

# Press Releases: Readout of Secretary Tillerson's Phone Call With Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov

Readout  
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
December 27, 2017

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The following is attributable to Spokesperson Heather Nauert:

Secretary of State Rex Tillerson and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov spoke yesterday by phone.

The two discussed concerns related to the DPRK's destabilizing nuclear program and emphasized that neither the United States nor Russia accepts the DPRK as a nuclear power. Both sides agreed that they will continue to work toward a diplomatic solution to achieve a denuclearized Korean peninsula. On Syria, they discussed the importance of supporting the Geneva process to achieve a peaceful resolution of the Syrian conflict as called for in the Joint Statement made by Presidents Trump and Putin in DaNang, Vietnam. Underscoring the U.S. concern with the rising violence in eastern Ukraine, the Secretary requested that Russia return its representatives to the Joint Center on Coordination and Control and lower the level of violence.

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# Press Releases: Announcement of the Selection of the UNICEF Executive Director

Press Statement  
Heather Nauert

Department Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
December 22, 2017

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The United States welcomes Secretary-General Guterres' appointment of Henrietta Holsman Fore as Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). Ms. Fore has had a long and distinguished career in public service, private sector, and nonprofit leadership, including as Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development and Under Secretary of State for Management. Over the course of her career, Ms. Fore has worked to champion economic development, education and health, security and good governance, and humanitarian assistance for the most vulnerable in the world. Most recently, Ms. Fore has served as Chairperson and Board Member for several private sector and non-profit institutions.

Ms. Fore will be a powerful voice on behalf of the world's children in her new position with the UN. In January, she will succeed current Executive Director Anthony Lake, whose leadership, dedication, and compassion have been exemplary. We thank Mr. Lake for his seven years of tireless service to UNICEF.

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# **Press Releases: Illegitimate Constituent Assembly Undermining Democracy in Venezuela**

Press Statement  
Heather Nauert

Department Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
December 22, 2017

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The United States condemns the illegitimate Constituent Assembly's continued attacks on Venezuelan democracy. On December 20, it passed a decree to effectively ban certain political opposition parties from participating in the 2018 presidential election. The Venezuelan people deserve better. The U.S. calls for respect for the Venezuelan constitution and the will of the Venezuelan people through the democratically elected National Assembly. Venezuela must have free and fair presidential elections in 2018.

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# **Press Releases: On the Presidential Elections in Honduras**

Press Statement  
Heather Nauert

Department Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
December 22, 2017

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We congratulate President Juan Orlando Hernandez on his victory in the November 26 presidential elections, as declared by the Honduran Supreme Electoral Tribunal (TSE).

The close election results, irregularities identified by the OAS and the EU election observation missions, and strong reactions from Hondurans across the political spectrum underscore the need for a robust national dialogue. A significant long-term effort to heal the political divide in the country and enact much-needed electoral reforms should be undertaken.

We call upon the TSE to transparently and fully review any challenges filed by political parties. We urge Honduran citizens or political parties challenging the result to use the avenues provided by Honduran law.

We reiterate the call for all Hondurans to refrain from violence. The government must ensure Honduran security services respect the rights of peaceful protestors, including by ensuring accountability for any violations of those rights.

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## **[Press Releases: Closing of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia](#)**

Press Statement  
Rex W. Tillerson

Secretary of State

Washington, DC  
December 21, 2017

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The United States congratulates the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), which will close its doors on December 31, 2017, on its many achievements. Since the inception of the ICTY in 1993, the United States has steadfastly supported the Tribunal's work. We applaud the Tribunal's record, which includes indicting 161 senior leaders of regional governments, militaries, and paramilitaries for their roles in atrocities committed during the Balkan wars of the 1990s.

While we recognize the ICTY's contributions to justice and reconciliation in the Balkans, we also believe there are lessons to learn from its experiences. We must work to deliver justice for victims efficiently and cost-effectively, while also prioritizing forums closer to where the crimes occurred, and with greater inclusion of victims in the process.

The pursuit of justice in the Balkans is not over. We call on national authorities to resolve remaining cases in their jurisdictions and to cooperate with one another and the UN Mechanism for International Criminal Tribunals to that end. The ICTY demonstrated that we can hold accountable those who commit the gravest of offenses. As it closes its doors, we also give notice to perpetrators of atrocities anywhere in the world that the United States remains committed to seeking accountability for their crimes.

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