

# Press Releases: Department Press Briefing – August 23, 2018

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Department Press Briefing  
Washington, DC  
August 23, 2018

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TRANSCRIPT:

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3:42 p.m. EDT

**MS NAUERT:** Good afternoon. Hope you're all doing well. Some of you may have seen the Secretary's announcement earlier today. The Secretary announced that Steve Biegun joined our team as our new special representative for North Korea. He will lead negotiations and spearhead our diplomatic efforts with our allies and partners to achieve our goal of the final, fully verified denuclearization of North Korea. With nearly two decades of foreign policy work on Capitol Hill and in the executive branch, he's qualified – more than qualified – for the task. We welcome this announcement, and it's consistent with the Secretary's desire to get his team on the field as soon as possible.

You may have also seen that, since last Thursday, the White House has sent 14 ambassadorial nominations to the Senate. Thirteen of those nominees are career members of our senior Foreign Service. So we're thrilled to see them moving ahead, and we hopefully will have a speedy confirmation process for them.

And since I've been out on vacation, I'd be happy to just take your questions. But before we do that, let me welcome, for those of you who have not seen or met Robert Palladino first – yet, Robert Palladino is our new official – not acting, official – deputy spokesperson. He comes to us by way of the National Security Council. So look forward to having him meet all of you.

Okay. Thanks.

**QUESTION:** Welcome.

**QUESTION:** Well said.

**QUESTION:** Robert. (Laughter.) So let's start –

**MS NAUERT:** That's kind of an odd welcome, Matt. (Laughter.)

**QUESTION:** Yes.

**QUESTION:** Well, it was sincere. Right?

**MS NAUERT:** We're thrilled to have him.

**QUESTION:** Yes. It's good for you have a deputy.

**MS NAUERT:** Team on the field.

**QUESTION:** Exactly.

**MS NAUERT:** Okay. What's up?

**QUESTION:** Let's start with South Africa. You will have seen, I'll bet – hard to miss – the President's tweet last night in which he instructed Secretary Pompeo to look into land expropriations and – from white farmers in South Africa. I'm wondering if the Secretary takes this seriously at all.

Now, the reason I'm asking that is because I went to the Human Rights Report for South Africa, the one that the State Department puts out, and it doesn't mention anything about this being a problem. I would think that this is the report where it would mention it. In fact, when it talks of discrimination, it says most of it is directed at blacks, and the incidence of racism that it points out are all directed at blacks as well. So does the Secretary actually intend to look into this?

**MS NAUERT:** Well, I can tell you that the Secretary and the President certainly discussed it. The President asked the Secretary to look closely at the current state of action in South Africa related to land reform. This is something that has been going on for many decades, the conversation and debate about land reform there. I should mention that the expropriation of land without compensation – our position is that that would risk sending South Africa down the wrong path. We continue to encourage a peaceful and transparent public debate about what we consider to be a very important issue, and the South Africans certainly do as well.

**QUESTION:** Right. But did – is this something that was a concern of yours before the President tweeted? And you mentioned the 13 or 14 ambassadorial nominations have gone up. You might get on the phone and call the ambassador to South Africa – if there was one, but there isn't –

**MS NAUERT:** Matt, as you well know, we are working very hard to get our team on the field.

**QUESTION:** I know.

**MS NAUERT:** Nominations are –

**QUESTION:** But where was –

**MS NAUERT:** May I finish?

**QUESTION:** Yeah.

**MS NAUERT:** Nominations are announced by the White House. The Secretary has done a terrific job of getting more people in place. It doesn't happen overnight. We also need the cooperation of the U.S. Senate to get our folks through.

**QUESTION:** Well –

**MS NAUERT:** And they have pledged that they would get them through expeditiously.

**QUESTION:** That's fine. But does the embassy think that this is a serious problem?

**MS NAUERT:** I can tell you that our embassy has had meetings with the South African Government. Anything additional beyond that, I just don't have it.

**QUESTION:** Heather –

**QUESTION:** Can you say when the President –

**MS NAUERT:** Hi.

**QUESTION:** Can you say when the President and the Secretary had the discussion?

**MS NAUERT:** I would say sometime in the last day or so.

**QUESTION:** In the last day, meaning in the last 24 hours?

**MS NAUERT:** The last day or so. That's all I'm aware of.

**QUESTION:** And one –

**MS NAUERT:** Okay. Hi. Hi.

**QUESTION:** Can I follow up on this, please?

**MS NAUERT:** Go ahead. Go ahead.

**QUESTION:** So apparently the U.S. charge was called into – was summoned by the South Africans today.

**MS NAUERT:** I know that they met today. I don't have a readout of that meeting, but they did meet today.

**QUESTION:** Was that at the request of the South Africans?

**MS NAUERT:** I don't know who requested it, but I do – I can confirm that they did meet today.

**QUESTION:** So does the U.S. believe that – from what you've seen, and I believe that there's been meetings between the two sides on this – believe that what's going on, that the South African land policy would be similar to that of the land grabs that we saw in Zimbabwe?

**MS NAUERT:** Well, I think the situation between South Africa and also Zimbabwe are quite different. It may be easy for some to try to draw a comparison, but there are very big differences. In Zimbabwe, we saw the government there squash civil society, shut down the media from doing their jobs and reporting, and destroyed an independent judiciary. And we have not seen that happen in South Africa. So I think they're different situations altogether.

Okay? Hi.

**QUESTION:** So given that, according to the State Department's own reporting that Matt mentioned, discrimination and actions against blacks in South Africa is a far, far bigger problem than this, what is the Secretary's view on what is happening right now, and what is he going to do after the President's tweet?

**MS NAUERT:** I can just tell you that it was discussed with the President and he will focus on this issue, and I'll leave it at that, okay.

**QUESTION:** What does focus on it mean?

**MS NAUERT:** Well, he will take a look at it, just as he had discussed with the President.

Hey, Francesco.

**QUESTION:** And are sanctions an option you will look at?

**MS NAUERT:** (Laughter.) You know we would never forecast that, but that is such a hypothetical.

**QUESTION:** I mean, (inaudible) –

**MS NAUERT:** That is a hypothetical. No. That's a hypothetical and I'm not going to comment on it.

**QUESTION:** – Turkey with sanctions.

**QUESTION:** Well, how about this: Is the department aware of – is the embassy aware of a concern that there are land seizures going on without any compensation?

**MS NAUERT:** I can just tell you this is obviously an issue, debate that's been going on for quite some time. We encourage – an expropriation of land without compensation would risk sending South Africa down the wrong path. We encourage a peaceful and transparent public debate about this important issue that seems to be happening in South Africa right now. If policies are poorly implemented, there are potentially detrimental

political, socioeconomic, and other issues.

**QUESTION:** So you're aware of a plan being debated by the South African Government that would seize white-owned farms or land without any compensation?

**MS NAUERT:** Matt, I'm just saying that expropriation of land without compensation would not be a good thing. It would send them down the wrong path.

**QUESTION:** Okay. And is there any reason to be concerned about it?

**MS NAUERT:** Matt, that's just what I'm telling you right now, okay. Thank you.

**QUESTION:** Did the Secretary –

**MS NAUERT:** Last one. Then we're going to move on. I don't have anything further for you on this.

**QUESTION:** Okay. Did the Secretary correct some of the reporting and maybe views that the President holds on this issue? Did he explain to the President what actually is happening, what is proposed versus –

**MS NAUERT:** Michele, you know we never get into the private conversations between the Secretary and the President – on any issue for that matter, okay.

Hi, Laurie.

**QUESTION:** Hi. President Erdogan's spokesman complained yesterday about U.S. procedures against Halkbank. Could you comment on his remarks and explain the situation regarding that bank?

**MS NAUERT:** Yeah, Laurie, I'm sorry. I have not seen those remarks just yet. I can look into it and see if I can find something for you. I just have personally not seen those.

**QUESTION:** Well, he said – I could tell you, quote – he says unacceptable that certain baseless and false allegations were made against the bank. You don't –

**MS NAUERT:** I think that would fall under Department of Justice and also Treasury as well. But again, I'm hesitant to comment on anything that I haven't seen myself, but I appreciate your work to try to synthesize it for me.

**QUESTION:** Okay. Another question then.

**MS NAUERT:** Okay.

**QUESTION:** Russia has announced that it will move up the scheduled delivery of this S-400 air defense missile to Turkey from 2020, which it

was originally scheduled, to 2019. What is your response to that?

**MS NAUERT:** Well, if that is the case – and I’ve not seen that report myself either – but that would be a concern of ours. You know it goes against our policy to have a NATO ally such as Turkey use an S-400 system. Part of the problem with that, it is – that it is not interoperable with other NATO systems. And so we are against the – having some of our partners and allies around the world potentially purchase S-400s.

**QUESTION:** And it would trigger CAATSA sanctions too?

**MS NAUERT:** I’m not going to get into that. But we have made very clear what could trigger sanctions for other countries and entities around the world.

Okay. Hey, Rich.

**QUESTION:** Hey, Heather. Pakistan is asking for an immediate correction to the readout that you guys provided this morning on the telephone conversation between the new prime minister there, that it is factually incorrect that they discussed the terrorists operating in Pakistan. So is there a correction, or are they wrong?

**MS NAUERT:** Yeah. So you saw our readout. In the readout the Secretary notes that he spoke with the new prime minister and expressed his willingness to work with the new government toward a productive bilateral relationship. They had a good call. That may surprise some of you, but they had a good call. Pakistan is an important partner to the United States. We hope to forge a good, productive working relationship with the new civilian government. My understanding is that the beginning of the call or the call itself was a good call and a good discussion toward our working with the new government and the new administration.

**QUESTION:** So the U.S. Government continues to stand by the readout, that there’s no correction to the readout –

**MS NAUERT:** We stand by our readout.

**QUESTION:** When you just mentioned the readout and read almost the whole thing, you didn’t mention the fact that terrorism was discussed. So are you saying that terrorism was discussed in the call?

**MS NAUERT:** I’m saying we stand by our readout. I don’t necessarily read an entire readout, word-for-word, for you here at the podium.

**QUESTION:** Do you know how it is that the Pakistanis could have gotten this so wrong?

**MS NAUERT:** Matt, I’m not going to speculate, okay.

**QUESTION:** Well – but, I mean –

**MS NAUERT:** And I can't speak on their behalf. I can only say we stand by our readout. They're an important partner. The Secretary had a good call with the new prime minister and we look forward to having –

**QUESTION:** Okay. So in other words, can you –

**MS NAUERT:** – a good relationship with them in the future.

**QUESTION:** Can you just say, in clear English, there will not be an apology forthcoming, there will not be a correction?

**MS NAUERT:** Matt, those are your words. We stand by our –

**QUESTION:** Well –

**MS NAUERT:** We stand by our readout.

**QUESTION:** All right.

**QUESTION:** Can I get a follow-up?

**QUESTION:** And then real quick again on Pakistan, does the U.S. and the State Department and the Secretary still stand behind the comments the Secretary made earlier about an IMF bailout and there should not be one for Pakistan?

**MS NAUERT:** I don't see that our position has changed in any way, but I'm not going to forecast anything that could happen in the future.

Hey, Jessica.

**QUESTION:** Hi. Can you confirm that the Secretary has asked Zalmay Khalilzad to be the new special representative to Afghanistan?

**MS NAUERT:** We have no personnel announcements. If I had an announcement to make, I would be thrilled to bring it to you today. We've obviously had a great day with Steve Biegun being announced as our new special envoy handling North Korea.

**QUESTION:** Heather?

**MS NAUERT:** Yeah. Hi, Janne. How are you?

**QUESTION:** On North Korea and South Korea. As you know, that South Korean Government announced that South and North Korea will open Liaison Office soon. Do you think this will have a negative impact on denuclearization or –

**MS NAUERT:** I mean, we're certainly aware that North Korea and South Korea are talking about opening a Joint Liaison Office there. I think I'd go back to something that President Moon had said not too long ago, and that is his opinion and his stance that the improvement of relations between the North and South can't advance separately from resolving North Korea's nuclear program. We, of course, closely coordinate with



both the Japanese and the South Koreans. I just mention the Japanese because our close allies there as well. So we continue to coordinate closely and have lots of conversations with them about a lot of things.

**QUESTION:** But South Korea providing a lot of things, like goods, energy, to North Korea. Is this a violation of sanctions against North Korea? What was it?

**MS NAUERT:** We would take a look at all of that. Okay? Yeah.

**QUESTION:** Can you just be a little bit more specific than the Secretary was about his travel to North Korea next week? When is – exactly is he going with the new special envoy?

**MS NAUERT:** We are leaving relatively soon. Exact time and date I don't know, but we'll be headed out soon.

**QUESTION:** All right. And is he going anywhere else?

**MS NAUERT:** Not to my knowledge. I'll let you know if we have any additional stops to announce. Okay?

Hi, Francesco.

**QUESTION:** On North Korea. The Secretary said he was looking forward to have progress, diplomatic progress, towards denuclearization. Can you tell us what exactly he expects from this trip? Are there some steps he would like North Korea to announce, to take, on the denuclearization?

**MS NAUERT:** Yeah, I think we'll say this: The conversations continue. We have made significant movements over the past six months. In fact, we've had more conversations and consultations with the North Koreans in six months than we have in virtually the past 10 years. So we think we're on fairly strong footing here.

We look forward to having those conversations. I'm not going to get ahead of the Secretary's meetings by highlighting what we are going to be expecting or asking of them. I can just tell you the consultations will continue, and I imagine you'll see more meetings and trips ahead.

Elise.

**QUESTION:** Heather, you are – just to confirm, the Secretary is expected to meet with Kim Jong-un?

**MS NAUERT:** No, no. We have no plans for a meeting of that sort, but I'll let you know any additional details as we get them.

**QUESTION:** I mean, this would be the second time that he's traveled there without meeting with Kim Jong-un. I mean, if you've already – you've said, like, a lot of times that Kim is the kind of ultimate decision maker. So what is the – obviously, there could be – his envoy could go and meet with Kim's envoy, but why would the Secretary continue to go to

North Korea if he's not going to be able to meet with the key decision maker?

**MS NAUERT:** I think what's important is that we are regularizing these meetings and these conversations with a government that we have had very, very little interaction with over the past decade or so. The Secretary has now appointed Steve Biegun, and Biegun will be picking up some of those meetings that perhaps the Secretary normally would have gone on or would have conducted.

So I think this is just sort of the more – more of a normalization of our types of conversations. We have long said that none of this in terms of working toward denuclearization would be particularly fast. We go into this eyes wide open. But this is all going to take some time, and I think we have been clear about that.

**QUESTION:** Are you saying that a meeting with Kim isn't scheduled, or you're not – he's not expecting to meet with him at all?

**MS NAUERT:** We don't have – we don't have that scheduled. We have no expectations of meeting with Chairman Kim. That is not a part of this trip. Okay?

**QUESTION:** And so will he be meeting Kim Yong-chol?

**MS NAUERT:** I will – those are all the details that I have right now. I'm not going to get into it beyond that. When I do have additional information, I'd be happy to bring it to you.

**QUESTION:** (Off-mike.)

**QUESTION:** Did North Korea need to –

**MS NAUERT:** Hold on, hold on. We've talked a bunch of times already. Let me just get over to Kylie.

**QUESTION:** Hi. It's a little unclear as to Steve Biegun's background, how it's been so focused on Asia and North Korea. Can you elaborate on that a little bit in terms of why he was chosen for this position?

**MS NAUERT:** Well, Steve has certainly spent time in and around the region, has spent considerable time on behalf of Ford covering Asian nations. Stephen, having served as the head of international relations for Ford Motor Company, as the vice president of international government affairs, knows his way around the block, knows his way around so many of these nations around the world and has negotiated on behalf of that major auto corporation. And he will take those skills and abilities and apply them to this task. The Secretary is really good at determining talent and getting his people on the field. That is something that's important to him. And in picking Steve for this role, he picked the person he felt was best suited for this job.

**QUESTION:** But why not pick someone who's sat across from the North

Koreans in negotiations in the past?

**MS NAUERT:** I think he has an excellent pick in Steve, and the Secretary is comfortable with Steve and Steve has his full confidence, and so do we as well.

**QUESTION:** Would you –

**QUESTION:** Do you happen to know if he's ever been to North Korea?

**MS NAUERT:** I don't offhand. No, I don't.

**QUESTION:** Certainly not in his job at Ford, I would hope.

**MS NAUERT:** I don't –

**QUESTION:** Because that would be a violation of sanctions, I believe.

**MS NAUERT:** I don't know the answer – I don't know the answer to that, but he is a well-traveled guy. And I hope he's ready to travel a lot for this job too, because it certainly requires that.

**QUESTION:** Does he speak with him?

**MS NAUERT:** Hey, Ben. I don't know the answer to that.

**QUESTION:** Heather, going back to the Liaison Office.

**MS NAUERT:** Yes.

**QUESTION:** Foreign Minister Kang said that South Korea was waiting on an endorsement from Washington before they moved ahead, and also there's been some concerns. The South Korean Government is supposed to be providing fuel oil and electricity for this Liaison Office. Would that be a violation of UN sanctions?

**MS NAUERT:** I think to the second part of your question, Janne already asked that. We would certainly look at that, whether or not that would be a violation of sanctions. And to your first question, I just don't have anything for you on that whether we needed to sign some sort of a certificate of sorts. Okay.

**QUESTION:** Would you say that in order to take these meetings next week, North Korea had to show something or do something to indicate there was more willingness or readiness? Like, did they have to meet some expectation before the Secretary would go?

**MS NAUERT:** Michelle, I don't understand the point of your question. We are continuing to have conversations and consultations with the North Korean Government. Our goal is the denuclearization of North Korea.

**QUESTION:** Right.

**MS NAUERT:** That goal has not changed. We continue to have conversations

with them. Much of those conversations you know I will not be detailing for you here from this podium. The conversations continue to take place.

**QUESTION:** Heather, if I might.

**MS NAUERT:** Yeah.

**QUESTION:** But you've also said that your patience is not unlimited and you need to see some progress from North Korea, and the trip was announced the same week that the IAEA came out with this report that said that – that it has grave concern that North Korea is still continuing to develop its nuclear capabilities and hasn't – nothing has abated at all. So at what point do you say that we can't continue the conversations unless there's progress, otherwise you're just giving North Korea time to continue to develop?

**MS NAUERT:** I think I would look back to how long we've been having these conversations and look at the Secretary's first trip to North Korea before he was here at the State Department. That was what? In April, so just several months ago. I know you all want to speed up these things. I know you want it to happen overnight. But this thing, this issue, is going to take some time, and we've been very clear about that. We've been very upfront about how this will take some time.

As to your question about the IAEA, we share these concerns. I think the Secretary has addressed that in some of his congressional testimony, and we're working forward to implement the agreements that came out the Singapore summit. So we'll keep working at it.

Hey.

**QUESTION:** If meeting Kim Jong-un is not one of your – a part of your plan, do you expect at least to get a list from North Korea of their nuclear program?

**MS NAUERT:** I'm not going to get into or ahead of the Secretary's meeting on that front. Okay? Okay.

**QUESTION:** India?

**MS NAUERT:** Yes, go right ahead.

**QUESTION:** I have two questions, please. Thank you. As far as U.S.-India relations are concerned, in the next few weeks we are going to have 2+2 in New Delhi rather than Washington, and two Secretaries, of course, Defense and State, will be in New Delhi to discuss the issues. What are we expecting from these talks there as far as U.S.-India relations are concerned?

**MS NAUERT:** Well, we haven't announced any trips yet, but when we do I'll be sure to let you know. But as you well know, we have a good working relationship with the Government of India, and if and when we travel there, we look forward to having those meetings.

**QUESTION:** Heather –

**QUESTION:** And second –

**QUESTION:** Sorry.

**QUESTION:** And second, yesterday a general talking live from Afghanistan, he said that as far as terrorism in Afghanistan or peace in Afghanistan is concerned, Pakistan is not doing enough going after Haqqani Network or other terrorist groups inside Pakistan, and it's now up to the State Department diplomatically what they have to do as far as the new government is concerned. My question is that Afghan Government and the people in Afghanistan are still blaming Pakistan as far as peace not in Afghanistan or terrorism in Pakistan – in Afghanistan.

**MS NAUERT:** Well, I think you're referring to General Nicholson's briefing that he provided, and there's one part of that I'd like to highlight, and that he said, "Wars end with a political settlement." There is not a military solution to this 17-year-long war in Afghanistan, and I think you see that reflected in his comments.

There is a lot of work that is left to be done. Many of you probably saw the Secretary's statement that he put out that – in support of President Ghani's call for a ceasefire. We're certainly hopeful. We hope that that ceasefire will take effect and will hold so that Afghans can have the peace that they so dearly need and want.

**QUESTION:** Madam, one thing is clear that there cannot be peace in Afghanistan as far as many U.S. and Afghan officials and think-tanks that unless Pakistan is fully cooperating with Afghanistan and U.S. So what are we expecting now from the new prime minister, Mr. Imran Khan, of Pakistan? Because he is, I think, serious to have talks with the U.S. and Afghanistan.

**MS NAUERT:** Yeah, I think I would just say that the Secretary had a good initial call with him and we'll have more on that in the days and weeks ahead.

**QUESTION:** Thank you.

**MS NAUERT:** Okay.

**QUESTION:** So your friends in Moscow – or maybe they're not your friends, but your counterparts in Moscow say that the Secretary and Foreign Minister Lavrov had a call today that focused on Syria. I was wondering if you can confirm and/or elaborate on that and also tell us if the new special – is it envoy or representative, I can't remember –

**MS NAUERT:** Representative.

**QUESTION:** – Representative Jeffrey has got any Syria-related travel or events afterwards?

**MS NAUERT:** Certainly, and that was one we were really happy to be able – to have been able to announce last week the joining – Jim Jeffrey’s joining the State Department.

I can confirm that the Secretary did speak with Foreign Minister Lavrov earlier today. He spoke with Sergey Lavrov about the Ukrainian political prisoner Oleg Sentsov, who has been on a hunger strike for more than three months in a Russian prison now. The Secretary noted our concerns about Sentsov’s health and urged Russia to immediately release Sentsov and all Ukrainian political prisoners. The Secretary discussed the ongoing challenges in Syria and the United States serious concerns related to possible military activity in Idlib. He also asked Foreign Minister Lavrov to support efforts in the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, OPCW, as well as efforts to hold the Syrian regime accountable for its use of chemical weapons. And we can give you that paper readout in just a bit.

Yeah. Yeah.

**QUESTION:** Anything about the – relating to the conversations about – that Ambassador Bolton had in – with his counterpart in Geneva about getting Russia to help get the Iranians out of Syria? Was that an issue that Secretary Pompeo discussed?

**MS NAUERT:** I’m not sure if that came up on the call or not. I’m sorry, I just can’t comment on that.

**QUESTION:** Does the Secretary plan on bringing the Rocket Man CD back to North Korea with him next week?

**MS NAUERT:** You know what I’m going to bring to North Korea with me, and I’ll show this to you. My best friend from junior high school – you’ll love this story – Julie Michealchuk, she lives in Peru, Illinois –

**QUESTION:** Is that a Flat Stanley?

**MS NAUERT:** – sent me this Flat Stanley. This is what I’m going to bring to North Korea, Flat Stanley, because Julia’s been asking me where her daughter’s Flat Stanley is –

**QUESTION:** Are you going to bring the Elton John –

**MS NAUERT:** – and I have yet to bring Flat Stanley anywhere other than this briefing room. As exotic as all of you are, I think North Korea’s a little bit better. (Laughter.)

**QUESTION:** Heather, Kim Jong-un might not understand what you’re trying to say.

**MS NAUERT:** Yeah. Wouldn’t that be great, though?

**QUESTION:** But he might think it’s him.

**MS NAUERT:** Do you think this is the first Flat Stanley to head to North Korea?

**QUESTION:** It looks a little like Kim Jong-un. But are you going to bring the Elton John CD?

**MS NAUERT:** I don't have anything that I'm bringing along with me other than some comfortable clothes.

**QUESTION:** Apparently, the Eagles' Greatest Hits is quite popular now.

**MS NAUERT:** Good to know.

**QUESTION:** Has outsold Thriller.

**MS NAUERT:** Okay. Okay.

**QUESTION:** Can I have a question on Iran, please?

**MS NAUERT:** Sure, and then I'm going to have to wrap it up.

**QUESTION:** Yeah. This is a question actually by some TV colleagues who had to leave because of the briefing's late –

**MS NAUERT:** Okay.

**QUESTION:** – but the question is: There's a few Republican senators that have written a letter actually to Treasury, and I'm not sure if it's State Department, calling for the – for Iran to be discontinued from SWIFT, which is the payment system which will affect students and there's bigger implications for it. Do you know anything about that or that request or whether the U.S. is planning –

**MS NAUERT:** I will have to take that question and get back to you.

**QUESTION:** Thank you.

**MS NAUERT:** Not ashamed to say that.

All right, thanks, everybody. We'll see you soon.

(The briefing was concluded at 4:07 p.m.)

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