Press Releases: Unconscionable Reports of Secret Executions of Minors in Iran

Press Statement
Morgan Ortagus

Department Spokesperson

Washington, DC
May 1, 2019

The Department of State is appalled by the Iranian regime's secret execution of two 17-year old males, Mehdi Sohrabifar and Amin Sedaghat, in Adelabad prison in Shiraz, as reported by Amnesty International. According to this report, Iran has resumed its execution of minors, while attempting to keep this inhumane practice hidden from the world. The report notes that Iran is also the top executioner of children in the world.

The Iranian regime unjustly cut short the two boys' lives. The Amnesty International report also documented disturbing abuse and floggings inflicted by authorities in the final moments before their deaths. According to the Amnesty report, the boys were just 15 when they received hasty convictions following a questionable set of legal maneuvers that suggest arbitrary detention.

These most recent juvenile executions follow an all-too-familiar practice in Iran. The United States condemns Iran's practice of executing and even torturing minors, giving it the appalling distinction as the world' leading executioner of children. Amnesty International's finding unfortunately is consistent with Iran's egregious overall human rights record. More than 90 juveniles, as Amnesty International notes, are currently at risk of execution.

This is unacceptable. We will continue to shine the light on the regime and ask others to join us in holding Iran's corrupt leaders accountable for their crimes.

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Press Releases: Interview With Lester Holt of NBC News

Interview
Michael R. Pompeo

Secretary of State

Washington, DC
April 30, 2019

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, thank you for joining us. Let me begin by asking: Did the U.S. either tacitly or actively encourage this uprising?

SECRETARY POMPEO: Lester, we've supported the Venezuelan people for an awfully long time now. We have done all that we can to implore the Maduro regime to depart. We've recognized Juan Guaido as the interim president of Venezuela, and we are continuing to work to support the Venezuelan people to restore democracy there, Lester. You've seen the terrible human rights situation, the disastrous condition of the nation with starving people, kids that can't get medicine. We're doing everything we can to support Juan Guaido and the National Assembly there in Venezuela.

QUESTION: But is this how you want it to play out, with violence on the streets, a public uprising?

SECRETARY POMPEO: We've said all along we want this to be a peaceful transition. We regret that the Maduro regime has resorted to violence. And you should know and the American people should know we're going to hold all of those in the Maduro regime, all the thugs, all those around him, whether they be Venezuelans or Cubans or Russians, those that engaged in violence will have a special place as America evaluates how this unfolded.

QUESTION: Mr. Guaido seemed to imply today when he made this call for an uprising that he had the support of the military. That is in question at this hour. What is your understanding of the situation on the ground, and could this fail?

SECRETARY POMPEO: So Lester, it's very fluid, to be sure. It is the case that we're aware that senior leaders that are at least for the moment still with Maduro though it's difficult to tell – folks like the defense minister, Mr. Moreno, the head of the supreme court, the head of the presidential guard – each of those had indicated they were prepared to abandon Maduro. They made that very clear to other members of the opposition. And today they haven't indicated that as clearly. We're hopeful that as the day wears on they'll honor the commitment that they had made to the opposition, that they understood that Maduro days were numbered and that was not the best direction for them to go.

QUESTION: I know you and the President have been asked this a lot, but given the situation on the ground right now, would the U.S. intervene militarily here?

SECRETARY POMPEO: Yes, we've said very clearly all along that we're going to do all that we can for the Venezuelan people and restore democracy, that we want this to be a nonviolent transition. And you should know there's already been an intervention. There's already been a military intervention by the Cubans and by the Russians, right. This is the duly elected by the Venezuelan people – the National Assembly and Juan Guaido are the duly elected government. And so when the Russians came in at the behest of Maduro, they were not there with the consent of the government, and the Cubans are the ones protecting Maduro today. That's wrong. It's not consistent with Venezuelan democracy, and the United States is determined to keep every option on the table to restore that democracy.

QUESTION: But looking at the situation as it is now, if this uprising fails, if it stalls, would U.S. troops come in and tip the scales?

SECRETARY POMPEO: Look, Lester, I've answered the question about the military option still remaining viable. We're working diligently. I'm the Secretary of State. Our task is to make this a political and diplomatic resolution. We've been working on this for months. We've made enormous progress, and we're hoping that progress continues.

QUESTION: Have you or anyone in the administration you're aware of spoken to Mr. Guaido in the last 24, 48 hours?

SECRETARY POMPEO: We're talking to lots of folks on the ground, Lester. I don't want to get into who all we've had a chance to speak with today, but we've continually spoken with Juan Guaido all throughout this. You see too, you see that Juan Guaido is in the streets, and we've not seen Mr. Maduro since this morning. We did see his airplane. It was parked at the airport. We understand that he was actually getting ready, contemplating leaving the country, and the Russians told him to stay, not to depart for Havana.

QUESTION: That's based on American intelligence?

SECRETARY POMPEO: We have good information that confirms that fact.

QUESTION: All right. Mr. Secretary, we appreciate you spending some time with

us. Good to see you.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Thank you, Lester.

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Press Releases: U.S.-Mongolia Consultations Advance Bilateral Relations

Media Note
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
April 29, 2019

On Friday, April 26, 2019, representatives of the United States and Mongolia met for the 13th Annual Bilateral Consultations at the Department of State in Washington, DC. This year's consultations were the first held under the auspices of the U.S.-Mongolia Expanded Comprehensive Partnership, announced during Mongolian Prime Minister Khurelsukh's official visit to Washington in September 2018.

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs W. Patrick Murphy and Mongolian Ministry of Foreign Affairs State Secretary D. Davaasuren co-chaired the consultations, which were also attended by representatives from the U.S. Departments of Commerce, Defense, Labor, and Treasury, along with the National Security Council, the U.S. Agency for International Development, the Federal Aviation Administration, the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, the Millennium Challenge Corporation, and the Overseas Private Investment Corporation.

The United States and Mongolia exchanged views on how to promote their shared

values in the Indo-Pacific region, with an emphasis on democracy, human rights, freedom of belief, and the rule of law. The United States noted that the Leaders Advancing Democracy (LEAD) Mongolia program is extended through 2021, continuing support for young leaders working collaboratively to address Mongolia's most pressing issues.

Further recognizing that strong people-to-people ties constitute the foundation of the bilateral relationship, the United States announced its intent to expand the Peace Corps presence in Mongolia, and also add a Mongolian Visiting Scholar component to the Fulbright program for the first time.

The United States and Mongolia held broad consultations on regional security matters, including their shared participation in the ASEAN Regional Forum, and on economic issues, including macroeconomic stability, regulatory transparency, countering financial crimes, sustainable infrastructure development, and investment in energy and other sectors. The United States and Mongolia agreed that aviation safety cooperation is a priority for both sides and will actively seek opportunities to deepen these ties. Both sides also identified mining safety as another area for deepened bilateral cooperation. The United States and Mongolia agreed to continue engagement in accordance with the 2018 Roadmap for Expanded Economic Partnership.

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Press Releases: Secretary Pompeo's Meeting With Swedish Foreign Minister Margot Wallström

Readout
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
April 29, 2019

The below is attributable to Spokesperson Morgan Ortagus:

Secretary Michael R. Pompeo met today at the State Department with Swedish Foreign Minister Margot Wallström. They discussed a range of bilateral and global issues, including preparations for the May 6-7 Arctic Council Ministerial in Rovaniemi, Finland; developments in North Korea; and the situation in Venezuela. The Secretary reiterated the United States' appreciation for the role Sweden plays as our protecting power in North Korea.

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Press Releases: Secretary Pompeo To Receive the Business Executives for National Security Eisenhower Award

Notice to the Press
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
April 29, 2019

Secretary of State Michael R. Pompeo will receive the Business Executives for National Security's (BENS) 2019 Eisenhower Award on Tuesday, April 30, 2019, in the Grand Ballroom of The Mandarin Oriental, in Washington, DC. Secretary Pompeo will deliver remarks at approximately 9:00 p.m.

This event is open press coverage. Media who wish to cover this event in person must RSVP to James Whitaker at jwhitaker@bens.org by 3:00 p.m. on

Tuesday, April 30.

The Secretary’s remarks will be live streamed on www.state.gov.

For more information, please contact James Whitaker at jwhitaker@bens.org or the Department of State’s Office of Press Relations via e-mail at PAPressDuty@state.gov.

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