

Press Releases: Interview With Cynthia Fodor of KCCI

Interview
Michael R. Pompeo

Secretary of State

Des Moines, Iowa
March 4, 2019

QUESTION: Good morning, Eric. The Secretary arrived here shortly and he is with us right now. And we are so excited to have you here in Des Moines, Iowa. Mike Pompeo, thank you for joining us and –

SECRETARY POMPEO: Cynthia, it's great to be with you.

QUESTION: Of all the hot spots in the world right now – we have Syria, Iran, Venezuela, you just got back from Hanoi and dealing with the North Korea – Mr. Secretary, why are you here in Des Moines, Iowa this morning on a record cold day?

SECRETARY POMPEO: So I have lots of great reasons to be here. First, I think it's important to share with the American people who is the first client of the United States Department of State, what it is we do, why we do it, how we are important to American national security, keeping Iowans safe, and I want to talk with them about that.

I'm going to get a chance to spend a lot of time with the agricultural community today. I want to talk about the State Department's role in promoting and assisting in success of people here in the heartland who are growers and farmers and ranchers. And then finally, I want a diverse workforce at the State Department, and I want to see if I can't convince a few young Iowans that being a diplomat on behalf of the United States of America is a noble calling and to come join the team.

QUESTION: Well, we certainly have a lot of Iowans who have – who are now on the national stage or have been, and Governor Branstad is one – Ambassador Branstad now is one of those, and he is back with you. And I understand you will be talking about China today. Of course, you know how important this is to Iowa agriculture and farmers, and we are hearing this morning reports that we are fairly close to a trade deal with China. How close are we, and where do those negotiations stand right now?

SECRETARY POMPEO: So I can't tell you exactly how close we are, but real progress has been made for sure. Ambassador Branstad has been a great asset for the United States working in Beijing helping the Chinese understand that we have to have free, fair, reciprocal trade. Iowa farmers, Kansas farmers – the place that I'm from – have to have the opportunity to sell their products, and they can't do it in a way that presents risks that the Chinese are going to steal their intellectual property or take trade secrets from our amazing, innovative companies that do lots of hard work and invest lots of money in R&D. Ambassador Branstad has taken that message to the Chinese, and we are very hopeful that we'll get a good trade deal laid down in the days and weeks ahead.

QUESTION: Does it seem somewhat imminent? I know on Friday President Trump asked for – asked the Chinese to lift the tariffs on ag commodities. What has their response been to that?

SECRETARY POMPEO: So I haven't seen any formal response to them yet – from them yet, but remember, that's the mission set. When the Trump administration came in, agriculture companies all across the country, including here in Iowa, couldn't sell most of their products into these countries. There were tariffs; there were non-trade tariff barriers as well. And President Trump has taken on the task of pushing back, saying that's not fair, that's not fair to the people of Kansas, the people of Iowa, the people of Nebraska, who work so hard. They could sell their products here, but we couldn't sell our products there, and so we're trying to get that rectified, get that fixed, make it fair and reciprocal. I think we're on the cusp of doing that, and I hope all those tariffs will go away, all those barriers. And then when Iowa farmers compete on a level playing field, I know how that goes; America will be very successful.

QUESTION: Yeah, they have said all along that we want trade, not aid.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Amen.

QUESTION: Do you think the markets will fully rebound for American farmers?

SECRETARY POMPEO: So I've been around ag markets a long time, and there's – I wasn't a farmer myself, but family's got a farm down in Winfield, so I know there's the cyclical pricing. Prices move. What Iowa farmers depend on, and they ought to be able to count on from America and American leaders, is that we will fight for them, we will work for them, we'll get them a fair shot at competing, and then I know they'll take it the rest of the way. They'll take risks, they'll work their tails off, and they'll get it done.

QUESTION: Now I understand this afternoon you're going to be speaking to ag leaders and hundreds of farmers at the World Food Prize voting, and you're going to be making a major policy announcement. Can you give us a preview?

SECRETARY POMPEO: I can't say much, but I've been looking forward to this now for weeks since we've got it all set. I'm going to get to not only speak there, but this morning with a bunch of young farmers from the FFA –

QUESTION: And what's your message to them?

SECRETARY POMPEO: My message to them is the Trump administration is going to make sure that their farm is there for them and for their children and grandchildren. Generational farming, family farming, is something that I know so well is important to President Trump, and we're going to take on the challenges, the challenges not only from China but other countries who treat us unfairly, and make sure that generations of farming can emanate from places like Kansas and Iowa, and we'll still be feeding the world 20, 40, 60 years from now.

QUESTION: So it's a message of optimism. And farmers tell me all the time they have to be optimistic if they're going to be a farmer. Thank you very much for joining us today.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Cynthia, thank you, ma'am.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, we hope you have a wonderful day here in Iowa.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Thank you.

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[Press Releases: Interview With Sabrina Ahmed of WOI](#)

Interview
Michael R. Pompeo

Secretary of State

Des Moines, Iowa
March 4, 2019

QUESTION: Good morning, Elias. We are getting out of the studio this morning and switching things up a bit because we have a very special guest on Good Morning Iowa. We are joined now by the U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo. Secretary Pompeo, thank you so much for being here.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Sabrina, it's great to be with you. Good morning.

QUESTION: So I'm sorry that it's so cold, first of all, but are you –

SECRETARY POMPEO: (Laughter.) Reminds of home in Kansas.

QUESTION: Yeah, there you go. You're here on a day-long trip. You have a whirlwind of events. You are shifting your focus. We've been talking a lot and hearing a lot about the North Korean summit, and now you want to talk more about agriculture, and what more of a fitting way to do that than to be joined by former Governor, now Ambassador to China Terry Branstad. Why are you here in Des Moines today?

SECRETARY POMPEO: So this was actually former Governor Branstad's idea. He said, "Mike, we need to get out and talk to the people of Iowa about the amazing work that the State Department does on behalf of folks like people from – Iowans." We wanted to come out here and talk about that, the work we do to open up markets so that farmers, ranchers in Iowa can sell their products all across the world. We want to talk about the country that he's our ambassador to, China, and the risk that that presents to the next generations of farmers.

And so we're out here today, and then I have another mission, which is that I want a lot of great, talented young people working as diplomats on behalf of the United States. And I would love to have some wonderful young people from Iowa decide that a career as a member of the diplomatic corps for the United States of America, the greatest nation in the history of civilization, is something they want to do. So I'm on a recruiting trip as well.

QUESTION: Okay, wonderful. Now you mentioned all of the wonderful things that the State Department is doing for Iowans and for the markets, but we have this trade war going on right now and it has created so much uncertainty for our farmers. What is your message to them this morning? Because honestly, with this on-and-off-again "Yes, there will be tariffs, yeah – no there won't be increasing tariffs," there's – they just don't know what to think.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Sabrina, remember the mission. When President Trump came in office, Iowa farmers, farmers all across America were being treated horribly around the world. These markets were closed. They were using smear campaigns to say that our food wasn't safe, our product wasn't high enough quality, and they had tariffs and barriers that prevented Iowans from competing around the world not just in farming, but in manufacturing, other businesses as well. And so President Trump set about the difficult task of fixing that to get fair and reciprocal trade. So a Iowan who wants to sell their products in China or in Europe can do so in a way that they can sell their products here. That's the mission statement and it creates some uncertainty, to be sure, but it's an important mission and one that I know in the long run will benefit

Iowa farmers, Iowans more broadly as well.

QUESTION: What is the status of those negotiations? We've heard a lot that maybe there might be –

SECRETARY POMPEO: Yeah.

QUESTION: They might be coming to an end sometime this month. (Laughter.)

SECRETARY POMPEO: So I've been in a lot of negotiations too. It's never over till it's over, but they've made a lot of progress, and so I'm very hopeful that in the coming days and weeks, there'll be a significant announcement. You saw the President make the ask of China – I think it was on Friday of this past week – saying hey, you should take down all your tariffs. That's been the goal, it's the President's objective, and I hope the Chinese will agree to do that. When they do and when Iowans can compete, I know they'll be successful.

QUESTION: But do you think it's fair for Iowa farmers to be bearing the brunt of this trade war?

SECRETARY POMPEO: It wasn't fair for 25 years to have China steal agriculture's intellectual property, to take our trade secrets. Those are things that aren't fair, and the President's determined to get fairness. That's the objective. We don't want anyone to bear the brunt of any of this, but for too long, Iowa farmers have been abused by these countries, treated unfairly, and President Trump and I are determined to fix it.

QUESTION: This evening at the World Food Prize, you, in front of the Iowa Farm Bureau, are expected to make the, quote, "major policy announcement." Can you give us some insight of at least a topic, a direction for us to begin?

SECRETARY POMPEO: I can't tip much, but we're going to come back to the central theme of making sure that Iowans have a chance to compete around the world, and the State Department's role in ensuring that opportunity exists.

QUESTION: Fairly vague.

SECRETARY POMPEO: (Laughter.) Yes.

QUESTION: Okay. So talk to me a little bit about your relationship with former Governor –

SECRETARY POMPEO: Yeah.

QUESTION: – now Ambassador to China Terry Branstad.

SECRETARY POMPEO: It's been wonderful to get to know him. He works his tail off on behalf of the United States of America. He loves this place, Iowa, deeply. He communicates very effectively on behalf of our country the things that President Trump's trying to achieve, and to convince China to just compete, but not to do so in a way that's unfair. He's been a great

ambassador. He is a great ambassador. I'm looking forward to spending the day here in Iowa with him.

QUESTION: Now as we consider this – continue this conversation of trade and trade talks, do you believe that President Trump has been an effective leader in this?

SECRETARY POMPEO: I do. I do. He's the first president in some time – and this isn't political, this crosses both parties – who's been prepared to take this challenge on, who recognized that when China steals hundreds of billions of dollars a year worth of intellectual property that Iowans invested in, that the seed that they buy, right, has a component, that the cost has to do with R&D and innovation and technology – when they steal that, that's bad news in the long run for Iowa farmers. President Trump's been prepared to take that on, and I'm very confident we'll get a good outcome for America and for Iowa.

QUESTION: Secretary Pompeo, thank you so much for taking the time.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Sabrina, thank you so much. Wonderful to be with you.

QUESTION: Welcome to Iowa.

SECRETARY POMPEO: All right. Stay warm.

QUESTION: All right. Elias, we will send it back to you – you stay warm too – in the studio. For now, I am live in downtown Des Moines, Sabrina Ahmed, Local 5 News, We Are Iowa.

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[Press Releases: Secretary Enacts 30-Day Suspension of Title III \(LIBERTAD Act\) With an Exception](#)

Media Note
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
March 4, 2019

Today, Secretary Pompeo reported to the appropriate Congressional committees his determination that an additional suspension for 30 days through April 17, 2019, of the right to bring an action under Title III of the 1996 Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act is necessary to the national interests of the United States and will expedite a transition to democracy in Cuba, with the below exception. Beginning March 19, suspension shall not apply to:

- The right to bring an action against a Cuban entity or sub-entity identified by name on the State Department's List of Restricted Entities and Sub-entities Associated with Cuba (known as the Cuba Restricted List), as may be updated from time to time.

We will continue to study the impact of this suspension on the human rights situation in Cuba. The Cuba Restricted List identifies entities and sub-entities under the control of Cuban military, intelligence, or security services. These security services are directly responsible for the repression of the Cuban people. We encourage any person doing business in Cuba to reconsider whether they are trafficking in confiscated property and abetting the Cuban dictatorship.

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[Press Releases: Merger of U.S. Embassy Jerusalem and U.S. Consulate General Jerusalem](#)

Press Statement
Robert Palladino

Deputy Spokesperson

Washington, DC
March 3, 2019

On March 4, 2019, U.S. Consulate General Jerusalem will merge into U.S. Embassy Jerusalem to form a single diplomatic mission. This step follows Secretary Pompeo's October 18, 2018 announcement that the two missions and teams would be combined.

There will be complete continuity of U.S. diplomatic activity and consular services during and after the merger. We will continue to conduct all of the diplomatic and consular functions previously performed by U.S. Embassy Jerusalem. We will also engage in a wide range of reporting, outreach, and programming in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, as well as with Palestinians in Jerusalem, through a U.S. Embassy Palestinian Affairs Unit (PAU), which will operate from our historic Agron Road location in Jerusalem. Our State Department and interagency teams on the ground do exceptional work every day in representing the United States to diverse audiences, reflecting their views back to Washington, and assisting American citizens. That critical work will be enhanced and will continue uninterrupted as we form a larger team.

This decision was driven by our global efforts to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of our diplomatic engagements and operations. It does not signal a change of U.S. policy on Jerusalem, the West Bank, or the Gaza Strip. As the President has stated, the United States continues to take no position on final status issues, including boundaries or borders. The specific boundaries of Israeli sovereignty in Jerusalem are subject to final status negotiations between the parties. The Administration remains fully committed to efforts to achieve a lasting and comprehensive peace that offers a brighter future to Israel and the Palestinians.

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Press Releases: Secretary Pompeo's Travel to Houston, Texas

Press Statement
Robert Palladino

Deputy Spokesperson

Washington, DC
March 3, 2019

Secretary Pompeo will travel to Houston, Texas on March 12 to deliver keynote remarks at CERA Energy Week's "Reshaping the Energy Future" conference. The speech will address how America's energy revolution strengthens national security in an age of renewed great power competition.

The Secretary also will participate in a roundtable with international energy firms on advancing the Asia EDGE "Enhancing Development and Growth through Energy" initiative and the energy pillar of the Middle East Strategic Alliance. These initiatives seek to promote a strong, growing, integrated, diversified, and resilient global energy market; catalyze private sector trade and investment; advance energy security for the United States, its allies, and partners; and promote regional cooperation and good governance in the extractives sector.

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