

# Press Releases: Department Press Briefing – October 30, 2018

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Department Press Briefing  
Washington, DC  
October 30, 2018

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TRANSCRIPT:

Today's briefing was held off-camera, so no video is available.

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2:15 p.m. EDT

**MR PALLADINO:** Hi, guys. A couple things for the top. We have an update on – for you all on the Global Engagement Center and their efforts to counter foreign disinformation. At the end of September, the Global Engagement Center obligated 40 million to support initiatives to counter disinformation and propaganda spread by foreign countries abroad. That funding included an extra 20 million provided to the Global Engagement Center by Congress in the Fiscal Year 2018 omnibus spending bill and 20 million from the Department of Defense transferred to the State Department.

This funding will support a variety of efforts to counter Russian, Iranian, and Chinese disinformation and propaganda directed to foreign audiences. These initiatives include deploying technology to provide early warnings of foreign disinformation, analyzing those foreign audiences that are most susceptible to disinformation, developing

partnerships with key local social media influencers to produce content to reach critical audiences, and building the technical skills of civil society organizations, nongovernmental organizations, local influencers, and journalists to shed light on the spread of disinformation.

The Fiscal Year 2019 National Defense Authorization Act extends the Department of Defense's authority to transfer funding to the State Department for these efforts through fiscal year 2020. This will allow the Departments of State and Defense to continue developing new joint initiatives to counter foreign disinformation.

Second, happy birthday. Combatting international crime, including drug trafficking, transnational gang activity, and corruption is one of the key ways that the State Department keeps America safe, and the bureau here at the State Department that leads these efforts is the International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs Bureau, or as we call it, INL. And they are celebrating their 40th anniversary this month. After an initial focus on halting cocaine trafficked from the Andes – that was back in the 1990s – or that was back – in the 1990s, INL expanded to what we have today, and that is global diplomacy and foreign assistance platform to fight crime and strengthen justice sectors at every level.

In 2018 stopping the flow of opioids into the United States is INL's highest drug control priority, and last month at the United Nations President Trump launched a global call to action on the world drug problem, with 130 countries joining that effort. The State Department, via our INL Bureau, is at the forefront of such work, including diplomacy to increase international restrictions on synthetic opioids and supporting Mexico's ability to eradicate poppy and take down clandestine labs. INL will continue to fight to keep Americans safe into the future, meeting new drug and crime threats as they emerge.