

Press Releases: Remarks With Qatari Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman al-Thani Before Their Meeting

Remarks

Rex W. Tillerson

Secretary of State

Treaty Room

Washington, DC

July 26, 2017

SECRETARY TILLERSON: His Excellency, welcome.

FOREIGN MINISTER AL-THANI: Thank you very much.

SECRETARY TILLERSON: Great to see you again at the State Department.

FOREIGN MINISTER AL-THANI: Thank you for receiving us. Thank you and great to be here.

SECRETARY TILLERSON: Thank you.

QUESTION: Secretary Tillerson, have you committed to staying in your position as Secretary of State?

SECRETARY TILLERSON: I'm not going anywhere.

QUESTION: How long will you stay for?

SECRETARY TILLERSON: As long as the President lets me.

QUESTION: How's your relationship with the President right now?

SECRETARY TILLERSON: It's good.

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endorsement of the views or privacy policies contained therein.*

Press Releases: Selection of the Sixth Annual U.S. Youth Observer to the United Nations

Media Note
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
July 25, 2017

The U.S. Department of State, in partnership with the United Nations Association of the USA (UNA-USA), is pleased to announce the selection of the sixth annual U.S. Youth Observer to the United Nations. Ms. Munira Khalif of Minnesota was chosen from a competitive pool of applicants that included top-ranked university students and young professionals from across the United States.

Ms. Khalif studies economics and government at Harvard University. She co-founded a youth-run non-profit organization called Lighting the Way, which works to make education more accessible and equitable for girls in East Africa. She has actively advocated for women and girls' issues at the United Nations through the UN Foundation's Girl Up Campaign and is passionate about empowering youth voices through grassroots community initiatives.

The U.S. Youth Observer to the United Nations program was launched in 2012 to increase youth engagement in global affairs. As the Youth Observer, Ms. Khalif will represent American youth at the 72nd UN General Assembly in New York and other UN events throughout the coming year, traveling within the United States and overseas to share her impressions and experiences. Ms. Khalif follows Ms. Nicol Perez, who served as a voice for American youth at major global events in New York, Rome, Dubai, and Berlin as the U.S. Youth Observer for 2016-2017.

For further information, please contact Cain Harrelson, Public Diplomacy Chief for the Bureau of International Organization Affairs, at

HarrelsonBC@state.gov. Follow the program and the Department of State's multilateral engagements on Twitter at [@USYouthObserver](#) and [@State_IO](#). Complete details about the U.S. Youth Observer program are available at http://genun.unausa.org/youth_observer.

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Press Releases: Eighth U.S.-Laos Comprehensive Bilateral Dialogue

Media Note
Washington, DC
July 25, 2017

The United States and the Lao People's Democratic Republic held their 8th annual Comprehensive Bilateral Dialogue on July 25 in Washington. Acting Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and Pacific Affairs Susan Thornton led the U.S. delegation, which included representatives from the U.S. Departments of State, Defense, and Commerce; Office of the U.S. Trade Representative; and the United States Agency for International Development. Lao PDR Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Thongphane Savanphet led the Lao delegation. The two sides affirmed that the U.S.-Lao relationship is stronger than ever and expressed satisfaction at progress in forging greater cooperation as outlined in the 2016 Joint Declaration on the Comprehensive Partnership.

U.S. and Lao officials discussed broader regional developments and threats to regional security, including those posed by the DPRK. Thornton reiterated the enduring U.S. commitment to Southeast Asia, ASEAN, and the Asia Pacific region and to continued close relations with Laos.

The U.S. and Lao delegations reviewed progress in removing unexploded ordnance (UXO) in Laos and welcomed continued U.S. support for clearance efforts, highlighting progress made on a national cluster munition survey

which will define and quantify contamination in the most heavily impacted areas. U.S. and Lao officials also reviewed wide-ranging development cooperation in health, nutrition, and education and discussed freedom of expression, religious freedom, and labor rights, emphasizing the important role of civil society and rule of law to good governance, shared prosperity, and stability in the region. The two delegations reaffirmed their support for the Lower Mekong Initiative (LMI), a collaborative agreement between the United States, Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam that facilitates transboundary development and regional integration. The United States thanked the Lao government for agreeing to host the upcoming LMI Regional Working Group in Vientiane in the fall. The two sides pointed to the importance of human rights of vulnerable groups, including disabled persons, as well as the Lao PDR's efforts to implement its National Action Plan to combat trafficking in persons.

The two delegations agreed to cooperate on the repatriation of Lao nationals subject to final orders of removal, pledging to establish a standing process to review cases and facilitate speedy removals.

The U.S. and Lao delegations agreed on the importance of deepening people-to-people ties, noting the potential of English language training; academic, professional, and youth exchanges; and university partnerships to enhance mutual understanding. They also reviewed mechanisms to facilitate bilateral trade and investment, including their Trade and Investment Framework Agreement, and noted the opportunities for increased business between the two countries. Both delegations look forward to holding the ninth Comprehensive Bilateral Dialogue next year.

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[Press Releases: WiSci Girls STEAM Camp in Malawi Begins July 30](#)

Media Note
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
July 24, 2017

Building upon the success of the [WiSci \(Women in Science\) Girls STEAM Camp held in Peru](#) in 2016 and in [Rwanda in 2015](#), this year's WiSci Girls STEAM Camp will take place in [Malawi, July 30–August 14](#). A public-private partnership designed to expand science, technology, engineering, arts and design, and mathematics (STEAM) exposure and opportunities for adolescent girls, the 2017 camp brings together 100 students from Malawi, Rwanda, Uganda, Liberia, Tanzania, Zambia, and the United States.

Led by industry experts, WiSci 2017 focuses on the applications of science and technology in creating a safer, more prosperous, and secure world. Campers will learn about coding and app development, engineering and robotics, micro- and molecular biology, satellite mapping, and sustainable development. They will have the opportunity to present project ideas and designs that use the skills and tools they gained to address a social or development challenge. The camp will also provide the girls with leadership and communication skills, teamwork opportunities, cultural exchange, educational excursions, mentorship, and professional development and networks extending beyond the camp to continue participants' engagement in STEAM fields.

The 2017 WiSci Girls STEAM Camp is led by founding partners the [U.S. Department of State](#), [United Nations Foundation's Girl Up campaign](#), and [the Intel Corporation](#), and sustaining partner [Google](#). Additional programmatic support is provided by [Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany](#), [American Society for Microbiology](#), and [NASA](#). The implementing partner for WiSci 2017 is [World Learning](#).

The WiSci Girls STEAM camp is part of the U.S. government's efforts to empower adolescent girls, especially in the STEAM fields, and to prevent and respond to gender-based violence

For more information on the WiSci Girls STEAM Camp, visit girlup.org/wisci, follow [#WiSci2017](#) on social media, or contact Alex Campbell, CampbellAM2@state.gov or Anita Ostrovsky, Ostrovskya@state.gov.

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Press Releases: The United States Congratulates Timor-Leste on Parliamentary Elections

Press Statement
Heather Nauert

Department Spokesperson

Washington, DC
July 24, 2017

The United States congratulates the people of Timor-Leste for holding peaceful national parliamentary elections on July 22. This achievement represents another major milestone in Timor-Leste's young democracy. We applaud all political parties for their participation and look forward to working with the new government.

We commend Timor-Leste's national election bodies for leading an electoral process that was well-managed, credible, and accountable to the people. The United States also appreciates the robust engagement of domestic and international observers during the elections.

Timor-Leste and the United States share many values and principles, and we look forward to deepening our partnership.

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