

Press Releases: Update on the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR)

Media Note
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
July 24, 2017

Today, the United States announced that through support from the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) four African countries are approaching control of their HIV epidemics.

Groundbreaking new PEPFAR data show that the HIV epidemic is coming under control across all age groups in Swaziland, the country with the highest HIV prevalence in the world. Additional PEPFAR-supported studies released in December 2016 for Malawi, Zambia, and Zimbabwe also demonstrate significant progress toward controlling the HIV epidemics in these countries.

In Swaziland, new HIV infections have been nearly halved among adults, and HIV viral load suppression – a key marker of the body successfully controlling the virus – has doubled since 2011. These data suggest that Swaziland has met the global target for community viral load suppression among HIV-positive adults four years ahead of schedule. The Swaziland data is particularly important because PEPFAR funded a comprehensive survey in 2011-2012, which provides the critical baseline comparator of current results and progress.

Today's findings demonstrate the remarkable impact of the U.S. government's efforts, through PEPFAR and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, in close collaboration with African countries and other partners.

The United States is the largest bilateral donor to the global HIV/AIDS response. Through PEPFAR, the United States continues to invest in over 50 countries, ensuring access to services by all populations, including the most vulnerable and at-risk groups. Malawi, Swaziland, Zambia, and Zimbabwe are among the 13 highest-burden countries that have the greatest potential to control their epidemics by 2020 through the UNAIDS 90-90-90 framework and expansion of HIV prevention, leading PEPFAR to accelerate its efforts in these particular countries.

For more information about PEPFAR, visit: www.pepfar.gov

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Press Releases: Quartet Envoys' Joint Press Statement – July 22, 2017

Media Note
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
July 22, 2017

The Envoys of the Middle East Quartet from the Russian Federation, the United States, the European Union and the United Nations are deeply concerned by the escalating tensions and violent clashes taking place in and around the Old City of Jerusalem.

They strongly condemn acts of terror, express their regret for all loss of innocent life caused by the violence, and hope for a speedy recovery to the wounded.

Noting the particular sensitivities surrounding the holy sites in Jerusalem, and the need to ensure security, the Quartet Envoys call on all to demonstrate maximum restraint, refrain from provocative actions and work towards de-escalating the situation.

The Envoys welcome the assurances by the Prime Minister of Israel that the status quo at the holy sites in Jerusalem will be upheld and respected.

They encourage Israel and Jordan to work together to uphold the status quo, noting the special role of the Hashemite Kingdom as recognized in its peace treaty with Israel.

The Quartet Envoys reiterate that violence deepens mistrust and is fundamentally incompatible with achieving a peaceful resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

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Press Releases: State Department **Amendments to the Terrorist** **Designation of Yarmouk Martyrs Brigade**

Media Note
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
July 21, 2017

The Department of State has amended the designation of Yarmouk Martyrs Brigade as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist (SDGT) under section 1(b) of Executive Order (E.O.) 13224 to change the group's primary name to Khalid bin Al-Walid Army and to add new aliases. U.S. persons are generally prohibited from engaging in transactions with the Khalid bin Al-Walid Army, and all property and interests in property of the organization subject to U.S. jurisdiction are blocked.

The Yarmouk Martyrs Brigade, formed in 2012, has staged attacks throughout Southern Syria, including several attacks targeting UN personnel. The group, which has pledged allegiance to ISIS, was designated by the Department of State as a SDGT entity on June 10, 2016. Near the time of the U.S. designation, the Yarmouk Martyrs Brigade changed its name to Khalid bin Al-Walid Army after merging with groups operating in Southern Syria. ISIS announced the group's name change and merger through its Amaq News Agency.

Khalid bin Al-Walid Army has also been listed on the UN Security Council 1267/1989/2253 ISIL (Da'esh) and al-Qaida sanctions list. The group's UN designation coincides with the UN Security Council's adoption of a resolution updating the UN Security Council 1267/1989/2253 ISIL (Da'esh) and al-Qaida sanctions regime and underscoring its continued importance in the global effort to defeat ISIS and al-Qa'ida.

These actions notify the U.S. public and the international community that the

terrorist organization Yarmouk Martyrs Brigade now operates under, and is known by, the name Khalid bin Al-Walid Army. Designations of terrorist individuals and groups expose and isolate organizations and individuals, and result in denial of access to the U.S. financial system. Moreover, designations can assist or complement the law enforcement actions of other U.S. agencies and other governments.

A list of State Department-designated Foreign Terrorist Organizations and SDGTs is available here: <http://www.state.gov/j/ct/list/index.htm>.

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Press Releases: United States Special Representative for Ukraine Negotiations Kurt Volker Travel to Ukraine, France, Belgium, Austria, and the United Kingdom

Media Note
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
July 21, 2017

United States Special Representative for Ukraine Negotiations Kurt Volker will travel to eastern Ukraine on July 21 to meet with those who have been affected by Russian aggression and to discuss the importance of security and safety for all Ukrainians. On July 24, he will be in Kyiv to meet with Ukrainian officials to discuss the path to restoring Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. He will then travel to Paris to see French and

German officials to discuss the Minsk process and Normandy format conversations. His next stop will be Brussels, where he will meet EU and NATO officials on resolving the conflict in Ukraine. On July 26, he will travel to Vienna for meetings with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to discuss the efforts of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission in eastern Ukraine. He will then travel to London, where he will consult with British officials regarding the way forward in Ukraine.

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Press Releases: Poland: Independence of the Judiciary

Press Statement
Heather Nauert

Department Spokesperson

Washington, DC
July 21, 2017

The Polish government has continued to pursue legislation that appears to undermine judicial independence and weaken the rule of law in Poland. We urge all sides to ensure that any judicial reform does not violate Poland's constitution or international legal obligations and respects the principles of judicial independence and separation of powers.

Poland is a close ally of the United States, and a strong and healthy democracy in Poland is vital to relations between our two countries.

We remain confident about the strength of Poland's democracy and the ability of Poles to address these issues through dialogue and compromise to ensure Poland's democratic institutions and system of checks and balances are fully

functioning and respected.

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