

Press Releases: Republic of Palau Independence Day

Press Statement
Rex W. Tillerson

Secretary of State

Washington, DC
September 29, 2017

On behalf of the United States, please accept our best wishes as the people of Palau celebrate their 23rd Independence Day on October 1st.

Palau is an extraordinary friend of the United States. We continue to work together to promote peace and prosperity around the world as well as at the United Nations. Our relationship goes beyond that of our two governments – Americans and Palauans share warm cultural ties and democratic traditions. From Palauans contributing to our mutual security serving in the U.S. military, to Palauans actively engaged in their local communities across the United States, we are bound together by our shared values. We are deeply grateful to those Palauans who have given their lives in combat to protect our shared way of life. We look forward to working with Palau to create a better future for our two peoples.

We offer our congratulations to Palauans everywhere on this special occasion.

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Press Releases: Actions Taken in Response to Attacks on U.S. Government Personnel in Cuba

Remarks

Rex W. Tillerson

Secretary of State

Washington, DC

September 29, 2017

Over the past several months, 21 U.S. Embassy employees have suffered a variety of injuries from attacks of an unknown nature. The affected individuals have exhibited a range of physical symptoms, including ear complaints, hearing loss, dizziness, headache, fatigue, cognitive issues, and difficulty sleeping. Investigators have been unable to determine who is responsible or what is causing these attacks.

On September 29, the Department ordered the departure of non-emergency personnel assigned to the U.S. Embassy in Havana, as well as all family members. Until the Government of Cuba can ensure the safety of our diplomats in Cuba, our Embassy will be reduced to emergency personnel in order to minimize the number of diplomats at risk of exposure to harm.

In conjunction with the ordered departure of our diplomatic personnel, the Department has issued a Travel Warning advising U.S. citizens to avoid travel to Cuba and informing them of our decision to draw down our diplomatic staff. We have no reports that private U.S. citizens have been affected, but the attacks are known to have occurred in U.S. diplomatic residences and hotels frequented by U.S. citizens. The Department does not have definitive answers on the cause or source of the attacks and is unable to recommend a means to mitigate exposure.

The decision to reduce our diplomatic presence in Havana was made to ensure the safety of our personnel. We maintain diplomatic relations with Cuba, and our work in Cuba continues to be guided by the national security and foreign policy interests of the United States. Cuba has told us it will continue to investigate these attacks and we will continue to cooperate with them in this effort.

The health, safety, and well-being of our Embassy community is our greatest

concern. We will continue to aggressively investigate these attacks until the matter is resolved.

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Press Releases: United States **Congratulates Samoa on Accession to** **the Biological and Toxin Weapons** **Convention (BWC)**

Media Note
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
September 29, 2017

The United States congratulates Samoa, which deposited its instrument of accession to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention with the United States on September 21, 2017. Samoa's accession brings total membership in the BWC to 179 States Parties.

The BWC is critical to international efforts to address the threat posed by biological weapons, whether in the hands of State or non-State actors. Maximizing its effectiveness requires that all States become Parties and fully implement its obligations. We strongly urge all States not party to the BWC to join the Convention without delay.

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Press Releases: Summary of the U.S.- China Social and Cultural Dialogue

Media Note
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
September 28, 2017

Secretary of State Rex Tillerson and Chinese Vice Premier Liu Yandong co-chaired the inaugural U.S.-China Social and Cultural Dialogue today. The Dialogue underlined support for an array of cooperative areas in education, social development, science and technology, health, subnational, arts and culture, and environment and conservation.

In particular, the sides expressed support for the U.S.-China Fulbright program and for additional opportunities to promote study in the United States by Chinese students, who bring billions of dollars to the U.S. economy every year.

The success of our people-to-people ties is due in large part to the dynamism and commitment of the many American non-governmental organizations (NGOs) – such as universities, museums, foundations, advocacy groups, cultural institutions, and sports groups – that work in China. China committed that its Foreign NGO Management Law would not impede the activities of American NGOs in China. The United States looks forward to a new consultation on China's Foreign NGO Management Law before the end of this year.

Both sides acknowledged the importance of including effective intellectual property protections for researchers in our science and technology cooperation through the U.S.-China Science and Technology Agreement.

Both nations committed to maintain a clear process for the timely sharing of novel influenza viruses in the effort to detect, prevent, and control influenza outbreaks. The Secretary pressed China to take steps toward further healthcare sector liberalizations that would allow U.S. companies and health

experts to bring to China high quality healthcare facilities and services.

The social, cultural, and people-to-people ties between our two peoples are both deep rooted and dynamic. In this information age, American and Chinese citizens learn about each other and the world through well-established sources – such as print media, broadcasting, and cinema – and cutting edge electronic media. The Secretary noted the importance of adding media as an additional cooperative area for the Social and Cultural Dialogue in 2018. In this spirit, the Secretary advocated for foreign media access to Chinese audiences.

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Press Releases: Secretary Tillerson's Meeting With Philippine Secretary of Foreign Affairs Cayetano

Readout
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
September 28, 2017

The below is attributable to Department Spokesperson Heather Nauert:

Secretary Tillerson met with Philippine Secretary of Foreign Affairs Peter Cayetano on September 27 to coordinate on the upcoming East Asia Summit and U.S.-ASEAN Summit, as well as to discuss mutual areas of concern such as North Korea, counterterrorism, counternarcotics, rule of law, and maritime security.

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