

Press Releases: Rocket Attacks on Israel

Press Statement
Morgan Ortagus

Department Spokesperson

Washington, DC
May 4, 2019

The United States strongly condemns the ongoing barrage of rocket attacks by Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad from Gaza upon innocent civilians and their communities across Israel. We call on those responsible for the violence to cease this aggression immediately. We stand with Israel and fully support its right to self defense against these abhorrent attacks.

As noted in the State Department Travel Advisory, U.S. citizens should exercise caution and remain alert to emergency situations.

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Press Releases: Interview With Ben Shapiro of The Ben Shapiro Show

Interview
Michael R. Pompeo

Secretary of State

QUESTION: Welcome back. This is the Ben Shapiro Show. We're obviously watching with bated breath everything that is happening in Venezuela, where a standoff seems to have ensued between Juan Guaido, the legitimate leader of Venezuela, and the socialist dictator of Venezuela, the evil dictator, Nicolas Maduro.

Joining us on the line to discuss all of this is Secretary of State Mike Pompeo. Secretary Pompeo, thanks so much for joining the Ben Shapiro Show.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Ben, it's great to be with you today.

QUESTION: So, Secretary, why don't we start with the current situation as you know it in Venezuela. What is the latest on the ground? What's happening over there?

SECRETARY POMPEO: Well, you have to back up just for first principles. You have a country devastated from years and years of socialist thuggery, an economy that can't support feeding children, medicine for kids. And this has now culminated in the Venezuelan people using their constitutional authority to get to a place where we now have a new leader, Juan Guaido, and he is doing battle against Maduro. And what we saw this week was a demonstration of the absence of the ability of Maduro to control his own government. You saw them bring forces into the streets. Everyone has seen those videos. And we've also seen senior leaders inside what is the Maduro-led rump former government all begin to waver, and all begin to talk about how it is they'll get out of the country, who's going to get the golden tickets, how are they going to get out.

We saw that Maduro himself was preparing to depart the country. Over time, Maduro has no capacity to govern. He may get to rule for a little while, but at the end of the day democracy will be restored in Venezuela and the Venezuelan people will have an opportunity to rid themselves of the Cubans, to rid themselves of the Russians, and restore democracy to this nation that has the capacity to be incredibly wealthy and incredibly democratic.

QUESTION: Well, Secretary Pompeo, as you mentioned at the very end there, the Russians and the Cubans have been heavily involved in Venezuela. I'm frankly bewildered by the media's suggestion – and many members of the Democratic Party – that the United States should stay out in, what, deference to Russia and Cuba? Can you explain to folks how deep the intervention of the Russians and Cubans is in Venezuela right now?

SECRETARY POMPEO: Ben, I kind of laugh sometimes. You'll hear people saying we need to make sure there's not an invasion in Venezuela, and yet there's been one. I mean, it took place. The Cubans invaded some time ago; the

Russians have now followed suit. The numbers of Cubans in the security apparatus alone are in the thousands. The Russians have people working over there in the hundreds, if not more. These are the folks who are actually controlling the direction of travel for Venezuela. We've seen that failure even today. It's largely Cuban security forces that are protecting Maduro in his hiding place. He talked yesterday about having nerves of steel. That's easier to do when you're surrounded by Cuban military people and you're hiding in a bunker.

They are deep. They've controlled the economy; they have looted the nation. They've demanded that Venezuela provide to Cuba essentially discount oil for years and years, harming the Venezuelan people. The Cubans have been there and are deeply embedded, have been for years, and the Russians have been there as well, largely protecting their economic interests.

QUESTION: Secretary Pompeo, one of the criticisms that has been – or levied against the American government has been made by people, including Representative Ilhan Omar of Minnesota, who have suggested – many people on the left seem to be suggesting that American sanctions – that America bears responsibility for the situation in Venezuela. I was hoping maybe you could debunk this silly myth that it was American sanctions that led to the collapse of civil society in Venezuela.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Ben, there's always elements of – in the United States that are the blame-America-first crowd. This is factually unfounded in the most troubling way. It's deeply disturbing that someone would say something like that. The challenges that face the Venezuelan people today are years and years in the making, long before American sanctions were put in place months and months ago, whether that was putting military individuals in charge of their oil wealth – the largest known substantiated oil reserves in the world belong to Venezuela. Not the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, not the United States, not Russia, but Venezuela, and they put a general in charge, and of course it falls into disrepair. The corruption, the kleptocracy, is legion, and that all long predates Americans' effort – America's effort to build out a 54-nation coalition to restore democracy. To suggest that the troubles – when there are 200 metric tons of food sitting on the Venezuelan border that came from the taxpayers of the United States of America through our good graces – to suggest somehow that America is remotely connected to the harm befalling the Venezuelan people is sick and dangerous.

QUESTION: We're speaking with Secretary of State Mike Pompeo.

Secretary Pompeo, now there's been a lot of controversy surrounding comments by you, members of the administration, suggesting that all options, including possible military intervention, are on the table with regard to Venezuela. Where do we stand on that, and what is the position of the administration with regard to the possibility of military intervention in Venezuela?

SECRETARY POMPEO: The President has been unambiguous. He talked last night about – or the night before last about how we're going to approach the Cubans, the challenges, the costs that we're going to impose on Cuban leadership such that they depart Venezuela, but has also made very, very

clear that military action is something that we are prepared to use that is an option.

I'm the Secretary of State. We are doing – using all of our diplomatic and political tools to try and resolve this crisis in a way that is peaceful to restore democracy in a way that creates the least violent situation with the least persons injured and harmed. But I think the Venezuelan people are demanding. I think it is morally correct to make sure that in the event that we can find no other way, that American use of military power is something we will simply not rule out.

QUESTION: So I was hoping that maybe you could express the American interest in Venezuela. So I've heard people on the isolationist right as well as the isolationist and progressive left suggesting that America doesn't really tremendous interests in Venezuela. Why should the American people care about what's happening in Venezuela other than the simple humanitarian concern for suffering people?

SECRETARY POMPEO: First, I think that's significant in its own right, but there are certainly additional reasons that America cares deeply about restoring democracy to Venezuela. We need other democratic nations that are prepared to engage and freely trade. The risk from migrants we see today in Colombia, numbering in the 1.5 million, the risk of migrants moving, leaving those places, having to leave their homes, is real.

America also has a deep interest in ensuring that countries that are adverse to the United States, who are desirous of putting America at risk – countries like Cuba, countries like Russia – don't continue to have the foothold that they have literally hundreds of miles from our shores. I don't want to get in too much detail, but their capacity to know what's going on here in the United States, to use that platform to hold Americans at risk, is something that's simply not acceptable and would be deeply adverse to the United States' interests.

QUESTION: We're speaking with Secretary of State Mike Pompeo.

Secretary Pompeo, I want to switch topics for just a moment and talk about the situation in Yemen. Obviously, there's a lot of controversy surrounding America's involvement in Yemen. Again, the big question that is raised is: Why should Americans care about what happens in Yemen? Why should we be expending any efforts on behalf of the Saudi government, for example, in Yemen in the middle of what seems to be an internecine warfare – internecine war between Sunni and Shia? So what is the situation in Yemen? And the President has made pretty obvious his interest in being involved. Why should America be involved in Yemen?

SECRETARY POMPEO: So were this a simple civil war in Yemen, it would be difficult to justify America having any involvement, but sadly, that's not the case. This is terrain in which al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula exists. They have some of their most sophisticated capability at performing operations that are external. That is, external planning groups are sitting in parts of Yemen today. We have an obligation to protect America, to take

down that al-Qaida terrorist threat that is on inside of Yemen.

Moreover, we have the Iranians using Yemen as a platform, a platform to hold ships transiting through the strait and around and through the waters that surround Yemen, both to the south of Yemen and to the west of Yemen, holding American ships, ships sailing through those seas, at risk. We also have Iranian platforms, unarmed – unmanned, armed aerial vehicles as well as missile systems launching missiles into Riyadh and into the Emirates, where Americans travel frequently. There are real security risks. The Saudis have a unambiguous right to defend themselves from attacks out of Yemen, and it is not the Houthis but rather the Iranians that are responsible for that.

QUESTION: My final question for you, Secretary Pompeo, because I know you have to run. Obviously, you're a busy man. I wanted to ask you about the reports of a dramatic rise in anti-Semitism across the world. Today, of course, marks *Yom HaShoah*, Holocaust Remembrance Day. I was wondering if you had any words on the threat to Jews both in the United States as well as internationally in the midst of what seems to be a radical rise in anti-Semitism from a lot of different sides of various aisles.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Ben, you have that right. Anti-Semitism can come from a number of directions, and sadly, it is indeed on the rise. It's on the rise in Europe. You see the Corbynites, the Corbyn folks in the United Kingdom. You see the risk in France, and sadly, here in the United States as well. We all know the history, and we each have an individual obligation to do all that we can to push back, certainly against the violence, and keeping people secure and safe, but also against the rhetoric, against the language, the anti-Semitic language that can be used, which causes others to engage in that violence. It's deeply troubling to see this rise. I've spoken about this with great frequency. The President has as well. We're determined to push back against it not only here in the United States of America but around the world as well.

QUESTION: Well, Secretary Pompeo, thank you so much for your time. I really appreciate, obviously, all your hard work. The world's a dangerous place, and we need people like you making sure that the policy is done right. Thanks so much for your time, Secretary Pompeo.

SECRETARY POMPEO: That's very kind, Ben. Thank you, sir. Have a good day. So long.

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Press Releases: Joint Statement on Science and Technology Cooperation

Media Note
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
May 2, 2019

The following statement was released by the Government of the United States of America and the Government of Japan on the occasion of the Joint High-Level Committee Meeting on Science and Technology Cooperation.

Begin text:

Pursuant to a shared goal of continuing to advance science and technology cooperation and further strengthen the U.S.-Japan relationship, the Government of the United States of America and the Government of Japan met for the 14th Joint High Level Committee (JHLC) Meeting on Science and Technology (S&T) Cooperation on May 2, 2019 in Washington, D.C. This high-level meeting demonstrated the strong mutual commitment of two of the world's most technologically advanced nations to enhance their bilateral S&T cooperation.

This year, the U.S. delegation was co-chaired by Dr. Kelvin Droegemeier, Director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) and Mr. Michael Kratsios, Deputy Assistant to the President for Technology Policy and Deputy U.S. Chief Technology Officer. The Japanese delegation was co-chaired by Mr. Takuya Hirai, Minister of State for Science and Technology Policy, the Cabinet Office, and Mr. Masahiko Shibayama, Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. The U.S. delegation brought together representatives from the White House, Department of Energy, National Institute of Standards and Technology, National Science Foundation, Department of Health and Human Services, and Department of State. The Japanese delegation included participants from the Cabinet Office, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and National Institute of Information and Communications Technology.

This iteration of the JHLC strengthened collaboration between the two countries from a broad strategic perspective and emphasized a whole-of-government approach to S&T issues. U.S.-Japanese cooperation provides the

basis for scientific, technological, and economic progress that benefits both nations. To date, joint initiatives have led to new ideas and advancements in such fields as particle physics, advanced computing, fusion plasma, materials discovery, natural resources, neuroscience, space, cancer biology, and natural disaster resiliency.

The JHLC was divided into two tracks: science and technology. Each track opened with a discussion of national policy and research areas of common interest. Representatives reviewed recent cooperation across a wide range of scientific disciplines, such as energy-related research and bioscience, including precision medicine. The technology track focused on advancing industries of the future, specifically quantum science and technology and artificial intelligence (AI). Discussions also highlighted efforts to enrich domestic innovation ecosystems; the development of STEM-related human capital and industrial training; principles and ethics in the social implementation of AI and other emerging technologies; the role of bilateral cooperation in protecting and promoting advancements in science and technology; and joint efforts to encourage S&T initiatives at the upcoming G20 Summit and beyond. The delegations conveyed the importance of bilateral space cooperation, which will be further addressed in the U.S.-Japan Comprehensive Dialogue on Space scheduled for the summer of 2019.

Both sides encouraged science and technology stakeholders to explore new avenues for collaboration under the Government of Japan's Moonshot Research and Development Program as it takes shape. The program aims to solve difficult issues in contemporary society by facilitating highly transformative S&T concepts and promoting international cooperation.

Given the many policy and research priorities, both the United States and Japan expressed enthusiasm for a bilateral Joint Working Level Committee (JWLC) meeting on science and technology cooperation to advance the identified action items. The next JWLC, set to take place in 2020, will be co-led by the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the U.S. Department of State with the participation of the related ministries and agencies of both countries.

End text

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Press Releases: Secretary Pompeo To Deliver Remarks at Foreign Affairs Day Celebration and Attend the AFSA Memorial Plaque Ceremony on May 3

Notice to the Press
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
May 2, 2019

Secretary of State Michael R. Pompeo will deliver the keynote address at the Department of State's Foreign Affairs Day for active and retired employees of the Department of State and other Foreign Affairs Agencies on Friday, May 3 at 3:45 p.m., in the Dean Acheson Auditorium at the Department of State.

Secretary Pompeo also will deliver remarks at the American Foreign Service Association (AFSA) Memorial Plaque Ceremony at 4:00 p.m. in the C Street Lobby. The Secretary will be joined by AFSA President Ambassador Barbara Stephenson. The AFSA Memorial Plaque Ceremony honors those who have lost their lives while serving overseas due to circumstances distinctive to the Foreign Service, including acts of violence or terrorism. AFSA President Barbara Stephenson will preside over the ceremony and deliver welcoming remarks. Secretary Pompeo will also give remarks paying tribute to those who made the ultimate sacrifice while serving our country around the world.

Both events are open to the press. **Please note:** Due to timing and required preset times, press will not be able to cover both events.

For the keynote address at the Foreign Affairs Day Celebration, preset time for video cameras is 2:45 p.m. from the 23rd Street Entrance. Final access for writers and still photographers is 3:30 p.m. from the 23rd Street Entrance.

For the AFSA Memorial Plaque Ceremony, preset time for video cameras is 3:00 p.m. from the 23rd Street Entrance. Final access for writers and still photographers is 3:30 p.m. from the 23rd Street Entrance.

Media representatives may attend this event upon presentation of one of the following: (1) A U.S. Government-issued identification card (Department of State, White House, Congress, Department of Defense or Foreign Press Center),

(2) a media-issued photo identification card, or (3) a letter from their employer on letterhead verifying their employment as a journalist, accompanied by an official photo identification card (driver's license, passport).

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Press Releases: Poland National Constitution Day

Press Statement
Michael R. Pompeo

Secretary of State

Washington, DC
May 2, 2019

On behalf of the Government of the United States of America, I extend my congratulations and best wishes to the people of Poland on the occasion of your 228th Constitution Day.

Widely regarded as one of the first modern constitutions in Europe, the May Third Constitution represented an historic landmark in your country's pursuit of freedom and democracy.

It was an honor for me to have visited Poland earlier this year and to see

the tremendous progress the country has made since the collapse of communism and return of freedom 30 years ago. I look forward to marking this and several other important anniversaries in 2019 with our Polish Allies and friends as we continue to strengthen the strategic partnership between our two countries.

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