

# Press Releases: United States Announces Additional Humanitarian Assistance for the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)

Media Note  
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
April 13, 2018

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Today, the U.S. government announced nearly \$67 million in additional humanitarian assistance for the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) at the DRC Humanitarian Conference held in Geneva, Switzerland.

With the assistance announced today, the United States is providing food, protection, shelter, health care, and other urgent aid for vulnerable Congolese and refugees in the DRC. This funding is also supporting the humanitarian response for new Congolese refugees in the region, including the construction of new settlements, water infrastructure, logistics, and other life-saving assistance. While the United States is disappointed that the government of the DRC elected not to participate in today's conference, we nevertheless urge the government of the DRC to continue working to ensure that life-saving humanitarian assistance reaches those in need.

The intensifying conflicts in the DRC since late 2016 have left more than 13 million people in need of urgent humanitarian assistance, including 7.7 million people facing acute food insecurity. There are now 4.5 million Congolese displaced from their homes within the country—double the number displaced at the beginning of 2017. Countries neighboring the DRC host some 700,000 Congolese refugees, including more than 50,000 who have fled so far in 2018.

The DRC is at a critical juncture, with the opportunity for the country's first ever peaceful, democratic transfer of power. While elections alone will not address the DRC's many challenges, a credible electoral process that leads to a democratic transfer of power without violence is essential for securing a more prosperous and peaceful future for the DRC and its people.

The United States is the single largest donor to this humanitarian response. Since October 2016, the U.S. government has provided nearly \$277 million in

critical assistance to people in need in the DRC and for Congolese refugees in the region. We applaud the contributions of countries in the region that are hosting Congolese refugees, and the other donors who joined us in announcing new funding today. We urge more donors to provide new and additional resources to help those who are suffering in the midst of this terrible conflict and the DRC government to take steps to address underlying causes of insecurity that have given rise to the displacement and conflict and fueled the humanitarian crisis.

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## **Press Releases: Acting Secretary Sullivan's Meeting With Venezuelan Civil Society**

Readout  
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
April 12, 2018

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The below is attributable to Spokesperson Heather Nauert:

Acting Secretary of State John J. Sullivan and USAID Administrator Mark Green met today with representatives from Venezuelan civil society on the margins of the Summit of the Americas in Lima, Peru.

The Acting Secretary and the Administrator applauded Venezuelan civil society's courageous defense of human rights and democracy in their country. They also recognized the importance of civil society representatives working together to empower Venezuelan youth and to document and raise awareness about repression in Venezuela, including the rising number of political

prisoners.

Acting Secretary Sullivan reaffirmed U.S. support for the Venezuelan people and their right to elect their representatives through free and fair elections.

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## [Press Releases: Acting Secretary Sullivan's Meeting With Cuban Independent Civil Society](#)

Readout  
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
April 12, 2018

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The below is attributable to Spokesperson Heather Nauert:

Acting Secretary of State John J. Sullivan and USAID Administrator Green met today with Cuban independent civil society members on the margins of the Summit of the Americas in Lima, Peru to demonstrate support for the Cuban people in the face of continued repression by their government.

The Acting Secretary applauded the work these activists and independent thinkers do to promote a more open, free, and prosperous future for their country. Participants from civil society noted their friends and colleagues who were prevented from attending the Summit by the Cuban government. The Acting Secretary condemned the harassment and intimidation by state security services faced by these individuals routinely.

In light of the undemocratic leadership transition set to take place on April

19 in Cuba, Acting Secretary Sullivan reaffirmed support for the Cuban people and the call for democratic reforms to Cuba's flawed electoral process and an end to arbitrary detention and intimidation of independent civil society.

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## **Press Releases: Bengali New Year**

Press Statement  
John J. Sullivan

Acting Secretary of State

Washington, DC  
April 12, 2018

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On behalf of President Trump and the American people, I wish Bengalis everywhere a joyous New Year. We commemorate this important day along with all those from Bangladesh, India, and around the world who come together today to mark the arrival of the New Year.

Pohela Boishakh is an opportunity for those who speak Bangla as a mother tongue, of all faiths and beliefs, to celebrate their rich history and culture with beautiful parades, fairs, and dances.

Here in the United States, we take this opportunity to thank the Bangladeshi American community for its outstanding contributions to our nation, our economy, and our culture. We join all of you in looking toward a bright future, and wish you the best in the year to come.

Shubho Noboborsho!

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## **Press Releases: Nepali New Year**

Press Statement  
John J. Sullivan

Acting Secretary of State

Washington, DC  
April 12, 2018

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On behalf of President Trump and the American people, I wish a festive New Year to all Nepalis across the globe.

The celebration of Nepali New Year is a chance for all of us to celebrate Nepal's many accomplishments this past year, including the peaceful conclusion of elections, and to look ahead to a future of increasing prosperity and deepening partnership between our governments. It is also a chance to honor the contributions of Nepali Americans to our culture and society.

Please accept my best wishes on this joyous day.

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