Press Releases: Senior State Department Officials Previewing the Secretary's Upcoming Trip to Rovaniemi, Finland; Berlin, Germany; London, United Kingdom; Kangerlussuaq, Greenland; and Nuuk, Greenland

Special Briefing
Senior State Department Officials
Via Teleconference
May 2, 2019

MODERATOR: Thank you so much and good morning, everyone. Thank you for joining today's on-background call with – on Secretary Pompeo's upcoming trip to Finland, Germany, the United Kingdom, and Greenland. Joining us today are [Senior State Department Official One]. He will be referred to as Senior State Department Official Number One. And also we have with us [Senior State Department Official Two]. She will be referred to as Senior State Department Official Number Two. This is just another reminder that today's call is on background.

I'll now turn it over to [Senior State Department Official One], again, Senior State Department Official Number One, who will open our call with brief remarks.

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL ONE: Well, good morning, everybody. I'm delighted to be here and very much looking forward to going on the trip with the Secretary. We're going to start just from the top and sort of give a description of where we're going in Europe, and then talk about the Trump administration's goals for these visits.

As I think you know already, Secretary Pompeo will have four stops on this trip to Europe. First, we're going and arriving Monday in Rovaniemi, Finland. The Secretary is going to give a speech there on U.S. Arctic policy, and he'll participate in the 11th Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting. We'll also have a chance to celebrate 100 years of U.S.-Finland bilateral relations. And on the Arctic Council, as you know, the United States has been a strong supporter of the Arctic Council, which is composed of all eight nations that have territories above the Arctic Circle. And it is the premier international forum for building consensus to support peace and cooperation in the Arctic

region. My colleague, Senior Official Number Two, can also talk more about that and the context there.

From Finland we'll be traveling to the United Kingdom. In London, Secretary Pompeo is very honored to be delivering this year's Margaret Thatcher Lecture at the Center for Policy Studies. In his remarks, the Secretary is going to discuss the Special Relationship that binds the United States and the United Kingdom in a relationship that has indelibly contributed to the prosperity, security, and freedom of both countries and our people. And I think it's particularly poignant this year, prior to the President's state visit to the United Kingdom and as we celebrate the 75th anniversary of D-Day and the approaching 75th anniversary of the end of World War II. Secretary Pompeo will also meet with Prime Minister Theresa May and Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt to discuss the full range of our bilateral cooperation. That, of course, includes robust economic and trade relations, the global issues of shared concern like Russia's activities, Yemen, Iran, foreign terrorist fighters.

And I think I confused you a little here – let me back up one stop. From Finland we go directly to Berlin. And the Berlin stop, of course, will including meeting with Chancellor Angela Merkel and Foreign Minister Heiko Maas to discuss, again, issues of mutual concern such as Ukraine, Russia, China, Syria, and the Western Balkans. And then from Berlin we go to London, as I just spoke about.

Finally, the Secretary will wrap up this trip to Europe with a visit to Greenland. This will be the Secretary's third stop in the Arctic in as many months, in addition to visiting Finland, Secretary Pompeo – and I was with him on that trip – to Iceland in February. We are invigorating relationships, of course, all over the world, whether we look at the Middle East and the Warsaw ministerial that dealt with the future of the Middle East, Latin America, the Lima Group, OAS work on Venezuela, the Secretary's Santiago speech, Asia, and Indo-Pacific strategy. And this one, of course, will focus our engagement in the Arctic. So both Rovaniemi, the Arctic Council meeting, and the visit to Greenland.

In Greenland the Secretary will have a chance to meet with Greenlandic Premier Kim Kielsen, the Danish Foreign Minister Anders Samuelsen, and Greenlandic Foreign Minister Ane Lone Bagger in the capital of Nuuk. The administration is reinvigorating our trilateral relationship with Greenland and Denmark after a period of neglect, and we've committed to peace and sustainable economic developments for the long term. And we're concerned about activities of other nations, including China, that do not share these same commitments.

The Secretary will then travel to – and I know I'm going to mess this up – Kangerlussuaq to meet members of the New York Air National Guard, who provide vital support for the international Arctic research that takes place there. They provide airlift services to U.S. scientists that are conducting research on Greenland's ice cap.

So this is a quick trip to Europe, but the Secretary has a very full schedule of productive engagements with key allies and partners, and particularly this

focus on the Arctic.

With that, I'll turn it over to my colleague.

MODERATOR: Okay. Just a reminder, this is Senior State Department Official Number Two, who is [Senior State Department Official Two].

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL TWO: Good morning, everyone. Thank – I would like to say a bit more about the Secretary's speech on Arctic policy, and then separately I want to add details on his engagement at the Arctic Council.

First, before the Arctic Council begins, as my colleague said, the Secretary will give a speech laying out U.S. policy in the Arctic. He will explain that our main goal in the Arctic is to promote economic growth and good stewardship of the environment while ensuring the Arctic remains stable and free from conflict. The Secretary will also emphasize that the council is the premier forum for discussing matters of Arctic governance.

There are eight Arctic states: United States, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, the Russian Federation, and Sweden. The responsibility for governing the Arctic falls to these countries. The Arctic Council is an international forum that operates based on consensus, echoing the peaceful and cooperative nature of the region.

There has been no military conflict in the Arctic, which remains peaceful in large part due to strong, stable governance. All of the Arctic Council states and observers recognize the Arctic states' sovereignty, sovereign rights, and jurisdiction in the Arctic. The Arctic Council's greatest legacy is the peaceful cooperation it has engendered in the region.

There are Arctic states and there are non-Arctic states. The eight Arctic states conduct governance of the Arctic region, and we reject attempts by non-Arctic states to claim a role in this process.

If you recall, the Secretary's speech last year in Brussels, he made it clear that we want multilateral organizations that serve their members' interests. He said, "We aspire to make the international order serve our citizens, not to control them. America intends to lead now and always."

The Arctic Council is an example of a multilateral organization that has served our citizens well, and it is relatively small, flexible, and inexpensive. At this year's meeting, the ministers will adopt new work products on telecommunications connectivity, oil spill response, remote community clean energy networks, and indigenous people's health, among others.

The Secretary is looking forward to engaging on issues of governance across the region with the other members of the Arctic Council. Thank you.

MODERATOR: Okay, great. So I believe we have questions now (inaudible) the queue.

OPERATOR: And ladies and gentlemen, if you wish to ask a question, please press * and then 1 on your phone at this time. We begin with Nick Wadhams with Bloomberg. Please, go ahead.

QUESTION: Hi. I have a question about the UK and Germany stops and Huawei, given that the UK is suggesting that it will tighten its restrictions on Huawei but isn't going to impose an outright ban on incorporating Huawei into its 5G networks. Will the Secretary be delivering any sort of warning or ultimatum to either Germany or the UK on their partnerships with Huawei? Thank you.

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL ONE: I'll take that one. This is [Senior State Department Official One]. Nick, the first thing I'd do is refer you to the Secretary's remarks. I happened to be with him on that trip in Budapest on February 28th, I think it was, where he addressed the general issue of Huawei. And as he noted there, what we want to do with friends, allies, partners on this issue is share with them the things we know about the risks that the presence of Huawei and their networks present. And we see that as imperative, the risk to their own people, to the loss of privacy protections, the risk that China will use the data in a way that's not in the best interests of their country. And we have an obligation to share that information with them, and we'll do that and continue that discussion.

And also, of course, as the Secretary has pointed out, it makes it more difficult then for the United States to be present if equipment is collocated in places where we have American systems as well. It makes partnering more difficult. And so we want to make sure – we have an obligation to identify with all our partners, and that will include discussions with Germany and with the UK – that the opportunities and the risks associated with that equipment, and I think that's what the Secretary will be reiterating.

MODERATOR: Okay. Great. Thank you. Next question.

OPERATOR: Next we go to Courtney McBride with *Wall Street Journal*. Please, go ahead.

QUESTION: Thank you. During the Berlin stop, does the Secretary plan to discuss Nordstream II with Chancellor Merkel and Foreign Minister Maas? And then also, regarding the Arctic policy speech, is he going to address the potential security implications for some of the environmental changes that the council has been considering? Thank you.

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL ONE: In terms of NordStream II, I would expect that the subject could certainly come up in Germany. You know very well our views about that, our concerns about energy security for Germany, for the rest of Europe, what NordStream II means in terms of reliance on Russia. So I would expect that that's a subject that could certainly come up in the discussions.

On the more specific Arctic questions, I think that's probably more for my colleague to touch on.

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL TWO: Yeah, thank you. I would just say that the council was formed in part to address environmental issues in the Arctic, so of course that will be part of the Secretary's focus and the focus of all the member states during the council meeting this year.

I would just point out that the U.S. is a leader in addressing the changes that are occurring in the region, and we bring more scientific resources to assess the changes that are taking place in the Arctic than any other country in the world. Our National Science Foundation alone invests $100 million a year in that effort.

MODERATOR: Great. Thank you. Next question.

OPERATOR: We go to Matthew Lee at the Associated Press. Please, go ahead.

QUESTION: Hi, I've got two questions, one for each. [Senior State Department Official One], in Finland, presumably Foreign Minister Lavrov will be there too. Is the Secretary planning to have a separate meeting with him, and do you expect that to touch – and if he is, do you – what would you expect that to be – touch – that meeting would touch on? Would it be Venezuela or the U.S.-Russia situation more broadly?

And then for the other [Senior State Department Official Two], I'm just wondering is there – both of you have made this point about how the Arctic Council is the premier forum for the Arctic and you're going to reject attempts by non-Arctic countries to get in. Is there some challenge that maybe I'm not aware of to the preeminence of the Arctic Council? I seem to recall there was something that the Canadians were talking about some years ago. Perhaps [Senior State Department Official One] remembers that. But anyway, if it – what is the challenge, if there is one? Why does it – why do you need to stress the preeminence of the council on this? Thank you.

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL ONE: Matt, why don't I start on just taking your last question. I mean, my intention in stressing the preeminence was just to indicate this trip is very much about the Arctic and the Arctic Council is the forum that is recognized for that. I don't recall what you may be referring to about the Canadians, but the Canadians obviously will be there as well. That's really the intent. This is the forum. These are the countries that actually have a presence above the Arctic Circle, and they're the focus of the organization and how we deal with the Arctic.

On your question about Lavrov, I do understand that he will be there. I would expect that the Secretary and he will have an opportunity, obviously, to talk. I think Venezuela, as you suggested, would be on that – part of that discussion. I think you've had a readout of the telephone call the Secretary had with Minister Lavrov about that yesterday, and then they'll obviously have a chance to talk about a broad range of issues, both about the Arctic, the purpose of the ministerial, but when they have a chance to get together they can review a whole range of issues, including our concerns about Russian behavior. That includes Ukraine and certainly Venezuela.

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL TWO: I would only add that, no, there hasn't

been a challenge, and we recognize that what happens in the Arctic affects every country in the world, and that is why, in part, the council has the provision to have observers. But we make the distinction that it is up to those eight countries, through the council, to address governance issues. Observers have interests, but we note, for example, China sometimes refers to itself as a near-Arctic state. There's no such definition in the council's lexicon.

MODERATOR: Great. Next question.

OPERATOR: We go to Lesley Wroughton with Reuters. Please, go ahead.

QUESTION: Hi, good morning. For administration Official Number One, can you please get into a little more about the discussions on the Special Relationship between the UK and the U.S.? Does that involve planning for the President's trip?

And number two, does that involve any discussions on trade agreement? This is the first time that the Secretary would have been there since the whole Brexit turmoil. What is he going to be talking about there?

And also, on the Huawei, you probably saw that the defense minister was sacked yesterday over this issue. Can you think that Huawei could actually interfere with the Special Relationship between the UK and the U.S., if they do not take action against the Chinese telecommunications company?

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL ONE: Well, on the Special Relationship in general, obviously, as I tried to indicate, this is an important moment historically, just in terms of our reflections back on when that phrase was first used after World War II, as we anticipate, of course, the historic visit of the President, a state visit, and the commemorations that will take place there. We have this exceptionally close political, diplomatic, cultural, economic, trade, military, and historical relationship between the United Kingdom and the United States. I think it's fair to say we have no closer ally than the UK, and British foreign policy – their own policies – emphasize close coordination with the United States that's reflected in a whole array of bilateral cooperation, common language, ideals, and again, our history. So I think this is just really an important opportunity. The Margaret Thatcher Lecture is a great honor; the Secretary is very pleased to use that forum to highlight this.

In terms of the question on trade, as has been made very clear, we look forward to pursuing a new bilateral free trade agreement with the UK post-Brexit, if that's the case. That's, I think, been very clear and signaled by the President since his first meeting with Prime Minister May soon after his inauguration. And they've reaffirmed that commitment last summer at the meeting in Chequers, and we've certainly had meetings between U.S. and UK officials through the Trade and Investment Working Group to deepen trade ties and lay the groundwork for that. I'm sure there'll be a discussion, notice of the President's upcoming state visit. I wouldn't call it planning for that, since that's taking place obviously with others. But we do anticipate that, and this is a nice opportunity for the Secretary to preview that.

As far as the Huawei, I don't think there's much else to add. That's clearly an issue in the United Kingdom that they are dealing with. They're going to have to make their own decisions. But as I said, the Secretary just wants to be very clear that we are providing our views, our information, what the challenges are there, what the challenges would mean for us, and then the UK, as other countries, will make their decision.

MODERATOR: Great. Thank you. Next question.

OPERATOR: Shaun Tandon at AFP, please go ahead.

QUESTION: Yeah. Thanks for doing this call. I was wondering if you could confirm or comment otherwise on a report just now in *The Washington Post* that the administration wants to remove references to climate change in the Arctic Council statement. And then I guess more broadly about climate change, to what extent do you expect this to be addressed? Will the Secretary talk about the reality of climate change? Will he avoid references to climate change? How do you think this topic will come up both in Finland and in Greenland?

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL TWO: Let me – if I can speak first to the Arctic Council, obviously we don't discuss the details of ongoing negotiations. But let me say a couple of things. First, when we don't agree with our allies and friends we talk with them about it directly. We engage them closely, and that's what we're doing in the Arctic Council. It's what we've done in each meeting of the council and it's what we do all over the world in other fora, whether bilateral or multilateral.

Secondly, climate is very much a subject of focus, and for that I would say I think that the Secretary has made his views clear in his public statements. For example, in his confirmation hearing, he said that, "I believe that the climate is changing" and "there's a warming taking place," that "there is likely a human component to that." But let me just go on to say that this administration is focused on climate action in the Arctic and elsewhere. We have reduced our CO2 emissions by 13 percent from 2005 to 2017. Our energy-related CO2 emissions fell by 14 percent during that same period while the global energy-related CO2 emissions increased by more than 23 percent. And we've also reduced black carbon, which is a particular issue to the Arctic, by 16 percent since 2013.

We've done this while growing our economy by over 19 percent, and that's due to deploying clean energy and other technologies and using the kind of innovation both at the local and national level that will ensure that there are more advances on the way. So this is not an issue we shy away from. We're very proud of the record.

MODERATOR: Great, thank you. Next question.

OPERATOR: Abigail Williams at NBC News. Please, go ahead.

QUESTION: Thanks for doing the call. I had a follow-up on Shaun's question. So I don't believe *The Washington Post* was the first one to report that there have been reports for a couple of weeks that there's disagreement among the

members and they're struggling to find language on climate change ahead of this meeting that the U.S. would support. Are you concerned that this sort of disagreement distracts from council unity around your goal of trying to counter China's move to extend the Belt and Road Initiative to the Arctic?

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL TWO: No, just the opposite. The council is a great opportunity to – for engagement, and we do it all the time and we do it in other fora. Climate is a complex global issue and it's a global challenge all around, and this administration supports a balanced approach that promotes economic growth and improves energy security while protecting the environment. And we talk about that in each forum and we work with our partners to come to agreement on how we express it, but again, more importantly, what action we take to address it.

MODERATOR: Great, thank you. Next question.

OPERATOR: We'll go to Dmitry Kirsanov at TASS News Agency. Please, go ahead.

QUESTION: Hi, can you hear me?

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL ONE: Yes.

QUESTION: Thanks a lot for doing this, and [Senior State Department Official One], it's been a while. It's good to hear you again. Listen, I wanted to follow up on Matt's question and ask you if it would be a full-scale negotiations between Minister Lavrov and Secretary Pompeo, or a short pull-aside. How exactly do you see that? Is there arrangement in place with the Russians about that?

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL ONE: (Inaudible.)

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL TWO: Sorry, go ahead.

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL ONE: I was –

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL TWO: Sorry, we were talking on mute. Go ahead.

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL ONE: I was muted. Sorry about that, Dmitry. Now what was I saying? (Laughter.)

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL TWO: Sorry.

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL ONE: No, at this point, I just can't give you any great details. Foreign Minister Lavrov will be there, the Secretary will be there, they've got the Arctic Council ministerial and the related events to that, and they will have an opportunity, obviously, to meet and review whatever topics they choose to. At this point, I couldn't give you a time or exact format. Obviously, as – by the time we get there, I think we'll have a better idea of schedule.

MODERATOR: All right. That is all that we have time for today. Thank you, all of you, for dialing in, and just follow up with me or Robert if you have any

questions. Thanks.

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Press Releases: The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations Dedicates the New U.S. Embassy in Harare, Zimbabwe

Media Note
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
May 2, 2019

As a display of our enduring friendship, U.S. Ambassador Brian A. Nichols and Director of the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations Tad Davis, with local officials, dedicated the new U.S. Embassy in Harare, Zimbabwe today.

The new U.S. Embassy provides a safe and secure platform for diplomacy and includes a new chancery, a Marine security guard residence, and support facilities. It includes design elements reminiscent of Great Zimbabwe and locally sourced materials, such as brick and black granite, that reflect our appreciation for Zimbabwe’s culture and responsible use of natural resources.

AECOM of Washington, D.C. is the design architect, and Page of Washington, D.C. is the architect of record. B.L. Harbert International of Birmingham, Alabama, is the construction contractor.

Since 1999, as part of the Department’s Capital Security Construction Program, OBO has completed 157 new diplomatic facilities and has an additional 59 projects in design or under construction.

OBO provides safe, secure, functional, and resilient facilities that represent the U.S. government to the host nation and support our staff in the achievement of U.S. foreign policy objectives. These facilities represent American values and the best in American architecture, design, engineering, technology, sustainability, art, culture, and construction execution.

For further information, please contact Christine Foushee at FousheeCT@state.gov, or visit www.state.gov/obo.

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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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