. Some of this is legal in assessing the best terminology, so all options are on the table on how best to describe this.

In the meantime, I want to emphasize we're not waiting for any determination on what best to call it to take actions. We see that atrocities have been committed. Accountability is necessary to both end the violence, ensure that responsibility is taken for actions and acts that have been committed, and to forestall future violence in this complicated part of the country.

MS NAUERT: Warren from Reuters.

QUESTION: So if the U.S. Government does decide to use the words "crimes against humanity" or "genocide," does that cause you to have to take certain policy steps? I remember during the debate over Darfur several years ago, there was a debate about whether to use the term "genocide." The U.S. Government eventually did, but I don't think it kind of precipitated necessary policy action.

MR MURPHY: I'm actually not the expert on it. I think there are some legal issues involved with what obligations there might be with any particular determination. What I can say as a matter of policy, we've assessed that atrocities have been committed and we must pursue accountability. And to do so we're working with members of the international community, but equally as important stakeholders inside the country. And I want to emphasize here that there are many stakeholders when it comes to perpetuating violence and taking responsibility to end it. There's the government, the armed forces, local authorities in Rakhine State, and the general population across Burma; all of them have some responsibilities to contribute to ending the violence, helping reveal all of the facts necessary for accountability going forward.

MS NAUERT: Nike, go ahead.

QUESTION: Thank you.

MS NAUERT: And this has to be our last question. Thanks.

QUESTION: Sure. Just to follow up on Warren's question, does the determination of ethnic cleansing give you authorization for new sanctions? And separately, do you know when is the last time Secretary Tillerson called Aung San Suu Kyi? Did they ever talk after October 12th?

MR MURPHY: Listen, I've – over the course of my career, sadly – have encountered many humanitarian crises of a very serious nature around the world, and I understand the frustrations and the emotions in trying to describe them with the strongest terms possible. What I have offered for you, what we've seen inside Rakhine State, is a collection of serious atrocities. There's no question about that. There has been violence. There have been many individuals and entities contributing to that violence. We don't have all the facts. Security forces have responsibility and they have responded to the initial attacks in August in a disproportionate manner. They also have a responsibility to protect civilians, and we assess they have had some shortcomings.

There are other contributors to violence, including Rohingya militants, local vigilantes, and the like. Our effort now is to stop the violence and to pursue accountability, so the terminology is really not a factor for us. We know that violence has been committed and acts associated with atrocities have been undertaken, and we are pursuing and encouraging voices in the international community and inside Burma to provide the information necessary to come about with the measures leading to accountability. We view that, I think, as our most important priority.

MS NAUERT: Thank you.

QUESTION: Can I have just a follow-up on –

MS NAUERT: We've got to go.

QUESTION: On one thing? Just a really quick follow-up on –

MS NAUERT: Any questions I – Said, any questions, I can collect them and get them for you later. Okay?

MR MURPHY: Thank you very much.

MS NAUERT: And I neglected to say you're East Asia and Pacific Affairs, so.

MR MURPHY: Great. Thank you very much, Heather. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen.

MS NAUERT: Thank you, sir. Thank you. Great to see you, and thank you, everybody.

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