

Press Releases: Winner of the 2017 U.S. ASPIRE Competition

Media Note
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
June 15, 2017

The U.S. Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Science Prize for Innovation, Research, and Education (ASPIRE) Competition named Dr. Liangfang Zhang of the University of California, San Diego as this year's U.S. nominee to represent the United States at the APEC-wide ASPIRE prize.

Dr. Zhang was selected for his outstanding work in biomimetic nanotechnologies. He was the first to invent a red blood cell-membrane-camouflaged nanoparticle platform that can evade the body's immune system for prolonged and effective delivery of drugs, and he has been recognized for his innovative work in the medical field applying new material technologies. He was honored at the State Department in Washington, DC, along with fellow scientists Dr. Michael Arnold of University of Wisconsin-Madison and Dr. Zhen Gu of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and North Carolina State University.

The scientists were recognized at a roundtable event on June 12, where Dr. Jonathan Margolis, Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Science, Space, and Health, and Wendell Albright, Director of the East Asia Pacific Bureau's Office of Economic Policy, awarded prizes and highlighted science's role in addressing regional challenges and building relationships.

ASPIRE is an annual award that recognizes young scientists from APEC economies who have demonstrated a commitment to both excellence in scientific research, as evidenced by scholarly publication, and cooperation with scientists from other APEC member economies. The award, as well as the competition for U.S. ASPIRE, is co-sponsored by Wiley and Elsevier, publishers of scholarly scientific knowledge. The winner of the APEC-wide ASPIRE prize will receive a cash prize of \$25,000.

For more information, please visit
<https://www.state.gov/e/oes/stc/aspire/index.htm>.

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Press Releases: Seventy-Fifth Anniversary of the Founding of the Office of Strategic Services

Notice to the Press
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
June 15, 2017

On June 13, 1942, Franklin D. Roosevelt signed an Executive Order creating the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) to “collect and analyze such strategic information as may be required by the United States...” and “plan and operate such special services as may be directed by the United States Joint Chiefs of Staff.” President Roosevelt appointed Buffalo, New York native William J. (“Wild Bill”) Donovan as the first Director of Strategic Services.

To commemorate the establishment of the OSS, the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, Mr. Mike Pompeo; the State Department’s Assistant Secretary of Intelligence and Research Ambassador Daniel B. Smith; and U.S. Special Operations Vice Commander Lt. Gen. Thomas J. Trask will join Mr. Charles Pinck, President of the OSS Society, on Friday, June 16, at 1:00 p.m. in front of the Navy Hill East Building at the Observatory Hill Historic District in northwest Washington, DC for a ceremony.

When the OSS was dissolved at the end of World War II, its core components were transferred to the War and State Departments. The Research and Analysis Branch was transferred to the State Department and became the Bureau of Intelligence and Research. The military elements became what is now the U.S. Special Operations Command. Many key OSS personnel later went on to join the Central Intelligence Agency upon its creation in 1947.

The East Building served as OSS headquarters from its inception and later became the first headquarters of the Central Intelligence Agency from 1947

until 1961.

The event is open to the press. Pre-set time for cameras is 11:00 a.m. from the Navy Hill North Gate entrance (located at 23rd and D Street). Final access time for writers and stills is 12:00 noon from the Navy Hill North Gate entrance.

Media representatives may attend this event upon presentation of one of the following: (1) a U.S. Government-issued photo media credential (e.g., Department of State, White House, Congress, Department of Defense or Foreign Press Center), or (2) an official photo identification card issued by their news organization, or (3) a letter from their employer on official letterhead verifying their current employment as a journalist.

Additionally, they must present an official government photo identification card (e.g., U.S. driver's license or passport).

For further information, please contact a Public Affairs Specialist at leerh2@state.gov or 202-647-6561/202-351-9200.

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Press Releases: State Department Terrorist Designations of Mohammad Shafi Armar, Oussama Ahmad Atar, and Mohammed Isa Yousif Saqar Al Binali

Media Note
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
June 15, 2017

The Department of State has designated Mohammad Shafi Armar, Oussama Ahmad Atar, and Mohammed Isa Yousif Saqar Al Binali as Specially Designated Global Terrorists (SDGTs) under Section 1(b) of Executive Order (E.O.) 13224, which imposes sanctions on foreign persons determined to have committed, or pose a significant 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 Armar, Atar, and Binali, and all of their property and interests in property subject to United States jurisdiction is blocked.

Mohammad Shafi Armar is a leader and head recruiter in India for the Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) and Specially Designated Global Terrorist (SDGT) group, ISIS. He has cultivated a group of dozens of ISIS sympathizers who are involved in terrorist activities across India, such as plotting attacks, procuring weapons, and identifying locations for terrorist training camps.

Oussama Ahmad Atar is a senior leader of ISIS's external operations efforts and has established a network to carry out attacks in Europe. He was a leading coordinator of the November 2015 Paris attacks and March 2016 attacks in Brussels. The Belgian-Moroccan national was responsible for recruiting, training, and sending at least some of the individuals to Paris to launch the November 2015 attacks, which killed and injured hundreds, including Americans. He also recruited and mentored two of the bombers involved in the March 2016 Brussels attacks that killed 32 and left many more wounded.

Mohammed Isa Yousif Saqar Al Binali is a senior member of ISIS. Binali departed Bahrain to join the terrorist group in 2014 and has since appeared in multiple ISIS propaganda videos calling on Bahrainis, specifically members of Bahrain's security forces, to join ISIS.

Today's action notifies the U.S. public and the international community that Atar, Armar, and Binali have committed or pose a significant risk of committing acts of terrorism. Designations 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>.

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Press Releases: Secretary of State Tillerson To Travel to Mexico

Press Statement
Heather Nauert

Department Spokesperson

Washington, DC
June 15, 2017

Secretary of State Rex Tillerson will travel to Cancun, Mexico, June 19-20 to lead the U.S. delegation to the General Assembly of the Organization of American States (OAS), the Western Hemisphere's preeminent multilateral organization. The Secretary will meet and consult with regional counterparts on issues of shared interest.

The U.S. delegation will include Francisco Palmieri, Acting Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs, and Kevin K. Sullivan, Interim U.S. Permanent Representative to the OAS.

Follow Secretary Tillerson's travel via @StateDept on Twitter and visit the State Department's Flickr account for the latest trip photos. Stay connected at <https://blogs.state.gov/engage> and keep track of all of the Secretary's travels at <https://www.state.gov/secretary/2017travel/index.htm>.

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Press Releases: Remarks With Mongolian Foreign Minister Tsend Munkh-Orgil Before Their Meeting

Remarks
Rex W. Tillerson

Secretary of State

Treaty Room
Washington, DC
June 13, 2017

SECRETARY TILLERSON: Welcome to the State Department. It's a pleasure to have you here.

FOREIGN MINISTER MUNKH-ORGIL: Thank you. Thank you for having us.

SECRETARY TILLERSON: Indeed. My pleasure.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, is the U.S. any closer to freeing the other three Americans in North Korea?

SECRETARY TILLERSON: It's a delicate matter. We're working on it.

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