

# **Press Releases: Secretary Pompeo's Call With Nigerian President Buhari**

Readout  
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
May 17, 2018

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The below is attributable to Spokesperson Heather Nauert:

On May 17, Secretary Pompeo called Nigerian President Buhari. The Secretary noted the longstanding relationship between the Nigerian and American people and underscored the themes of the April 30 official working visit of President Buhari to the White House. He recognized Nigerian leadership across the African continent on priorities we share: countering terrorism and other threats to peace and security, creating economic opportunity, fighting corruption, and advancing democracy and stability. The Secretary welcomed continued cooperation in advancing our nations' mutual prosperity.

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## **Press Releases: 2018 U.S.-Vietnam Human Rights Dialogue**

Media Note  
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
May 17, 2018

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Today, the Department of State hosted the 22nd session of the U.S.-Vietnam Human Rights Dialogue. Ambassador Michael Kozak of the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, and Director General Pham Hai Anh of the Department of International Organizations in the Vietnamese Ministry of Foreign Affairs led their respective delegations in the Dialogue.

The Dialogue covered a wide range of human rights issues, including the importance of continued progress on legal reform efforts, rule of law, freedom of expression and assembly, religious freedom, labor rights, rights of vulnerable populations, multilateral cooperation, as well as individual cases of concern.

The promotion of human rights is a crucial part of U.S. foreign policy and key to our ongoing dialogue with Vietnam under the U.S.-Vietnam Comprehensive Partnership.

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## **[Press Releases: Report of the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission in Syria Regarding an Alleged Incident in Saraqib, Syrian Arab Republic on 4 February 2018](#)**

Press Statement  
Heather Nauert

Department Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
May 17, 2018

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On May 15, 2018, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) Fact-Finding Mission, released its report regarding an alleged incident in Saraqib, Syrian Arab Republic on 4 February 2018. The FFM *“determined that chlorine, released from cylinders through mechanical impact, was likely used as a chemical weapon on 4 February 2018 in the Al Talil neighborhood of Saraqib.”*

The FFM conducted a comprehensive investigation including analysis from interviews, supporting material submitted during the interview process, analysis of environmental samples, and subsequent cross-referencing and corroboration of evidence. In addition, patients who sought treatment at medical facilities shortly after the incident showed signs and symptoms consistent with exposure to chlorine. This attack bears all the hallmarks of similar past chemical weapons attacks by the Assad regime against its own people. The Syrian regime’s offensive around Saraqib was also marked by its characteristic brutality and disregard for civilian lives.

The OPCW’s Fact-Finding Mission does not attribute responsibility for an attack. Unfortunately, Russia has vetoed the renewal of Joint Investigative Mechanism, which was the only impartial and independent body with the mandate for attributing responsibility, at the UN Security Council five times.

For seven long years there has been no let-up in the atrocities committed by the Assad regime, enabled by its backers, Russia and Iran, in flagrant violation of international law. The suffering that has been inflicted on the Syrian people by the Assad regime and its Iranian and Russian backers is abhorrent. Russia, which promised the world in 2013 that it would guarantee the destruction of Syria’s chemical weapons stocks, is ultimately responsible for their continued use there.

We condemn, in the strongest terms possible, the use of chemical weapons. As President Trump said, these are not the acts of a man, but of a monster. We are committed to ensuring that all those responsible for the use of chemical weapons in Syria are held to account. We will not rest in our efforts to seek justice for the victims of these abhorrent chemical weapons attacks.

As part of our determination to hold those who use chemical weapons accountable, senior officials from over 30 nations will gather in Paris on May 18, 2018, for a Ministerial Meeting of the International Partnership against Impunity for the Use of Chemical Weapons. The Partnership ministerial will address recent chemical weapons use by States and non-State actors, in addition to actions the Partnership can take to contribute to the deterrence of future use and attribution in cases where use has occurred.

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## **Press Releases: Assistant Secretary of State for Consular Affairs Carl Risch Travels to the Republic of Korea and China**

Media Note  
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
May 17, 2018

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Assistant Secretary of State for Consular Affairs Carl Risch will travel to the Republic of Korea (ROK) and China from May 20-24, 2018 to engage in bilateral discussions with counterparts on issues relevant to visa processing, consular protection, and International Parental Child Abduction (IPCA). Assistant Secretary Risch also plans to review consular operations at our U.S. Embassies in Seoul and Beijing and our Consulates General in Shenyang and Chengdu.

The United States is committed to long-term engagement with the ROK and China on a range of consular issues.

For press inquiries please contact [CAPRESSREQUESTS@state.gov](mailto:CAPRESSREQUESTS@state.gov) or (202) 485-6150.

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# Press Releases: Deputy Secretary Sullivan Travel to Argentina and Brazil

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Deputy Secretary of State John J. Sullivan will travel to Buenos Aires, Argentina from May 20-21 to lead the U.S. delegation to the G-20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting. The G-20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting offers an opportunity for foreign ministers to exchange views and collaborate on global economic, political, and security issues of mutual concern, including sustainable development and the role of multilateralism. These conversations will set the stage for the G-20 Leaders' Summit in Argentina in November. On the margins of the G-20 ministerial, Deputy Secretary Sullivan will meet with a number of foreign ministers for bilateral discussions.

Following the G-20, the Deputy Secretary will travel to Brasilia, Brazil to meet with leaders and launch the U.S.-Brazil Security Forum, a bilateral law enforcement cooperation initiative to address transnational crime and threat networks of mutual concern. He will also discuss our joint economic growth agenda and global issues, including Venezuela's humanitarian crisis and regional support for the restoration of democracy in Venezuela.

While in Brazil, the Deputy Secretary will also engage with U.S. Embassy staff and members of Brazilian civil society.

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