

# [Press Releases: United States Applauds Central African Republic's Ratification of the Biological Weapons Convention](#)

Media Note  
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
September 26, 2018

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On September 25, 2018, the Government of the Central African Republic deposited its instrument of ratification to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BWC) with the U.S. Department of State, one of this treaty's Depositary Governments. The United States warmly congratulates the Central African Republic for taking this step, which advances the BWC toward the goal of universalization.

The BWC is the key instrument for strengthening international efforts against the threat posed by biological weapons, whether in the hands of state or non-state actors. Maximizing its effectiveness requires that all states become Parties and fully implement its obligations. The United States urges all states not party to the BWC to accede to the treaty without further delay.

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## [Press Releases: Celebrating 20 Years](#)

# of U.S.-Slovenian Collaboration on Humanitarian Demining Efforts

Media Note

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The Embassy of Slovenia is hosting an event at the United States Diplomacy Center at 11:00 am on Friday, September 28 to recognize 20 years of American support for the Slovenian government-led nonprofit organization ITF Enhancing Human Security (ITF). ITF is dedicated to reducing threats from landmines and other explosive remnants of war and to facilitating safety and long-term development in conflict-affected communities.

President Borut Pahor of Slovenia will attend and give remarks as will Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs Elisabeth Millard, with a reception to follow. The event is accompanied by a photo exhibit of ITF's work around the world that will be on display in the Diplomacy Center from September 24 through October 1.

ITF was formed in 1998 to help Bosnia and Herzegovina implement the Dayton Peace Agreement. Former U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and former Slovenian Foreign Minister Boris Frlec agreed to its establishment as a key component of the peace settlement, placing the war torn region on the road to recovery by clearing landmines and assisting landmine survivors in the wake of the 1992-1995 Bosnian War.

Since then, the United States has invested \$220 million in conventional weapons destruction (CWD) projects managed by ITF around the world through the Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement in the Department's Bureau of Political-Military Affairs. ITF has proven particularly valuable in Southeast Europe, using its intimate knowledge of the region to deliver quality, cost-effective, and timely results. It also has assisted young victims in the Middle East to receive advanced medical care in Slovenia (funded in part by the U.S.), facilitated U.S.-funded cluster munitions clearance in south Lebanon, and worked with Libya to establish a national mine action authority. In Afghanistan, the U.S. and ITF are supporting the Directorate of Mine Action Coordination (DMAC), Afghanistan's national humanitarian mine action authority, with conducting quality assurance reviews of internationally-funded clearance sites.

With the early support of the United States, ITF has grown over the past 20 years to operate in 31 countries around the world, clearing of more than 139 million square meters of mine-affected land, protecting civilians in fragile and recovering states, and opening a path to stability and prosperity.

For media inquiries, please contact Mary Kane at [KaneM@state.gov](mailto:KaneM@state.gov).

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## **Press Releases: Deputy Secretary Sullivan's Meeting With Yemeni President Hadi**

Readout  
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
September 26, 2018

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The below is attributable to Spokesperson Heather Nauert:

On September 24, Deputy Secretary of State John J. Sullivan met with Yemeni President Abd Rabbu Mansour Hadi on the margins of the United Nations General Assembly. The Deputy Secretary and the President discussed the political process and the dire humanitarian crisis in Yemen. Deputy Secretary Sullivan thanked President Hadi for his continued partnership on counterterrorism efforts, as well as the Republic of Yemen Government's participation in UN-led consultations in Geneva earlier this month. The Deputy Secretary and the President discussed the importance of all parties supporting UN Special Envoy Martin Griffiths as he continues his consultation and reaffirmed that a political agreement to end the current conflict is the only path to a peaceful, prosperous, and stable Yemen.

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## **Press Releases: Ninth Ministerial Plenary Meeting of the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF)**

Media Note  
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
September 26, 2018

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The Ninth Ministerial Plenary Meeting of the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF), co-chaired by the Netherlands and Morocco, took place today in New York on the margins of the UN General Assembly. Deputy Secretary of State John J. Sullivan represented the United States, and introduced two new U.S. co-led initiatives on terrorist travel and unmanned aerial system (UAS) threats.

The United States and Morocco will co-lead the “Initiative on Improving Capabilities for Detecting and Interdicting Terrorist Travel through Enhanced Terrorist Screening and Information Sharing.” This terrorist travel initiative will address border security and information sharing, including the use of watchlists, biometrics, Advance Passenger Information (API), and Passenger Name Record (PNR) data. It aims to help countries implement their obligations under UNSCR 2396 to combat terrorist travel. The United States and Germany will co-lead the “Initiative to Counter Unmanned Aerial System Threats” to raise awareness of the growing UAS threat and help formulate plans to address it. Both initiatives will produce a set of non-binding good practice documents for endorsement at the GCTF Ministerial in 2019.

Ministers also endorsed today two new GCTF documents stemming from two current initiatives on returning families of foreign terrorist fighters and homegrown terrorism. The *Good Practices for Addressing the Challenge of Returning Families of Foreign Terrorist Fighters* was generated by an initiative co-led by the United States and the Netherlands, and is a resource

for international engagement, assistance, and training on this issue. The *Rabat-Washington Good Practices on the Prevention, Detection, Intervention, and Response to Homegrown Terrorism* came out of an initiative co-led by the United States and Morocco and helps policymakers and practitioners improve domestic efforts to identify and counter homegrown terrorism.

Founded in 2011, the GCTF is a multilateral counterterrorism platform focused on identifying critical civilian counterterrorism needs, mobilizing the expertise and resources to address those needs, and enhancing global cooperation. The Forum, with its 30 members (29 countries and the European Union), regularly convenes key policymakers and practitioners from nations around the world, as well as experts from the UN and other multilateral bodies.

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## [Press Releases: Under Secretary Hale's Meeting on Next Steps on the South Sudan Peace Process](#)

Media Note  
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Today, Under Secretary Hale convened a meeting on the South Sudan peace process on the margins of the 73rd UN General Assembly. Together with African regional leaders and other international partners, he discussed ongoing efforts to address the political, security, and humanitarian crises in South Sudan, including key actions needed to ensure successful implementation of the September 12 peace agreement. Under Secretary Hale underscored that the

United States is a partner with the South Sudanese people and the region for a sustainable peace in South Sudan, and strongly encouraged member states of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the African Union to hold the parties of the September 12 agreement accountable to honoring their commitments.

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