

# Press Releases: Formation of a New Government in Lebanon

Press Statement  
Robert Palladino

Deputy Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
February 1, 2019

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The United States welcomes Lebanon's announcement of the formation of a new government and congratulates President Aoun and Prime Minister Hariri on this historic occasion. We commend Lebanese leaders for working collectively to overcome the political obstacles that prolonged this process, and we look forward to engaging with the new Lebanese government to strengthen further our bilateral relationship. In this regard, the Secretary looks forward to traveling to Lebanon.

Nevertheless, we are concerned that Hizballah, a U.S.-designated Foreign Terrorist Organization, will continue to occupy ministerial positions and was allowed to name the Minister of Public Health. We call on the new government to ensure the resources and services of these ministries do not provide support to Hizballah.

We look to all parties in the new government to uphold Lebanon's policy of disassociation from regional conflicts and its international obligations, including those contained in UN Security Council Resolutions (UNSCR) 1559 and 1701. In this regard, we welcome Lebanese leaders' recent statements committing to abide by UNSCR 1701 and appreciate their recent efforts to avoid escalating tensions along the Blue Line. We hope Lebanon's new government will take urgent action to implement meaningful measures necessary to improve Lebanon's difficult economic situation.

The United States reaffirms its strong support for Lebanon's security, stability, and sovereignty and will continue to stand with the Government of Lebanon and the Lebanese people as they build a stable and prosperous future.

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## **Press Releases: Secretary Pompeo's Call With UN Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen Martin Griffiths**

Readout  
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
January 31, 2019

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The below is attributable to Deputy Spokesperson Robert Palladino:□

Secretary of State Michael R. Pompeo spoke today with UN Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen Martin Griffiths. The Secretary thanked the Special Envoy for his continued dedication and conveyed strong U.S. support for progress made following consultations between the parties in Sweden. The Secretary and the Special Envoy discussed the latest efforts by the Republic of Yemen government and the Houthis to implement agreements made in Sweden, as well as next steps in the political process. The Secretary and the Special Envoy agreed that the release of prisoners by the Saudi-led Coalition and the Houthis was a positive step and hoped this would lead to swift implementation of the prisoner exchange agreement discussed in Sweden. The Secretary and the Special Envoy reaffirmed that parties must transition from conflict to compromise in order for all Yemenis to achieve a brighter future.

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# Press Releases: Ambassador Nathan A. Sales Travels to Denmark, Sweden, and Norway To Discuss Counterterrorism Cooperation

Media Note  
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
January 29, 2019

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Ambassador Nathan A. Sales, the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, travels to Denmark, Sweden, and Norway the week of January 28 to discuss Iran-backed terrorism in Europe, prosecuting foreign terrorist fighters, and combatting terrorist travel.

Iran remains the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism. In recent years the regime has directed or backed terrorist plotting in France, Denmark, The Netherlands, Albania, and elsewhere. To address the threat of foreign terrorist fighters who traveled from Europe and other parts of the world to fight for ISIS, the United States is urging its partners to repatriate their citizens and prosecute them for the crimes they have committed. In December 2017, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 2396, which obliges member states to use key tools to combat terrorist travel, including terrorist watchlists and airline reservation data.

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# Press Releases: Sentencing of Wang Quanzhang

Press Statement  
Robert Palladino

Deputy Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
January 29, 2019

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The United States is deeply concerned by the sentencing of human rights lawyer Wang Quanzhang in Tianjin, China on January 28 to four-and-a-half years in prison on charges of “subverting state power.” Wang was among the first individuals detained during the Chinese government’s July 9, 2015 (“709”) crackdown on legal advocates for rule of law and human rights defenders, and the last to be tried.

We are troubled that China has subjected Mr. Wang to a three-and-a-half-year period of pre-trial detention, and has been held incommunicado, has been deprived of legal counsel of his choosing, and that his chosen lawyer has been subjected to reprisals.

We call on China to release Mr. Wang immediately and allow him to reunite with his family. We remain concerned by the deteriorating situation for the rule of law, human rights, and fundamental freedoms in China, and continue to urge China to uphold its international human rights commitments and to respect the rule of law.

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# Press Releases: Meeting of Foreign Ministers of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS

Media Note  
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
January 29, 2019

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U.S. Secretary of State Michael R. Pompeo will host a day of meetings with the foreign ministers of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS on February 6 in Washington, D.C. The full 79-member Coalition will meet for in-depth discussions on the impending territorial defeat of ISIS in Iraq and Syria, which is the result of four years of Coalition and our partners' efforts, and a significant milestone towards delivering ISIS an enduring defeat. Ministers will discuss the next phase of the campaign in Iraq and Syria, which will focus on protecting against a resurgence of ISIS through stabilization and security assistance. Ministers will also discuss important next steps in degrading ISIS's global networks and affiliates outside Iraq and Syria.

These meetings are taking place at a key moment in our coordinated fight. The United States is determined to prevent a resurgence of ISIS in Syria and Iraq after the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Syria takes place, and remains committed to working with the Global Coalition to continue to destroy ISIS remnants and thwart its global ambitions. As ISIS is defeated on the battlefield, the Coalition will continue its stabilization efforts to facilitate the safe and voluntary return home of those who have been displaced by the violence.

The Global Coalition regularly meets to coordinate and enhance combined efforts to counter ISIS. The last Ministerial took place in Brussels on July 12, 2018, with select members of the Coalition. The last meeting at the Political Director level took place in Rabat, Morocco, on June 26, 2018.

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