

# Press Releases: Concerns for Democracy in Venezuela

Press Statement  
Heather Nauert

Department Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
February 24, 2018

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The United States respects the decision by Venezuelan opposition parties, most recently the Democratic Unity Roundtable, to reject President Maduro's terms and conditions for April presidential elections. We reject ruling party calls to replace the democratically elected National Assembly simultaneously, rather than in 2021, as provided for under the 1999 Constitution. Deepening the rupture of Venezuela's constitutional and democratic order will not solve the nation's crises.

We reiterate our call for the establishment of a legitimate and independent National Electoral Council, selected by the National Assembly as required by the Constitution. We renew our call for the establishment of an electoral calendar in compliance with the Constitution and in consultation with the legitimate National Assembly. We note that the lack of agreed terms for an election seriously compromises the integrity of the process. A free and fair election should include the full participation of all political parties and political leaders, the immediate and unconditional release of all political prisoners, a proper electoral calendar, credible international observation, and an independent electoral authority.

The United States stands with democratic nations around the world in support of the Venezuelan people and their sovereign right to elect their representatives through free and fair elections.

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# Press Releases: Remarks With Irish Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign and Trade Minister Simon Coveney Before Their Meeting

Remarks

Rex W. Tillerson

Secretary of State

Treaty Room

Washington, DC

February 23, 2018

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**SECRETARY TILLERSON:** I want to welcome Tanaiste and Minister of Foreign

Affairs Coveney from Ireland to the State Department. I'm pleased to have him here with us.

**DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER COVENEY:** Thank you very much.

**QUESTION:** Mr. Secretary –

**QUESTION:** Secretary Tillerson, will the U.S. State Department consider appointing a special envoy to Northern Ireland given the difficulties in the country at the moment?

**SECRETARY TILLERSON:** We're reviewing some names with the White House as we currently speak. We've had some names we're going over with them.

**QUESTION:** Are you confident that the facility in Jerusalem is going to be ready for a move in May?

**SECRETARY TILLERSON:** Fairly confident, yes. Thank you.

**QUESTION:** Including the security infrastructure?

**SECRETARY TILLERSON:** We'll be fine.

**DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER COVENEY:** Thank you.

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## [Press Releases: Deputy Secretary Sullivan Travels to Haiti](#)

Media Note  
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
February 23, 2018

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Deputy Secretary of State John J. Sullivan will travel to Port-au-Prince, Haiti to meet with Haitian President Jovenel Moise and Caribbean leaders attending the twenty-ninth Inter-Sessional Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) from February 26-28.

The Deputy Secretary will focus discussions on issues of mutual interest to the United States and the Caribbean, including energy diversification, regional security, and economic development. The United States is an enduring partner to the Caribbean as underscored in the Caribbean 2020 strategy, which strengthens security, diplomacy, prosperity, energy, education, and health in the region.

While in Haiti, the Deputy Secretary will also engage with U.S. Embassy staff, as well as representatives from the business community and civil society, and make a visit to the Haitian National Police School, which receives funding from the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement.

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## **[Press Releases: Under Secretary Shannon's Travel to Ecuador, Colombia, and Chile](#)**

Media Note  
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
February 23, 2018

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Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Thomas A. Shannon, Jr. will travel to Ecuador, Colombia, and Chile February 25-March 3. The Under

Secretary will underscore long-standing U.S. support for bilateral priorities and reaffirm U.S. engagement to promote a safe, prosperous, and democratic hemisphere.

In Quito, Ecuador on February 25-27, Under Secretary Shannon will meet with Ecuadorian President Lenin Moreno to discuss the strengthening of the bilateral relationship and expanded collaboration in areas of mutual interest. In meetings with other Ecuadorian officials, he will discuss trade and investment, counter-narcotics cooperation, and regional and international issues.

Under Secretary Shannon will then travel to Bogotá, Colombia on February 28, where he will meet with Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos and Vice President Oscar Naranjo to discuss the U.S. partnership with Colombia to combat narcotics trafficking and transnational crime, support sustainable peace, and improve regional security.

On March 1, Under Secretary Shannon, with U.S. Deputy National Security Advisor Ricky Waddell, will co-lead the U.S. delegation to the United States-Colombia High Level Dialogue, where he will discuss initiatives to achieve increased stability, prosperity, and opportunities for the citizens of both countries. Under Secretary Shannon will meet in this context with Foreign Minister María Ángela Holguín.

The Under Secretary will then travel to Santiago, Chile on March 2 to meet with President Michelle Bachelet and Foreign Minister Hernando Muñoz. During these meetings, he will discuss the United States' strong partnership with Chile on bilateral and regional efforts to advance security, prosperity, and democratic governance.

For further information, please email [WHAPress@state.gov](mailto:WHAPress@state.gov).

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**[Press Releases: Counterterrorism](#)**

# Coordinator Nathan A. Sales To Speak at Defeat-ISIS Coalition Conference on Mobilizing Law Enforcement Efforts

Notice to the Press  
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
February 23, 2018

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Counterterrorism Coordinator Nathan A. Sales will deliver the opening remarks at the International Conference on Mobilizing Law Enforcement Efforts to Defeat ISIS at the Department of State's Loy Henderson auditorium at 9:00 am on February 27, 2018.

The Department of State, in cooperation with INTERPOL and the International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law, is hosting the two-day conference on February 27-28, 2018. The Defeat-ISIS Coalition is at a key strategic moment as we near the military defeat of ISIS in Iraq and Syria, and the destruction of the group's physical and operational hub. It is critical that we now strengthen our focus on civilian sector tools as ISIS seeks other places to operate. This conference will bring together senior-level diplomatic, justice, and law enforcement officials responsible for counterterrorism from approximately 90 countries and organizations.

*Counterterrorism Coordinator Nathan A. Sales' remarks are open to the press. Pre-set time for cameras is 8:15 am from the 23rd Street entrance. Final access time for writers and stills is 8:30 am from the 23rd Street 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 (i.e., U.S. driver's license or passport).*

For further information, please contact Rhonda Shore at [shorerh2@state.gov](mailto:shorerh2@state.gov).

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