

[Press Releases: Death of Human Rights Attorney Dr. Li Baiguang](#)

Press Statement
Heather Nauert

Department Spokesperson

Washington, DC
February 27, 2018

We are saddened by the sudden death of Chinese human rights attorney Dr. Li Baiguang. Dr. Li Baiguang devoted his career to defending the rights of vulnerable peoples, including religious minority groups. As recently as two weeks ago, Dr. Li Baiguang travelled to Washington to attend the National Prayer Breakfast and meet with senior State Department officials to advocate on behalf of these groups.

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[Press Releases: Dominican Republic National Day](#)

Press Statement
Rex W. Tillerson

Secretary of State

Washington, DC

February 27, 2018

On behalf of the Government of the United States, I congratulate the people of the Dominican Republic on 174 years of independence.

The United States values our longstanding friendship with the Dominican Republic. We applaud the Government's leadership in the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative, and more broadly, for its commitment to improving the political, economic, and social bonds within the Western Hemisphere.

We look forward to working with the Dominican Republic to strengthen these partnerships for greater security and prosperity in the region, as stated in the Caribbean 2020 strategy.

We send our very best wishes for a happy Independence Day to the Dominican people.

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[Press Releases: Third Anniversary of the Murder of Boris Nemtsov](#)

Press Statement
Heather Nauert

Department Spokesperson

Washington, DC
February 26, 2018

Three years ago, opposition leader Boris Nemtsov was assassinated just outside the Kremlin. As a leading figure of Russia's democratic movement, a former Russian regional governor, and an energy minister as well as a deputy prime minister, Boris Nemtsov committed his life to public service and the goal of a freer and more prosperous Russia. His memory continues to inspire the Russian people and many others around the world to engage in the difficult and sometimes dangerous struggle for just, democratic, and accountable government.

As we honor the memory of Boris Nemtsov's life and work, we renew our call on the Government of Russia to uphold its obligations to promote and protect universal human rights, including freedom of expression, peaceful assembly, and freedom of association.

We again urge the Russian government to ensure that all involved in this crime, including those who organized or ordered it, are brought to justice.

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[Press Releases: State-Defense Cooperation on Global Engagement Center Programs and Creation of the Information Access Fund to Counter State-Sponsored Disinformation](#)

Media Note
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
February 26, 2018

The Department of State is pleased to announce a new partnership with the Department of Defense. We have signed a Memorandum of Agreement to transfer \$40 million from the Department of Defense to the Department of State's Global Engagement Center (GEC) in Fiscal Year 2018 for initiatives to counter propaganda and disinformation from foreign nations.

One of those initiatives is the creation of an Information Access Fund to support public and private partners working to expose and counter propaganda and disinformation from foreign nations. Under the Information Access Fund, civil society groups, media content providers, nongovernmental organizations, federally funded research and development centers, private companies, and academic institutions will be eligible to compete for grants from the GEC to advance their important work to counter propaganda and disinformation.

Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Steve Goldstein said the transfer of funds announced today reiterates the United States' commitment to the fight.

"This funding is critical to ensuring that we continue an aggressive response to malign influence and disinformation and that we can leverage deeper partnerships with our allies, Silicon Valley, and other partners in this fight," said Under Secretary Goldstein. "It is not merely a defensive posture that we should take, we also need to be on the offensive."

The Department of State plans to award an initial \$5 million in grants from the Information Access Fund. In consultation with Congress, this funding will include \$1 million in initial seed money from the Department of State's public diplomacy account in order to kick-start the initiative quickly. The Fund will be a key part of the GEC's partnerships with local civil society organizations, NGOs, media providers, and content creators to counter propaganda and disinformation. The Fund will also drive the use of innovative messaging and data science techniques.

Separately, the GEC will initiate a series of pilot projects developed with the Department of Defense that are designed to counter propaganda and disinformation. Those projects will be supported by Department of Defense funding.

The Department of State will soon begin reviewing applications for funding from the Information Access Fund. For more information, please follow this link, please email the GEC at GEC-IAF@state.gov.

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[Press Releases: Conference on Mobilizing Law Enforcement Efforts to Defeat ISIS](#)

Media Note
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
February 26, 2018

The Department of State, in cooperation with INTERPOL and the International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law, will host an International Conference on Mobilizing Law Enforcement Efforts to Defeat ISIS in Washington, DC, on February 27-28, 2018. The conference will bring together senior-level justice and law enforcement officials, and their diplomatic counterparts responsible for counterterrorism, from approximately 90 countries and organizations.

Although ISIS has lost nearly all of its former territory in Iraq and Syria, we cannot underestimate the evolving threat ISIS networks and local adherents pose elsewhere. While we will continue our efforts to ensure that ISIS is militarily defeated, it is increasingly important that we also mobilize justice and law enforcement agencies around the world to neutralize ISIS's other incarnations.

Conference participants will seek to establish a common understanding of the depth and breadth of the evolving ISIS global threat, and discuss how we can enhance law enforcement and other civilian tools to counter ISIS, including watchlists, information sharing, biometrics, criminal laws, and the tracking of terrorist finances. The conference will also identify specific actions to help countries disrupt potential attacks, and further strengthen unity of purpose.

The discussions over the two-day conference will build on our existing strategy and lay the foundation for the next phase in our effort as we work to confront the evolving ISIS threat.

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