

[Press Releases: Deputy Secretary Sullivan's Meeting With Austrian Secretary General for Foreign Affairs Peterlik](#)

Readout
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
December 13, 2018

The below is attributable to Deputy Spokesperson Robert Palladino:□

Deputy Secretary of State John J. Sullivan met today in Vienna with Austrian Secretary General for Foreign Affairs Johannes Peterlik. During the meeting, Deputy Secretary Sullivan reaffirmed the importance of U.S.-Austrian bilateral relations and thanked him for Austria's contributions to security cooperation in Afghanistan and the Western Balkans. The Deputy Secretary also emphasized the need to counter the malign activities of the Iranian regime such as its ballistic missile program and the importance of maintaining sanctions on Russia.

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[Press Releases: Press Availability at the United Nations](#)

Press Availability

Michael R. Pompeo

Secretary of State

United Nations
New York City
December 12, 2018

SECRETARY POMPEO: Good afternoon, everyone. We had a productive Security Council meeting where the United States made clear that Iran's ballistic missile activity is out of control and that they are defying the UN Security Council 2231 in numerous ways.

Iran has been testing – on a testing spree and a proliferation spree and this must come to an end. We want to work with all members of the Security Council to reimpose tougher restrictions on the Iranian ballistic missiles. The restrictions that were in place under UNSCR 1929 are the place that the world needs to be today. This threat is real and upon us. We clearly see that the JCPOA didn't succeed in stopping this malign activity. This Security Council has a responsibility to protect citizens in the Middle East, Americans traveling through the Middle East, Europeans who are now at risk from Iranian missiles, and we called upon every member of the Security Council to undertake actions that would achieve that.

With that, I'm happy to take a couple of questions.

MR PALLADINO: Let's start with CBS, Pam Falk.

QUESTION: Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Secretary. It's Pamela Falk from CBS. Do you envision any additional sanctions on either Iran or on the European Union given the fact that the SPV, according to Iran's chief of staff of the president, is about to go into effect in two or three weeks, meaning avoiding U.S. sanctions given what you said today about the proliferation?

SECRETARY POMPEO: Sure. So I never get out in front of decisions that we make about sanctions. We have to evaluate the facts as they present themselves. But we've been unambiguous with respect to those things that are permissible and those that are not. Should it be the case that the Europeans develop an SPV, we'll look at it. There are humanitarian exemptions in the sanctions that have been put in place for foodstuffs and medicine. If the activity that is undertaken is consistent with that, we obviously won't emplace sanctions. But to the extent that there are violations of our sanctions, we intend to enforce them with great rigor against any party who is a participant in those violations.

MR PALLADINO: (Inaudible) BBC.

QUESTION: Right here. Right here. Thank you, Secretary. BBC. Good afternoon.

SECRETARY POMPEO: (Off-mike.)

QUESTION: Secretary, you heard your European allies expressing their continued support for JCPOA. You also – even the French ambassador talking about how pressure and sanctions might not change a dynamic much alone. If you're here exactly where we are one year from now, another 2231 meeting where your sanctions haven't changed the behavior of the Iranian regime, they are still adhering to the deal, and their missile activity or regional activity is (inaudible) less as where we are, what is next? I ask that because Mr. Hook standing here just two weeks ago talked about military option, and many of your critics are saying you're basically repeating the Iraq playbook and that this is all a pretense for war. What is the next step if your sanctions do not work a year from now?

SECRETARY POMPEO: So back to first principles. The first thing that didn't work was the JCPOA. All the ballistic missile activity, save for the last two that I spoke about today, occurred during the JCPOA. So if you're looking for an agreement that was unable to contain assassination efforts in Europe, the establishment of an equivalent of Lebanese Hizballah on the cusp of being achieved in Yemen, malign activity in Iraq by the Iranians, the missile activity to which we were debating today – if you're looking for bad activity, this all occurred during the JCPOA. So if you're looking for a failed agreement, I got a good one for you.

Now it's time for this Security Council to get serious about this real risk from proliferation from the Iranian regime. And it is our determination to do everything we can, everything within – as the President says, everything we can to make sure that we do the right thing. We're going to exert American

leadership to build a coalition – and you heard today, you heard 11 members of the Security Council join the United States in expressing their concerns about the Iranian missile proliferation. We're going to work with a coalition to build out a set of responses that deliver deterrence against Iran and its continued proliferation of ballistic missiles and ballistic missile systems that have the potential to carry nuclear warheads.

MR PALLADINO: Fox News, Adam Shaw, please.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, Adam Shaw, Fox News. We saw a lot of support for the JCPOA from the European countries today. We also saw a lot of criticism of Iran's destabilizing activities. Are you getting any sense that European countries are beginning to come around to your way of thinking on Iran?

SECRETARY POMPEO: So I'll let the European countries speak for themselves with respect to where they are, but this much is clear: We have a different view on the JCPOA, as we should – or we're not ambiguous when I speak with my European counterparts. We're very clear about that. They view it as the linchpin. I view it as a disaster and I think President Trump does as well.

Now the challenge is this: We continue to see the Islamic Republic of Iran behaving in ways that are inconsistent with keeping people safe all around the world, and we need to figure out how together we can build out a coalition to push back against that. There are lots of places that can occur. It can occur while the JCPOA is still in effect, that is, while they're still inside of it. But make no mistake, American leadership is determined to work not only with the Europeans – we think of Germany, France, and Britain, but many other European countries who share our concerns as well, countries throughout the Middle East, Asia, Africa all joining with the United States under our leadership to – first, as a first step, acknowledge the risk that Iran presents and then set up a response that will ultimately deter them.

MR PALLADINO: Last question. Al Jazeera, James Bays.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, James Bays from Al Jazeera.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Yes, sir.

QUESTION: You were today in the chair that's normally occupied by Ambassador Haley. She said in an interview the – about responsibility for the death of Jamal Khashoggi, she said, "It was the Saudi Government, and MBS is the head of the Saudi Government. So they are all responsible and they don't get a pass." Do you agree that Mohammed bin Salman is responsible?

SECRETARY POMPEO: So I think Ambassador Haley said something that's very consistent with what President Trump and I have both said, which is that we have already held accountable a large number of persons who were responsible for the heinous murder of Jamal Khashoggi, that we will continue to investigate and take the facts where they lead, and get to a place where we hold those responsible accountable. We'll do that.

At the same time, and I didn't hear these remarks by Ambassador Haley, but I'm confident that she would share my view that America's interests in the

region are important. And our partnership with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is an important one. It has delivered American security in important ways in President Trump's first two years in office, and we intend to continue to work with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to keep America safe.

QUESTION: (Inaudible.)

SECRETARY POMPEO: Thank you all.

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[Press Releases: On the Attack in Strasbourg](#)

Press Statement
Robert Palladino

Deputy Spokesperson

Washington, DC
December 12, 2018

The United States stands in solidarity with France and condemns in the strongest terms the horrific act of terror in Strasbourg. Our thoughts are with the family and loved ones of those affected and with all the people of Strasbourg. We commend the work of the first responders, and are ready to provide any assistance that French officials require in this difficult time. We remain committed to working with France and our other allies and partners to defeat the global threat of terrorism. Crimes that target the innocent only reinforce our shared resolve to stop these senseless attacks and those who would commit them.

The U.S. Mission to France has issued a Security Alert to inform U.S. citizens of the attack, and stands ready to provide consular assistance to

any affected U.S. citizens. U.S. citizens should maintain security awareness and monitor media and local information sources. We also strongly encourage U.S. citizens in Strasbourg to contact family and friends in the United States directly to inform them of their safety and whereabouts.

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[Press Releases: Remarks at the United Nations Security Council Meeting on Iran](#)

Remarks

Michael R. Pompeo

Secretary of State

United Nations

New York City

December 12, 2018

SECRETARY POMPEO: Thank you very much, and good morning. Thank you for the kind words. I appreciate them.

Just two days ago, the head of the IRGC's airspace division, Amir Hajizadeh, boasted that Iran is capable of building missiles with a range beyond 2,000 kilometers. He said, quote, "We have the ability to build missiles with broader ranges. We don't have limitations from a technical perspective." End of quote. He also said there are many "enemy bases" within 800 kilometers of Iran – in other words, within striking distance of Iranian missiles. He bragged that Iran does 40 to 50 tests per year.

As I'll talk about further, it is clear that the Iranian regime's ballistic missile activity has grown since the nuclear deal. Iran has exploited the goodwill of nations and defied multiple Security Council resolutions in its quest for a robust ballistic missile force. The United States will never stand for this.

No nation that seeks peace and prosperity in the Middle East should either.

Since 2006, this Council has been telling Iran to stop testing and proliferating ballistic missiles in one form or another. From 2010 to 2015, Iran was subject to UN Security Council Resolution 1929 – the strictest resolution addressing the Iranian ballistic missiles to date.

In that resolution, the Security Council decided that, "Iran shall not undertake any activity related to ballistic missiles capable of delivering nuclear weapons, including launches using ballistic missile technology, and that States shall take... necessary measures to prevent the transfer of technology or technical assistance to Iran related to such activities." This provision of UNSCR 1929 imposed a legal prohibition on Iran's ballistic missile activity. There was force of law behind these words.

Nevertheless, Iran conducted multiple ballistic missile launches between 2010 and 2015, in flagrant violation of that resolution.

So what did we do in response? Did we increase accountability on Iran for serial violations of international law? Quite the opposite. In fact, the level of accountability on Iran has diminished instead of – decreased, while the risk has increased.

In connection with the Iranian regime's engagement in nuclear talks, and at the Obama administration's urging, the Security Council replaced Resolution 1929 with Resolution 2231. Resolution 2231 "calls upon" Iran not to undertake any activity related to ballistic missiles designed to be capable of delivering nuclear weapons. Notwithstanding that change in language, the world's concerns remain.

When we collectively "call upon" Iran to cease its ballistic missile activity, we must agree to stop it now. But Iran is as defiant of the world's insistence as ever. Because here we are, for the 12th year in a row, meeting about Iran's ballistic missiles, addressing an incredibly problematic data set.

Iran's pace of missile activity, including missile launches and tests, did not diminish since the JCPOA. In fact, Iran's missile testing and missile proliferation is growing. Today Iran has the largest ballistic missile force in the Middle East. It has more than 10 ballistic missile systems in its inventory or in development. It has hundreds of missiles which pose a threat to our partners in the region.

From more recent times: In 2016, during the time of the JCPOA, Iran unveiled two new short-range ballistic missiles, which it claims are capable of striking targets between 500 and 700 kilometers. In January of 2017, during the time of the JCPOA, Iran launched a medium-range missile designed to carry a payload greater than 500 kilograms, and which could be used to carry nuclear warheads. Its suspected range also approaches 2,000 kilometers, which is far enough to target Athens, Sofia, Bucharest, and other major European cities. If the IRGC airspace commander is telling the truth, and Iran has capabilities beyond 2,000 kilometers, other European capitals are at risk as well.

In July of 2017, while the United States was still in the JCPOA, Iran tested a Simorgh space launch vehicle. The United States, France, Germany, and the UK all assessed that the launch was inconsistent with 2231, because space launch vehicle use – uses a similar technology as intercontinental ballistic missiles.

Iran has exported ballistic missile systems as well, most recently to Yemen. We have hard evidence that Iran is providing missiles, training, and support to the Houthis, and the Iranian-Houthi missile force is fully engaged. This poses a threat to innocent civilians – including Americans – living in Riyadh, Abu Dhabi, Dubai, as well as people of all nationalities who travel on civilian aircraft in that region.

Iran is also transferring ballistic missile systems to Shia militias in Iraq.

And just look at the last two weeks. The Iranian regime test-fired a medium range ballistic missile that is capable of carrying multiple warheads.

Our goodwill gestures have been futile, futile in correcting the Iranian regime's reckless missile activity and its destructive behaviors. No nation can dispute that Iran is in open defiance of UN Security Council Resolution 2231.

The United States is not alone in raising these concerns. I'd like to thank France and Germany and the United Kingdom for raising concerns about Iranian missile proliferation to the secretariat.

I would also like to thank our partners from Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, who are working with UN inspectors in recovering material debris of Iranian-supplied missiles, rockets, and UAVs launched into their countries by Houthi forces in Yemen.

Our Israeli allies have brought further evidence to the Security Council about Iran's continued launches of ballistic missiles that are inherently capable of carrying nuclear weapons. Israel has also given evidence to the secretariat of Iran's transfer of weapon systems to its proxies all around the Middle East, and in defiance of what we have insisted that they do.

So the question – the question now: What steps ought we take to confront this Iranian malign activity? We risk the security of our people if Iran continues stocking up on ballistic missiles. We risk escalation of conflict in the region if we fail to restore deterrence. And we convey to all other malign actors that they too can defy the Security Council with impunity if we do nothing.

The United Nations Charter, as you all know well, calls the primary – gives – bestows upon the Security Council “the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.” We all take this responsibility seriously. The United States seeks to work with all other members of the Council to reimpose on Iran the ballistic missiles restrictions outlined in 1929.

Beyond addressing Iran's ballistic missile activities, the Council should not lift the arms embargo in 2020 on Iran. This is a country in noncompliance with multiple UN Security Council resolutions, including those related to al-Qaida, Afghanistan, Lebanon, Yemen, and Somalia. Iran is harboring al-Qaida, supporting Taliban militants in Afghanistan, arming terrorists in Lebanon, facilitating illicit trade in Somali charcoal benefiting al-Shabaab, and training and equipping Shia militias in Iraq, even as we sit here today.

It is also stoking conflict in Syria and Yemen. The Council must address these malign activities. It cannot reward Iran by lifting the arms embargo.

We also call on the Council to establish inspection and interdiction measures, in ports and on the high seas, to thwart Iran's continuing efforts to circumvent the existing arms restrictions.

Some have questioned our decision to withdraw from the JCPOA. We reply that it is self-evident why we did so based upon the very conversation we're having here today. Prior to the deal, Western leaders made grand claims of how the JCPOA would usher in a new era of moderation from the Iranian regime.

Indeed, America's own president said, quote, "Ideally, we would see a situation in which Iran, seeing sanctions reduced, would start focusing on its economy, on training its people, on re-entering the world community, to lessening its provocative activities in the region." But what do we actually see?

The JCPOA has without a doubt, to date, shielded the Islamic Republic of Iran from the accountability to the risks it presents to the world.

The Iranian regime is pursuing the same destructive, revolutionary goals that it has for the past 39 years – except now it has more money to achieve them, thanks to the nuclear deal.

I'm here today first and foremost as my capacity as the Secretary of State of the United States of America. Under President Trump, the security of our people and our allies comes first.

But in the finest traditions of American leadership, the United States will continue to unite sovereign nations in their responsibility to work for the peace and security of their own people and a stable international order.

The United States is going to continue to be relentless in building a coalition of responsible nations who are serious in confronting the Iranian regime's reckless ballistic missile activity.

This includes the treatment of its own people as well. That type of malign activity is something that the United States will keep standing side by side with the people of Iran. They have been the worst victims of the regime for nearly 40 years and they have the unwavering support of the United States.

Finally, The Trump administration clearly defined in May the 12 areas in which we are demanding change from Iran.

If Iran makes a fundamental strategic shift and honors these demands, we are prepared to ease our pressure campaign and support the modernization and reintegration of the Iranian economy into the international economic system.

But relief – relief from our efforts will come only when we see tangible, demonstrated, and sustained shifts in Tehran's policies.

Thank you.

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Press Releases: Public Designation, Due to Significant Corruption, of Nicaragua's Roberto Jose Rivas Reyes

Media Note
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
December 12, 2018

Due to his involvement in significant corruption, the Department is publicly designating the President of Nicaragua's Supreme Electoral Council, Roberto Jose Rivas Reyes, under the terms of Section 7031(c) of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act of 2018. Rivas was designated in December 2017 under Executive Order 13818 implementing the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act for involvement in significant corruption and for perpetuating electoral fraud that undermined Nicaragua's electoral institutions. Section 7031(c) provides that, in cases where the Secretary of State has credible information that foreign officials have been involved in significant corruption or a gross violation of human rights, those individuals and their immediate family members are ineligible for entry into the United States.

The law also requires the Secretary of State to publicly or privately designate such officials and their immediate family members. In addition to the designation of Mr. Rivas, the Secretary is also publicly designating Mr. Rivas' spouse, Ileana Patricia Lacayo Delgado de Rivas.

For more information, please contact INL-PAPD@state.gov.

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