

Press Releases: Assistant Secretary Mitchell Travel to Brussels, Tbilisi, and Kyiv

Media Note
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
April 26, 2018

Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs A. Wess Mitchell will join U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo in Brussels, Belgium, on April 27, where the Secretary will lead the U.S. participation in the NATO Foreign Ministerial Meeting.

Following the NATO Foreign Ministerial, Assistant Secretary Mitchell will visit Tbilisi, Georgia, where he will provide the keynote address at the NATO-Georgia Public Diplomacy Forum and meet with senior government officials as well as with other political leaders, representatives of civil society, and the American Chamber of Commerce to reinforce U.S. support for Georgia's aspirations to integrate into Euro-Atlantic institutions.

He will then travel to Kyiv, Ukraine, May 1-3. He will meet with senior government officials, other political leaders, and civil society representatives to underscore U.S. support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity and stress the importance of Ukraine implementing economic and anti-corruption reforms.

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Press Releases: Secretary Pompeo Travel to Brussels, Riyadh, Jerusalem, and Amman

Press Statement
Heather Nauert

Department Spokesperson

Washington, DC
April 26, 2018

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo will travel to Brussels, Riyadh, Jerusalem, and Amman, April 26-30.

The Secretary looks forward to meeting key Allies and partners on his first official trip as Secretary of State.

The Secretary will travel to Brussels April 26-27, where he will meet with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg and participate in the NATO Foreign Ministerial, during which Allies will discuss preparations for July's NATO Summit of Heads of State and Government meeting.

The Secretary will then travel to the Middle East, where he will meet with Saudi, Israeli, and Jordanian leaders to discuss critical regional and bilateral issues.

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[Press Releases: Commemorating the Birthday of the Disappeared Panchen Lama](#)

Press Statement
Heather Nauert

Department Spokesperson

Washington, DC
April 26, 2018

On April 25, we marked the birthday of the 11th Panchen Lama, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, who has not appeared in public since he was reportedly abducted two decades ago by the Chinese government at age six. The United States remains concerned that Chinese authorities continue to take steps to eliminate the religious, linguistic, and cultural identity of Tibetans, including their ongoing destruction of communities of worship, such as the Larung Gar and Yachen Gar monasteries. We call on China to release Gedhun Choekyi Nyima immediately and to uphold its international commitments to promote religious freedom for all persons.

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[Press Releases: U.S. Aviation Sales to Turkey](#)

Press Statement
Heather Nauert

Department Spokesperson

Washington, DC
April 26, 2018

We congratulate Turkish Airlines on its March 12, announcement to order 25 Boeing 787-9 Dreamliners with an option for five more airplanes, and its subsequent agreement on April 25, to purchase GE engines for those planes. These deals together total over \$10 billion, create and sustain more than 25,000 U.S. jobs, and underscore the expanding economic cooperation between the United States and Turkey.

American companies, including Boeing and GE, are dedicated to the Turkish market, and their investment in Turkey has built capacity, trained talent, and provided innovative solutions to fuel the region's socio-economic growth. Especially in the field of aviation, American industry continues to create value-added manufacturing, exports, high technology jobs, and innovative R & D.

We congratulate GE, Boeing, Turkish Airlines, and the Government of Turkey on this important announcement and look forward to working with Turkey to deepen the U.S. – Turkey economic relationship.

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[Press Releases: On Taliban Announcement of Spring Offensive](#)

Press Statement
John J. Sullivan

Acting Secretary of State

Washington, DC
April 25, 2018

We have seen the Taliban's announcement of their spring offensive. The announcement affirms the Taliban's responsibility for the insecurity that destroys the lives of thousands of Afghans each year.

President Ghani recently extended an historic invitation for the Taliban to join a peace process, and there is no justification for the announcement of a new offensive. There is no need for a new "fighting season." Still, the Taliban announced another campaign of senseless violence targeting the democratically elected and internationally recognized Afghan government and their fellow Afghans.

The United States stands with the Afghan people in response to the Taliban's announcement. We support the brave Afghan security forces who are standing against the Taliban and terrorist groups that seek to destroy Afghan society. We commend the Afghan people, who are carrying on their lives, raising families, attending universities, building businesses, preparing for elections, and strengthening their communities despite violence and continued bloodshed.

As President Ghani recently said, the Taliban should turn their bullets and bombs into ballots. They should run for office. They should vote. We encourage Taliban leaders to return to Afghanistan from their foreign safe havens and work constructively for Afghanistan's future. More violence will not bring peace and security to Afghanistan.

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