

Press Releases: On the Attack in Strasbourg

Press Statement
Robert Palladino

Deputy Spokesperson

Washington, DC
December 12, 2018

The United States stands in solidarity with France and condemns in the strongest terms the horrific act of terror in Strasbourg. Our thoughts are with the family and loved ones of those affected and with all the people of Strasbourg. We commend the work of the first responders, and are ready to provide any assistance that French officials require in this difficult time. We remain committed to working with France and our other allies and partners to defeat the global threat of terrorism. Crimes that target the innocent only reinforce our shared resolve to stop these senseless attacks and those who would commit them.

The U.S. Mission to France has issued a Security Alert to inform U.S. citizens of the attack, and stands ready to provide consular assistance to any affected U.S. citizens. U.S. citizens should maintain security awareness and monitor media and local information sources. We also strongly encourage U.S. citizens in Strasbourg to contact family and friends in the United States directly to inform them of their safety and whereabouts.

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Press Releases: Remarks at the United Nations Security Council Meeting on Iran

Remarks
Michael R. Pompeo

Secretary of State

United Nations
New York City
December 12, 2018

SECRETARY POMPEO: Thank you very much, and good morning. Thank you for the kind words. I appreciate them.

Just two days ago, the head of the IRGC's airspace division, Amir Hajizadeh, boasted that Iran is capable of building missiles with a range beyond 2,000 kilometers. He said, quote, "We have the ability to build missiles with broader ranges. We don't have limitations from a technical perspective." End of quote. He also said there are many "enemy bases" within 800 kilometers of Iran – in other words, within striking distance of Iranian missiles. He

bragged that Iran does 40 to 50 tests per year.

As I'll talk about further, it is clear that the Iranian regime's ballistic missile activity has grown since the nuclear deal. Iran has exploited the goodwill of nations and defied multiple Security Council resolutions in its quest for a robust ballistic missile force. The United States will never stand for this.

No nation that seeks peace and prosperity in the Middle East should either.

Since 2006, this Council has been telling Iran to stop testing and proliferating ballistic missiles in one form or another. From 2010 to 2015, Iran was subject to UN Security Council Resolution 1929 – the strictest resolution addressing the Iranian ballistic missiles to date.

In that resolution, the Security Council decided that, "Iran shall not undertake any activity related to ballistic missiles capable of delivering nuclear weapons, including launches using ballistic missile technology, and that States shall take... necessary measures to prevent the transfer of technology or technical assistance to Iran related to such activities." This provision of UNSCR 1929 imposed a legal prohibition on Iran's ballistic missile activity. There was force of law behind these words.

Nevertheless, Iran conducted multiple ballistic missile launches between 2010 and 2015, in flagrant violation of that resolution.

So what did we do in response? Did we increase accountability on Iran for serial violations of international law? Quite the opposite. In fact, the level of accountability on Iran has diminished instead of – decreased, while the risk has increased.

In connection with the Iranian regime's engagement in nuclear talks, and at the Obama administration's urging, the Security Council replaced Resolution 1929 with Resolution 2231. Resolution 2231 "calls upon" Iran not to undertake any activity related to ballistic missiles designed to be capable of delivering nuclear weapons. Notwithstanding that change in language, the world's concerns remain.

When we collectively "call upon" Iran to cease its ballistic missile activity, we must agree to stop it now. But Iran is as defiant of the world's insistence as ever. Because here we are, for the 12th year in a row, meeting about Iran's ballistic missiles, addressing an incredibly problematic data set.

Iran's pace of missile activity, including missile launches and tests, did not diminish since the JCPOA. In fact, Iran's missile testing and missile proliferation is growing. Today Iran has the largest ballistic missile force in the Middle East. It has more than 10 ballistic missile systems in its inventory or in development. It has hundreds of missiles which pose a threat to our partners in the region.

From more recent times: In 2016, during the time of the JCPOA, Iran unveiled two new short-range ballistic missiles, which it claims are capable of

striking targets between 500 and 700 kilometers. In January of 2017, during the time of the JCPOA, Iran launched a medium-range missile designed to carry a payload greater than 500 kilograms, and which could be used to carry nuclear warheads. Its suspected range also approaches 2,000 kilometers, which is far enough to target Athens, Sofia, Bucharest, and other major European cities. If the IRGC airspace commander is telling the truth, and Iran has capabilities beyond 2,000 kilometers, other European capitals are at risk as well.

In July of 2017, while the United States was still in the JCPOA, Iran tested a Simorgh space launch vehicle. The United States, France, Germany, and the UK all assessed that the launch was inconsistent with 2231, because space launch vehicle use – uses a similar technology as intercontinental ballistic missiles.

Iran has exported ballistic missile systems as well, most recently to Yemen. We have hard evidence that Iran is providing missiles, training, and support to the Houthis, and the Iranian-Houthi missile force is fully engaged. This poses a threat to innocent civilians – including Americans – living in Riyadh, Abu Dhabi, Dubai, as well as people of all nationalities who travel on civilian aircraft in that region.

Iran is also transferring ballistic missile systems to Shia militias in Iraq.

And just look at the last two weeks. The Iranian regime test-fired a medium range ballistic missile that is capable of carrying multiple warheads.

Our goodwill gestures have been futile, futile in correcting the Iranian regime's reckless missile activity and its destructive behaviors. No nation can dispute that Iran is in open defiance of UN Security Council Resolution 2231.

The United States is not alone in raising these concerns. I'd like to thank France and Germany and the United Kingdom for raising concerns about Iranian missile proliferation to the secretariat.

I would also like to thank our partners from Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, who are working with UN inspectors in recovering material debris of Iranian-supplied missiles, rockets, and UAVs launched into their countries by Houthi forces in Yemen.

Our Israeli allies have brought further evidence to the Security Council about Iran's continued launches of ballistic missiles that are inherently capable of carrying nuclear weapons. Israel has also given evidence to the secretariat of Iran's transfer of weapon systems to its proxies all around the Middle East, and in defiance of what we have insisted that they do.

So the question – the question now: What steps ought we take to confront this Iranian malign activity? We risk the security of our people if Iran continues stocking up on ballistic missiles. We risk escalation of conflict in the region if we fail to restore deterrence. And we convey to all other malign actors that they too can defy the Security Council with impunity if we do

nothing.

The United Nations Charter, as you all know well, calls the primary – gives – bestows upon the Security Council “the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.” We all take this responsibility seriously. The United States seeks to work with all other members of the Council to reimpose on Iran the ballistic missiles restrictions outlined in 1929.

Beyond addressing Iran’s ballistic missile activities, the Council should not lift the arms embargo in 2020 on Iran. This is a country in noncompliance with multiple UN Security Council resolutions, including those related to al-Qaida, Afghanistan, Lebanon, Yemen, and Somalia. Iran is harboring al-Qaida, supporting Taliban militants in Afghanistan, arming terrorists in Lebanon, facilitating illicit trade in Somali charcoal benefiting al-Shabaab, and training and equipping Shia militias in Iraq, even as we sit here today.

It is also stoking conflict in Syria and Yemen. The Council must address these malign activities. It cannot reward Iran by lifting the arms embargo.

We also call on the Council to establish inspection and interdiction measures, in ports and on the high seas, to thwart Iran’s continuing efforts to circumvent the existing arms restrictions.

Some have questioned our decision to withdraw from the JCPOA. We reply that it is self-evident why we did so based upon the very conversation we’re having here today. Prior to the deal, Western leaders made grand claims of how the JCPOA would usher in a new era of moderation from the Iranian regime.

Indeed, America’s own president said, quote, “Ideally, we would see a situation in which Iran, seeing sanctions reduced, would start focusing on its economy, on training its people, on re-entering the world community, to lessening its provocative activities in the region.” But what do we actually see?

The JCPOA has without a doubt, to date, shielded the Islamic Republic of Iran from the accountability to the risks it presents to the world.

The Iranian regime is pursuing the same destructive, revolutionary goals that it has for the past 39 years – except now it has more money to achieve them, thanks to the nuclear deal.

I’m here today first and foremost as my capacity as the Secretary of State of the United States of America. Under President Trump, the security of our people and our allies comes first.

But in the finest traditions of American leadership, the United States will continue to unite sovereign nations in their responsibility to work for the peace and security of their own people and a stable international order.

The United States is going to continue to be relentless in building a coalition of responsible nations who are serious in confronting the Iranian regime’s reckless ballistic missile activity.

This includes the treatment of its own people as well. That type of malign activity is something that the United States will keep standing side by side with the people of Iran. They have been the worst victims of the regime for nearly 40 years and they have the unwavering support of the United States.

Finally, The Trump administration clearly defined in May the 12 areas in which we are demanding change from Iran.

If Iran makes a fundamental strategic shift and honors these demands, we are prepared to ease our pressure campaign and support the modernization and reintegration of the Iranian economy into the international economic system.

But relief – relief from our efforts will come only when we see tangible, demonstrated, and sustained shifts in Tehran’s policies.

Thank you.

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[Press Releases: Public Designation, Due to Significant Corruption, of Nicaragua’s Roberto Jose Rivas Reyes](#)

Media Note
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
December 12, 2018

Due to his involvement in significant corruption, the Department is publicly designating the President of Nicaragua’s Supreme Electoral Council, Roberto Jose Rivas Reyes, under the terms of Section 7031(c) of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act of 2018.

Rivas was designated in December 2017 under Executive Order 13818 implementing the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act for involvement in significant corruption and for perpetuating electoral fraud that undermined Nicaragua's electoral institutions. Section 7031(c) provides that, in cases where the Secretary of State has credible information that foreign officials have been involved in significant corruption or a gross violation of human rights, those individuals and their immediate family members are ineligible for entry into the United States.

The law also requires the Secretary of State to publicly or privately designate such officials and their immediate family members. In addition to the designation of Mr. Rivas, the Secretary is also publicly designating Mr. Rivas' spouse, Ileana Patricia Lacayo Delgado de Rivas.

For more information, please contact INL-PAPD@state.gov.

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[Press Releases: Interview With Fox & Friends](#)

Interview
Michael R. Pompeo

Secretary of State

New York City
December 12, 2018

QUESTION: Let's bring in Mike Pompeo, the U.S. Secretary of State. Thank you so much for being here with us.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Ainsley, it's great to be with you all.

QUESTION: We have so many topics to get through with you. First of all, what's your reaction to this?

SECRETARY POMPEO: So it's obviously tragic. The loss of life is always awful. But these risks of terror, we all need to be mindful, they're everywhere. Europe has got an enormous challenge. The United States tries our best to help them. We try to keep Americans safe when they're traveling over this holiday season. This was a Christmas market. This appears to have been attacked because it was a Christmas market, although the facts are still developing. These are real risks all around the world and we can – we must always be mindful that America has a big role in preventing terror around the world.

QUESTION: No Americans killed?

SECRETARY POMPEO: It appears there were no Americans killed or injured, but we still don't have all the facts just yet.

QUESTION: Sure. Apparently he was on a terror watch list. The police were going to arrest him before he started shooting. They got to his house and he wasn't there, so they were unable to arrest him. He was on a terror watch list, though, and some – we had an expert on this morning about an hour ago who said why have a terror watch list if we can't keep an eye on people.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Yeah, Steve. This is an enormous challenge. We have this problem here in the United States as well. Lots of folks that we're watching we think are a risk we try to monitor, but the numbers are so big. It's why, frankly, border security matters too. These are related issues in the sense of we need to know who's coming in and out of our country so there are fewer people that the FBI and sheriff's offices in Kansas and places like that have to monitor and watch. Every time we add to people here who have the risk of becoming radicalized, we increase the risk to American citizens.

QUESTION: Yeah, I know you're in contact – as we switch over to immigration – with the new president of Mexico and I know you're going to be heading there shortly. What is their role, do you think, on their southern border to protect our southern border? Do you see that they – do they see an urgency now that perhaps they haven't sensed before?

SECRETARY POMPEO: The incoming administration's been great. They've now been in power for less than two weeks. But our conversations about how it is we control traffic flow into Mexico along their southern border from Guatemala, from Honduras –

QUESTION: What we saw was a joke. They let rocks dissuade them from stopping caravans.

SECRETARY POMPEO: We have to control that border that is ours and they have to control that border that is theirs. And we're happy to support them, we're happy to try and do the things we can do to help them, but this is a real national security issue for the United States of America, so it shouldn't surprise you that the State Department is involved in trying to make sure

that we do what the President has said, which is to have control over our southern border.

QUESTION: Sure. Well, the President yesterday – I’m sure you saw the President’s contentious meeting in the Oval Office with Nancy Pelosi and Chuck Schumer. They said we don’t need the wall. The President said I’m willing to shut down the government over this wall thing. What do you say? You used to be in Congress.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Yeah. The Democrats have been all over on this issue when I was a member of Congress. Now I try to step away from the domestic U.S. politics, but this much is sure: We have to have the capacity to control entry into our country everywhere – through our airports and ports, but most importantly today at the southern border, and a wall is a vital component of that, and we ought to build it out.

QUESTION: Nancy Pelosi said yesterday we don’t need it.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Yeah.

QUESTION: Experts say we don’t need.

SECRETARY POMPEO: We should build it out. We should do all the things we need to do to control the flow of people into our country in a way that is lawful only.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, there’s no doubt about it if – see, most of the people coming here illegally are not Mexicans, OTMs. So if Mexico sees the same problem, is there a chance they’ll pay for this wall? Have you had initial conversations about this?

SECRETARY POMPEO: So we’re working in the State Department on lots of issues not directly related to the wall. There are lots of things the Mexican Government can do to discourage this transit from these three Northern Triangle countries. And I think back to my time in Kansas. There’s a big highway that runs out of Mexico. We used to have a lot of illegal traffic come up that very highway. There are many components to this. A border wall and a security system is certainly one of them. But frankly, the most important thing we can do is turn off the flow from those three countries and reduce the risk to our Customs and Border Patrol agents, our ICE agents, the men and women who are tasked with apprehending these folks who have transited into our country illegally.

QUESTION: Let’s talk about the murder of Jamal Khashoggi. The President doubled down on his support of the Saudi crown prince, said he’s a good ally. You have some senators that are calling for more action. They want condemnation; they want him to be penalized. You’re going to be briefing the House today. What do you plan on saying?

SECRETARY POMPEO: So we’re going to say to the House what we’ve said to the American people. President Trump’s made very clear: The murder of Jamal Khashoggi was a tragic incident; it was heinous. It’s not something that America approves of. We’ve already held a number of individuals accountable

by putting sanctions on them, those that we have evidence were directly involved. We'll continue to develop the facts, but America has an important ally in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. They work with us on issues that provide security for America and for Israel. It is an important relationship with the kingdom and we intend to continue to protect the American people in the way that voters back two years ago demanded.

QUESTION: Right. But Mr. Secretary, they're the ones who are putting it in peril, not us. They're the ones who have evidently pulled this off. And when you have people like Lindsey Graham, hardly an enemy of the White House, and Bob Corker and others said this is a "smoking saw," not a "smoking gun," and you even have audio tapes, we know the prince knows, right? You know, you looked him in the eye. You know that he knows.

SECRETARY POMPEO: I've spoken to the king, King Salman. I've spoken to the crown prince a number of times since the murder of Jamal Khashoggi, and it is absolutely America's intent to hold everyone accountable who was responsible for this.

QUESTION: So that's yes, you – when you looked him in the eye and he denied it, did you believe him?

SECRETARY POMPEO: The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia decides who's running the country. I think this is what the President said yesterday. We are working closely with the kingdom to make sure that America is protected. That's our interest there.

QUESTION: What's your response? The CIA says that they're highly confident that the Saudi crown prince did order the murder of Khashoggi.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Yeah, some of the reporting that you've seen on that has been inaccurate.

QUESTION: Is that part – is that inaccurate?

QUESTION: That's false?

SECRETARY POMPEO: Look, we all know they're still working on this. This is still a developing set of facts with respect to the murder of Jamal Khashoggi. The intelligence community is working diligently on that. The direct evidence – this is what I've said before – the direct evidence isn't yet available. It may show up tomorrow; it may have shown up overnight and I haven't seen it. But President Trump is – President Trump –

QUESTION: Someone has to pay the price, though. It's so brutal. Apparently, those audio tapes are awful.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Well, we – the Saudis have already paid the price. There are the folks who actually committed the murder we've held accountable. We will continue to do that. No one underestimates how horrible this murder was, but remember, Iran is running rampant throughout the Middle East. The death of any one individual is awful. The death of hundreds of thousands of people in Europe or the Middle East or the United States matters an awful lot, and

President Trump is committed to protecting America.

QUESTION: Well it's a big story. That's why *Time Magazine* made murdered journalists the cover story for Man of the Year, People of the Year.

Let's talk a little bit about China. We know that the President has tried to equalize the whole tariff situation between us and them, and the stock market has gone up and down and up and down. I know that there are other people negotiating the trade deals and the tariff stuff as well, but what's your involvement in that? Because right now, it looks to some from the outside like maybe we're not on good terms with China.

SECRETARY POMPEO: So our relationship with China is a challenging one to be sure. We consider them a strategic competitor. They are taking actions in the South China Sea. They're conducting espionage and influence operations here in the United States.

QUESTION: The latest one was the Marriott.

SECRETARY POMPEO: That's right.

QUESTION: 500 million guests there have been – had their security breached.

SECRETARY POMPEO: They have committed cyber attacks across the world. Our effort, from Department of Homeland Security and the FBI and the State Department, is to push back against these threats to America from China. Trade is a component of that to be sure. The President is very focused on making sure Americans get a chance to sell their products into China. It's a big market, and the President is determined to get a level playing field for American businesses.

QUESTION: Are we closer? Are we closer to a deal?

SECRETARY POMPEO: Yeah, I think we're closer. I truly think we're closer, and I'm very hopeful in the next handful of weeks there'll be some good announcements on that front.

QUESTION: This Huawei executive, the President says, "I might have to get directly involved if it hurts our trade negotiations." That that would be him going into the law enforcement end where there's a trade end. Do you worry about the President blending the two?

SECRETARY POMPEO: We always have to balance American interests. Any time there's a law enforcement engagement, we need to make sure we take foreign policy consideration – considerations into effect. It's totally appropriate to do so. The President's mission is very clear. It's "America First," right? Making sure that we protect the American people from threats, whether they emanate from Russia or from China or from any of the other places we've had the chance to talk about this morning.

QUESTION: Let's talk about your speech in Brussels – bold, unconventional. Was your message heard?

SECRETARY POMPEO: I think so. We've gotten lots of feedback from it to be sure.

QUESTION: Such as?

SECRETARY POMPEO: I'm not sure unconventional is accurate, but we told hard truths about the things that America intends to do. There's this notion somehow that we've withdrawn from American leadership, and nothing could be further from the truth. President Trump has boldly reasserted American leadership. But where organizations that no longer function in the way they should have, right – if there's inadequate burden-sharing at NATO, if the UN is acting in a way that is against Israel, we're going to call it out in this administration.

QUESTION: But they don't – the world doesn't like the whole "America First" message. They like the world first.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Yeah. We're committed to leading in America. We want them to assert their own sovereignty as well. We want those leaders of their countries to protect their people too, and we think together that will create peace and prosperity for the world.

QUESTION: You're the chief diplomat, but it's obviously the thuggish behavior of the Russians with the Ukrainians, taking three ships and 24 sailors. Nothing's budged. What could we actually do in coordination with Defense to stop the aggression from Georgia to the Ukraine? It's not ceasing and bombers now in Venezuela. How urgent is this and how can an economy that's shrinking like this act as boldly as that?

SECRETARY POMPEO: Sometimes the last act doesn't appear to be the last act, and deterrence is just on the horizon. We have pushed back against Russia in serious ways. We've provided defensive weapon systems for the Ukrainians to defend their own country. We have sanctioned more Russians than any administration in recent history. This administration has been very serious. We've obviously seen these incidents in the Kerch Strait, and we're working with our European partners, for whom this is in their backyard and presents a real short-term risk, to make sure they understand the importance of protecting that waterway and pushing back against the Russians in a way that actually leads to deterrence from this kind of aggression from Vladimir Putin.

QUESTION: Well, Mr. Secretary, we know you've been doing a lot of traveling all over the world since you got the job.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Yes, sir.

QUESTION: Thanks for dropping by the couch.

SECRETARY POMPEO: It's great to be with you all.

QUESTION: Good to see you, Mr. Secretary.

QUESTION: Thank you so much. Great to see you. Wish you all the best today.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Brian, wonderful to see you too, sir. Wonderful to see you. Thank you.

QUESTION: Congratulations on everything. Thank you.

QUESTION: And Merry Christmas.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Thank you. Merry Christmas, Steve.

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[Press Releases: The Republic of Kenya's National Day](#)

Press Statement
Michael R. Pompeo

Secretary of State

Washington, DC
December 12, 2018

On behalf of the Government of the United States of America, I offer my congratulations on the occasion of Kenya's 55th Jamhuri Day.

The United States and Kenya maintain strong government and people-to-people ties, and I am proud of this enduring relationship that continues to deepen and flourish. Through our new Strategic Partnership, the United States will advance our economic, security, and governance goals in Kenya and the Indian Ocean region more broadly.

I would like to convey our warmest regards to all the people of Kenya and wishes for a peaceful and prosperous year to come.

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