

# [Press Releases: U.S.-Israel Foreign Policy Dialogue Readout](#)

Media Note  
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
February 12, 2018

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Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Thomas A. Shannon, Jr. and Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs Director General Yuval Rotem co-chaired the first U.S.-Israel Foreign Policy Dialogue in Washington, DC on February 12, 2018.

The dialogue addressed issues of mutual interest in the Middle East and across the globe including opportunities for cooperation in Africa on development, economics, and counterterrorism; challenges in Asia and ways to advance shared interests in the Indo-Pacific region; and efforts to advance shared approaches to regional engagement in the Americas in collaboration with the Organization of American States. The dialogue also focused on digital diplomacy and recent developments in research and social media technology. Both sides expressed an interest to continue this dialogue on a regular basis in Washington and Jerusalem.

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## [Press Releases: State Department and U.S. Agency for International](#)

# Development FY 2019 Budget Request

Fact Sheet

Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC

February 12, 2018

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The President's FY 2019 budget request proposes \$39.3 billion for critical State Department and U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) efforts to advance peace and security, expand American prosperity and influence, and address global crises while making efficient use of taxpayer resources. The budget request modernizes State Department and USAID diplomacy and development to advance a more secure and prosperous world by helping to support more stable and resilient societies that will lead their own development and, ultimately, no longer need foreign aid.

The budget request supports the President's "America First" vision with a commitment to four key national priorities:

## **Protecting America's Security at Home and Abroad:**

- **Sustaining Support for Efforts to Defeat ISIS and Other Violent Extremist Organizations:** Supporting efforts to defeat ISIS and violent extremist organizations while addressing the conditions that these groups seek to exploit, including poor governance, weak institutions, lack of economic opportunity, corruption, and persistent human rights abuses with \$5.7 billion. This includes continued support for security in Afghanistan and Iraq, and sustains protection of our personnel and facilities overseas as well as to combat disinformation as part of the effort to defeat ISIS. Assistance also supports the needs of displaced religious minorities in the Middle East and North Africa.
- **Upholding Commitments to Our Allies:** Supporting the recent 10-year Memorandum of Understanding between the U.S. and Israel, this request provides \$3.3 billion in Foreign Military Financing for Israel. It also recognizes the critical U.S. strategic partnership with and support for Jordan by providing \$1.3 billion in economic and security assistance.
- **Prioritizing Programs that Counter Critical National Security Threats:** Leading international efforts with \$127 million to prevent North Korea, Iran, and other states and terrorist actors from unlawfully acquiring weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, while strengthening the capacity of partner nations to do so as well.
- **Protecting our Borders:** Supporting our border security and Consular service with \$3.8 billion for fee-funded programs and personnel that

secure our borders through enhanced visa vetting, preventing fraud, improving visa processes, and enabling the conduct of international business by facilitating legitimate foreign travel to and from the United States.

- **Reducing Illegal Immigration:** Providing \$1.1 billion for Central and South America, Mexico, and the Caribbean to break the power of transnational criminal organizations and networks; help shut down illicit pathways for irregular migration and goods; and address insufficient economic opportunity, weak governance, and inadequate security, all of which drive irregular migration.
- **Protecting U.S. Overseas Personnel and Facilities:** Providing \$5.4 billion for the protection of our U.S. government personnel and facilities overseas, including security for the U.S. presence in Afghanistan and Iraq. The Administration is also prioritizing funding for a U.S. Embassy facility in Jerusalem which will begin once design and construction plans are finalized.

### **Renewing America's Competitive Advantage for Sustained Economic Growth and Job Creation:**

- **Strengthening Democratic Governance and Standing against Corruption:** Dedicating \$1.4 billion in assistance to fight against corruption and support efforts that promote democratic governance principles, such as rule of law, transparency, and accountability.
- **Mobilizing the Private Sector and Reforming U.S. Development-Finance:** Supporting activities that promote economic growth and engage the private-sector in developing nations to advance U.S. national-security interests; support development outcomes; and support U.S. companies, jobs, and exports. This includes providing \$56 million for programming at USAID in support of the proposed consolidated, reformed Development Finance Institution and \$15 million in new trade capacity building efforts, which will better harness and incentivize private-sector financing.
- **Expanding Domestic Resource Mobilization:** Providing \$75 million via central funding and additional bilateral resources to equip and challenge countries to mobilize and manage their domestic public and private resources more effectively, leverage other available financing sources, and sustainably lead their own development.
- **Addressing the Root Causes of Poverty and Hunger:** Providing \$518 million for food security programs that advance agricultural development to improve economic growth, reduce malnutrition, and strengthen resilience to recurrent crises, leveraging private investment, donor, and host-country contributions.

### **Promoting American Leadership through Balanced Engagement:**

- **International Organizations:** Funding \$2.3 billion for preserving strategic participation in multilateral fora to achieve outcomes favorable to the U.S. and its allies while reinforcing the expectation that we will continue to work with the international organizations including the UN to reduce costs, improve effectiveness, and more fairly share the funding burden.

- **Leading in Global Health Programs:** Providing \$6.7 billion to support U.S. leadership in advancing global health, including through the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR); the Global Fund to Combat AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria; the President's Malaria Initiative; and global health security activities while simultaneously supporting efforts to help partner nations build their own capacity. With the Protecting Life in Global Health Assistance policy now in place, the Budget includes investments in family planning and reproductive health, and supports women's empowerment.
- **Addressing Major Humanitarian Crises:** Maintaining U.S. leadership in shaping global humanitarian assistance by providing \$6.4 billion, a 21 percent increase from the FY 2018 Budget request, to address complex crises, such as those occurring in Syria, Yemen, Iraq, South Sudan, and elsewhere, while also asking the rest of the world to increase their share and demanding improved performance by implementers to maximize the benefit for recipients of assistance.
- **Pursuing a More Balanced U.S. Share of International Spending:** Setting the expectation that other donors will do their fair share to advance shared priorities, support economic growth and development worldwide, and address humanitarian crises, and holding international organizations accountable.
- **Informing Foreign Opinion and Engaging Foreign Audiences:** Furthering U.S. foreign policy goals by providing \$565 million for Public Diplomacy (PD) programs to inform foreign opinion. PD programs assist in countering misinformation about the U.S., its foreign policy and strengthen relationships between Americans and foreign publics.

#### **Ensuring Effectiveness and Accountability to the American Taxpayer:**

- **Strengthening the Effective Management of our People, Programs, Information, and Capital Assets:** Improving business process and program design and aligning foreign assistance, policies, and resources with key strategic priorities as part of the Impact Initiative (formerly Redesign) in order to better advance American interests in a constantly changing world.
- **Modernizing Information Technology:** Investing \$150 million for modernizing the State Department's information technology, including wireless and cloud-based services to provide our employees with greater mobility.
- **Focusing on an Effective Workforce and Leadership:** Advancing leadership and modernization of the State Department and USAID workforce through the Impact Initiative. Requesting \$96.2 million for Impact initiatives to develop a more flexible workforce and pursue operational management efficiencies.

For more information, please:

- Visit [state.gov/f](https://state.gov/f)
- Visit [state.gov/s/d/rm](https://state.gov/s/d/rm)
- Follow [@USForeignAssist](https://twitter.com/USForeignAssist) on Twitter

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## **Press Releases: Secretary Tillerson's Meeting With Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi**

Readout  
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
February 12, 2018

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The following is attributable to Spokesperson Heather Nauert:

Secretary Tillerson had a productive meeting with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi Monday in Cairo. They discussed our two countries' shared commitment to fight terrorism in all its forms, and particularly to continue our efforts as members of the global coalition to defeat ISIS. They also agreed to pursue a new joint strategic dialogue and enhance the already strong ties between the United States and Egypt, including economic and commercial links. In the context of those strong ties, the Secretary and the President agreed to continue to work to resolve a number of issues of mutual concern.

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# Press Releases: Department of State and USAID FY 2019 Budget Request

Press Statement  
Rex W. Tillerson

Secretary of State

Washington, DC  
February 12, 2018

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Today, President Trump requested \$39.3 billion for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 Department of State and U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) budget. This request upholds the President's commitment, as outlined in the National Security Strategy and the State Department and USAID's Joint Strategic Plan, to protect our security, rights, and values.

This budget focuses resources on national security at home and abroad, on economic development that contributes to the growth of our economy, and on renewed efforts to modernize the operations of both the State Department and USAID for greater effectiveness. It requests the resources necessary to advance peace and security, and respond to global crises, while prioritizing the efficient use of taxpayer resources.

As we advance the President's foreign policy priorities, we continue to promote the advancement of more stable and resilient societies that contribute to a secure and prosperous world.

For more information about the FY 2019 budget request, please visit [www.state.gov/s/d/rm/c6112.htm](http://www.state.gov/s/d/rm/c6112.htm).

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# Press Releases: Press Availability With Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry

Press Availability  
Rex W. Tillerson

Secretary of State

Cairo, Egypt  
February 12, 2018

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**FOREIGN MINISTER SHOUKRY:** (In Arabic.)

**SECRETARY TILLERSON:** Well, I'm delighted to be in Cairo, my first trip to Egypt as Secretary of State, and to really have very comprehensive discussions about this almost one-half-century relationship between the U.S. and Egypt and our commitment to strengthening this partnership in the years to come. I'm also very pleased to be with Foreign Minister Shoukry, who has become a friend as we have engaged on a number of challenges in the region and to address those jointly and with a great deal of agreement between us as to how those issues need to be addressed. I look forward to my meeting with

President al-Sisi and appreciate his receiving me as well.

We had a very productive discussion on our shared regional and security concerns. We spoke about opportunities as to how to strengthen our ties and, as the foreign minister indicated, mechanisms by which we can deepen those ties and further explore areas for mutual cooperation, first through the strategic dialogue which we've agreed we will have later this year, and then we're going to explore also the possibility of a 2+2 dialogue to even allow us to further enhance these conversations both on a full range of issues of not just security concerns, but political and economic opportunities as well.

I did express to the foreign minister our condolences to the people of Egypt for the violence that they have been suffering from the terrorist attacks perpetrated by ISIS and other terrorist groups. Egypt's been battling this level of extremism for many years, and we continue to be steadfast partners in their response to these attacks throughout this time.

We agreed that we would continue our close cooperation on counterterrorism measures, including our joint commitment to the defeat of ISIS, and Egypt has been a very important member of the Defeat-ISIS Coalition from the beginning. They – Egypt deals with the threats of ISIS themselves and are dealing with it certainly currently in the Sinai.

We also discussed the importance of the protection and promotion of human rights and the vital role of civil society in Egypt. With the presidential elections planned for the end of March, the United States, as it does in all countries, supports a transparent and credible electoral process, and all citizens being given the right and the opportunity to participate freely and fairly.

On Libya, the United States and Egypt support the UN's Action Plan for Libya for credible and peaceful elections in their country. This will promote stability – much-needed stability for Libya and their economy to prosper. As the Security Council affirmed on December the 14th, the Libyan Political Agreement in our view must remain the framework for a political solution throughout Libya's transitional period.

Foreign Minister Shoukry and I also discussed Syria and how we can work together to reinforce the UN-led Geneva political process, which is the only political framework through which this conflict can be resolved. And Egypt has played a very important role in supporting dialogue between opposition representatives and the central government in Damascus.

On the Middle East peace, I reiterated that the Trump administration remains committed to achieving a lasting peace agreement between the Israelis and the Palestinians.

Now, the foreign minister and I also discussed how we can intensify our countries' economic engagement and support our private sectors to generate jobs and prosperity for both of our people, and I acknowledged and welcomed the very important – although we know difficult – steps towards reform that President Sisi has undertaken in order to create a very strong foundation for



future prosperity and economic performance in Egypt, and those have been necessary, although difficult, to be fully – receive the full support of the IMF, and Egypt has met all of those requirements.

We'll do what we can to continue to encourage the economic recovery and we hope that American companies are able to increase their investments in Egypt that will create jobs and opportunities here as well.

The United States, again, commits itself to standing with Egypt, standing shoulder to shoulder in these – in the fight against terrorism, but also standing together to create a more stable region for everyone as well, and I thank the foreign minister for our opportunity to meet and exchange on so many important issues. Thank you.

**FOREIGN MINISTER SHOUKRY:** Thank you very much.

**MODERATOR:** (In Arabic.)

**QUESTION:** (In Arabic.)

**SECRETARY TILLERSON:** Well, I think the commitment the U.S. has to Egypt's security in the fight against terrorism should be evident, and both with the release of about a billion dollars of foreign military financing assistance to Egypt to continue to strengthen its capabilities, and also sharing of other approaches to countering terrorism, some of which we can talk about, some of which we can't so easily talk about. But our joint commitment to defeat ISIS is steadfast and there has been no gap between Egypt and the United States in our joint efforts to confront terrorists and extremist – extremism in the region, but most specifically here in Egypt as well.

So I think the Egyptian people should be confident that the U.S. commitment to continuing to support Egypt in this fight against terrorism, in bringing security for the Egyptian people is steadfast, and that will continue, and we had a great deal of exchange today about how we can advance that. And we just mentioned the intent to have a strategic dialogue later this year. All of these are opportunities for us to identify other ways that we can strengthen and support Egypt's fight against terrorism, but also, ultimately, to strengthen the economic development of Egypt as well.

**MODERATOR:** (In Arabic.) Carol, *Washington Post*.

**QUESTION:** Thank you. Mr. Secretary, given the concerns (inaudible) to run against the president (inaudible) election and who were arrested and disqualified, how (inaudible) do you believe those elections will be? And will the United States consider withholding more military aid from Egypt (inaudible)?

And Mr. Foreign Minister, sir, human rights groups have called this the most repressive era in modern Egyptian history. What did Secretary Tillerson tell you about democracy and civil liberty here in Egypt? And will anything change here in Egypt after your meeting today? Thank you.

**SECRETARY TILLERSON:** Well, I think as I indicated in my prepared remarks, and

I would answer the same: We have always advocated for free and fair elections, transparent elections, not just for Egypt but in any country. And so the U.S. is always going to advocate for an electoral process that respects the rights of its citizens to make the choices the citizens want to make and the full participation of citizens in those elections. And nothing has changed about our advocacy for those types of elections.

**FOREIGN MINISTER SHOUKRY:** As relates to some of the comments that have been made by certain members of the human rights community and other activists, I would only recommend that you ascertain for yourself the nature and the current situation in Egypt as relates to human rights, and how the Egyptian people view this administration and its efforts to strengthen and protect human rights, and whether there is that sense of restriction that you alluded to. I think it is – it isn't helpful that a certain group projects from a perspective of lack of information, lack of direct association to a society, but it is much, much more important the general conditions, the freedom of press that is available, the variety of television shows, the dialogue and the exchange. Development in the social and political field is an evolutionary process. I think over the last 11 years, the Egyptian people have shown their commitment and their determination and their ability to change their course and to indicate their dissatisfaction. If they deemed that they were dissatisfied, they have been able to change two governments in the last seven years, and they have undertaken legislative elections and know how to protect their rights and to advocate for those rights.

So it's important that I think we recognize that it is the Egyptian people who should determine how they are applying their freedoms and their political activism, and I hope that you will have the opportunity while you're here in Egypt to discuss this with the Egyptians on the street and ascertain from them directly whether they are satisfied with current conditions.

We had a discussion with the Secretary related to Egypt's efforts to develop both politically, economically, and socially, and that we continue to do so out of our desire to see Egypt evolve into a place of – that can fulfill the aspirations of its people, and we will continue to rely on the support that we can depend on from the United States in this regard. These are commitments that this administration is confident it will fulfill, and it is responsible to the Egyptian people to continue to fulfill those commitments, as has been stipulated in our constitution.

**MODERATOR:** (In Arabic.)

**QUESTION:** (In Arabic.)

**SECRETARY TILLERSON:** Well, I think it's important to note that in the announcement President Trump made regarding Jerusalem he also made two very important points as well, one of which was he was not advocating for any change to the status quo as to oversight of the holy sites, recognizing the proper role of existing authorities; and the second is that the final boundaries of Jerusalem are yet to be determined, and that those will be decided among the parties. And those – I think it's oftentimes those two important points seem to have been overlooked in his announcement. And yes,

the U.S. is still committed to the peace process and still believes we have an important role to play in bringing the parties together and seeing a resolution to this. And President Trump is committed to that.

**FOREIGN MINISTER SHOUKRY:** (In Arabic.)

**MODERATOR:** (In Arabic.) *Wall Street Journal*, Felicia.

**QUESTION:** Thank you. Secretary Tillerson, Vice President Pence, in an interview with *The Washington Post*, endorsed what you've described publicly as talks about talks with the North Koreans, and president – South Korea's President Moon said he would go to Pyongyang. Is this the start of a diplomatic process in North Korea?

And then for Foreign Minister Shoukry, the U.S. has in the past raised concerns about Egypt's ties with North Korea. What is Egypt doing to cut those ties?

**SECRETARY TILLERSON:** I'm not sure I could hear the last part of your question.

**QUESTION:** I was just asking if this – is this the start of a diplomatic process with North Korea?

**SECRETARY TILLERSON:** Well, as to – as to the Vice President's comments about potentially having talks and whether it's the start of a diplomatic process, I think it's too early to judge. As we've said for some time, it's really up to the North Koreans to decide when they're ready to engage with us in a sincere way, a meaningful way. They know what has to be on the table for conversations. We've said for some time that I think it's important that we have – we're going to need to have some discussions that precede any form of negotiation to determine whether the parties are, in fact, ready to engage in something this meaningful, in order for us to then put together the construct of a negotiation. So we'll just have to wait and see.

**FOREIGN MINISTER SHOUKRY:** We did discuss with Secretary Tillerson the issues related to North Korea, the Korean Peninsula, and the security of that region. Egypt has had normal diplomatic ties with North Korea, as does many Western and NATO members, and those ties are, in terms of the relationship, limited to representation, and there is almost no existing economic or other areas of cooperation. But we are concerned with the current status with the threats emanating from the proliferation of nuclear weapons, a situation which we deem as threatening to the global nonproliferation regime, one that has to be dealt within our maintaining global security, also the threats of ballistic missile systems to South Korea and to Japan, and we believe that all of these issues must be resolved for the security of the region and the Korean Peninsula. And we will continue to discuss these issues and to take the appropriate measures to deal with these challenges.

Thank you very much.

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