

Press Releases: Remarks at the Department of State's Foreign Affairs Day

Remarks
Mike Pompeo

Secretary of State

Dean Acheson Auditorium
Washington, DC
May 4, 2018

UNDER SECRETARY SHANNON: Ladies and gentlemen, welcome and good afternoon. It's a tremendous pleasure to see you all again. You've had a busy day, and I hope your discussions have been fruitful and have allowed you to engage on the many challenges and opportunities that face American diplomacy. Now you have an opportunity to meet and hear from our new Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo.

Secretary Pompeo is a great public servant, having served as an Army officer, a member of the House of Representatives, and until recently as director of the Central Intelligence Agency. He is a man of deep intellect, broad understanding of global issues, and strong character. He wasted no time getting started as Secretary of State, traveling directly from his confirmation and swearing-in to Brussels for the NATO ministerial, and then on to Saudi Arabia, Israel, and Jordan. He has returned in time for Foreign Affairs Day. (Laughter and applause.) And to meet with all of you.

So ladies and gentlemen, please join me in welcoming the 70th Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo. (Applause.)

SECRETARY POMPEO: Thank you. Thank you all very much. While I was standing there, I did the math. I count about 12,000 years of experience in the room. (Laughter.)

And I must say, it's an honor to be with you here today. It's the 53rd Foreign Affairs Day. I know I speak for everyone in the building when I say that we're grateful for your service to the country and the many sacrifices you and your families have made along the way.

President Eisenhower – I tend to use Kansas quotes – he's a Kansan I greatly admire – he once remarked that when State Department colleagues get together, it felt more like a "family gathering" than anything else. I have already found that description fits. I was given an incredibly warm welcome on my first day. The team has been great. My wife joked that she hoped that I wasn't peaking that day. (Laughter.) Always that risk. And it's still the case. As I was walking down the hall, I realized I still need help to find my way around the building.

I want to thank a few people for making today possible. Our generous co-sponsors, the American Foreign Service Association, DACOR, and the Senior Living Foundation of the American Foreign Service. Thank you for making this possible, and for your constant support of our team. (Applause.)

I also want to thank – congratulate, rather, some very special people. I want to congratulate the award recipients: DACOR's Foreign Service Cup winner Ambassador Henry Allen Holmes. (Applause.) Thank you, Ambassador, for serving our community both in and out of government, and to dedicating your life to equipping the next generation of our team's leaders. We are also proud today to recognize the winners of the Director General's Civil Service Cup and Foreign Service Cup – Richard Greene and Ambassador Kristie Kenney. (Applause.)

You have all had a long day, but this day does offer a real opportunity, an opportunity to review – to consider our successes from the past in a building of strong – and in how we've built a strong, diverse corps of the best foreign affairs professionals in the world. But it also provides an opportunity to consider the future, and in my first week on the job it's mostly future, not past. There are many challenges we face today; you all know that. And while I'm new to this, and it is my first week, I want to talk to you about where I believe we're going, and my commitment to you and our

Foreign and Civil Service team.

But for starters, the good news is while I have not been here long, I already know the mettle, patriotism, and the nature and character and the dedication of you and your colleagues. I remember trips I took as a member of Congress where I watched Foreign Service officers putting their lives on hold at all hours of the day and night, working weekends to help us get the most out of our visit. And I know they were working when we were gone, as well.

One thing I learned right away is that the department's heroes regularly toil outside of the limelight, in tough environments all over the world. So well before I raised my right hand and took the Oath of Office, the State Department had already served me incredibly well. And it is indeed an enormous honor to now be part of this group.

These times are turbulent. The demands are for strong leadership. It is essential that our team does that and counters the threats that we face with courage and strength. I know that you all did that; I know that our team will do that in the days ahead.

Fortunately, we have a President who believes in muscular diplomacy as well, one that makes full use of the instruments of national power to advance, first and foremost, vital American interests and values.

Effective, forward-thinking diplomacy increases our chances of solving problems peacefully, without ever firing a shot.

Our foreign policy, too, it's got to be pragmatic while still remaining principled – and agile enough to respond to changing circumstances yet anchored in the fundamental ideals and values that ground – ground our nation's history. I saw our country's strength and commitment to those ideals as a young cavalry officer. Tom referred to my time in the military. I led troops that patrolled the boundary between freedom and communism along the East German – then-East German and Czechoslovakian border. Today the world strength – the world needs that strength and those ideals ever more.

We have to continue this centuries-old mission of defending freedom, liberty, and human dignity around the world, while first keeping our country and people safe.

At that time, I recall we were prepared for conflict along the Iron Curtain, but it was diplomacy executed over months and years and, indeed, decades that saved me and my tank platoon from ever having to engage.

This is every corner of the world today. Men and women of the State Department and USAID out there serving America's interests. It's essential to deal with the many challenges. My mission is to help every member of our team achieve that goal.

Today there are several places – you've heard about some of them – there's enormous diplomatic effort to continue to keep the pressure on North Korea and bring them to the negotiating table, to a place where we can successfully eliminate the threat from Kim Jong-un's nuclear arsenal.

We see it, too, with our allies in Europe. I spent my first few days there – indeed, my first hours. We're blessed to have so many allies with strong relationships. There are, of course, rough times and places that we disagree. But these countries share our values and our interests, and we all have a common effort in ensuring prosperity for our nations moving forward.

I traveled from there to the Middle East. We need strong diplomatic efforts there as well to prevent Iran's destabilizing behavior in Syria, in Yemen, and across the region. We have to tackle the threat from jihadist terror and from places with really weak governance. These are all great challenges, but I'm confident that our team can develop strategies and diplomatic footprints capable of resolving them.

We often don't talk so much about Latin America, but as we witness the destruction of a once prosperous and democratic nation in our near-abroad, we need to tackle that diplomatically as well. A dictator today in Venezuela cripples his economy and starves his people. We need a strong State Department and USAID to help the millions of Venezuelans fleeing the corrupt regime as a result of this entirely man-made crisis.

And finally, we need our diplomats and foreign affairs professionals working all over the world to promote the dignity of every single human being to live freely and achieve their full potential.

A lot's changed in the 53 years since the first time this ceremony was held. But I am confident that one thing that has never faltered is the character of the people who deliver American diplomacy. The men and women of this department and the agencies represented have always been called upon to do great things. Great things that still resonate throughout these walls and throughout the history of our great country. This team responded to the Iranian revolution in 1979; and organized an important summit in Reykjavik in 1986; we built a coalition of partners during the first Gulf War; and I've already talked about the reunification of Germany, assisting a newly free Central and Eastern Europe in the wake of it. There's more history to be made. I'm confident of that. And it will be because of the hardworking men and women that I have been chosen to lead.

I want to thank everyone here today for helping write that history. This is a remarkable institution. I've seen a handful of our officers in this first week. I can tell you that you have prepared them well. Over the course of the weeks and months, I'd welcome thoughts from you, ideas, your expertise, and I know that together we can achieve great things for our nation.

Today is also special because we get a chance to remember and honor the sacrifice of Americans living and working abroad on behalf of the United States.

Following my remarks, it will be a privilege to take part in a memorial ceremony to honor those who lost their lives in service to our country. In particular, we will honor the service of one man and one woman who made the ultimate sacrifice while honorably serving America abroad. Our nation owes them and their families an enormous debt of gratitude. Let's remember them

and the great sacrifice our team makes every day to advance America's interests and protect our nation.

It has been a great pleasure to host the reunion my first week on the job. I cannot imagine a better start to my time in service. Thank you for your service, and please do not be strangers. Thank you and God bless you. (Applause.)

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Press Releases: Poland National Day

Press Statement
Mike Pompeo

Secretary of State

Washington, DC
May 3, 2018

On behalf of President Trump and the people of the United States, I congratulate the people and government of Poland as you celebrate the 227th anniversary of the Constitution of the Third of May.

The Constitution of the Third of May was a landmark event in Poland's history, making it among the first countries in the world to adopt a written constitution. This year is also the centennial of Poland's recovery of its independence on November 11, 1918, as well as President Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points, which included a call for the restoration of "an independent Poland." We recall our common heritage in the events of 1918 and affirm our strong alliance today.

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[Press Releases: Secretary Pompeo To Deliver Remarks at the Foreign Affairs Day Celebration and Attend the AFSA Memorial Plaque Ceremony on May 4](#)

Notice to the Press
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
May 3, 2018

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo will deliver the keynote address at the Department of State's Foreign Affairs Day for Active and Retired Employees of the Department of State and other Foreign Affairs Agencies on Friday, May 4 at 3:45 p.m. in the Dean Acheson Auditorium at the Department of State.

Secretary Pompeo also will deliver remarks at the American Foreign Service Association (AFSA) Memorial Plaque Ceremony at 4:15 p.m. in the C Street Lobby. The Secretary will be joined by Deputy Secretary John J. Sullivan, Under Secretary Thomas A. Shannon, Deputy Under Secretary William E. Todd, and AFSA President Ambassador Barbara Stephenson. The AFSA Memorial Plaque Ceremony honors those who have lost their lives while serving overseas due to circumstances distinctive to the Foreign Service, including acts of violence or terrorism. AFSA President Barbara Stephenson will preside over the ceremony and deliver welcoming remarks. Secretary Pompeo and Under Secretary Shannon will also give remarks paying tribute to those who made the ultimate sacrifice while serving our country around the world. They will also pay their respects to the family and friends of the heroic employees whose names will be added to the plaque:

- **Michael Andrew Cameron "Andy" Jordan, a Foreign Service specialist, died on December 18, 2016 in Juba, South Sudan.**
- **Selena Nelson-Salcedo, a Foreign Service officer, died on June 4,**

2017 in Bratislava, Slovakia.

Both events are open to the press. **Please note:** Due to timing and required preset times, press will not be able to cover both events.

For the keynote address at the Foreign Affairs Day Celebration, preset time for video cameras is 2:30 p.m. from the 23rd Street Entrance. Final access for writers and still photographers is 3:30 p.m. from the 23rd Street Entrance.

For the AFSA Memorial Plaque Ceremony, preset time for video cameras is 3:30 p.m. from the 23rd Street Entrance. Final access for writers and still photographers is 3:45 p.m. from the 23rd Street Entrance.

Media representatives may attend this event upon presentation of one of the following: (1) A U.S. Government-issued identification card (Department of State, White House, Congress, Department of Defense or Foreign Press Center), (2) a media-issued photo identification card, or (3) a letter from their employer on letterhead verifying their employment as a journalist, accompanied by an official photo identification card (driver's license, passport).

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[Press Releases: The Global Engagement Center's Technology Series To Counter](#)

Foreign Propaganda and Disinformation

Media Note
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
May 2, 2018

The Department of State is announcing the establishment of the Global Engagement Center's (GEC) Technology Series to counter foreign propaganda and disinformation. This initiative will convene some of the country's best technologists, academics, and civil society advocacy groups on a regular basis to identify technological solutions and to encourage stronger public-private partnerships in the fight against foreign propaganda and disinformation.

On May 2, 2018, the GEC held its kickoff event for this technology series and participants agreed to hold short counter foreign propaganda and disinformation technology demonstrations over the next six months. These technologies may include, but are not limited to, bot network detection, blockchain-enabled content authentication, and counter-messaging automation.

Acting Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Heather Nauert attended the event and emphasized the importance of this initiative. "These demonstrations will show the U.S. interagency how specific technology can be applied to stem the spread of false narratives and to authenticate emerging information," said Under Secretary Nauert.

The GEC is seeking additional participants in its future GEC Technology Series activities. For more information, please contact GECIncubator@state.gov.

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Press Releases: On the Occasion of North Korea Freedom Week

Press Statement
Heather Nauert

Department Spokesperson

Washington, DC
May 2, 2018

On the occasion of North Korea Freedom Week, we must not forget the millions of North Koreans who continue to suffer under one of the most repressive and abusive governments in the world. For more than 60 years the people of North Korea have faced egregious human rights violations in virtually every aspect of life. In addition to the roughly 100,000 individuals, including children and family members of the accused, who suffer in political prison camps, North Koreans face an almost complete denial of fundamental freedoms by their government. Those trying to flee this oppressive environment, if caught, are often tortured or killed.

We remain gravely concerned and deeply troubled by these abuses. In tandem with the maximum pressure campaign, we will continue to press for accountability for those responsible. We are also going to continue our efforts to increase the flow of independent information into, out of, and within this isolated state to present everyday North Koreans with a more realistic picture of the outside world.

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