

Press Releases: Interview With Niusha Boghrati of Radio Farda

Interview
Michael R. Pompeo

Secretary of State

Sheraton Hotel
Warsaw, Poland
February 14, 2019

QUESTION: Secretary Pompeo, so let's begin with what has happened right here, right now: an effort by U.S. administration in order to form a broad and international coalition against the Islamic Republic, as was reflected in Vice President Pence's remarks. Now, my question is that how feasible do you think that is, given the fact that EU countries seem to be sticking to their end of the deal when it comes to JCPOA? You know that recently they've put in place a tool in order to facilitate the trade with Iran.

SECRETARY POMPEO: So the gathering was aimed at creating peace and stability throughout the Middle East. That's what 60-plus countries came together to talk about, to work on solutions to what have been intractable problems – problems in Yemen, problems in Syria, the security risks associated with the conflict between the Palestinians and Israel. Each of those topics, that's what we came together for. It's the case that when you talk about Hizballah, you have to talk about Iran. When you talk about the Houthis' mischief in Yemen, you have to talk about Iran. Iran was certainly one of the things that was discussed.

But I will tell you that the coalition is strong. Not a single person, not a single country, denied that this threat from Iran is real, whether they were Arab countries or countries that were here from Asia or from South America or from the Middle East itself. All understood the threat that the Islamic Republic of Iran presents to their citizens. And so we worked on that.

There's clearly differences on how to attack the problem. The Europeans are wedded to the JCPOA. We've made a very different decision. We think any money that goes to the Islamic Republic of Iran will end up in the hands of Qasem Soleimani and be used for mischief and, most importantly, will be used to create real hardship for the Iranian people. And so we are determined to make sure that the Iranian people's voices are heard. We gathered people here today, we made our case, and I am confident that we came out of here today

more collectively able to deal with all of the threats that exist throughout all of the Middle East.

QUESTION: But going back to Iran, how those threats that you're mentioning are going to be dealt with? This conference is viewed by many as part of an ongoing effort on Washington's side in order to pave the way for a regime change in Iran. What do you think about that?

SECRETARY POMPEO: Well, I have to say this was historic. You had the Israelis and the Arabs sitting together having a conversation about the threat that Iran poses. This wasn't a Washington-driven effort. We certainly have made clear our concerns about the Islamic Republic of Iran, and we have devoted substantial resources towards reducing those risks. We'll keep at that because we ultimately want the Iranian people to have their voices heard.

We want a change in the regime's behavior. We want them to act like a normal country. Back in May, I laid out 12 core things that the Islamic Republic of Iran needed to do to rejoin the community of nations. We are driving every day a set of policies that we hope will achieve that, and when we do, the entire Middle East and indeed the world will be a safer place.

QUESTION: About those conditions, the preconditions and the changing of behavior which has been mentioned numerous times by you and other figures in the administration, the thing is that the behavior that you have in mind is so integral with the identity of the Islamic Republic that changing them will basically be a sort of a regime change. I mean, if Iran would just abandon every single behavior that it has got throughout the Middle East, throughout the world, towards the people of Iran, then nothing is left of the Islamic Republic.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Ultimately, the how – how these behaviors will be changed – will be dealt with by the Iranian people. They'll make their voices heard. They'll assert their power. These are smart people, capable people, with a deep and rich history. They are entirely capable of managing the affairs of their nation. And so these behavioral changes that we are seeking are aimed at creating security throughout the Middle East and creating better lives for the Iranian people, and we are doing everything we can to support those Iranian voices inside of their country so that they can get a life that is the one that they want and one that doesn't pose a threat and a risk to people throughout the Middle East and the rest of the world.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, you're aware that on Wednesday, a deadly attack happened in Iran against a bus which belonged to IRGC, killing 27 people. Mohammad Javad Zarif, Iranian foreign minister, wrote in a tweet, and I quote, that, "Is it no coincidence that Iran is hit by terror on the very day that," quote/unquote, "Warsaw Circus begins?" Your reaction to that?

SECRETARY POMPEO: Yeah, well, the Americans had nothing to do with this at all. I'll say this: Many countries, including European countries, meet with this man Zarif. He is actually headed to Munich, where many European countries will meet with him. I would ask those countries when they meet with Mr. Zarif to ask him why he would say such an outrageous thing. Sometimes he

is posited to be a moderate. It's not moderate to accuse the Israelis and the Americans of murder. That's not moderate. I think it shows the signs that Mr. Zarif and Mr. Rouhani are revolutionaries in the same way that the other leaders inside of Iran are as well.

QUESTION: Thank you. Thank you very much.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Thank you for your time today.

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[Press Releases: Interview With Judy Woodruff of PBS NewsHour](#)

Interview
Michael R. Pompeo

Secretary of State

Sheraton Hotel
Warsaw, Poland
February 13, 2019

QUESTION: Secretary Mike Pompeo, thank you very much for joining us. You are in Poland for a meeting to discuss the future of the Middle East. What do you want to come out of this meeting?

SECRETARY POMPEO: Well, Judy, thanks for having me on the show. I appreciate the opportunity to speak with your audience. We've gathered 70 nations to talk about how we achieve Middle East stability and prosperity and peace. As you know, this region is fraught with risk, and we will spend tomorrow, we spent a good part of tonight talking about the various risks and how this coalition, how different countries from every continent save for Antarctica can come together and deliver on Middle East peace. We hope to walk away from

here with a number of ideas and plans. We hope to have follow-up meetings where we can truly begin to deliver on something that the Middle East certainly needs and the world will benefit from as well.

QUESTION: So we are told that a number of key Middle Eastern and European officials decided not to attend. There are some countries represented at a lower level. How does that affect your ability to move this forward?

SECRETARY POMPEO: Judy, this event's been absolutely historic. It's the first time we've put it together. And even tonight it's the first time in a quarter of a century that you had the prime minister of Israel in the same room talking about threats in the Middle East with senior Arab leaders from all across the Middle East. It was truly remarkable. It was historic. Seventy-plus countries gathered together, all sharing ideas. We come from different backgrounds. We come from different places. We see these risks differently. But tonight, I think we began a conversation which will lead to really good outcomes all across the Middle East.

QUESTION: You mentioned the prime minister of Israel, Mr. Netanyahu. He just a short time ago was quoted as saying, tweeting that the countries were there to discuss their "common interest of war with Iran." They later changed the wording to say "common interest of combating Iran," but is that the focus?

SECRETARY POMPEO: Well, it may not surprise you, Judy, I was out with American soldiers on freedom's frontier today. I didn't have a chance to spend a lot of time on Twitter, so I haven't seen those remarks.

No, this gathering is certainly about Middle East peace and stability. You can't talk about that without talking about the threat from the Islamic Republic of Iran, whether it's Hizballah, Hamas, the Houthis – I call them the three H's – whether it's their work against the Iraqi government, trying to harm the independence and sovereignty of Iraq, whether it's what they're doing in Syria today.

There are shared interests there between the Saudis, between the Emiratis, between the Bahrainis, the Jordanians, the Israelis all understand that their nations are at risk from Iran, and the Europeans heard tonight as well their nations are at risk as well. Iran is conducting an assassination campaign throughout Europe. This is a global phenomenon. The threat from Middle East instability is real, and you can't possibly talk about it without talking about the enormous influence that Iran has had in the Middle East, none of which has been for good.

QUESTION: Well, Mr. Secretary, we know you've appealed directly to the people of Iran, but a question that's been raised is how can you expect them to support this when many of them wanted that nuclear agreement to go forward, many of them just don't want to be seen as supporting the U.S. right now. How – is that a tack that you think you can count on?

SECRETARY POMPEO: Judy, we don't expect the Iranian people to support the U.S. We expect them to take care of their own country. We hear from Iranians all the time at the United States State Department. They are wholly

dissatisfied with the conditions that are inside of their country. They watch the kleptocracy that is the clerical regime there. They watch it squander money around the world. They watch it get their brothers and sisters killed in wars all across the region. And for what? For the IRGC, for Qasem Soleimani, not for the benefit of the Iranian people.

So what we want the Iranian people to do is not support Europe or support the United States or anyone else. We want the Iranian people to have the opportunity to live in a prosperous, peaceful society and one that is controlled by their desires, their wishes. And if we can get that, I am very confident that these behaviors that we see in Iran will change dramatically.

QUESTION: And one other question, Mr. Secretary, about Iran, and that is it's been pointed out that the U.S. singles out human rights abuses in Iran but does not do so with regard to countries like Egypt, like Syria, like Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. How do you reconcile that?

SECRETARY POMPEO: I mean, Judy, your statement's just false. You reconcile it by going and looking at our record, and we've made very clear that the failure to observe the most basic fundamental human rights, treating human beings with the dignity and respect to which they are entitled by nature of their humanity, the United States calls that out wherever we find shortcomings, whether that's the Muslim Uighurs that are being held in detention camps in China or what's happening in Iran or any other country where we find it, North Korea, the list goes on. The United States is very consistent, and we ask every nation to treat their people with the basic human rights to which each of us is entitled.

QUESTION: Well, one of the countries that conversation has led to has to do with the war in Yemen, and you may know that just a short time ago the U.S. House of Representatives, where you previously served, passed a bill basically saying that the U.S. can no longer put money toward the military effort, the U.S. – the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen. Is this a – how much of a rebuke, of a setback, is this to the President?

SECRETARY POMPEO: Look, members of Congress – I was one – they get to vote the way they want to vote and pass resolutions that they want to pass. That's certainly their right. You should know that we listen to them. I meet with senators and members of the House of Representatives all the time and talk to them about a range of issues, and we certainly hear their voice with respect to Yemen.

But you know just tonight, Judy, I was with foreign ministers from the Emirates, the Saudis, and Britain, the UK. We met with Martin Griffiths from the UN, who is working to solve this problem in Yemen. We have two problems – three problems really. The first problem is al-Qaida. It's still there. The United States is doing its best to take down that terror threat. The second problem is Iran continuing to fund the Houthis. If you want to know who's caused the humanitarian crisis in Yemen, you need look no further than the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Judy, for example, how many dollars has Iran provided for humanitarian

assistance in Yemen? I can tell you. Do you know?

QUESTION: I don't know.

SECRETARY POMPEO: It's zero. How much money – how much money have the Emiratis and Saudis provided? The Americans, the Brits, the Saudis, and the Emiratis are doing everything we can to take down the threat from the humanitarian crisis in Yemen while Iran fuels it. It provides missiles to the Houthis that they launch into airports in Saudi Arabia and the Emirates.

These are the challenges in Yemen, these are the challenges that this administration is determined to push back against, and we're going to keep at it.

QUESTION: And we assume this legislation will go on to the Senate, which passed similar language not very long ago. So we'll watch to see what happens.

Just finally, Mr. Secretary, I want to take you to North Korea, which, of course, is another major focus of yours with this upcoming meeting between President Trump and the North Korean leader Kim Jong-un. There are reports now that the International Atomic Energy Agency may be allowed back into North Korea. Can you confirm that?

SECRETARY POMPEO: No, ma'am, I can't – I can't confirm that for you this evening. What I can tell your viewers is that President Trump is headed there on the 27th and 28th to Hanoi to have a second conversation with Chairman Kim Jong-un, and we really hope that we can make progress, a significant step towards denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula. That'll reduce risk. It'll reduce all the tension that's been along that border for far too long. And then we hope we can create a brighter future, a much brighter future for the North Korean people as well. That's the mission that the President's given me, and it's one that we hope we make a significant advance on at the end of this month.

QUESTION: Well, we will certainly be following that story and we'll be following your travels in Europe today. We wish you – we wish you safe travels, Secretary Mike Pompeo. Thank you very much.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Thank you, ma'am. Have a good evening, Judy. So long.

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Press Releases: Interview With Jan Mikruta of Polsat

Interview
Michael R. Pompeo

Secretary of State

Sheraton Hotel
Warsaw, Poland
February 13, 2019

QUESTION: Secretary Pompeo, thank you very much for your time. Sir, how important Warsaw Mideast summit is for American-Polish relationship? Does it change a lot?

SECRETARY POMPEO: First of all, Jan, thank you for having me on. I appreciate it. Look, this is an important ministerial, and we are deeply appreciative of Poland agreeing to co-host it. I thanked President Duda, my foreign minister counterpart. We've gathered over 70 countries to talk about an incredibly important issue to the world, Middle East peace and prosperity and stability.

We had a great day. I met with my Polish counterparts. I went out and saw U.S. soldiers working in northeast Poland alongside the NATO forces – Romanians, Croatians, Brits. It was quite a day to be with my Polish counterpart. I think a very productive relationship was already in place and now we've built on it.

QUESTION: Sir, and the conference itself, is it more about seeking peace or building coalition against Iran? This is obviously Prime Minister Netanyahu's point of view.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Yeah, boy, they're related. We are building a coalition which is intent on delivering something that the world has been looking for for quite some time: taking down the threat and the risk that's associated with terrorism in the Middle East. An item of that, an element of that is Iran. They're conducting terror campaigns in Syria, in Lebanon, in Yemen, in Iraq, and assassinate people in Europe.

So Iran is a very real threat, but this ministerial is aimed at a broader objective. It's to begin the process of addressing the conflicts that have taken place in the Middle East for time immemorial and putting together a coalition that's determined to take down risk all around the world.

QUESTION: Sir, United States expect to Poland to harden policy toward Iran and China, and Huawei especially. Can Poland expect some extra support from United States, like more U.S. troops on Polish soil?

SECRETARY POMPEO: We'll certainly make decisions about the right force levels for NATO and for U.S. forces here, and we'll work closely with the Polish Government to make sure that we have the right level of security. That's incredibly important. The threat from Russia is real. The Polish people know that, and they're a great American partner in pushing back against that threat.

But with respect to peace in the Middle East and the strategic effort we're engaged in, this isn't about countries doing each other favors. This is in Poland's best interest. The threat from Huawei – that technology, the threat that it poses to the Polish people, their privacy, the ability to keep secure systems – is very real. We want to make sure they know about that, then the Polish Government will make its own sovereign decision about how to proceed.

Each of these threats – the threat of attacks from the Middle East and from Iran – is very real. It's very real to the Polish people, and I'll tell you, there are few countries that understand the need for deterrence better than Poland. If you wait, if you allow fascist and tyrannical regimes to expand, if you allow them to get on the march, the risk to great nations, democratic nations like Poland, is real and increasing.

QUESTION: Regarding Huawei, is it kind of a choice for Poland to be American friends or to have big contacts with Huawei and China?

SECRETARY POMPEO: Not at all. America doesn't behave that way. That's not how we roll. That's how China rolls. China shows up and makes demands and says if you don't participate with our products, if you don't take our loan, if you don't become addicted to our technology, then we won't be your friend. America is Poland's friend. We've been working with Poland for years. The relationship between President Trump and President Duda is very real.

What we're doing with respect to China is we want to make sure that every country understands the risks, and then we want to make sure they know what their alternatives are as well. Our aim is to make sure that President Duda takes care of the Polish people the same way President Trump is taking care of the American people, and we have a responsibility to make sure when we identify a risk for Poland, we share that information with the Polish people and the Polish Government.

QUESTION: Speaking of security, sir, and Russian threats, you mentioned this threat many times today. Fort Trump, Mr. Secretary – the idea of a permanent U.S. base on Polish soil – how real is this vision?

SECRETARY POMPEO: So there's lots of discussions taking place between the Polish military and the United States Department of Defense. We've made a significant commitment here already with our enhanced forward positioning of soldiers. We think that's important. The two countries will work together to figure out if we have the levels right and we have the level of resiliency

right, and when we do, I think we'll see further decisions about how to approach that.

QUESTION: But do you believe in idea of Fort Trump, the military base called Fort Trump on Polish soil?

SECRETARY POMPEO: Call security whatever you want to call it. I always think about it from a strategic standpoint: What's the right outcome? How do we deliver the response in a way that deters Russian aggression so that we can keep the Polish people and the rest of Europe safe?

QUESTION: And when we can expect decision on that?

SECRETARY POMPEO: Oh, goodness, I think it'll be a continuing discussion for an awfully long time. We'll often have to reset and rethink the way to approach this. We'll get it right and then we'll continue to evaluate, and as threats change, as risk changes, we'll make sure and get the deterrence model correct. It's important for the Polish people; it's important for America as well.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, you were saying how an important ally Poland is, how President Trump is grateful. So I have to ask you this question, an important one for Poles: When can we expect to be included in the visa waiver program?

SECRETARY POMPEO: I hope soon. We're working diligently to do that. I know the Polish Government is working diligently to do that. I don't know the date. There are a set of requirements that we have in place. Poland is getting closer and closer. Our ambassador here is working diligently on that. She's made that one of her core missions here. We hope Poland is part of the visa waiver program very, very soon.

QUESTION: Going back to Iran, sir, Iran warned Poland of consequences if this meeting turns out to be anti-Iranian according to Tehran. Is Poland now after this conference less safe, in your opinion?

SECRETARY POMPEO: What does that tell the Polish people about the nature of the Islamic Republic of Iran, that they would threaten a country for having dialogue and conversations and debating and inviting nations from around the world to join together to have discussions about how to keep the Middle East safe? Boy, I think that tells you all you need to know about the Islamic Republic of Iran. No, indeed, I think the Polish people understand: If we don't take care of the threats – threats in the Middle East, threats that emanate from Iran – the Polish people will then be more at risk, not as a result of this conference. This conference will make the Polish people much more safe.

QUESTION: Secretary Pompeo, thank you very much.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Jan, thank you very much.

QUESTION: Thank you very much, sir.

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Press Releases: Department of State Announces Publication of 36th Edition of World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers (WMEAT)

Media Note
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
February 13, 2019

The Department of State's Bureau of Arms Control, Verification and Compliance is pleased to announce its recent online posting of WMEAT 2018, the 36th edition of the State Department's World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers (WMEAT) publication, covering the years 2005-2016, on the State Department's website [here](#).

This edition of WMEAT, like previous recent annual editions, presents data in spreadsheet form for ease of reference by researchers.

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Press Releases: Iran-based Entities and Individuals Sanctioned Under E.O. 13606 and 13224

Media Note
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
February 13, 2019

Today, the U.S. Department of the Treasury designated an Iran-based entity, as well as four associated individuals, that organize international conferences in support of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-Qods Force's (IRGC-QF's) efforts to recruit and collect intelligence from foreign attendees, including U.S. persons. In addition, the Department of the Treasury designated a separate Iran-based entity and six associated individuals involved in a malicious cyber campaign targeting current and former U.S. government personnel to gain access to and implant malware on their computer systems.

The Department of the Treasury coordinated today's designations with the U.S. Department of Justice and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, which separately released details regarding law enforcement actions taken against a number of the persons designated.

These designations seek to deny the Iranian regime a platform to collect damaging intelligence from U.S. persons and conduct malicious cyber activity. The designations block the property of the entities and individuals and suspend their entry into the United States.

The U.S. Government's message to the Iranian regime is unequivocal: the United States will not tolerate the belligerent targeting of U.S. persons. While the Iranian regime engages in this type of malign activity outside of its borders, it also continues to violate the human rights of its own people. The United States stands in solidarity with the Iranian people's desire for a normal life. Our actions aim to increase pressure on the Iranian regime until it decides that discord, terrorism, and instability are no longer values worth spreading.

For more information on the designations, visit the Department of the Treasury's [Press Release](#).

For more information on the law enforcement actions, visit the Federal Bureau

of Investigation's [Press Release](#).

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