

# Press Releases: ICC Arrest Warrant for Major Mahmoud al-Werfalli in Libya: Joint Statement by the Governments of France, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America

Media Note  
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
August 18, 2017

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The following is the text of a joint statement by the governments of France, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America.

*Begin Text:*

The governments of France, the United Kingdom, and the United States welcome the announcement on August 17 by the Libya National Army (LNA) that it will investigate reports of unlawful killings in Benghazi. We note that the LNA has recognized the arrest warrant by the International Criminal Court prosecutor for a member of the LNA, Major al-Werfalli, and are encouraged by the LNA's decision to suspend Major al-Werfalli pending an investigation. We call on the LNA to ensure that the investigation is carried out fully and fairly; and those responsible for the unlawful killings are held to account.

We are monitoring ongoing acts of conflict in Libya closely. Those suspected of committing, ordering, or failing to prevent unlawful killings and torture on all sides must be fully investigated and held accountable, as appropriate. We will continue our efforts at the international level to pursue appropriate action against those who are complicit in violations of international human rights law or international humanitarian law, whatever their affiliation. We consider that it is in Libya's interest to be able to rely on unified security forces responsible for the country's security and acting within the framework of Libya's laws and respecting international law.

The governments of France, the United Kingdom, and the United States also reaffirm their support for the Government of National Accord. We underscore the importance of the United Nations' central role in facilitating Libyan-led political dialogue, welcome the appointment of the new Special Representative

of the Secretary-General Ghassan Salamé, and look forward to supporting his efforts to facilitate a political solution in Libya.

*End Text.*

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## **Press Releases: Assumption of Legislative Powers in Venezuela**

Press Statement  
Heather Nauert

Department Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
August 18, 2017

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The United States strongly condemns the assumption of legislative powers by the illegitimate Constituent Assembly. This power grab is designed to supplant the democratically-elected National Assembly with an authoritarian committee operating above the law. In our view, the democratically-elected National Assembly is the only legitimate legislative body.

We join Venezuela's neighbors in condemning the illegitimate Constituent Assembly and its authoritarian directives. As long as the Maduro regime continues to conduct itself as an authoritarian dictatorship, we are prepared to bring the full weight of American economic and diplomatic power to bear in support of the Venezuelan people as they seek to restore their democracy.

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## **Press Releases: Afghanistan Independence Day**

Press Statement  
Rex W. Tillerson

Secretary of State

Washington, DC  
August 18, 2017

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On behalf of the Government of the United States of America, I would like to congratulate the Afghan people as they celebrate their 98th anniversary of independence on August 19th.

The Afghan spirit of resilience and courage in the face of adversity continues to guide the people of Afghanistan toward a better future. Afghanistan has made significant economic, political, and social progress in the last 16 years, and we bear witness every day to the Afghan people's dedication to building a more democratic and peaceful country.

Our strong friendship with Afghanistan is based on our mutual dedication to helping the Afghan people secure a safe and prosperous future. Today, the United States joins the people of Afghanistan in celebrating your independence.

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## **Press Releases: Hungary National Day**

Press Statement  
Rex W. Tillerson

Secretary of State

Washington, DC  
August 18, 2017

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On behalf of the United States, we extend our congratulations on the occasion of Saint Stephen's Day this August 20th.

The United States and Hungary are bound by strong connections between our people, a robust trade relationship, and a commitment to global security. Our membership in NATO, mutual efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan, and common mission to combat terrorism are critical to our shared security. Our shared commitments also include the fundamental values of "democracy, individual liberty, and the rule of law," enshrined in the North Atlantic Treaty.

We wish the people of Hungary prosperity and happiness as the nation comes together to celebrate the founding of the Hungarian state.

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## **Press Releases: Special Representative Volker To Travel to Belarus,**

# Lithuania, and Ukraine

Media Note  
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
August 18, 2017

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United States Special Representative for Ukraine Negotiations Kurt Volker will travel to Minsk, Belarus, where he will meet with a representative of the Russian government to discuss Russian-Ukrainian relations on August 21.

He will then travel to Vilnius, Lithuania, to meet with senior government officials to discuss the way forward in Ukraine.

On August 23, he will travel to Kyiv, Ukraine, where he will join Secretary of Defense James Mattis in meetings with senior Ukrainian government officials to discuss next steps in diplomatic negotiations to restore Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

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