

# [Press Releases: Vesak Day](#)

Press Statement  
Rex W. Tillerson

Secretary of State

Washington, DC  
May 9, 2017

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On behalf of the people of the United States of America, I offer our best wishes to all those celebrating Vesak Day.

As Buddhist communities around the world gather, we wish you a joyous remembrance of the birth, enlightenment, and passing of Siddhartha Gautama, the founder of Buddhism. Celebrations on this day symbolize peace, compassion, and goodwill, universal values we all share.

Vesak is celebrated by diverse Buddhist communities worldwide including here in the United States. In honor of Vesak Day, we recognize the enduring contributions to thought, culture, and belief that Buddhism has made for over 2,500 years.

May you all enjoy a peaceful and joyful Vesak.

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# [Press Releases: United States and Georgia Sign General Security of](#)

# Information Agreement

Media Note  
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
May 9, 2017

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Secretary of State Rex Tillerson and Prime Minister of Georgia Giorgi Kvirikashvili signed a U.S.-Georgia General Security of Information Agreement (GSOIA) this morning at the U.S. Department of State.

The agreement represents a major milestone in security cooperation between the United States and Georgia. The GSOIA establishes a legal foundation for bilateral intelligence sharing and will strengthen counterterrorism cooperation between the United States and Georgia. This agreement will also enhance the Georgian military's interoperability with the armed services of NATO member states. The GSOIA supports Georgia's efforts to transform its military and paves the way for future security agreements between the United States and Georgia.

After signing the agreement, Secretary Tillerson and Prime Minister Kvirikashvili met to discuss the strong U.S.-Georgia partnership, noting that this year marks the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of diplomatic relations. Secretary Tillerson thanked the Prime Minister for Georgia's contributions to global security and commended the significant reform progress the country has made since independence. He reaffirmed U.S. support for continued progress toward Georgia's Euro-Atlantic integration. The Secretary also reiterated the steadfast commitment of the United States to Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders. The leaders agreed to continue efforts to ensure Georgia's security and prosperity.

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## **Press Releases: Under Secretary Thomas Shannon Travel to London**

Media Note  
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
May 9, 2017

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Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Thomas Shannon will travel to London May 10-12. On May 11, Under Secretary Shannon will attend the London Conference on Somalia, which aims to accelerate progress on security, peace, and prosperity in Somalia. On May 12, Under Secretary Shannon will meet with UK counterparts in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Department for International Development, and the Cabinet Office.

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## **Press Releases: On the Occasion of Europe Day**

Press Statement  
Rex W. Tillerson

Secretary of State

Washington, DC

May 9, 2017

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In honor of Europe Day, I join all Americans in offering our best wishes to the citizens of the European Union.

The United States and the European Union have a strong and enduring partnership based on our shared democratic values, strong economic ties, and mutual commitment to addressing global challenges.

The United States deeply appreciates the European Union's role in promoting peace, security, human rights, and prosperity in Europe and around the world. The European Union has stood with us on a full range of international security issues and is an increasingly important partner in countering terrorism and extremism. We work closely with the European Union in the Middle East, Africa, and Asia and coordinate our humanitarian assistance around the world.

Our mutual trade and investments, which account for almost half of global output and one-third of world trade, reinforce these strong ties and create millions of jobs on both sides of the Atlantic.

As the cultural bonds between our peoples unite us, so do the many common interests we share.

As we honor the spirit of Europe Day, we value the strong friendship and cooperation between the United States and the European Union.

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**[Honoring our Veterans this National Military Appreciation Month](#)**



Yesterday, we marked National Military Appreciation Month by welcoming Honor Flight veterans, who fought on the front lines of freedom in WWII, Korea, and Vietnam, to the White House.

Our service members served their country in a way and at a time that challenged each one of them to step up the perseveration of our way of life. With America's armed forces in the vanguard, the United States was able to stand as a beacon for freedom. Our nation marshaled every ounce of our strength to save freedom across the Atlantic, across the Pacific, and across the very world. The sons and daughters of America, and, indeed, all who call themselves free will remember their service for eternity, until the world stops turning.

The old book says, if you owe debts, pay debts. If honor, then honor. If respect, then respect. These men and women are among the best of us. And on behalf of their Commander-in-Chief, we say thanks and salute their service.



But our service members know that they have more than just our thanks. Under President Donald Trump, America's armed forces have a leader – a tireless defender of our American military and our veterans. The President is fighting every single day to keep America safe and keep our promises to those who have served in the uniform of the United States.

The President has said that our veterans deserve the finest care America can provide. Just over a week ago, President Trump signed an executive order to ensure that the Department of Veterans Affairs is as efficient, effective, and accountable as any great healthcare provider in America. And last month, President Trump signed into law the Veterans Choice Act to give our heroes the choices they deserve for world-class healthcare.

He also signed into law legislation that, in the balance of this fiscal year, will increase defense spending by \$21 billion – the biggest investment in military readiness in nearly a decade.

Thanks to President Trump's strong leadership, national defense is now coming first. And, we were able to increase defense spending with the largest investment in years without requiring an additional increase in domestic spending, putting an additional burden on taxpayers. That's real progress for taxpayers and our military.



As the proud father of an American service member, it's the greatest privilege of my life to serve as Vice President to a President who is committed to the men and women of our armed forces, to their families, and to our veterans.

In this administration, we will not rest and will not relent until we give our soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines, and Coast Guard the resources they

need to accomplish their mission, defend our nation, and come home safe.

We're going to see our veterans to make sure that the promises that they earned in uniform are kept by the American people.

And we're never going to hesitate to honor those who've served, and to pay a debt of honor and gratitude to all who in their moment, in their time said, yes, to America. And because they said, yes, freedom prevails to this day.