

Press Releases: Remarks at Close of United Nations Security Council Ministerial Session on D.P.R.K.

Remarks
Rex W. Tillerson

Secretary of State

United Nations
New York City
April 28, 2017

SECRETARY TILLERSON: I shall now make a further statement in my capacity as Secretary of State of the United States. First, I appreciate all of the statements that have been made by you, and I have received those statements in the constructive spirit in which I know they've been offered. I also want to acknowledge the presence of a large number of ambassadors with us today. Your presence gives strength to the importance of this issue. It is a visible demonstration of the importance of this issue to the international community, and I welcome you, and I appreciate you being here.

It has been stressed repeatedly in many of your statements today North Korea has failed to honor its commitments of the past. It has made promises which it has broken. Had this body fully enforced and stood behind resolutions it had enacted in the past, vigorously enforcing sanctions with full compliance, perhaps we would not have found ourselves confronted with the high level of tension that we face today.

We will not negotiate our way back to the negotiating table with North Korea. We will not reward their violations of past resolutions. We will not reward their bad behavior with talks. We will only engage in talks with North Korea when they exhibit a good-faith commitment to abiding by the Security Council resolutions and their past promises to end their nuclear programs.

And that is why we must have full and complete compliance by every country to the resolutions that have been enacted by this body in the past – no relaxation in the vigorous implementation of sanctions. And we have called for those sanctions to be extended to other areas as well on a voluntary basis, and we're calling globally for all countries to participate in exerting pressure on North Korea – this is the way you make your voice heard, is through action. Any failure to take action diminishes your vote for these

resolutions of the past, and diminishes your vote for future resolutions, and it de-values your seat at this council. We must have full, complete compliance by all members of the council.

I thank you.

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[Press Releases: Remarks Before Meeting With Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi](#)

Remarks

Rex W. Tillerson

Secretary of State

U.S. Mission to the UN

New York City

April 28, 2017

SECRETARY TILLERSON: Foreign Minister Wang Yi, thank you so much for traveling to New York and in particular participating in this morning's very important session at the Security Council. I appreciated very much your remarks, and I appreciate the constructive way in which China has engaged with the United States to address the challenges on the Korean peninsula that are common to both of us.

We also appreciate the early relations that we are establishing with the visit of President Xi to Mar-a-Lago. Our two presidents, I think as you pointed out, have developed a very good understanding of one another and a level of trust which allows them to communicate openly, and that has translated to all of us. And we feel, too, very open to discuss issues of great importance with our counterparts. And we look forward to the engagement

of the first important dialogues beginning next month, in June, in Washington, D.C., where we can begin to build on the discussions that began in Mar-a-Lago.

We're encouraged by our working relationship today, and we look forward to advancing that further. And in particular, we appreciate our joint efforts in addressing the situation on the Korean peninsula, and we look forward to our continued collaboration in addressing this particular challenge.

And again, thank you. I thank both of your ambassadors. They represent China well here at the United Nations and in Washington, and we appreciate the very open and frank conversations we are always able to have with them as well.

Thank you.

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[Press Releases: Designation Under Russia's "Undesirables" Law of Open Russia, the Open Russia Civic Movement, and the Institute of Modern Russia](#)

Press Statement
Mark C. Toner

Deputy Department Spokesperson

Washington, DC
April 28, 2017

We are deeply troubled by the Russian Government's decision to designate Open Russia, the Open Russia Civic Movement, and the Institute of Modern Russia as so-called "undesirable" foreign organizations. We reject the notion that these and other international civil society organizations are a threat to Russia. If Russia hopes to build a strong, democratic government with a dynamic, competitive economy, it should value and support, not harass and criminalize such independent voices.

We again call on the Government of Russia to uphold its international obligations and commitments to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms and to cease restrictions on the work of civil society organizations in Russia.

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[Press Releases: Violence in Macedonian Parliament](#)

Press Statement
Mark C. Toner

Deputy Department Spokesperson

Washington, DC
April 28, 2017

The United States strongly condemns the violent attacks on members of the Macedonian parliament which followed the election of Talat Xhaferi as Speaker of Parliament. We will work with the new Speaker to support democracy and to help Macedonia move forward on its European path.

Violence has no place in the democratic process. We express our deepest sympathies to those Members of Parliament injured in the attacks and their

families. The United States calls on Macedonian authorities to ensure the security of all Members of Parliament, to investigate the attack thoroughly, and to hold accountable those who committed acts of violence.

We urge all parties to remain calm, resolve any differences peacefully, and respect Macedonia's laws and democratic processes.

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[Press Releases: 20th Anniversary of the Chemical Weapons Convention](#)

Press Statement

Mark C. Toner

Deputy Department Spokesperson

Washington, DC

April 28, 2017

The Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), the world's only multilateral treaty that verifiably bans an entire category of weapons of mass destruction, marks the 20th anniversary of its entry into force this Saturday, April 29. The CWC prohibits the development, production, acquisition, stockpiling, retention, transfer, and use of chemical weapons.

To date, the CWC—with 192 States Parties— has verified the destruction of approximately 95 percent of all declared chemical weapons stockpiles and has made a significant contribution to making our world a safer place. The Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), the CWC's governing body, has facilitated the destruction of chemical weapons in Libya, Syria, Iraq, Russia, Albania, China, and the United States – among others.

Nonetheless, the international community's work is far from done, and serious

challenges remain. In 2013, following devastating chemical weapons attacks on Damascus suburbs, Syria acceded to the CWC and agreed to comply with the Convention's obligation to fully declare and eliminate its chemical weapons program. Despite the destruction of over 1,200 tons of chemical weapons and precursor chemicals, the OPCW has repeatedly expressed concerns about gaps, inconsistencies, and discrepancies in Syria's declaration. The OPCW concerns preceded the most recent appalling chemical weapons attacks perpetrated by the Assad regime in Khan Shaykhun earlier this month.

Additional challenges include the reported use of the nerve agent VX in the assassination of Kim Jong-Nam in Malaysia, a heinous act representing a clear threat to international security. Further, ISIS has repeatedly used sulfur mustard in chemical weapons attacks in Syria, as well as in Iraq. There must be consequences for these actions and those responsible must be held accountable.

The United States remains committed to the CWC and the complete elimination of chemical weapons worldwide. We continue to call on the international community to stand with us and speak with one voice against the use of chemical weapons anywhere, by anyone. The use of chemical weapons by any actor lowers the threshold for others that may seek to follow suit, and raises the possibility that such weapons may be used against the United States, our allies or partners, or any other nation around the world. On the CWC's 20th anniversary, we reaffirm that the use of chemical weapons will not be tolerated.

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