

Press Releases: Remarks on the Creation of the Iran Action Group

Remarks

Michael R. Pompeo

Secretary of State

Press Briefing Room

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SECRETARY POMPEO: Good afternoon, everyone. Today I am happy to announce the creation of the Iran Action Group.

The Iran Action Group will be responsible for directing, reviewing, and coordinating all aspects of the State Department's Iran-related activity, and it will report directly to me.

For nearly 40 years, the regime in Tehran has been responsible for a torrent of violent and destabilizing behavior against the United States, our allies, our partners, and indeed the Iranian people themselves. In May of this year, President Trump withdrew from the flawed Iran nuclear deal, which failed to

restrain Iran's nuclear progress or its campaigns of violence abroad. In its place President Trump has instituted a campaign of pressure, deterrence, and solidarity with the long-suffering Iranian people.

Our hope is that one day soon we can reach a new agreement with Iran. But we must see major changes in the regime's behavior both inside and outside of its borders. The Iranian people and the world are demanding that Iran finally act like a normal nation.

The Iran Action Group will drive daily progress on these objectives and I hope do much more.

We are committed to a whole-of-government effort to change the Iranian regime's behavior, and the Iran Action Group will ensure that the Department of State remains closely synchronized with our interagency partners. The IAG will also lead the way in growing efforts with nations which share our understanding of the Iranian threat. President Trump is making our Iran strategy a true multinational undertaking, and the Iran Action Group will be key to further progress in that regard.

I am also announcing that Brian Hook will lead the Iran Action Group with the formal title of Special Representative for Iran. Brian has served as the Director of Policy Planning here since February of 2017, and he has worked tirelessly to advance President Trump's foreign policy priorities across multiple domains. Brian's diplomatic expertise and broad experience with Iran policy makes him an outstanding choice to lead the State Department's Iran Action Group.

Since the President's decision to withdraw from the Iran deal in May, Brian has played an important role in shaping our strategy of maximum diplomatic and economic pressure.

We are going to continue to rely on him and his team to lead our efforts to counter the Iranian regime's malign activity, to support Iranian voices, and to galvanize international support for our efforts.

And with that, I'd like to introduce our new Special Representative for Iran, Brian Hook.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary –

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, before you leave, do you agree with or were you aware of the decision to withdraw Pompeo's security clearance, sir?

QUESTION: Brennan.

QUESTION: Brennan.

QUESTION: Brennan. (Laughter.)

QUESTION: But Brian, you can answer that question.

MR HOOK: I'm going to pass on – Andrea, that's – I'm going to pass on that.

QUESTION: Would you agree with the President –

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