

# Press Releases: Assad Regime Intentions in the Southwest De- escalation Zone

Press Statement  
Heather Nauert

Department Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
May 25, 2018

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The United States is concerned by reports of an impending Assad regime operation in southwest Syria within the boundaries of the de-escalation zone negotiated between the United States, Jordan, and the Russian Federation last year and reaffirmed between Presidents Trump and Putin in Da Nang, Vietnam in November. The United States remains committed to maintaining the stability of the southwest de-escalation zone and to the ceasefire underpinning it. We also caution the Syrian regime against any actions that risk broadening the conflict or jeopardize the ceasefire. As a guarantor of this de-escalation area with Russia and Jordan, the United States will take firm and appropriate measures in response to Assad regime violations.

The Presidents of the United States and Russia agreed in Da Nang to de-escalate the conflict. This agreement must be enforced and respected. Russia has declared to the world and to the UNSC that it will “guarantee” ceasefires in its self-declared de-escalation zones. Unfortunately, the Assad regime, with the support of Russia and Iran, has repeatedly violated these de-escalation zones, most recently in its brutal assault on East Ghouta. The Assad regime and its allies continue to prolong the conflict by ignoring their own de-escalation agreements and stonewalling the Geneva process.

Russia is duly responsible as a permanent member of the UN Security Council to use its diplomatic and military advantage over the Assad regime to stop attacks and compel the Assad regime to cease further military offensives. Russia has blocked UN Security Council actions that would have held Assad accountable for the use of chemical weapons and possibly saved innocent lives in Syria 11 times so far in this conflict. Six of those vetoes related to the use of chemical weapons, and others were providing humanitarian access and aid, and ceasing attacks against civilians. Russia should live up to its self-professed commitments in accordance with UNSCR 2254 and the southwest ceasefire, embodied in the Da Nang Statement issued by Presidents Trump and

Putin.

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## **Press Releases: Colombian Accession to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development**

Press Statement  
Heather Nauert

Department Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
May 25, 2018

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The United States congratulates Colombia on its accession and completion of the process to become a member of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The United States commends Colombia's significant efforts over the past five years to meet the OECD's technical standards.

Membership will bring benefits to the economy and people of Colombia, along with important responsibilities to level the playing field on trade and to enhance protections for investors. The United States looks forward to working with Colombia through the OECD to promote the economic and social well-being of people around the world.

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## **Press Releases: General Elections in Barbados**

Press Statement  
Heather Nauert

Department Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
May 25, 2018

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We congratulate Mia Mottley on her election as the next prime minister of Barbados in the May 24 general election vote. Ms. Mottley makes history as Barbados' first female prime minister. We congratulate the Barbadian people on participating in another free and fair election and for their commitment to democratic values.

The United States and Barbados enjoy a strong partnership based on our shared democratic values and commitment to peace and security. We applaud Ms. Mottley's stated intent to address fiscal transparency, and we look forward to collaborating with Barbados to enhance economic partnerships and private sector investment.

We value the productive relationship we built during Prime Minister Stuart's administration and look forward to working with Prime Minister-elect Mottley when the new government takes office.

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# Press Releases: Georgia National Day

Press Statement  
Mike Pompeo

Secretary of State

Washington, DC  
May 25, 2018

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On behalf of the Government of the United States, I would like to wish the Government of Georgia and the Georgian people a joyous Independence Day.

This year marks the centennial anniversary of the Democratic Republic of Georgia, the first independent Georgian state in modern history. Since regaining its independence in 1991, Georgia has been a close friend and valued partner of the United States.

Over the past 27 years, Georgia has made impressive progress in building its economy and its democracy. Georgians also make valuable contributions to regional peace and security, including through their service in Afghanistan, where they serve side by side with American servicemen and women. These achievements would not be possible without the dedication and numerous sacrifices of the Georgian people.

The United States is proud to continue to support Georgia's democratic and economic development, its NATO membership, and its sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders. We look forward to many more years of friendship and cooperation between our two countries.

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## Press Releases: Secretary Pompeo's Call With Republic of Korea Foreign Minister Kang

Readout  
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
May 25, 2018

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The below is attributable to Spokesperson Heather Nauert:

On May 24, Secretary Pompeo spoke by telephone with Republic of Korea Foreign Minister Kang. Secretary Pompeo and Foreign Minister Kang reaffirmed their shared commitment to the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula and to the ironclad alliance between the United States and the Republic of Korea. They committed to remaining closely coordinated in all of their efforts to create conditions for dialogue with North Korea and agreed that must continue until North Korea embraces denuclearization.

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