

# Press Releases: 23rd Anniversary of Srebrenica Genocide

Press Statement  
Michael R. Pompeo

Secretary of State

Washington, DC  
July 10, 2018

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This year marks 23 years since the Srebrenica genocide. Today, we Americans join together with the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina to honor the memory of the more than 8,000 men and boys who perished in Srebrenica.

The horrific Srebrenica genocide reminds us that we must strive for a stable and prosperous future for the benefit of all citizens, regardless of race or religion, in Bosnia and Herzegovina and everywhere else. Every day, we are charged with remembering the past as we build a better future. We must work harder to overcome past grievances and to strengthen democratic institutions so that our path never again leads back to dark days of the past. We must work for the day when the remains of all of those slain in Srebrenica are finally recovered and may lie in their lasting resting places, and when justice reaches all of the perpetrators still at large.

The United States stands with the people Bosnia and Herzegovina on this day. We will not forget your fallen. We honor the victims of genocide and remain steadfast in our partnership to bring enduring stability and prosperity to your country.

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# [Press Releases: Kiribati National Day](#)

Press Statement  
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On behalf of the Government of the United States of America, please accept my best wishes as you and the people of Kiribati celebrate your National Day.

The United States and the Republic of Kiribati share a close partnership based on mutual respect and common interests. Later this year our citizens will come together to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Tarawa, a pivotal event in the history of both our nations. I appreciate the warm cooperation from the government and people of Kiribati in repatriating the remains of U.S. Marines fallen in that Battle. I likewise look forward to deepening the strong relationship between us as we work together to achieve our shared goals, including the protection of a free and open Indo-Pacific, for many more years to come.

I offer my congratulations on the occasion of your Independence Day and wish the people of Kiribati a joyous and prosperous year.

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# [Press Releases: Secretary Michael R.](#)

# Pompeo's Meeting With U.S. Forces-Afghanistan and Resolute Support Mission Troops

Readout  
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
July 10, 2018

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The below is attributable to Spokesperson Heather Nauert:

Secretary Pompeo met with U.S. and coalition troops yesterday at Bagram Airfield in Afghanistan. The Secretary thanked the troops on behalf of President Trump and expressed his appreciation for their hard work and sacrifice. He commended them for delivering security to Afghanistan and providing the Afghan people with an opportunity for a peaceful future.

Secretary Pompeo reiterated that the Taliban cannot win on the battlefield, cannot wait us out, and will ultimately have to settle their differences with the Afghan government at the negotiating table.

The Secretary also answered questions from the troops on both internal governmental and global issues such as North Korea in which he underscored the U.S. commitment to developing a peaceful solution on the Korean Peninsula.

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# Press Releases: Secretary Pompeo's Meeting With Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan and Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan of the United Arab Emirates

Readout  
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
July 10, 2018

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The below is attributable to Spokesperson Heather Nauert:

Secretary Michael R. Pompeo met today in Abu Dhabi with Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan and Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan of the United Arab Emirates. The Secretary thanked the Crown Prince and the Foreign Minister for the United Arab Emirates' strong partnership and longtime friendship with the United States. The Secretary expressed his appreciation for the United Arab Emirates' substantial commitments in Syria and Iraq, and the officials agreed to continue collaborating to enhance regional security. They also discussed how to further strengthen robust bilateral economic and trade ties.

On Yemen, the Secretary, Crown Prince, and Foreign Minister agreed on the importance of all sides supporting the UN-led political process, facilitating critical humanitarian and commercial access, and working toward a comprehensive agreement to end the conflict.

The Secretary emphasized the President's desire to see the Gulf dispute eased and eventually resolved, and his hope that our Gulf partners will work jointly and in unity to promote regional security and stability, and stand against Iran's destabilizing activities.

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## [Press Releases: Interview With Mina Al-Oraibi of The National](#)

Interview  
Michael R. Pompeo  
  
Secretary of State

Fairmont Hotel  
Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates  
July 10, 2018

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**QUESTION:** Mr. Secretary, thank you so much for making the time to speak to *The National*.

**SECRETARY POMPEO:** Of course, wonderful to be with you.

**QUESTION:** Thank you. I want to ask you about Iran, basically, because of course, here in the region, we have a lot of concerns about Iran's expansionist policies, and you recently said that Ayatollah Khamenei has to be held to account for destabilizing the Gulf's security. How can he be held to account?

**SECRETARY POMPEO:** So there are lots of ways. First, a united opposition is very important, and it's one of the reasons I'm here. We have great partners here in the United Arab Emirates, we have great partners with the Saudis and the Bahrainis, many countries pushing back, demonstrating that what we're asking is pretty simple: Iran to become a more normal country.

The tools we'll use will be varied. They'll often be diplomatic. You see the U.S.-led efforts on sanctions, so economic tools. And then it's also the case that we will be prepared to make sure that when Iran does things like launch missiles that come here or go to Riyadh, that we're prepared to defend the region as well militarily.

**QUESTION:** The recent threat of closing the Strait of Hormuz is one that, of course, the whole world cares about. Is that a realistic threat?

**SECRETARY POMPEO:** The United States has made very clear we're going to make sure that the sea lanes remain open. It's been a longstanding U.S. policy and we're prepared to make sure that that happens.

**QUESTION:** Now, if we look at Yemen, we see an uptick of activity from Hizballah and from Iran's support for the Houthis. What can the international community do to stop that and how can we see an end to the war in Yemen?

**SECRETARY POMPEO:** So I do hope that there ultimately is a political resolution there. The UN, through Mr. Griffiths, is working hard to achieve that political resolution. But at the end of the day, it's going to require a global effort to convince the Iranians that this kind of meddling, this kind of interference, this kind of promotion of violence directed at Arab countries outside of Yemen doesn't make sense for them. And so all the same tools that I described previously are the ones that will ultimately lead to the Houthis and others in Yemen realizing that the war is not worth continuing, that a political resolution is the one that's best for the people of Yemen.

**QUESTION:** (Inaudible) sorts of actions that can be taken in addition to, of course, the sanctions to convince the Iranians to change their behavior? Because what we've seen in the last few years is whatever pressure has not wielded the results you're hoping for so far.

**SECRETARY POMPEO:** Well, remember the last few years, the sanctions were lifted. And so much of this malign activity, this increase in resources provided to Hizballah, the increase in resources provided to the Shia militias fighting in Iraq and in Syria, the support for the Houthis in Yemen, the efforts in Bahrain, those all took place against the backdrop of a relief from sanctions as a result of agreements that were entered into in the JCPOA. America has now withdrawn from those. These sanctions are returning. And I am convinced that the combined effort of the Gulf states and the United States and the Europeans will ultimately achieve a good outcome and convince the Iranian people that this is not the kind of activity their government ought to be involved with.

**QUESTION:** Are you working on an alternative deal when it comes to the nuclear activities of Iran? Do we expect another deal, a different type of deal?

**SECRETARY POMPEO:** Well, if there's another deal, it'll be completely different. It will be of permanent duration and not temporary. It will have a verification regime that is sufficient to ensure that nuclear weapons aren't being hidden or developed in a clandestine way. And equally importantly, it won't just be about the nuclear program. It'll be about their space program, which is really a proxy for their missile efforts. It'll be about their missile program, it'll be about the malign activity, it will be a comprehensive effort to convince Iran to behave in a way that we ask every other country in the world to behave.

**QUESTION:** Iran's presence in Syria is one that causes concern for Syrians and the region. Are you in talks with the Russians to work together to push out Iran and Hizballah's influence in Syria?

**SECRETARY POMPEO:** So we have spoken with many parties in Syria, including the Russians, and made very clear, as have the Israelis, that the Iranian presence in Syria is not appropriate and won't be tolerated. So we're working diligently to develop a political solution that not only achieves America's goal of defeating ISIS that's still there, still a challenge for us in Syria, but leads Iran to the place where they conclude it's not worth the candle for them to be in Syria. There's no reason for them to reach out to that country. There's no reason to have military forces on the ground there. And we're going to undertake, along with our partners, a comprehensive program to diminish that activity.

**QUESTION:** We've seen some Iraqi militia forces in Syria under the leadership of Iranian military commanders or the IRCG commanders. What do you say to the Iraqi Government on that role that they're playing?

**SECRETARY POMPEO:** So yes, Qasem Soleimani is causing trouble throughout Iraq and Syria, and we need to raise the cost for him, for he and his organization and for him personally. With respect to the Iraqi Government, we're working closely with the Iraqis to make sure that as they move through their government formation process – as the election is now over, as they move through the government formation process, what America wants is an Iraqi – Iraq for Iraqis, not influenced by Iran but rather comprised of the various groups: the Kurds, the Sunnis, the Shias. We want everyone to have a voice in an Iraqi national government that leads to an Iraq that is strong and independent and robust and economically successful as well.

**QUESTION:** If we go back to Syria, is the U.S.'s position still that Assad must go?

**SECRETARY POMPEO:** Our first step is to take down the violence. The first thing that America's working on politically is to reduce the level of violence. We have six million-plus displaced persons. We've got to restore the opportunity for the Syrian people to begin to engage politically and develop a stable, non-violent Syria. At that point, the political decisions, the constitution of Syria will be sorted out by the Syrian people.

**QUESTION:** And I want to ask you finally, on the issue of Qatar, as the Qatar crisis has developed, they've gotten closer and closer to Iran. So as this coalition is put together to face off on Iran's activities in the region, what is your message to the Qataris on that?

**SECRETARY POMPEO:** My message and the President's message to the entire Gulf (inaudible) is that we hope that they will begin to have discussions and resolve this dispute. We understand there are differences of views. This happens among countries with great frequency. But we do also recognize that these disputes lead to a strengthening of Iran, it allows Iran to create a wedge between Gulf states that have a shared threat from the Islamic Republic of Iran. And so we are hopeful and we are prepared to try and help facilitate

to the extent we can a resolution of this set of disputes.

**QUESTION:** Okay. Thank you very much for your time.

**SECRETARY POMPEO:** Thank you, Mina.

**QUESTION:** I appreciate it.

**SECRETARY POMPEO:** Thank you very much.

**QUESTION:** Thank you.

**SECRETARY POMPEO:** Wonderful to meet you.

**QUESTION:** You too. It's great to meet you and best of luck on your trip.

**SECRETARY POMPEO:** Thank you very much.

**QUESTION:** Eagerly anticipated.

**SECRETARY POMPEO:** Yes.

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