

Press Releases: Sanctions Announcement on Russia

Media Note
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
December 19, 2018

Today, the Departments of State and the Treasury took joint action against Russia's continued and blatant disregard for international norms.

Specifically, the State Department added 12 individuals and entities to the List of Specified Persons (LSP) pursuant to Section 231 of the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA) for being part of, or operating for or on behalf of, the defense or intelligence sector of the Government of the Russian Federation. These persons were involved in a wide range of malign activities, including attempts to interfere in the 2016 U.S. election, cyber-enabled attempts to undermine international organizations, and the brazen use of a chemical weapon in an assassination attempt abroad. Several of these persons were related to Project Lakhta, a broad Russian effort which includes the Internet Research Agency that has sought to interfere in political and electoral systems worldwide. As a result of this action, any person determined to knowingly engage in a significant transaction with any of these persons will be subject to CAATSA Section 231 sanctions.

In addition, the Treasury Department designated several members of Russia's Main Intelligence Directorate (GRU) and individuals and entities related to Project Lakhta, including the twelve persons added to the LSP. Treasury also designated Victor Boyarkin for having acted or purported to act for or on behalf of Oleg Deripaska.

The sanctions and listings undertaken today are one part of an aggressive stand against the irresponsible acts directed by the Government of the Russian Federation. Russian intelligence services' cyber operations continue to seek to undermine democratic elections and delegitimize international organizations. Additionally, it is clear that Russian intelligence operatives used a military grade nerve agent to carry out an assassination attempt inside the borders of our closest ally, a violation of Russia's obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention.

We will not tolerate attempts to interfere in our democratic process, and we

will side with our allies and partners against Russian subversion and destabilization. We will continue to work with our allies and partners to take collective action in response to irresponsible and malicious acts supported by Russia and its intelligence agencies.

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[Press Releases: Secretary Pompeo's Meeting With Norwegian Foreign Minister Ine Soreide](#)

Readout
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
December 19, 2018

The below is attributable to Deputy Spokesperson Robert Palladino:□

Secretary Michael R. Pompeo met today in Washington, DC, with Norwegian Foreign Minister Ine Soreide. They reaffirmed the close and enduring transatlantic partnership between the United States and Norway. Secretary Pompeo expressed appreciation for Norway's role as a steadfast NATO Ally, including hosting the Trident Juncture NATO exercise. They discussed a range of issues of mutual interest, including Russia, Syria, Iran, and Ukraine.

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Press Releases: Deputy Secretary John Sullivan's Meetings in Poland

Readout
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
December 19, 2018

The below is attributable to Deputy Spokesperson Robert Palladino:□

On Wednesday in Warsaw, Deputy Secretary John Sullivan reaffirmed to Foreign Minister Jacek Czaputowicz the United States' ironclad commitment to the NATO Alliance and celebrated the centennial of Poland's reclaimed independence. He applauded the continued strengthening of our bilateral relationship and commended Poland for the country's commitment to spend 2.5% of GDP on defense by 2030. He also witnessed the signing of an agreement between the Polish Oil and Natural Gas Company (PGNiG) and Sempra Energy, which will assist in energy diversification for Poland.

While in Poland, he also met with President Duda's Chief of Staff, Minister Szczerski, as well as representatives from civil society and the business community.

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[Press Releases: Deputy Secretary Sullivan's Meeting With Macedonian President Ivanov](#)

Readout
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
December 19, 2018

The below is attributable to Deputy Spokesperson Robert Palladino:□

On December 18 in Skopje, Deputy Secretary of State John J. Sullivan reaffirmed with President Gjorge Ivanov the United States' continued support of the landmark Prespa Agreement. The two also agreed on the need to implement key reforms required by NATO and the EU, including crucial judiciary reforms.

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[Press Releases: Bulgaria's Defense Modernization](#)

Press Statement
Michael R. Pompeo

Secretary of State

Washington, DC

December 19, 2018

The United States welcomes Bulgaria's defense modernization plans and looks forward to the country's imminent selection of a new multirole fighter aircraft.

As I emphasized during my phone call with Prime Minister Boyko Borissov on December 18, and as Deputy Secretary Sullivan underlined during his visit to Sofia last weekend, the United States is committed to working with the Bulgarian government to tailor the final scope of a potential F-16 sale to fit its budgetary and operational requirements, while still offering superior capabilities.

The United States has provided more than \$200 million in security assistance to Bulgaria over the last 25 years to increase military professionalization and NATO interoperability. The United States has also invested more than \$100 million in upgrades to the Novo Selo Training Center and Graf Ignatievo air base as part of the European Deterrence Initiative, and plans to continue such upgrades in the future. The United States will continue to prioritize investments with Bulgaria that build NATO interoperability.

The United States looks forward to completing final negotiations with the Bulgarian government.

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