

# [Press Releases: Israel's Right to Self-Defense](#)

Press Statement  
Robert Palladino

Deputy Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
December 28, 2018

---

The United States fully supports Israel's right to defend itself against Iranian regional actions that endanger Israeli national security and the safety of the Israeli people. Iranian support of and supply to terrorist groups in Syria and across the region that have the clear intent and capability to strike Israel are unacceptable. The United States fully supports Israel's right to defend itself against the Iranian regime's aggressive adventurism, and we will continue to ensure that Israel has the military capacity to do so decisively. The commitment of the Trump Administration and the American people to ensuring Israel's security is both enduring and unshakable.

*The Office of Website Management, Bureau of Public Affairs, manages this site as a portal for information from the U.S. State Department. External links to other Internet sites should not be construed as an endorsement of the views or privacy policies contained therein.*

---

# [Press Releases: Secretary Pompeo Travels to Brazil and Colombia To Strengthen Prosperity, Security, and](#)

# Democracy

Fact Sheet

Robert Palladino

Deputy Spokesperson

Washington, DC

December 28, 2018

---

- Secretary Pompeo is leading a Presidential Delegation to Brazil for the inauguration of President-elect Jair Bolsonaro, a leader who has expressed interest in closer ties with the United States and our regional allies.
- We welcome the opportunity to forge a close and comprehensive partnership with South America's most populous democracy and the world's eighth-largest economy. Our close cooperation has the potential to make our countries more prosperous and more secure. Together, we will support democracy throughout the Western Hemisphere.
- The Secretary's trip to Cartagena, Colombia, to meet with President Ivan Duque furthers our strong partnership with Colombia on shared goals, including building a more prosperous and secure hemisphere.

## **INCREASING ECONOMIC PROSPERITY**

- As the two largest economies in the region with approximately \$100 billion in bilateral trade per year, this new chapter in Brazil's democracy presents an historic opportunity for expanded prosperity in the bilateral, U.S.-Brazil relationship.
- The United States held a trade-in-goods surplus with Brazil of \$7.8 billion for 2017. We will seek to increase trade and investment between our countries, including increasing opportunities for U.S. businesses in technology, defense, and agriculture.
- We applaud President-elect Bolsonaro for standing up for Brazilian sovereignty in the face of China's predatory trade and lending practices.
- The Secretary's visit to Colombia will build on our countries' mutual successes under the U.S.-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement, which has doubled U.S. agricultural exports, to \$2.53 billion in 2017 from nearly \$1.3 billion in 2011.

## **DEFENDING AND STRENGTHENING DEMOCRACY**

- Brazil's latest free and fair election demonstrates the stability and integrity of the country's democratic institutions.

- As the two largest democracies in the hemisphere, our partnership is based on shared values and commitments to democracy and the rule of law, public security, education, and human rights.
- The United States will work with Brazil to support the peoples of Venezuela, Cuba, and Nicaragua who are struggling to live in freedom against repressive regimes. We welcome President-elect Bolsonaro's commitment to stand up to tyrants.
- In Colombia, the Secretary will meet with President Ivan Duque, commend Colombia for assisting Venezuelans fleeing the Maduro regime, and thank President Duque for his commitment to increasing pressure on Caracas to restore democracy in Venezuela.

#### **ADVANCING GLOBAL AND REGIONAL SECURITY**

- We seek to deepen our cooperation with Brazil and Colombia against transnational crime, including counter-narcotics, terrorism, and threats to international peace and security, like North Korea.

*The Office of Website Management, Bureau of Public Affairs, manages this site as a portal for information from the U.S. State Department. External links to other Internet sites should not be construed as an endorsement of the views or privacy policies contained therein.*

---

## **[Press Releases: Secretary Pompeo's Trip to Brazil and Colombia](#)**

Press Statement  
Robert Palladino

Deputy Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
December 27, 2018

---

U.S. Secretary of State Michael R. Pompeo will travel to Brazil and Colombia from December 31-January 2.

From December 31-January 2, Secretary Pompeo will lead the Presidential Delegation to Brasilia to attend the inauguration of Jair Bolsonaro, President-elect of Brazil. In addition to joining inauguration-related events, he will participate in a bilateral meeting with incoming President Bolsonaro and Foreign Minister Araujo to reaffirm the strong U.S.-Brazil partnership in promoting prosperity, security, education, and democracy. While in Brasilia, Secretary Pompeo will also participate in bilateral meetings with Peruvian President Martin Vizcarra and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

On January 2, Secretary Pompeo will travel to Cartagena, Colombia, to meet with Colombian President Ivan Duque. He will underscore U.S. support for shared goals, such as counternarcotics efforts, peace accord implementation, trade, and responding to the regional crisis perpetrated by the disastrous policies of the Maduro regime in Venezuela.

Follow Secretary Pompeo's travel to Brazil and Colombia via @StateDept and @SecPompeo on Twitter and go to the Department's Flickr account for the latest trip photos. Stay connected at <https://blogs.state.gov/engage> and keep track of all of the Secretary's travels at <https://www.state.gov/-/secretary/travel/index.htm>.

*The Office of Website Management, Bureau of Public Affairs, manages this site as a portal for information from the U.S. State Department. External links to other Internet sites should not be construed as an endorsement of the views or privacy policies contained therein.*

---

## **[Press Releases: On the Occasion of Christmas](#)**

Press Statement  
Michael R. Pompeo

Secretary of State

Washington, DC  
December 25, 2018

---

On behalf of the Department of State, I would like to wish a Merry Christmas to all those celebrating today, together with Orthodox Christians celebrating in early January.

This joyful occasion brings Christian communities together to rejoice in the birth of Jesus. In addition to celebrating and spending time with loved ones, the spirit of Christmas reminds us of Jesus' message of hope, mercy, and love of neighbor. This season reminds us to care for the less fortunate, including those communities around the world today who are not able to observe this holiday freely due to persecution or instability.

Again, a very Merry Christmas to those celebrating around the world. May you be surrounded by family, friends, and neighbors during this festive season.

*The Office of Website Management, Bureau of Public Affairs, manages this site as a portal for information from the U.S. State Department. External links to other Internet sites should not be construed as an endorsement of the views or privacy policies contained therein.*

---

## **Press Releases: Venezuelan Navy Actions in Guyana**

Press Statement  
Robert Palladino

Deputy Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
December 23, 2018

---

On December 22, the Venezuelan Navy aggressively stopped ExxonMobil contracted vessels operating under an oil exploration agreement with the Cooperative Republic of Guyana in its Exclusive Economic Zone.

We underscore that Guyana has the sovereign right to explore and exploit resources in its Exclusive Economic Zone. We call on Venezuela to respect international law and the rights of its neighbors.

*The Office of Website Management, Bureau of Public Affairs, manages this site as a portal for information from the U.S. State Department. External links to other Internet sites should not be construed as an endorsement of the views or privacy policies contained therein.*