

[Press Releases: On the Occasion of Portuguese National Day \(Portugal Day\)](#)

Press Statement
Rex W. Tillerson

Secretary of State

Washington, DC
June 12, 2017

I am pleased to extend warm greetings on behalf of the United States on the occasion of Portugal Day.

The United States and Portugal share a close bond, dating back to the founding of the United States. Our alliance is built upon and strengthened by innumerable ties of friendship and family. The transatlantic relationship between the United States and Portugal remains vital today. Our two countries cooperate closely through NATO and the United Nations in support of global peace and security.

On this important occasion, we reiterate our commitment to further deepen the friendship between the United States and Portugal and look forward to continued cooperation with our Portuguese partners.

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[Press Releases: Republic of the](#)

[Philippines Independence Day](#)

Press Statement
Rex W. Tillerson

Secretary of State

Washington, DC
June 11, 2017

On behalf of President Trump and the American people, congratulations and best wishes to the people of the Republic of the Philippines as you commemorate your 119th independence day on June 12.

The United States proudly stands with the Philippines as a longstanding ally, especially as the country confronts challenges associated with terrorism and extremism, including recent attacks in Marawi City and elsewhere. We admire the resilience and strength of Filipino people in battling adversity and building a more prosperous and secure future.

On this special day, we honor the enduring U.S.-Philippine alliance, built on our shared democratic values, growing commerce, and strong people-to-people ties.

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[Press Releases: Detention of Murad Amriev in Russia](#)

Press Statement
Heather Nauert

Department Spokesperson

Washington, DC
June 9, 2017

We are gravely concerned about the safety and well-being of Murad Amriev, a Russian athlete from Chechnya, who was reportedly detained by Belarusian authorities and returned to Russia, where he may be in custody. Mr. Amriev has reportedly expressed fears of torture and abuse in Chechnya. We urge the Russian government to ensure Mr. Amriev has access to his lawyer and that his rights under the Russian constitution, laws and international obligations are respected. We call on the Russian government to ensure the safety of Mr. Amriev and his lawyer.

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[Press Releases: On the Occasion of the Official Birthday of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II](#)

Press Statement
Rex W. Tillerson

Secretary of State

Washington, DC
June 9, 2017

On behalf of the Government of the United States of America, I offer congratulations to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and the people of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland as they celebrate Her Majesty's 91st birthday on June 10.

Queen Elizabeth II has served as a symbol of stability and strength throughout her 65 year reign, even in the face of great challenges and tremendous change. She rightfully enjoys the respect and admiration not only of the British people, but of people throughout the world.

The United States' partnership with the United Kingdom is as vibrant and relevant today as it was when Winston Churchill coined the term "Special Relationship" in 1946. We continue to cooperate closely on a wide range of regional and global challenges, including countering terrorism, promoting economic prosperity, and supporting human dignity and the rule of law. The United Kingdom is a strong NATO ally and, together, we have advanced our shared security goals and common interests.

The United States looks forward to continuing our close cooperation to address the most important and pressing issues facing our two countries.

I wish Her Majesty the Queen and the people of the United Kingdom a joyful birthday celebration.

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[Press Releases: Remarks on the Middle East](#)

Remarks
Rex W. Tillerson

Secretary of State

Treaty Room
Washington, DC
June 9, 2017

Good afternoon, and I thank all of you for your patience. I know you've been waiting a little while.

Three weeks ago, the President joined members of the Gulf Cooperation Council in a strong show of partnership, repudiation of extremism, and a plan to defeat terrorism of all kinds in the region and around the world.

Now, the situation in the Arabian Gulf over the last few days is troubling to the United States, the region, and to many people who are directly affected. The United States wishes to reaffirm our commitment to the spirit of the summit. As we combine efforts to defeat the military, financial, and ideological support of terrorists, we expect to see progress in the Arab world toward greater political expression. An important pathway to attack Islamic extremism and to prevent political activism from escalating into violence is to allow marginalized voices opportunities for political expression.

But this process requires regional and global consensus and mutual understanding. The GCC summit creates a platform to achieve this consensus and understanding. We call for calm and thoughtful dialogue with clear expectations and accountability among the parties in order to strengthen relationships. We ask that there be no further escalation by the parties in the region. We call on Qatar to be responsive to the concerns of its neighbors. Qatar has a history of supporting groups that have spanned the spectrum of political expression, from activism to violence. The emir of Qatar has made progress in halting financial support and expelling terrorist elements from his country, but he must do more and he must do it more quickly.

Others must also continue to eliminate factions of support for violent organizations within their own borders. Again, that was a commitment made by all at the summit. We call on the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, and Egypt to ease the blockade against Qatar. There are humanitarian consequences to this blockade. We are seeing shortages of food, families are being forcibly separated, and children pulled out of school. We believe these are unintended consequences, especially during this Holy Month of Ramadan, but they can be addressed immediately.

The blockade is also impairing U.S. and other international business activities in the region and has created a hardship on the people of Qatar and the people whose livelihoods depend on commerce with Qatar. The blockade is hindering U.S. military actions in the region and the campaign against ISIS.

We support the emir of Kuwait's efforts to bring about a peaceful resolution to this agreement and progress toward eliminating all forms of support for terrorism – military, financial, moral, or ideological. The U.S. will support these mediation efforts along with the emir of Kuwait.

In the last few days, I have spoken to many leaders in the region. And as I said to all of them, we know you are stronger together. It is clear to me, based on these conversations, that the elements of a solution are available. The GCC must emerge united and stronger to show the world the GCC's resolve in its fight against violence and terrorism, and its commitment to countering the threat from extremism.

Our expectation is that these countries will immediately take steps to de-escalate the situation and put forth a good-faith effort to resolve their grievances they have with each other. Thank you very much.

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