

Press Releases: U.S.-Kazakhstan Enhanced Strategic Partnership Dialogue

Media Note
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
December 7, 2018

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs, Ambassador Alice Wells will travel to Astana, Kazakhstan December 8-12 for the U.S.-Kazakhstan Enhanced Strategic Partnership Dialogue.

Ambassador Wells will lead the U.S. delegation, which will include representatives from the National Security Council, USAID, and the State Department's Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs and Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, for discussions on global and regional security issues, counterterrorism cooperation, economic and trade agreements, C5+1 initiatives, human rights and rule of law, people to people ties, and other issues of mutual interest. This will be the first official meeting within the framework of the Enhanced Strategic Partnership Dialogue following the visit of Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev to Washington in January 2018, which charted a clear path forward for increased bilateral cooperation between the United States and Kazakhstan.

The United States looks forward to deepening its relationship with Kazakhstan to promote mutual security and prosperity for the American and Kazakhstani people.

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Press Releases: Interview With Lukas & Careth In The Morning, B98 FM

Interview
Michael R. Pompeo

Secretary of State

Via Teleconference
December 7, 2018

QUESTION: 97.9 B98, Lukas and Careth in the Morning, your Christmas music station. We're joined now by Secretary Pompeo. We haven't talked to Secretary Pompeo since he left Kansas. Are you there?

SECRETARY POMPEO: I am here. It's great to be with you all. How's everything going back in Kansas?

QUESTION: We're – well, it's cold. I mean, as you expected, right?

SECRETARY POMPEO: I saw that. Yes, sir.

QUESTION: So man, so many things have happened since you've been on the show, Secretary. I mean, do you we call you Secretary? Is that the proper name?

SECRETARY POMPEO: It is, but you can call me Mike as you always did, so that'll be just fine.

QUESTION: (Laughter.) I asked Sumair (ph) about that. I said, "What do I call him now?" He's like, "Just call him Secretary." I was like, "Okay." So, I mean, this has been a whirlwind. You went there and you became the CIA director. Now you're the Secretary of the State. What's going on? Give us a little – give everybody in Kansas a little update of what's happened with you.

SECRETARY POMPEO: It's quite a privilege, and my Kansas roots have served me well. It's hard work trying to make sure that we do all the things right to protect Americans and keep them safe. But it is a real opportunity to serve the country and working for President Trump trying to deliver a foreign policy that keeps our young men and women who are serving in America in uniform safe and all of you back at home in Kansas safe as well.

QUESTION: I love it. Okay, so you spent a lot of time in North Korea. We're so interested in the – I mean, every time I turn on the TV you're there and doing all the business that's never been – never happened before in the history. Can you give us some details about that?

SECRETARY POMPEO: It's been quite a experience to have the opportunity to try and figure out how to deliver for President Trump the outcome that Chairman Kim promised, right, to denuclearize, something that matters to everyone. Then I had the incredible good fortune to return to America with three American hostages, folks who had been held there for a long time, and bring them back safely to their families. It was one of the highlights of my professional life to get the chance to do that. And now the hard task, the hard task of denuclearizing North Korea, it still remains in front of us.

QUESTION: Yeah.

QUESTION: We saw you at President George H.W. Bush's funeral, and just watching it on TV it was such an emotional experience. What was it like being there?

SECRETARY POMPEO: Oh goodness. It was – it was one of the greatness – one of the things that you see is about the greatness of America, the country coming together around someone who had committed his whole life to serving our country. He'd had one of the same jobs I did. He had been the CIA director. I had gotten to know he – him some during that time when I was CIA director. It was – it was really quite something to be there in that room with leaders from all around the world, leaders from the United States Congress, leaders in the executive branch, and then the Bush family, all paying tribute to a great American.

QUESTION: So being the CIA director and then the Secretary of State, which one did you lose the most sleep about? Like, which one's harder to – I mean, are they both just like nonstop?

SECRETARY OF STATE: They're both pretty busy, no doubt about that. Very different jobs for sure. Each one a real opportunity to serve with some great people here, the Foreign Service officers, the civil servants that work at the State Department, and before that the officers of the CIA. Great people. Patriots all, trying to get things done for us all around the world.

QUESTION: Well, I mean, you did a fantastic job of representing Kansas when you were in Congress, and everybody in Kansas loves that.

QUESTION: I've got one more question.

QUESTION: Go.

QUESTION: Did you get any of Lukas's texts?

SECRETARY POMPEO: (Laughter.) I can't say that I did.

QUESTION: I told him you probably changed your phone number.

QUESTION: I just congratulated him, that was it. That's all I got. Well, listen, the Shockers play tomorrow against Oklahoma. I know you're a big Shockers fan still, I hope.

SECRETARY POMPEO: I am. I know it's on the road. I hope the weather's good enough for everybody to get down to Norman and we can crush the Sooners.

QUESTION: Yes, look at that. All right. Secretary Pompeo, we love catching up with you. Thank you so much for spending time and calling us.

QUESTION: Merry Christmas, Secretary.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Thank you. Merry Christmas to you all.

QUESTION: Okay, bye-bye.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Yep, bye-bye.

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[Press Releases: The Russian and Assad Regime's False Allegations on Chemical Weapons Use in Aleppo](#)

Press Statement
Robert Palladino

Deputy Spokesperson

Washington, DC
December 7, 2018

On November 24, 2018, the Assad regime and Russia falsely accused the

opposition and extremist groups of conducting a chlorine attack in northwestern Aleppo. The United States strongly refutes this narrative and has credible information that pro-regime forces likely used teargas against civilians in Aleppo on November 24. The United States has information indicating Russian and Syrian personnel were involved in the teargas incident, and believes that both countries are using it as an opportunity to undermine confidence in the ceasefire in Idlib.

The United States is deeply concerned that pro-regime officials have maintained control of the attack site in its immediate aftermath, allowing them to potentially fabricate samples and contaminate the site before a proper investigation of it by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. We caution Russia and the regime against tampering with the suspected attack site and urge them to secure the safety of impartial, independent inspectors so that those responsible can be held accountable.

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Press Releases: New APEC Business Advisory Council Member Named

Media Note
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
December 7, 2018

The United States welcomes the appointment of Nathan Gatten, Senior Vice President of Government Affairs at American Airlines to the United States Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Business Advisory Council (ABAC). Gatten will join current U.S. ABAC member Scott Price of UPS and Ms. Zivanonic-Smith of NCR. He will replace at the end of the year Richard Cantor of Moody's Corporation, who served on the council since 2016.

These American business executives will join their ABAC counterparts from other APEC economies to advise APEC Leaders on issues affecting the continued growth of the region's economy. ABAC, created in 1995, consists of three business representatives from each APEC economy. ABAC meets throughout the year to discuss policy recommendations, undertake activities to promote trade and investment, and reports annually to the Leaders.

Gatten has more than twenty years of public and private policy experience at senior levels in government and the private sector working on legislative and regulatory issues across multiple sectors, including transportation and financial services. Prior to joining American Airlines, he served as Managing Director and Head of Global Government Relations at JPMorgan Chase & Co.

APEC is the premier organization for facilitating economic growth, cooperation, trade, and investment in the Asia-Pacific region. Under the APEC structure, the United States and 20 other of the world's leading economies come together to facilitate regional economic cooperation through trade and investment liberalization, and tackle a wide range of issues critical to ensuring regional prosperity and economic growth.

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[Press Releases: Special Representative for Syria Engagement Ambassador Jim Jeffrey Travel to Turkey and Jordan](#)

Media Note
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
December 4, 2018

The Secretary's Special Representative for Syria Engagement, Ambassador Jim Jeffrey and Deputy Assistant Secretary for Levant Affairs and Special Envoy for Syria Joel Rayburn will travel to Turkey and Jordan, December 4 – December 14.

In Turkey, the Ambassador will meet with Turkish leaders and other senior officials to discuss the promotion of stability and security in Syria. He will also conduct with Turkish officials a High-Level Working Group on Syria to address security concerns of our two countries and continue progress on issues of mutual interest regarding the ongoing crisis in Syria.

In Jordan, Ambassador Jeffrey will meet with Senior Jordanian officials to emphasize the importance of maintaining pressure on the Syrian regime and encouraging all possible efforts to advance the political track as called for in UNSCR 2254. The Ambassador will also thank the Jordanians for their continued support for the hundreds of thousands of Syrian refugees in Jordan and discuss additional ways to ensure consistent, unhindered access to humanitarian and medical aid for the population of Rukban. He will also meet with U.S. personnel focused on Syria policy issues from around the world.

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