

[Press Releases: Consultations With China and Russia on the Afghan Peace Process](#)

Media Note
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
March 22, 2019

Representatives of the United States, China, and Russia met in Washington, D.C., March 21-22, 2019. The parties exchanged views on the current status of the Afghan peace process and discussed common efforts to bring peace, prosperity, and security to Afghanistan. They underscored their respect for the sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity of Afghanistan, as well as Afghanistan's right to make its own political, security, and economic decisions.

The United States, China, and Russia agreed to continue further discussions. The exact date and venue for the next meeting will be decided through diplomatic channels. The parties will continue to seek common efforts and coordination on the Afghan peace process.

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[Press Releases: Guyanese Elections](#)

Press Statement
Robert Palladino

Deputy Spokesperson

Washington, DC
March 22, 2019

The United States reiterates the importance of scheduling genuinely free and fair national elections in the Co-Operative Republic of Guyana in adherence with the Guyanese constitution and Guyanese law. The U.S. government values Guyana as a friend and partner and stands ready to assist as needed.

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Press Releases: Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations Denise Natali Travels to Germany and Niger

Media Note
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
March 22, 2019

Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations Denise Natali will travel to Germany and Niger from March 23 to 29. In Germany, she will meet with military and civilian officials at AFRICOM to

discuss CSO's ongoing engagement and ways to enhance collaboration on stabilization strategy, policy, and planning. Assistant Secretary Natali will then travel to Niger to assess Niger's defections programs of Boko Haram and ISIS-West Africa fighters and areas for further CSO security sector stabilization. She will also meet with senior government officials in Niger and local civil society organizations to advance U.S. stabilization principles.

Follow [@CSOAsstSec](#) on Twitter for trip updates. For press inquiries, please contact CSOPublicAffairs1@state.gov.

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Press Releases: The United States Sanctions Venezuela's State-affiliated Bank

Press Statement
Robert Palladino

Deputy Spokesperson

Washington, DC
March 22, 2019

Today, the United States sanctioned the Venezuelan Economic and Social Development Bank (BANDES) and five subsidiaries (Banco Bandes Uruguay S.A., Banco de Venezuela S.A., Banco Universal, Banco Bicentenario del Pueblo, and Banco Prodem S.A.). In addition, the U.S. government today determined that persons operating in Venezuela's financial sector could be subject to sanctions pursuant to Executive Order 13850. This action targets a financial institution that the former Maduro regime uses to move money stolen from the

Venezuelan people outside of Venezuela.

The former Maduro regime continues its attack on democracy in Venezuela. This action is in response to the unjustified raids of the homes of several Venezuelan leaders, including National Assembly Deputy Sergio Vergara, and the abduction of Roberto Marrero, Chief of Staff to interim President Juan Guaido and Vergara's driver, Luis Aguilar.

The former Maduro regime dispatched thugs to plant evidence in the homes of these Venezuelan leaders in the middle of the night, and continues to use lawless bands as a means to intimidate, stifle democracy, and silence the voice of the Venezuelan people. These unconscionable acts will not stand. Neither will the regime's continued mismanagement and theft of Venezuela's resources.

We demand the release of Roberto Marrero and Luis Aguilar immediately, and will hold accountable all those involved.

We will continue to use the full weight of U.S. economic and diplomatic power to press for the freedom of the Venezuelan people and restoration of Venezuelan democracy.

The international community stands with interim President Guaido, the National Assembly, and the people of Venezuela.

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[Press Releases: Secretary Pompeo's Call With NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg](#)

Readout
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
March 22, 2019

The below is attributable to Deputy Spokesperson Robert Palladino:□

Secretary of State Michael R. Pompeo spoke today with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg. They discussed plans for the meeting of NATO Foreign Ministers to be held April 3-4 in Washington, DC where Allies will mark the 70th anniversary of NATO's founding and take stock of the Alliance's efforts to address the full range of challenges facing the Alliance. They also discussed the Secretary General's planned address to a joint session of the U.S. Congress and the value of that event in highlighting the enduring transatlantic bond.

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