

# Press Releases: Remarks at Funding Initiative for Women's Empowerment Announcement

Remarks

John J. Sullivan

Acting Secretary of State

Lima, Peru

April 13, 2018

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**ACTING SECRETARY SULLIVAN:** Good morning. It's wonderful to be here in Lima and to participate in the Summit of the Americas. I'm especially honored to join one of the Trump administration's most passionate advocates for issues impacting women across the globe, Advisor to the President of the United States, Ivanka Trump.

In Latin America and around the world, the United States supports policy engagement, programs, and partnerships to empower and to advance women's participation in the economy. For almost a decade, the Department of State has launched initiatives in the region that provide training, mentoring and technology support to women entrepreneurs to help them start and grow their businesses. In 2012, we established a Women's Entrepreneurship in the Americas initiative known as WEAmericas. Since that time, we have built over 40 WEAmericas partnerships and supported over 20,000 women in small and medium-sized enterprises across more than 20 Latin American countries.

Women entrepreneurs are an emerging market force serving as an invaluable source of innovation and job creation. From the United States Government's perspective, the case for advancing women's full participation in society and in business is critical. And further, advancing women's economic participation globally is key to achieving U.S. foreign policy objectives and is directly linked to our national security.

Last year, the President of the United States declared that, quote, "In order to create economic growth and lots of very good, well-paying jobs, we must ensure that our economy is a place where women can work and thrive," unquote. President Trump went on to say, "We need policies that help to keep women in the workforce and to address the unique barriers faced by female entrepreneurs."

Government agencies across the United States are working to heed the President's call to action to ensure that women are equipped with the necessary skillsets and provided equal access to the labor market, especially in those high-growth, high-wage sectors.

Now, I'm pleased to welcome my friend and colleague, the president of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, Ray Washburne, who will tell you more about OPIC's recent initiatives to empower women.

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## **Press Releases: Assistant Secretary Carl Risch Travels to Morocco, Nigeria, and Ethiopia**

Media Note  
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
April 13, 2018

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Assistant Secretary of State for Consular Affairs Carl Risch will travel to Morocco, Nigeria, and Ethiopia from April 15–21. While in Morocco and Ethiopia, Assistant Secretary Risch will meet with counterparts to discuss a range of consular issues including international legal obligations to accept the return of nationals who have been ordered removed and children's issues.

The Assistant Secretary plans to review consular operations at our U.S. Consulates General in Casablanca and Lagos, and our U.S. Embassy in Addis Ababa. He will also meet with interagency partners.

The United States is committed to long-term engagement with Morocco, Nigeria, and Ethiopia on a variety of consular issues, including efficient and

equitable visa processing, protecting U.S. citizens overseas, working together on intercountry adoptions, and preventing and resolving international parent child abduction cases.

For press inquiries please contact [CAPRESSREQUESTS@state.gov](mailto:CAPRESSREQUESTS@state.gov) or (202) 485-6150.

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## **Press Releases: United States Announces Additional Humanitarian Assistance for the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)**

Media Note  
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
April 13, 2018

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Today, the U.S. government announced nearly \$67 million in additional humanitarian assistance for the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) at the DRC Humanitarian Conference held in Geneva, Switzerland.

With the assistance announced today, the United States is providing food, protection, shelter, health care, and other urgent aid for vulnerable Congolese and refugees in the DRC. This funding is also supporting the humanitarian response for new Congolese refugees in the region, including the construction of new settlements, water infrastructure, logistics, and other life-saving assistance. While the United States is disappointed that the government of the DRC elected not to participate in today's conference, we

nevertheless urge the government of the DRC to continue working to ensure that life-saving humanitarian assistance reaches those in need.

The intensifying conflicts in the DRC since late 2016 have left more than 13 million people in need of urgent humanitarian assistance, including 7.7 million people facing acute food insecurity. There are now 4.5 million Congolese displaced from their homes within the country—double the number displaced at the beginning of 2017. Countries neighboring the DRC host some 700,000 Congolese refugees, including more than 50,000 who have fled so far in 2018.

The DRC is at a critical juncture, with the opportunity for the country's first ever peaceful, democratic transfer of power. While elections alone will not address the DRC's many challenges, a credible electoral process that leads to a democratic transfer of power without violence is essential for securing a more prosperous and peaceful future for the DRC and its people.

The United States is the single largest donor to this humanitarian response. Since October 2016, the U.S. government has provided nearly \$277 million in critical assistance to people in need in the DRC and for Congolese refugees in the region. We applaud the contributions of countries in the region that are hosting Congolese refugees, and the other donors who joined us in announcing new funding today. We urge more donors to provide new and additional resources to help those who are suffering in the midst of this terrible conflict and the DRC government to take steps to address underlying causes of insecurity that have given rise to the displacement and conflict and fueled the humanitarian crisis.

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## **[Press Releases: Acting Secretary Sullivan's Meeting With Venezuelan Civil Society](#)**

Readout  
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
April 12, 2018

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The below is attributable to Spokesperson Heather Nauert:

Acting Secretary of State John J. Sullivan and USAID Administrator Mark Green met today with representatives from Venezuelan civil society on the margins of the Summit of the Americas in Lima, Peru.

The Acting Secretary and the Administrator applauded Venezuelan civil society's courageous defense of human rights and democracy in their country. They also recognized the importance of civil society representatives working together to empower Venezuelan youth and to document and raise awareness about repression in Venezuela, including the rising number of political prisoners.

Acting Secretary Sullivan reaffirmed U.S. support for the Venezuelan people and their right to elect their representatives through free and fair elections.

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## **[Press Releases: Acting Secretary Sullivan's Meeting With Cuban Independent Civil Society](#)**

Readout  
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
April 12, 2018

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The below is attributable to Spokesperson Heather Nauert:

Acting Secretary of State John J. Sullivan and USAID Administrator Green met today with Cuban independent civil society members on the margins of the Summit of the Americas in Lima, Peru to demonstrate support for the Cuban people in the face of continued repression by their government.

The Acting Secretary applauded the work these activists and independent thinkers do to promote a more open, free, and prosperous future for their country. Participants from civil society noted their friends and colleagues who were prevented from attending the Summit by the Cuban government. The Acting Secretary condemned the harassment and intimidation by state security services faced by these individuals routinely.

In light of the undemocratic leadership transition set to take place on April 19 in Cuba, Acting Secretary Sullivan reaffirmed support for the Cuban people and the call for democratic reforms to Cuba's flawed electoral process and an end to arbitrary detention and intimidation of independent civil society.

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