

Press Releases: Secretary of State Tillerson Travel to the United Kingdom

Press Statement
Heather Nauert

Department Spokesperson

Washington, DC
September 8, 2017

U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson will travel to London from September 13 through September 14 for UK-hosted meetings on DPRK and Libya. In London, Secretary Tillerson will meet with senior British officials, including Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson and National Security Advisor Mark Sedwill. Secretary Tillerson will discuss a range of issues with his counterparts, including the need for increased pressure to counter the threat to global security posed by the DPRK's nuclear and missile programs. The Secretary will also participate in a ministerial on Libya with UN Special Representative of the Secretary General for Libya Ghassan Salamé.

Follow Secretary Tillerson's travel via @StateDept on Twitter and go to the Department's Flickr account for the latest trip photos. Stay connected at <https://blogs.state.gov/engage>, and keep track of all of the Secretary's travels at <https://www.state.gov/secretary/2017travel/index.htm>.

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Press Releases: Tajikistan

[Independence Day](#)

Press Statement
Rex W. Tillerson

Secretary of State

Washington, DC
September 8, 2017

On behalf of the Government of the United States of America, congratulations to the people of Tajikistan as you celebrate your independence on September 9.

Since gaining independence in 1991, Tajikistan has been a strong partner to the United States in promoting regional security and stability. For 26 years, our partnership has been based on mutual respect and cooperation, especially in the areas of security, energy, and economic development. This cooperation has benefitted our two nations and the Central Asian region as a whole.

I am confident that our partnership will continue to benefit our countries and achieve success on issues of mutual interest and concern in the next year and beyond.

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[Press Releases: Remarks With Kuwaiti First Deputy Prime Minister](#)

and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah al-Khaled al-Hamad al-Sabah at the U.S.-Kuwait Strategic Dialogue

Remarks

Rex W. Tillerson

Secretary of State

Washington, DC

September 8, 2017

SECRETARY TILLERSON: Well, good morning, everyone, and welcome to the State Department. The United States is very pleased to be hosting this Strategic Dialogue with our friends from Kuwait. We welcome Foreign Minister al-Khaled, Deputy Foreign Minister al-Jarallah, Ambassador al-Sabah, and the entirety of the Kuwaiti delegation. Thank you for being here. Thank you for traveling here.

This Strategic Dialogue deepens our close relationship, grows bonds between our people, and enhances practical cooperation for the security and prosperity of both of our nations. President Trump and I had a very productive meeting at the White House with His Highness the Emir yesterday. The President reaffirmed our friendship and discussed a number of shared objectives in the region. As a concrete demonstration of our close relationship and partnership, we have agreed to a number of initiatives that will deepen the ties between the U.S. and Kuwait.

Our governments have agreed to enhance Kuwait's military capabilities, the next steps of which will be the provision of F/A-18s. FBI Director Wray and Minister of Interior Khaled signed a counterterrorism information-sharing arrangement which will strengthen our fight against terrorism. Customs and Border Patrol and the Kuwait director general of customs also signed an agreement today to share customs information, which will also be very important in those efforts.

The U.S. and Kuwait are signing two more memorandum of understanding today. The first is an education MOU between the Department of State and Kuwait's ministries of education and of higher education. This MOU will help prepare Kuwaiti students to study in the United States and encourages relations between U.S. and Kuwaiti institutions of higher education. We've also finalized an MOU between the Department of Commerce, SelectUSA, and Kuwait

Direct Investment Promotion Authority to encourage additional bilateral investments in both countries.

We recognize His Highness the Emir's leadership and continue to support Kuwait's efforts to help bring about a settlement to the GCC dispute, including Egypt. The United States and Kuwait both recognize the importance of GCC unity to meet the challenges of the region that we all face together, not the least of which are the threats from Iran. We appreciate that Kuwait hosts the U.S. military facilities and makes significant contributions to America's initiatives directed at Kuwaiti and regional security. We are pleased we are increasing our security cooperation and our information sharing to prevent threats we both face.

The United States also has a deep appreciation for Kuwait's leadership on humanitarian commitments which help stabilize the region. In recent years, Kuwait has provided more than \$9 billion in humanitarian support in Syria, Iraq, Jordan, and Lebanon. Kuwait is the second largest single-country donor to these efforts worldwide after the United States. And lastly, we thank the large Kuwaiti delegation for their hard and diligent work with our teams to advance the bilateral agenda. We look forward to implementing the new agreements and strengthening our partnership for years to come, and we certainly look forward to a very productive session this morning.

I now invite the foreign minister for his remarks. Thank you.

FOREIGN MINISTER AL-KHALED: (Via interpreter) In the name of God, most compassionate, most merciful, my dear friend, Secretary Tillerson, U.S. Secretary of State, your excellencies, members of the two participating delegations in the second round of the U.S.-Kuwaiti Strategic Dialogue, ladies and gentlemen, peace of God be upon you all.

At the outset, I am very delighted to express on my behalf and on behalf of the Kuwaiti delegation our deepest thanks and gratitude for all the warm welcome and generous hospitality since we have arrived to this great capital, Washington. And as well we thank the two delegations and the members of these delegations for all their efforts exerted in preparing for this distinguished meeting and all these distinguished efforts.

We also would like in this context to reiterate our deepest, heartfelt condolences for all the destruction that happened in Texas because of Hurricane Harvey – all the losses of lives and all the destruction. We pray to God that the United States of America be spared the dangers of the looming Hurricane Irma, and that God protects your country and the American people, our friends, from any harm.

My dear friend, Secretary Tillerson, ladies and gentlemen, today as we meet, this comes to follow up on the historical and important meeting that happened between His Highness, the Emir of Kuwait, Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jaber al-Sabah – God protect him – and His Excellency President Donald Trump to continue and follow up on all what they discussed, and try to implement it and execute it to shape the outlook, the future of the outlook of our relationship for the 25 year to come in a way that reflects the vision of our

leadership and the aspiration of our people. In this context we certainly value what was said by President Trump when he met the Emir of Kuwait, His Royal Highness, Emir of Kuwait – God protects him – reaffirming the commitment of the United States of America to the security, the safety, and the stability of Kuwait.

In culmination for the strong bonds between our two countries we send – we signed during the visit of the Emir of Kuwait, His Highness, to Washington during the second round of the strategic dialogue, we signed seven agreements and memorandum of understanding in the fields of counterterrorism, customs, petroleum, higher education, scientific research, investment, electricity and power, and water in addition to 16 agreements that were previously concluded, for a total of 23 agreements – total of agreements concluded between our two friendly countries.

The size of the Kuwaiti representation in the second round of the strategic dialogue and the various representation of these various sectors present with us today that come from 10 various sectors and represent the various fields, vital fields of cooperation between our two countries – political, military, security, commerce, investments, education, cultural, and other fields of cooperation – this importance of Kuwait – to the importance of this dialogue.

At the political level, I must underscore and praise the coordination and the continuous communication and interaction between our two friendly countries and the conversion of positions and visions in numerous issues and numerous dossier of mutual interests to the two countries.

At the military level, Kuwait supports and provides facilities to the U.S. armed forces, the U.S. military that works within the global coalition to fight and combat the so-called Daesh, ISIS, the so called ISIS. And while we assert, as well, the importance of the defense agreement between our two countries that was concluded back in 1991. In this context, we certainly value and continuously praise the historical leadership role of your country in leading the international community and the global coalition to liberate Kuwait from the evil of the Iraqi aggression. And we certainly value the sacrifices of our soldiers and your soldiers, the brave soldiers, both Kuwaitis and the Americans, to restore legitimacy and to restore the right of the Kuwaiti people.

And yesterday, at the security level as well, we signed the arrangement HSPD-6 to fight terrorism and share information in that context and also to have cooperation to address the security holes in Kuwait International Airport. We have reached an advanced level of cooperation, and we also continue to continue the implementation of the security arrangements in the passenger terminals at Kuwait International Airport and to also create an office for American Customs and American Border Security and also focusing on cyber security as one of the major topics of our cooperation in this next phase.

At the economic and investment level, yesterday, Wednesday, we held – and there was an economic forum that was favorably and widely received with the participation of the deputy prime minister and minister of finance from our

side and the commerce secretary from the U.S. side and presence and participation of a number of the participants from the Kuwaiti and American business communities to discuss the opportunities for mutual investment and to – also, we look forward to hosting this forum next year in Kuwait. Our volume of the investments – Kuwaiti investments in the U.S. has reached more than 400 billion U.S. dollars in various sectors. With regard to the volume of the commerce and trade between our two countries, until the mid of this year has reached 4 billion U.S. dollars. Kuwait further looks forward to implementing and increasing this volume in the future.

At the level of the educational and cultural exchange, Kuwaitis in the United States have started to come to the U.S. universities since 1946. That is 70 years ago. Well, we have thousands of Kuwaiti citizens studying in the U.S. universities. And since our last round of this dialogue, we have increased the number of Kuwaitis coming to study in the U.S. In this context, we affirm our aspiration to increase the number of Kuwaiti students studying in U.S. colleges that has reached currently 15,000 female and male students.

My friend Secretary Tillerson, ladies and gentleman, in conclusion I would like to reiterate my thanks and appreciation to you for all your efforts to make sure that the second round of this strategic dialogue be held on time, on schedule. I wish all the working groups that will meet in a few moments all the success, hoping that they will – the outcome would be concrete efforts, and the goal is to deepen the strategic bond between our two countries and to explore the various spaces to expand our cooperation over the next decades. Hoping to hold the third round of this strategic dialogue in Kuwait next year. And thank you very much for your good listening.

SECRETARY TILLERSON: Thank you.

QUESTION: Secretary Tillerson, will you be discussing North Korean guest workers in Kuwait?

SECRETARY TILLERSON: We have discussed that.

QUESTION: Thank you.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, do you have any reaction to the appeals court decision on the travel ban yesterday?

SECRETARY TILLERSON: I do not have any particular – any particular comment on that.

QUESTION: Will you be discussing the situation in Qatar in your meeting today?

SECRETARY TILLERSON: We have discussed this issue. We discussed it yesterday in the meeting between His Highness the Emir and the President. We've had further consultations on it this morning. Thank you.

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[Press Releases: Joint Statement by the Governments of the United States of America and Kuwait on the Second United States-Kuwait Strategic Dialogue: “Continued Commitment to Long-Term Partnership”](#)

Media Note
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
September 8, 2017

U.S. Secretary of State Rex W. Tillerson and Kuwaiti First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah al-Khaled al-Sabah co-chaired the second U.S.-Kuwait Strategic Dialogue on September 8, 2017, in Washington, D.C. Complementing the visit of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmed al-Jaber al-Sabah and his meeting with President Donald J. Trump at the White House on September 7, this dialogue advances our strategic partnership in defense, security, trade, investment, education, consular, customs, and border protection issues. Our two countries renewed their commitment to promote the stability and security of the region, including the defeat of ISIS and other violent extremists.

When we launched this dialogue we set out to strengthen a bilateral relationship that benefits both our peoples in tangible ways. This second session discussed specific areas of cooperation to develop this partnership, for the good of the United States and Kuwait, and for the stability and security of the Gulf region and the Middle East more broadly.

Political Cooperation

We discussed the most pressing regional political issues, including the ongoing rift amongst some members of the GCC and Egypt. The United States reiterated its gratitude for Kuwait's mediation, and the United States and Kuwait call on all parties to reach a swift resolution through dialogue. Our two countries share the view of the importance of GCC unity in addressing the region's many challenges.

We also look forward to working together as Kuwait assumes its non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council 2018-19.

Kuwait is a significant contributor to stability in the world's most troubled regions and has long been one of the world's most generous humanitarian donors. Kuwait continues to be a key source of direct assistance to internally-displaced persons, as well as to the refugees that are hosted in other countries. Secretary Tillerson expressed U.S. appreciation for Kuwait's offer to host a donors' conference for Iraqi reconstruction in early 2018.

Moreover, we have discussed the destabilizing behavior of Iran, ongoing war in Syria, conflict in Yemen, Libya, and the Middle East Peace Process.

Both countries called upon the international community to exercise further pressure on North Korea to stop its destabilizing activities in the region and implement UN Security Council resolutions. The United States praised Kuwait's positive steps in regards to implementing UN resolutions.

Defense Cooperation

The United States is proud to have contributed to the liberation of Kuwait over 26 years ago, and reiterates its commitment to Kuwait's security. Today, both countries work closely together to ensure that the Armed Forces of Kuwait are best equipped to defend their nation. The two sides agreed to do their utmost to expedite Kuwait's acquisition of needed U.S. equipment, including the latest efforts at enhancing Kuwait's defensive capabilities through the addition of the F/A-18 Super Hornet to Kuwait's Air Force.

The United States and Kuwait share the responsibilities of cooperation on defense and the joint fight against terrorism. As an enduring symbol of our commitment to carry the partnership into a secure future, we agreed today on the priority of moving forward with modernizing the military facilities in Kuwait, guided by our Joint Military Commission.

Security Cooperation

Both Kuwait and the United States know firsthand the need for constant vigilance in the face of global terrorist threats and are committed to take further steps to prevent the financing of terrorism. Recognizing the benefit in combining our resources to defeat this scourge, our nations agreed to coordinate taking specific steps to increase information sharing (e.g., biometric information) that will help deter terrorist attacks. Our growing security cooperation seeks to deny refuge or sanctuary to those who plot violence and murder.

The United States, Kuwait, and our other Global Coalition partners stand

together in the shared fight against ISIS until it is defeated. We discussed the necessity of stabilizing those areas retaken from ISIS. Preventing the flow of foreign fighters has been a major part of our effort to defeat ISIS, and Kuwait is a co-lead of the Coalition Working Group on Foreign Fighters. The flow of foreign terrorist fighters to the region has declined significantly which emphasizes the importance of further cooperation regarding foreign fighters returning from conflict zones to rehabilitate and reintegrate them into their society, but more must be done.

Kuwait took positive measures toward enhancing security in Kuwait International Airport toward meeting the international and partner organization requirements.

We also agreed today to prioritize the protection of our people, our national assets, and our infrastructure from the threat of cyber-attacks. The U.S. public and private sectors stand ready to support Kuwait as it implements its National Cyber Security Strategy. Those charged with cyber policy met here in Washington to strategize long-term cooperation in this critical field.

Trade and Investment

Two days before the Strategic Dialogue, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce hosted a U.S.-Kuwait Economic Forum featuring leaders in industry and investment. The message of mutual investment and prosperity was underscored by the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of Commerce's Select USA and the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority. The Kuwaiti side stressed its priority to take steps that facilitate doing business in Kuwait. The United States and Kuwait will seek to alleviate any hindrances to bilateral investment in our two countries.

The Educational Ties That Bind

Education is one of the sturdiest building blocks of the U.S.-Kuwait partnership. The United States Department of State and the Kuwait Ministry of Higher Education signed a memorandum of understanding today that will encourage student exchanges and educational cooperation. Five generations of Kuwaitis have studied in the United States. Both parties seek to encourage more Kuwaitis to join the more than 15,000 Kuwaitis studying or preparing to study in the United States, and intend to cooperate more closely to explore ways to enhance the academic and professional success of students at quality educational institutions. The United States welcomed Kuwait's intent to establish additional chairs at American universities.

Consular Affairs, Customs, and Border Protection

We continue to expand our people-to-people contact. We reaffirmed our commitment to the protection of our nationals in Kuwait and the United States, solidifying our international obligations regarding consular notification and access to detained citizens. We signed a Customs Mutual Assistance Agreement to improve information sharing, training, and enforcement of our customs and immigration laws. In the coming months, we will work to facilitate the secure travel of our nationals and further

synchronize our border security partnerships.

Kuwait expressed to the U.S government its interest to become a pre-clearance border point to the United States, and explained to their American counterparts through numbers of meetings that the political will and resources are available to support that request.

Looking Ahead

This strategic dialogue process commits the United States and Kuwait to increased cooperation in the areas of greatest practical benefit to our governments and our peoples. Today, we set a roadmap for the advancement of our relations in the coming year. Individual working groups will be cooperating on numerous tasks in the coming months, including: modernizing military facilities; facilitating needed defense systems; extending counter-terrorism information sharing and cooperation, and stopping terrorist financing; expanding our trade and investment; taking effective measures to protect intellectual property; and broadening our educational and research connections; and facilitating travel procedures. We look forward to making progress in these areas when the Dialogue meets next in Kuwait in 2018.

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[Press Releases: U.S., IAEA Host North American Sub-Regional Workshop on the International Incident and Trafficking Database](#)

Media Note
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
September 8, 2017

The United States, in cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), organized the first North American sub-Regional Workshop on the international Incident and Trafficking Database (ITDB) this week in Arlington, Virginia.

Established in 1995, the IAEA's ITDB program has proven to be a valuable tool for sharing information on incidents involving nuclear and other radioactive materials outside of regulatory control, including illicit trafficking of such materials.

Experts from the United States, Mexico, and Canada, as well as representatives from the IAEA and INTERPOL, attended the workshop to promote responsible and accurate reporting of incidents of nuclear and other radioactive materials outside of regulatory control to the IAEA's ITDB. The data is used to identify trends and analyze past incidents to strengthen the global nuclear security regime. At the week's conclusion, IAEA and U.S. government officials jointly facilitated a tabletop exercise encouraging North American governments to consider how they can share national-level information on criminal incidents involving nuclear or other radioactive material by utilizing the ITDB.

Recognizing the serious threat of nuclear or radiological terrorism, participants agreed that governments must continue to work together to secure materials at their source, detect trafficking attempts, and investigate criminals who attempt to illegally acquire or traffic nuclear or other radioactive materials.

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