

# [Press Releases: Remarks With Mongolian Foreign Minister Tsend Munkh-Orgil Before Their Meeting](#)

Remarks  
Rex W. Tillerson

Secretary of State

Treaty Room  
Washington, DC  
June 13, 2017

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**SECRETARY TILLERSON:** Welcome to the State Department. It's a pleasure to have you here.

**FOREIGN MINISTER MUNKH-ORGIL:** Thank you. Thank you for having us.

**SECRETARY TILLERSON:** Indeed. My pleasure.

**QUESTION:** Mr. Secretary, is the U.S. any closer to freeing the other three Americans in North Korea?

**SECRETARY TILLERSON:** It's a delicate matter. We're working on it.

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[Press Releases: FY 2018 State](#)

# Department Budget Request

Testimony

Rex W. Tillerson

Secretary of State

Opening Remarks Before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee

Washington, DC

June 13, 2017

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**CHAIRMAN CORKER:** Thank you, sir. Mr. Secretary, since I know you just made an announcement, before you begin your opening comments, would you like to go ahead and share with us what has just occurred and then do your opening statement?

**SECRETARY TILLERSON:** Well, some of you may have seen a press release that was put out just before I arrived announcing that at the President's direction, the Department of State has secured the release of Otto Warmbier from North Korea. He is on his way, en route home, to be reunited with his family. We continue our discussions with the North Korean regime regarding the release of the three other American citizens that have been detained. We have no comment on Mr. Warmbier's condition, out of respect to him and the family, and that is the statement that was released.

**CHAIRMAN CORKER:** Very good. Well, listen, we look forward to your opening comment and questions. Thank you again for being here, and you can begin with that, if you would. Thank you.

**SECRETARY TILLERSON:** Well, thank you, Chairman Corker, Ranking Member Cardin, distinguished members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this administration's State Department and USAID request for Fiscal Year 2018.

As we all know, America's global competitive advantages and standing as a leader are under constant challenge. The dedicated men and women of the State Department and USAID carry out the important and often perilous work of advancing America's interest every day, 24/7, 365 days a year. That mission is unchanged.

However, the State Department and USAID, like many other institutions here and around the world, have not evolved in their responsiveness as quickly as new challenges and threats to our national security have changed and are changing. We are challenged to respond to a post-Cold War world that set in motion new global dynamics, and a post-9/11 world characterized by historic

new threats that present themselves in ways never seen before, enabled by technological tools that we have been ill-prepared to engage.

The 21st century has already presented many evolving challenges to U.S. national security and economic prosperity. We must develop proactive responses to protect and advance the interest of the American people.

With such a broad array of threats facing the United States, the Fiscal Year 2018 budget request of \$37.6 billion aligns with the administration's objective of making America's security our top priority. The first responsibility of government is the security of its own citizens, and we will orient our diplomatic efforts toward fulfilling that commitment.

While our mission will also be focused on advancing the economic interest of the American people, the State Department's primary focus will be to protect our citizens at home and abroad. Our mission is at all times guided by our longstanding values of freedom, democracy, individual liberty, and human dignity. The conviction of our country's founders is enduring: that all men are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights. As a nation, we hold high the aspiration that all will one day experience the freedoms we have known.

In our young administration's foreign policy, we are motivated by the conviction that the more we engage with other nations on issues of security and prosperity, the more we will have opportunities to shape the human rights conditions in those nations. History has shown that the United States leaves a footprint of freedom wherever it goes. Ensuring the security and prosperity of the American people and advancing our values has necessitated difficult decisions in other areas of our budget.

The Fiscal Year 2018 budget request includes substantial funding for many foreign assistance programs under the auspices of USAID and the State Department, but we have made hard choices to reduce funding for other initiatives. Even with reductions in funding, we will continue to be the leader in international development, global health, democracy and good governance initiatives, as well as humanitarian efforts. If natural disasters or epidemics strike overseas, America will respond with the care and support it always has. And I'm convinced we can maximize the effectiveness of these programs and continue to offer America's helping hand to the world.

This budget request also reflects a commitment to ensure every tax dollar spent is aligned with the department's and USAID's mission critical objectives. The request focused the State Department and USAID's efforts on missions which deliver the greatest value and opportunity of success for the American people. The State Department and USAID budget increased over 60 percent from Fiscal Year 2007, reaching a record-high \$55.6 billion in Fiscal Year 2017. Recognizing this rate of increase in funding is not sustainable, the Fiscal Year 2018 budget request seeks to align the core missions of the State Department with historic funding levels. We believe this budget also represents the interests of the American people, including responsible stewardship of the public's money.

I know there is intense interest in prospective State Department and USAID redesign efforts. We have just completed collecting information on our organizational processes and culture through a survey that was made available to every one of our State and USAID colleagues. Over 35,000 surveys were completed, and we also have held in-person listening sessions with approximately 300 individuals to obtain their perspective on what we do and how we do it. I met personally with dozens of team members who spoke candidly about their experiences. From this feedback, we have been able to get a clearer overall view of our organization.

We have no preconceived outcomes, and our discussions of the goals, priorities, and direction of the State Department and USAID are not token exercises. The principles for our listening sessions and subsequent evaluation of our organization are the same as those which I stated in my confirmation hearing: for our foreign policy. We will see the world for what it is, be honest with ourselves and the American people, follow the facts where they lead us, and hold ourselves and others accountable. We are still analyzing the feedback we have received, and we expect to release the final findings of the survey soon.

From all of this, one thing is certain: I'm listening to what my people tell me are the challenges facing them, and how we can produce a more efficient, effective State Department and USAID. And we will work as a team and with the Congress to improve both organizations.

Throughout my career, I have never believed, nor have I ever experienced, that the level of funding devoted to a goal is the most important factor in achieving it. Our budget will never determine our ability to be effective – our people will. My colleagues at the State Department and USAID are a deep source of inspiration, and their patriotism, professionalism, and willingness to make sacrifices for our country are our greatest resource.

I am confident that the U.S. State Department and USAID will continue to deliver results for the American people. I thank you for your time and am happy now to answer your questions.

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# Press Releases: FY 2018 State Department Budget Request

Testimony  
Rex W. Tillerson

Secretary of State

Opening Remarks Before the Senate Appropriations Committee on Foreign  
Operations  
Washington, DC  
June 13, 2017

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**SECRETARY TILLERSON:** Thanks, Chairman Graham, Ranking Member Leahy, and distinguished members of the subcommittee. I appreciate the opportunity to discuss the administration's State Department and USAID budget request for Fiscal Year 2018.

As we all know, America's global competitive advantages and standing as a leader are under constant challenge. The dedicated men and women of the State Department and USAID carry out the important and often perilous work of advancing America's interests every single day, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. That mission is unchanged. However, the State Department and USAID, like many other institutions here at home and around the world, have not evolved in their responsiveness as quickly as new challenges and threats to our national security have changed and are changing.

We are challenged to respond to a post-Cold War world that's set in motion new global dynamics and a post-9/11 world characterized by historic threats that present themselves in ways never seen before, enabled by technological tools that we have been ill-prepared to engage. The 21st century has already presented many evolving challenges to the U.S. national security and economic prosperity. We must develop proactive responses to protect and advance the interests of the American people.

With such a broad array of threats facing the United States, the Fiscal Year 2018 budget request of \$37.6 billion aligns with the administration's objective of making America's security our top priority. The first responsibility of government is the security of its own citizens, and we will orient our diplomatic efforts toward fulfilling that commitment. While our mission will also be focused on advancing the economic interests of the American people, the State Department's primary focus will be to protect our citizens at home and abroad.

Our mission is at all times guided by our longstanding values of freedom, democracy, individual liberty, and human dignity. The conviction of our country's founders is enduring: that all men are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights. As a nation, we hold high the aspiration that all will one day experience the freedoms we have known. In our young administration's foreign policy, we are motivated by the conviction that the more we engage with other nations on issues of security and prosperity, the more we will have opportunities to shape the human rights conditions in those nations.

History has shown that the United States leaves a footprint of freedom wherever it goes. Ensuring the security and prosperity of the American people and advancing our values has necessitated difficult decisions in areas of our budget. The Fiscal Year 2018 budget request includes substantial funding for many foreign assistance programs under the auspices of USAID and the State Department, but we have made hard choices to reduce funding for other initiatives. But even with the reductions in funding, we will continue to be the leader in international development, global health, democracy, and good governance initiatives, and humanitarian efforts. If natural disasters or epidemics strike overseas, America will respond with care and support. I am convinced we can maximize the effectiveness of these programs and continue to offer America's helping hand to the world.

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## **[Press Releases: State Department Terrorist Designations of Marwan Ibrahim Hussayn Tah al-Azawi and Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia](#)**

Media Note  
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
June 12, 2017

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The Department of State has designated Marwan Ibrahim Hussayn Tah al-Azawi

and Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia (MMI) as Specially Designated Global Terrorists (SDGTs) under Section 1(b) of Executive Order (E.O.) 13224, which imposes sanctions on foreign persons determined to have committed, or pose a significant risk of committing, acts of terrorism that threaten the security of U.S. nationals or the national security, foreign policy, or economy of the United States. As a consequence of these designations, U.S. persons are generally prohibited from engaging in transactions or dealings with Azawi and MMI, and all of their property and interests in property subject to United States jurisdiction are frozen. In addition to the State Department designations, the Department of the Treasury also designated Attallah Salman 'Abd Kafi al-Jaburi, an Iraq-based, Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) senior leader in charge of factories producing improvised explosive devices, vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices, and explosives, and involved in the development of chemical weapons, as an SDGT under E.O. 13224.

Marwan Ibrahim Hussayn Tah al-Azawi is an Iraqi ISIS leader connected to ISIS's development of chemical weapons for use in ongoing combat against Iraqi Security Forces. ISIS has repeatedly used sulfur mustard in chemical weapons attacks in Syria as well as in Iraq.

Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia (MMI) is an Indonesia-based terrorist group formed in 2000 by Abu Bakar Bashir, leader of the designated Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) and SDGT group, Jemaah Islamiya (JI). The group has conducted attacks in Indonesia, including claiming responsibility for a May 2012 attack at the book launch of Canadian author Irshad Manji; the attack left three attendees hospitalized. MMI also has links to al-Qa'ida's affiliate in Syria, the FTO and SDGT group al-Nusrah Front.

Today's action notifies the U.S. public and the international community that Azawi and MMI have committed or pose a significant risk of committing acts of terrorism. Designations expose and isolate organizations and individuals, and result in denial of access to the U.S. financial system. Moreover, designations can assist or complement the law enforcement actions of other U.S. agencies and other governments.

A list of State Department-designated FTOs and SDGTs is available here: <http://www.state.gov/j/ct/list/index.htm>.

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# Press Releases: Global Peace Operations Initiative Promotes International Peacekeeping

Media Note  
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
June 12, 2017

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The Department of State's Bureau of Political-Military Affairs and the Department of Defense's Office of the Secretary of Defense are co-hosting the 11th annual [Global Peace Operations Initiative \(GPOI\)](#) Worldwide Consultations at the State Department on June 12-16, 2017. Participants from the Department of State, Department of Defense, other key U.S. government organizations, and the United Nations are discussing the evolving nature of peacekeeping; ways to strengthen performance and operational readiness of peacekeeping units; and efforts to address sexual exploitation and abuse by peacekeepers. Participants will also review ongoing GPOI activities, share implementers' best practices, and discuss program priorities for the years ahead.

GPOI represents the U.S.'s primary global investment for strengthening international capacity and capabilities to execute peace operations around the world. The GPOI program accomplishes this goal by enhancing partner-country capabilities to train and sustain peacekeeping proficiencies and by building the capacity of the UN and regional organizations to conduct such missions.

GPOI has created a tangible return on investment by helping to expand the base of capable peacekeepers. For example, GPOI partners have increased their military deployment rates to UN and African Union (AU) peace operations by 161 percent since becoming GPOI partners. Additionally, GPOI is helping the majority of its partner countries develop critical enabling capabilities which are in short supply in UN and regional peace operations, such as aviation, engineering, logistics, and medical support. GPOI is also helping partner countries recognize the important role women play in peace operations. For example, over the past five years, active GPOI partners have increased the number of female military peacekeepers deployed by 62 percent. GPOI's positive impact can be seen in virtually every UN or regional organizations' peace operation around the world today.

For more information, please contact the Bureau of Political-Military

Affairs, Office of Congressional and Public Affairs at [PM-CPA@state.gov](mailto:PM-CPA@state.gov) and follow us on Twitter @StateDeptPM.

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