Press Releases: Acting Under Secretary Manisha Singh’s Travel to Finland

Media Note
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
May 2, 2019

Acting Under Secretary of State for Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment Manisha Singh will travel to Rovaniemi, Finland from May 2–7. While there, she will join Secretary of State Michael Pompeo at the Eleventh Ministerial Meeting of the Arctic Council.

For updates on Acting Under Secretary Singh, follow her on Twitter @EconAtState.

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Press Releases: Assistant Secretary Fannon Travels to New York City

Media Note
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
May 2, 2019

Assistant Secretary of State for Energy Resources Frank Fannon will travel to New York City on May 2, 2019.

During his trip, Assistant Secretary Fannon will attend the Eastern Mediterranean New York Investment Summit sponsored by The Economist to discuss “Energy Exploration in the Eastern Mediterranean” with a focus on opportunities for natural gas and energy cooperation. He will also participate in a roundtable interview at the Department of State’s Foreign Press Center with U.S.-based foreign press correspondents where he will discuss U.S. energy policy issues.

For further information, contact Vincent Campos, Spokesperson for the Bureau of Energy Resources, at CamposVM@state.gov or visit www.state.gov/e/enr. Additional information is available on Twitter at @EnergyAtState.

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Press Releases: United Nations 1267 Sanctions Committee Designation of Masood Azhar

Press Statement
Morgan Ortagus

Department Spokesperson

Washington, DC
May 1, 2019

The United States welcomes the addition of Jaish-e-Mohammed (JEM) leader Masood Azhar to the United Nations' (UN) 1267 ISIL and al-Qaida Sanctions List. JEM has been responsible for numerous terrorist attacks and is a serious threat to regional stability and peace in South Asia. JEM was designated by the United States as a Foreign Terrorist Organization and Specially Designated Global Terrorist (SDGT) in 2001 and has been listed by the UN since 2001. The United States also designated Azhar as an SDGT in 2010. As JEM's founder and leader, Azhar clearly met the criteria for designation by the UN. This listing requires all UN member states to implement an asset freeze, a travel ban, and an arms embargo against Azhar. We expect all countries to uphold these obligations.

Today's designation is an important step in promoting a peaceful and stable South Asia. In line with this vision, we appreciate Pakistani Prime Minister Khan's stated commitment that Pakistan, for the sake of its own future, will not allow militant and terrorist groups to operate from its territory. We recognize initial steps taken by the Government of Pakistan in this regard. We look forward to further and sustained actions from Pakistan as outlined in its National Action Plan, consistent with its international obligations.

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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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