

# **Press Releases: Syria Bombing**

Press Statement  
Mark C. Toner

Acting Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
April 15, 2017

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The United States strongly condemns today's barbaric attacks against innocent civilians, including women and children, in northern Syria. We remain firmly committed to defeating terrorists, including ISIS and al-Qaeda, as our top priority in Syria.

We deplore any act that sustains and empowers extremists on all sides including today's attacks, as well as forced migration, increased displacement, and all forms of violence directed against civilians in Syria.

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# **Press Releases: State Department Terrorist Designations of Tarek Sakr and Farah Mohamed Shirdon**

Media Note  
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
April 13, 2017

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The Department of State has designated Tarek Sakr and Farah Mohamed Shirdon as Specially Designated Global Terrorists (SDGT) under Section 1(b) of Executive Order (E.O.) 13224, which imposes sanctions on foreign persons determined to have committed, or pose a serious risk of committing, acts of terrorism that threaten the security of U.S. nationals or the national security, foreign policy, or economy of the United States. As a consequence of these designations, U.S. persons are generally prohibited from engaging in transactions or dealings with Sakr and Shirdon, and all of their property and interests in property subject to United States jurisdiction is frozen.

Tarek Sakr is a Syrian-born Canadian citizen who has conducted sniper training in Syria and periodically travels to Turkey. Sakr has been linked to the Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) and SDGT al-Nusrah Front, al-Qa'ida's affiliate in Syria.

Farah Mohamed Shirdon is a Canadian citizen who travelled to Iraq and Syria to fight with the FTO and SDGT the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). Shirdon is a prominent ISIS fighter and recruiter and has also been involved in fundraising.

Today's action notifies the U.S. public and the international community that Sakr and Shirdon are actively engaged in terrorism. 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 FTOs and SDGTs is available here: <http://www.state.gov/j/ct/list/index.htm>.

Identifiers:

**Name: Tarek Sakr**

DOB: March 14, 1987

POB: Syria

Citizenship: Canada

Location: Syria and Turkey

**Name: Farah Mohamed Shirdon**

AKA: Farah Shirdon

AKA: Abu Usamah

AKA: Abu Usamah Somali

AKA: Abu Usama al Somali

AKA: Abu Usamah as-Somali

DOB: April 18, 1993

POB: Toronto, Canada

Nationality: Somali

Nationality: Canadian

Location: Raqqa, Syria as of November 2015

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## **Press Releases: Thirteenth Session of the Bilateral Consultative Commission under the New START Treaty**

Media Note  
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
April 12, 2017

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The Thirteenth Session of the Bilateral Consultative Commission under the United States-Russia New START Treaty was held in Geneva from March 29 to April 11.

The U.S. and Russian delegations continued the discussion of practical issues related to the implementation of the Treaty.

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## **Press Releases: Remarks With Russian**

# Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov Before Their Meeting

Remarks

Rex W. Tillerson

Secretary of State

Osobnyak Guest House

Moscow, Russia

April 12, 2017

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**FOREIGN MINISTER LAVROV:** (Via translation) Who was bringing you up? Who was giving you your manners?

Mr. Secretary of State, dear colleagues.

We met in Bonn on February 16, where I told you about Moscow's basic views on Russian-US relations and international affairs.

In the few months since then, many statements have been made in Washington regarding current bilateral relations and their prospects, as well as key international issues. Frankly, they have provoked many questions, considering Washington's confusing and sometimes openly contradictory ideas on the entire range of bilateral and international issues. Moreover, these statements have been issued alongside some alarming actions, notably the illegal attack against Syria. Mr. Tillerson, we discussed this in a telephone conversation. President Vladimir Putin and other Russian leaders have expressed their principled position on this issue. We consider it crucially important to prevent a repetition of such actions in the future.

I believe that you have come at the right time. Your visit provides an indispensable opportunity to frankly and honestly discuss the outlook for cooperation on these issues, primarily the creation of a broad counterterrorism coalition, as President Vladimir Putin and President Donald Trump have agreed to do. This is especially important at a time when, as far as we know, not all key positions in the US Department of State have been filled and hence it is not easy to quickly receive clarification on current and future issues. More than once, we have reaffirmed our readiness for a constructive and equal dialogue and cooperation based on respect for the legitimate interests of the other. This has been our consistent policy that is fully in keeping with international law and does not depend on the current political climate or a false choice, such as "you are either with us or

against us.”

We have always stood for collective action and we don't think it is productive to stand behind the closed doors of alliances and “misalliances”. Of course, we have put forth this position to our American colleagues before, and this is well known in Washington and to you, Mr Tillerson. For our part, we need to understand the position of the United States and the practical intentions of the US administration. We hope to move forward on these issues today.

Welcome.

**SECRETARY TILLERSON:** Well, thank you very much, Foreign Minister Lavrov, for those opening remarks. This does represent a continuation of our communications and discussions and dialogue that began in Bonn.

We also had telephone conversations since that time, and as we've often agreed, our lines of communication shall always remain open.

Our meeting today comes at an important moment in the relationship so that we can further clarify areas of common objectives, areas of common interest, even when our tactical approaches may be different, and to further clarify areas of sharp difference so that we can better understand why these differences exist and what the prospects for narrowing those differences may be.

And I look forward to a very open, candid, frank exchange so that we can better define the U.S.-Russia relationship from this point forward. And I thank you for hosting these important meetings today, and I look forward to a very wide-ranging discussion on a number of important topics.

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## [Press Releases: Lao New Year \(Laos\)](#)

Press Statement  
Rex W. Tillerson

Secretary of State

Washington, DC  
April 12, 2017

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On behalf of the Government of the United States of America, best wishes to the people of the Lao People's Democratic Republic as they celebrate the Lao New Year.

This past year our two countries announced a Comprehensive Partnership, which opened a new era in the U.S.-Lao relationship and deepened our diplomatic, commercial and people-to-people ties. We celebrate our friendship with the Lao people and look forward to new opportunities for our two countries to work together.

Best wishes for a prosperous and joyful New Year.

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