

From: U.S. Department of State
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Assistant Secretary Donfried's Travel to the Republic of Bulgaria
To: Goodlander, Margaret V. (OAG)
Sent: May 17, 2022 5:23 PM (UTC-04:00)

You are subscribed to Press Releases for U.S. Department of State. This information has recently been updated, and is now available.

Assistant Secretary Donfried's Travel to the Republic of Bulgaria

05/17/2022 05:06 PM EDT

Office of the Spokesperson

On May 18-19, Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs Dr. Karen Donfried will visit Sofia, Bulgaria, for a series of high-level meetings to reaffirm the strong bilateral partnership between the United States and Bulgaria. During her visit, Assistant Secretary Donfried will meet with senior Bulgarian government officials and leaders of political parties, and discuss a range of key issues, including our robust bilateral security cooperation, NATO's unified response to Russia's unprovoked war against Ukraine, the U.S. commitment to supporting Bulgaria's energy security and efforts to combat corruption, and other regional issues.

This is the latest in a series of high-level engagements between the United States and Bulgaria. Most recently, Vice President Kamala Harris, Secretary of State Antony Blinken, White House National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan, and Department of State Under Secretary for Political Affairs Victoria Nuland met with Bulgarian Prime Minister Kirill Petkov during his May 9-10 visit to Washington, D.C. Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin visited Bulgaria in March, and State Department Counselor Derek Chollet visited Sofia in February. Assistant Secretary Donfried's visit will build on these recent engagements and set the stage for the next meeting of the U.S.-Bulgaria bilateral strategic dialogue later this year.

Stay connected with the State Department:



External links found in this content or on Department of State websites that go to other non-Department websites should not be construed as an endorsement of the views or privacy policies contained therein.

Update your subscriptions, modify your password or email address, or stop subscriptions at any time on your [Subscriber Preferences Page](#). You will need to use your email address to log in. If you have questions or problems with the subscription service, please contact subscriberhelp.govdelivery.com.



This email was sent to (b) (6) using GovDelivery Communications Cloud on behalf of: U.S. Department of State, 2201 C Street NW, Washington, DC 20520

From: U.S. Department of State
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Telephonic Press Briefing with Juan Gonzalez, National Security Council Senior Director for the Western Hemisphere and Brian A. Nichols, Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs, Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs
To: Goodlander, Margaret V. (OAG)
Sent: June 2, 2022 1:09 PM (UTC-04:00)

You are subscribed to Press Releases for U.S. Department of State. This information has recently been updated, and is now available.

[Telephonic Press Briefing with Juan Gonzalez, National Security Council Senior Director for the Western Hemisphere and Brian A. Nichols, Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs, Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs](#)

06/02/2022 11:24 AM EDT

Brian A. Nichols, Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs

Juan Gonzalez, National Security Council Senior Director for the Western Hemisphere

Moderator: Greetings to everyone from the U.S. Department of State Media Hub of the Americas in Miami, Florida. I would like to welcome our participants who have dialed in from the United States and across the region. This is an on-the-record press briefing with NSC Senior Director for the Western Hemisphere Juan Gonzalez and Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs Brian Nichols.

Senior Director Gonzalez and Assistant Secretary Nichols will discuss the upcoming 9th Summit of the Americas. They each will give opening remarks and take questions from participating journalists.

And with that, I'll turn it over to NSC Senior Director Juan Gonzalez.

Mr. Gonzalez: Good afternoon, everybody, and it's always a privilege to share a stage with our senior diplomat for the Western Hemisphere, Brian Nichols, who has been a partner through and through. I would like to start by, I think, first welcoming you all to the call and for your patience as we head toward what we know will be an incredible Summit of the Americas next week. You know that the President, as you know, incredibly values personal engagement and looks forward to speaking with and engaging with the leaders and other representatives that will be attending. The President is very much looking to hosting the 9th summit representatives from government, civil society, and the private sector to advance our common goals and find common ground.

The President specifically really sees an opportunity for leaders and key stakeholders to come together to address some of the core challenging challenges facing the people of the hemisphere, including economic prosperity, climate change, the migration crisis, and the COVID-19 pandemic. No other part of the world impacts the security and prosperity of the United States more directly than the Western Hemisphere, and that is why the President has consistently said that he sees the objective of U.S. policy to advance a vision of a region that is secure, middle class, and democratic as something that is fundamentally in the national security interest of the United States. But of course, we are joined with the hemisphere not just by geography but our economic ties, democratic principles, cultural connections, and familial bonds.

First, look, there's 28 years have passed since the United States has hosted the 1st Summit of the Americas, and we're obviously living in very different times. Today we have the – we're meeting against the backdrop of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, a region that is still reeling from the impact of the pandemic, the lasting socioeconomic impacts of the pandemic and obviously the inflationary impacts of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. And in a time when even before the pandemic there were ongoing protests by populations throughout the hemisphere that were really starting to question the value of democracy.

So against that backdrop, the President has really challenged the U.S. Government and engaged with partners to try to develop an ambitious agenda for the summit. And the United States will announce some key actions that we intend to accomplish along five specific areas for the summit. Without going into too much detail or getting out ahead of the President, I'll go through them very quickly.

The first is our economic agenda, recognizing the connection between the region's success and that of our own. As I had mentioned, the President will use the summit to align regional leaders, the private sector, and civil society behind a new and ambitious economic agenda that builds upon our existing free trade agreements in the hemisphere to really help address some of the dislocations of trade, but addressing issues of equity and equality, supporting the global energy transition, the adoption of technology. Health and health security systems are going to be fundamental, I think, that taking very concrete steps at the summit to make sure that we're moving forward to build upon our existing free trade agreements.

Also developing – we're updating tools that we've had. We have, obviously, a multilateral system that was developed decades ago, and we need new tools to really help a predominantly middle-income region address some – a once-in-a-century economic crisis that has been the pandemic. So that's something that I think we're very much looking forward to the President announcing.

The other is health, as a top national security priority for this administration to ensure that millions don't continue to die from the COVID-19 pandemic. That is why the United States has donated now nearly 70 million vaccines to the hemisphere without any strings attached, and at the summit the President will also launch an effort to promote health systems and health security in the region to prepare for future pandemics, strengthen the region's health systems, and bolster health security supply chains.

The President will also announce a new partnership on climate and energy with Caribbean nations and will ask the Vice President to lead this effort just as he did as vice president with the Caribbean Energy Security Initiative in 2013. The focus is on responding to the increasing climate energy challenges facing our Caribbean partners.

And we have also on food security and its effects on vulnerable populations. This is a regional priority and directly linked to our cooperative efforts on migration and ensuring an equitable and sustainable-driven economic pandemic recovery in the hemisphere. We have invested in key social safety nets to help reduce poverty and food shocks in the region through Feed the Future and other agricultural programs. The United States is proud to contribute more funding for migration and food security needs that will improve the quality of life for people across the region.

And of course, closely tied to the economic agenda and everything else that I mentioned is really addressing the historic migration crisis in a way that is unprecedented for the United States and for the region, recognizing that migration is a symptom of a much broader challenge brought on by the economic and security challenges that the hemisphere has been facing for the last couple years.

Now, for the last couple of months the President has and the Secretary of State and Secretary of Homeland Security, the Vice President, and others have been all-hands-on-deck to mobilize leaders around a bold new plan centered on responsibility sharing and economic support for countries that

have been most impacted by refugee and migration flows. On the margins of the summit, the President will join other heads of state to sign a migration declaration, sending a strong signal of unity and resolve to bring the regional migration crisis under control.

While, again, I'm not going to get into the specifics of the deliverables that you can expect from the President, what I can tell you is that we're looking forward to having you all join us and learn from him directly at the summit. I'd just like to note that the five action areas I just talked about are different than the five political commitments, which have been a function of the Summit Implementation Review Group process that are also going to be at the core of what comes out of the summit. And there's also an overlap here significantly with what the President's announcing with the political commitments, particularly in areas of democracy, governance, climate, energy, health, and digitalization.

And that concludes, I think, the main points. I will now pass the conversation to my colleague, Assistant Secretary of State for the Western Hemisphere Brian Nichols, who will speak to the collaborative work that the region's governments will commit to and which are currently being finalized at the Summit Implementation Review Group. Thanks.

Assistant Secretary Nichols: Thanks so much, Juan, and it's a great pleasure to work with you on this, and so your energy, creativity, and drive to help our hemisphere. I'd also like to recognize the great work that our senior advisors Chris Dodd and Debbie Mucarsel-Powell have been working on as well as our summit coordinator Kevin O'Reilly, who is in L.A. now working on the final negotiations for the Summit Implementation Review Group.

Before I take your questions, I'd like to briefly preview what you can expect in terms of the political commitments from the 9th Summit of the Americas, as Juan said. The United States is hosting the summit one week from today in Los Angeles, California, and we're focusing on how we'll deliver for average people in our region. Juan talked about the action that our President is taking in five key areas. Some of those are similar to the political commitments that I will discuss, but the difference is that those actions are the U.S. priorities for the region and things that President Biden is specifically going to deliver.

From June 8th to 10th, the heads of state and government from across the Americas will come together to adopt five leader-level political commitments which will set forth our mandate for building a sustainable, resilient, and equitable future by proposing and implementing actions under the summit's five political commitments: democratic governance, health and resilience, the clean energy transition, our green future, and digital transformation. Our region's leaders and stakeholders can improve the lives of the people of our hemisphere in a demonstrable and meaningful way.

First, on democratic governance, the United States knows we all have to work – we all have work to do on building strong and inclusive democracies in the hemisphere, including here at home. At the summit, our collective action can demonstrate our commitment to enhancing transparent and accountable governments that deliver democracy to the people of the Americas.

To this end, we will adopt a Plan of Action that calls for reaffirming our commitment to the Inter-American Democratic Charter, including establishing mechanisms to address new challenges to democracy; supporting the work of electoral observation missions, following up on our commitment at the 8th Summit of the Americas to promote transparency, accountability, and combat corruption; enhancing protections of human rights defenders, environmental defenders, members of the press, and whistleblowers; increasing the participation of civil society, private sector, and new stakeholders in democratic processes and decision-making. These are just a few of the ways in which we're working to bolster democratic governance as a region and build on the commitment we made 20 years ago when we adopted the Inter-American Democratic Charter.

Second, on health and pandemic resilience, the United States will propose that the hemisphere's leaders take a whole-of-government approach to address systemic health issues by agreeing to draft an action plan on health and resilience to be implemented by 10th summit. Components of the action plan will include: expanding quality people- and community-centered health services, strengthening of educational and training programs in the field of medicine, public health, nutrition, and biomedical science research; and examining financial systems to more efficiently, effectively, sustainably, equitably, and transparently improve public financing related to health systems.

Third, on the clean energy transition, we will discuss implementation of renewable energy goals and ways that the hemisphere can share technical knowledge and best practices to put the Americas at the forefront of the global clean energy transition. These include: collaborating with the private sector and other stakeholders to identify opportunities for manufacture or trade in clean energy goods and services; fostering the enabling conditions for the scale-up of renewable energy; and advancing sustainable, attainable, and responsible mining sector principles and securing the integration of mineral supply chains in our hemisphere.

Fourth, on climate change, our hemisphere will build our longstanding commitments on climate resilience and sustainability to strengthen the hemisphere's resilience and adaptive capacity to withstand the impacts of climate change and extreme weather events. Our regional political commitment on our green future will include measures such as: advancing the Glasgow Leaders Declaration on Forest and Land Use to halt and reverse deforestation; decreasing the amount of carbon emitted from land use activities and increasing carbon storage; harnessing the role of oceans and other bodies of water to mitigate climate change, as well as combatting ocean plastic pollution; accelerating climate change adaptation and resilience by implementing national adaptation plans or strategies.

Fifth and finally, on digital transformation, leaders will identify shared priorities and commit to specific actions building digital ecosystems. This first-ever regional agenda for digital transformation creates a framework for governments and stakeholders to collaboratively create the jobs and industries of the future based on interoperable, resilient, secure, and reliable telecommunications networks which will drive innovation and expand access to goods, services, and information in new ways.

These include: promoting policies to expand the internet access, particularly in historically marginalized communities, and drive digital innovation and social inclusion through increased access to digital government services; expanding digital technology's role in promoting quality education, digital literacy, and digital citizenry; increasing a regulatory harmonization in areas like spectrum management and digital trade.

We look forward to sharing more details on these political commitments at the summit. And both Juan and I will now take your questions. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. We will now begin the question-and-answer portion of today's call.

Our first question was submitted by Mark Stevenson from the Associated Press. And the question is: "Have Nicaragua, Venezuela, Mexico, or Cuba been confirmed as attending the Americas Summit, and who will they be sending?"

Mr. Gonzalez: So I'm happy to take that one. So we still have some final considerations, but we will, I think, inform people publicly soon about the final invitation list. I think what's really important for us in terms of the summit is why we are gathering, and that is to focus on our collective responsibilities to forge a more inclusive and prosperous future for the hemisphere. So we've not been so focused on the – on who is and is not invited, and more really on the outcomes that we want to achieve at the summit.

Moderator: Thank you. Our next question will go to David Alandete. Operator, please open line 95. David.

Question: Yes. Can you hear me?

Moderator: Yes, please go ahead.

Question: Can you hear me now?

Moderator: Yes, go ahead.

Question: Sorry about that. So yeah, I have two questions. One of them is like besides the fact that some details are still being finalized, I wanted to ask Mr. Gonzalez if in any case the option of inviting someone from the Cuban regime is still on the table, if it's something that is being debated. It's something like quite important from the point of view of the whole continent.

And the second one is like the presence of Venezuela. Could you explain how Mr. Guaido is invited, and when is he going to address the other leaders if he – or what is the nature of his invitation to the summit? Thank you so much.

Mr. Gonzalez: Thanks. So I mean, again, I'm not going to enter the details, but what I'll say is that we have just had very respectful and active conversations with Mexico and the Mexican president's request that Cuba attend the summit. The United States and Mexico have really partnered very closely on a number of issues, and the approach that we've taken is to talk with the leaders of the region, talk to Mexico. But again, I'll go back to the previous answer where I'll just say that we're still having some final considerations. And then as soon as we — as soon as the White House makes a final decision on final invites, that's something that we'll be happy to brief folks and to provide our rationale. Thanks.

Moderator: Thank you. Our next question was submitted by Jason Calderon from NTN 24. The questions is: "What does the document for the Regional Migration Pact that President Joe Biden will propose as the main objective of the Summit of the Americas include? And what is in the — what is new in this proposal?"

Mr. Gonzalez: Yes, I can – so I'll take the first part, and then Assistant Secretary Nichols has also been engaged on this. We'll invite him to say — to speak to this as well.

So look, while migration is, first, an important topic that'll be discussed at the summit, it's one of the several focus areas, all of which are important to the hemisphere. But I think the key here is – point here is that irregular migration is a regional problem that touches nearly every country in the region, and often a symptom of other challenges that I've mentioned facing Latin America and the Caribbean.

So what we are hoping to do is – and have been, as I mentioned, engaging on this very actively with our regional counterparts is to look at the regional challenge from the context of responsibility sharing and the need to provide economic support to countries to have been impacted by refugee and migration flows, but also the importance of avenues and in-country processing avenues, expanding refugee protections, and also addressing, I think, some of the core drivers of migration, which are lack of economic opportunities and insecurity.

I will say also there is just a robust initiative to combat smuggling in there as well. But at the – at its core, what this is, is something that is unprecedented in that the leaders of the region that are either source, transit, or destination countries for migration are really coming together behind a plan that recognizes that the migration challenge is not one that is – that is at the U.S. border, but it's one that is

actually impacting all the countries in the Americas, and that we need to work together to address it in a way that treats migrants with dignity, invests in creating opportunities that would dissuade migrants from leaving their homes in the first place, and provide the protections that migrants deserve.

Assistant Secretary Nichols: Yeah, I'll just add to that that this builds on Secretary Blinken's participation in co-hosting of ministerial-level meetings in Colombia and Panama to talk about this unprecedented challenge globally. There are more than 94 million people on the move as migrants. This poses a challenge to nations around the world, but particularly in our own hemisphere.

And this declaration is going to allow us to focus on promoting stabilization in communities that are hosting migrants; helping those communities and the migrants that they are hosting; ensuring things like access to legal documentation and public services; promoting pathways for legal, orderly migration when appropriate; to ensure ethical recruitment for employment, for example; promoting humane migration management; and a shared approach to mitigating and managing irregular migration.

Those are some of the things that we're focusing on. And it builds on not only the ministerial meetings that have taken place, but the many agreements that have come both within our region and around the world to promote safe, orderly, humane migration.

Moderator: Thank you. Our next question, we'll go to Rafael Mathus from *La Nacion*. Operator, please open line 30.

Question: Thank you very much for doing this call and for taking my question. About the invitations for Cuba, Nicaragua, Venezuela, and so on, Juan, can you specifically say what are the final considerations of the government on this topic, because it has been discussed for several months now? And what are your thoughts on the damage these issues are creating on both the summit and the agenda of the summit? Thanks.

Mr. Gonzalez: Well, look, I mean, I'm not going to get into the specifics of the considerations because I think fundamentally what this administration has done, whether it's on this topic or on any topic, is treated the countries of the region as our partners that – whose views we have to take into serious account. And certainly with Mexico and with others that have expressed a view, we have tried to engage in a conversation and been very respectful of the different perspectives. And ultimately, it's something that as the host's prerogative we'll make the final decision, and we'll announce that once the decision has been made.

Is it a distraction from the summit itself? Look, I don't think so. It's hard to, I think, confirm anything until it actually happens. But we are really confident that the summit will be well-attended, that our relationship with Mexico is – remains and will continue to remain positive. We very much want President Lopez Obrador there. The President of the United States very personally wants the President of Mexico there. And that I think once folks see what is announced at the summit we'll see that we're really actually addressing, I think, what are rising to the challenge that is – that are many of the different economic, pandemic-related, and other challenges that the region is facing. So I think we'll let the results speak for themselves.

Assistant Secretary Nichols: Yeah, I'd just like to add that we're very much focused on addressing the issues that affect people in their daily lives in our hemisphere. We will have attendance from leaders throughout our hemisphere, but we're also going to have attendance from private sector leaders and CEOs, from members of civil society, from youth from across the hemisphere. They are coming together in an unprecedented way, literally thousands of people, to talk about the issues of concern that affect people in their daily lives.

Can they get access to health care? Can their kids get a good education? Do they have the economic opportunities they need? Are they able to benefit from broadband internet technology? What are we doing to mitigate the shock caused by Russia's invasion of Ukraine and ensure people have reliable, affordable access to food? And what are we doing to reorient supply chains to make sure that the disruptions that we've seen over the past few years are not repeated? I think that's what average people care about, and that's what we're focused on.

Moderator: Thank you. We will now go to Raquel Krahenbul from TV Globo. Operator, please open line 7.

Question: Yes, hello. I am with Raquel. She is just out of the room for one minute. Can you please call on her in just another minute?

Moderator: Sure. Operator, thank you. We will now go to Priscilla Alvarez from CNN. We go to line 61, please.

Question: Hi. Can you hear me?

Moderator: Yes. Please go ahead.

Question: Thank you for doing this. You mention throughout the call that this is about creating regional partnership to address issues systemic to the hemisphere. But if you are missing key partners like Mexico or Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, how do you – do you anticipate success or an outcome from this? I mean, those are key partners.

And then also you mentioned earlier, and I just want to clarify, the Mexican president's request that Cuba attend the summit. Is that currently the state of play with those discussions, whether Cuba attends, and no longer a discussion about Nicaragua and Venezuela? Thank you.

Mr. Gonzalez: Sure. I mean, I'll be brief, and then Brian will have his views.

Look, I mean, with Mexico and those others, we have made very clear that participation won't impact cooperation or even a level of ambition certainly before – well before the summit. On the issue of migration, we've had very close cooperation with Mexico, and that will continue to be the case. And just again on the invitations, we're just – we're still looking through – it's continuing to engage in conversations with different countries. And once we make a final decision, we'll make an announcement.

Assistant Secretary Nichols: I'll just add that countries throughout our hemisphere have been playing an active role in the Summit Implementation Review Group negotiation of the five political commitments that will be approved at the summit, and that includes Mexico. The engagement across many levels, from ambassadors and department representatives to the Organization of American States to senior ministry officials to foreign ministers, around the goals for this summit has been active and intense and very constructive. And I think we're going to leave this summit with an incredibly strong mandate from this hemisphere to work on the issues that matter to people.

Moderator: Thank you. We will now go to Jaqueline Charles from *The Miami Herald*. Operator, please open line 83.

Question: Hi, thank you. In regards to Haiti, which today is undergoing multiple crises and we are seeing it playing itself out with the migration both at the land and the sea borders, what will be a

specific message or focus as far as Haiti is concerned during this summit, and what can we expect as far as deliverables in regard to Haiti?

Mr. Gonzalez: Brian, do you want to take this?

Assistant Secretary Nichols: So we're focused on a number of things that will benefit Haiti. Access to health care is one. Changes to the way that we approach our engagement on some economic issues to ensure that we're leveraging all the tools that we can to support partner nations throughout our hemisphere, which will benefit Haiti. Obviously, migration is an area where we have to do more to support and engage Haiti, and I think we're going to have some interesting things in that area.

And then more broadly, the commitments around democracy will benefit Haiti as it moves towards elections in the future, things like strengthening electoral oversight authorities in our hemisphere, support to candidates and political parties, respect for the role of ombudsmen and transparency-related authorities in country – all are directly applicable to Haiti. And by taking those commitments and working them both bilaterally with Haiti among the countries of our hemisphere, multilaterally through the Organization of American States, through UN bodies, I think we're going to be able to translate this into specific and concrete further assistance for the Haitian people who need it very much.

Moderator: Thank you. We will now go to Beatriz Bulla from Estradao. Operator, please open line 63.

Question: Hi, thank you all for doing this. So I'd like to ask about the position of the Brazilian president, Jair Bolsonaro. You mention that the summit will discuss the core challenges to the people of the hemisphere, and democracy is one of them. I'll like to ask if President Biden wants to raise concerns or express his confidence on the Brazilian electoral process, considering that President Bolsonaro has made some comments about the Brazilian electoral process, and also because last year when the NSA Jake Sullivan was here in Brazil with Bolsonaro, you – the U.S. expressed great confidence in the Brazilian institutions and society with Bolsonaro, the importance of not undermining trust in this process. So is the Brazilian electoral – is it going to be a topic during the summit or during the bilateral meeting with Biden and Bolsonaro?

Mr. Gonzalez: So I'll say the issue of the Brazilian elections is really up for the Brazilians to decide, and the United States does have confidence in Brazil's electoral institutions, which have proved robust. And – but the conversation with – between the President and President Bolsonaro is going to cover a wide range of topics that are bilateral and, frankly, global in nature given the importance of the U.S. relationship. So whether it's tackling food insecurity and economic response to the pandemic, health and health security, every single priority for the summit that we have are areas where Brazil plays an incredibly important role. The topic of climate change as well is something that the President has made clear is a priority, is something that's – so there is a very long list of issues that are going to be up for discussion between the President and President Bolsonaro.

Moderator: Thank you. We have time for one last question. The last question goes to Jorge Agobian from Voice of America. Operator, please open line 48.

Question: Thank you so much for doing this. We really appreciate it. I have a question. If the United States recognizes the government of Juan Guaido in Venezuela as the legit government of that country, why are there still additional considerations to be decided in this specific point? And why haven't they been invited to the summit, and how should it be interpreted? Then, if they were not invited as the representative of Venezuelan government, if U.S. actually recognizes Guaido as the president?

Mr. Gonzalez: Thank you. So the United States does continue to recognize interim President Juan Guaido as the legitimately elected president of the – of the national assembly, which was the last democratically elected institution in that country. And we engage actively with him, with his ambassador and his government as well as the representatives of the unity platform and we're actually supporting a dialogue that produces outcomes that lead to free and fair elections in the country.

I'm not going to talk about the considerations with regard to invitations except to just underscore that there are – governments have different views on some of these topics, and we engage and consult with them. And ultimately the host prerogative is important, but we also are wanting to facilitate a broad hemispheric discussion and want to make sure that we're integrating all of the views of the members of the Organization of American States. So again, we're – for us, it's most important that we're gathering together and that the focus is on our collective responsibility to forge a more inclusive and prosperous future for the hemisphere, and that includes one for the people of Venezuela.

Moderator: That concludes today's call. I want to thank Senior Director Gonzalez and Assistant Secretary Nichols for joining us and thank all of our callers for participating. If you have any questions about today's call, you may contact the Miami Media Hub at MiamiHub@state.gov. Thank you and have a good day.

Stay connected with the State Department:



External links found in this content or on Department of State websites that go to other non-Department websites should not be construed as an endorsement of the views or privacy policies contained therein.

Update your subscriptions, modify your password or email address, or stop subscriptions at any time on your [Subscriber Preferences Page](#). You will need to use your email address to log in. If you have questions or problems with the subscription service, please contact subscriberhelp.govdelivery.com.



This email was sent to (b) (6) using GovDelivery Communications Cloud on behalf of: U.S. Department of State, 2201 C Street NW, Washington, DC 20520

From: U.S. Department of State
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Department Press Briefing – June 6, 2022
To: Good ander, Margaret V. (OAG)
Sent: June 6, 2022 8:07 PM (UTC-04:00)

You are subscribed to Press Releases for U.S. Department of State. This information has recently been updated, and is now available.

[Department Press Briefing – June 6, 2022](#)

06/06/2022 07:57 PM EDT

Ned Price, Department Spokesperson

Washington, D.C.

2:18 p.m. EDT

MR PRICE: Good afternoon.

QUESTION: Hello.

MR PRICE: Happy Monday. A few things at the top and then we will turn to your questions.

I'm sure you all have seen the reports of the Russian ministry of foreign affairs summoning your colleagues to, quote, "explain to them the consequences of their government's hostile line in the media sphere." Let's be clear: The Kremlin is engaged in a full assault on media freedom, access to information, and the truth.

I think everyone here in this room knows the censorship and difficulties your colleagues who work in Russia have experienced, so I don't need to lay it out in exacting detail. Suffice it to say the Russians continue to make a false equivalency.

The Russian Government fundamentally and willfully disregards what it means to have a free press, as evidenced by them blocking or banning nearly every independent Russian outlet seeking to report inside their country.

Threatening professional journalists for simply trying to do their jobs and seeking to seal off Russia's population from any foreign information illustrates the flimsiness and the fragility of the Russian Government's narrative.

I also want to be clear about this: The United States continues to issue visas to qualified Russian journalists, and we have not revoked the Foreign Press Center credentials of any Russian journalists working in the United States.

As noted in the statement from the Secretary last month, the Treasury Department designated Russia-1, Channel One, and NTV, all of which are directly or indirectly state-owned and state-controlled media within Russia, and the revenues from which support President Putin's war. Many other both independent and state-linked entities remained unsanctioned.

The U.S. Government continues to engage with Russian media outlets because we believe it is vital for the people of Russia to have access to information. For example, our Ambassador to the Russian Federation John Sullivan, his interview with the TASS state news agency was just published this morning. We also support access to the internet and media by all people, including people in Russia,

even as we stand in solidarity with the people of Ukraine.

Moscow's efforts to mislead the people of Russia and the world and to suppress the truth about what they are doing in Ukraine continues, including by making it illegal to use the word "war" in connection with Putin's full-scale invasion or war on Ukraine.

There is no other word except for censorship.

Next I'd like to briefly preview the upcoming 9th Summit of the Americas, which the United States is excited to host this week in Los Angeles, California. From June 6th through the 10th, under the theme "Building a Sustainable, Resilient, and Equitable Future," heads of state and government officials from throughout the Western Hemisphere will come together to discuss and advance solutions to our most pressing challenges, such as areas – spanning areas such as health and resilience, climate change, democracy, digital transformation, and equitable economic recovery.

Hosting this event again 28 years after we hosted the inaugural summit in Miami in 1994 makes clear our deep and historical – historic commitment to the people of the Western Hemisphere and the commitment of the United States Government to implement President Biden's values-driven global infrastructure initiative announced at the Carbis Bay G7 Summit in 2021.

In addition to the summit's formal, leader-level proceedings, the United States is striving to make this 9th Summit of the Americas the most inclusive and accessible to date. Three stakeholder forums – for civil society, youth, and CEOs – will foster dialogue between national leaders and people, nongovernmental organizations, and businesses of the Americas. We will also engage in direct dialogues with these stakeholders on the margins of the summit, including with citizens from Venezuela, Cuba, and Nicaragua, as we work to realize a more equitable, democratic, and prosperous hemisphere. The United States is excited to invite and amplify diverse voices into the hemispheric dialogue, including the voices of the Los Angeles diasporic communities, during our time in a city with some of the deepest cultural, economic, and historic ties to the region.

And finally, before I turn to your questions, I just want to note the personnel transition in our office, in my office. On Friday, we had the task of saying goodbye to Principal Deputy Spokesperson Jalina Porter, a longtime colleague of mine, someone whose contributions across the department I greatly value and appreciate. And today we have the happy task of welcoming Vedant Patel. Many of you will know Vedant or at least know him by reputation. Vedant comes to us having been an assistant press secretary at the White House. We served together on the transition prior to that. Prior – previously, Vedant has also worked on the Hill as well. I know I'm confident all of you will enjoy working with Vedant, and we'll be sure to arrange introductions as appropriate in the coming days.

So with that, happy to turn your questions.

QUESTION: Thanks, Ned, and welcome. Really briefly —

MR PRICE: Yes.

QUESTION: — on the Summit of the Americas, and in terms of the Secretary's schedule there.

MR PRICE: Yes.

QUESTION: Is he going to be meeting some of these, I guess, civil society members from Cuba, Nicaragua, and Venezuela?

MR PRICE: He has a full schedule. We released a statement this morning indicating some of the elements that he will take part in, in addition to the fact that he will be accompanying President Biden

to many of his bilateral engagements and engagements with government leaders. The Secretary will indeed be taking part in engagements with civil society. Tomorrow evening, for example, he'll be taking part in an event predicated on media freedom. This falls within the bucket of democratic governance and civil society with the region. There will be other opportunities for him to meet not only with civil society stakeholders, but stakeholders from the private sector in addition to his engagement with government counterparts.

QUESTION: And then related to this, how disappointing is it or how much of a blow is it to the summit itself, to the administration's hemispheric diplomatic efforts, that the Mexican president is not going to be there? I mean, Mexico is arguably – well, not arguably, it is the only country that borders the U.S. directly other than Canada. So how disappointed are you that he won't be there? And what does that meant for the chances of success or failure of any kind of initiative coming out of – hemispheric initiative coming out?

MR PRICE: Well, as we've said, this is a summit that will bring together thousands of individuals, both government individuals and private citizens as well as representatives of the private sector, from across the hemisphere. Of course, Mexico is an important hemispheric player. We are very gratified that the Secretary's counterpart, Foreign Secretary Ebrard, will be in attendance. We will have a number of opportunities to engage with our Mexican counterparts in the context of the summit this week and we look forward to those engagements.

QUESTION: Right, but it's a summit, and Ebrard, as wonderful as he is as foreign secretary, I'm sure – at least I guess he is – is not the head of state. So isn't that a – is it a disappointment that you're not having your – that the leader of Mexico is not going to be there?

MR PRICE: We have certainly heard from President López Obrador today. We understand his position on this. As I said before, we look forward to engaging with Foreign Secretary Ebrard. The fact is that Mexico is an important partner across a range of issues. You mentioned one of them, migration. There are a number of other issues, from COVID to a sustainable, equitable, inclusive economic recovery, to the climate crisis we're confronting, in addition to the issue of regional and hemispheric migration.

We will have an opportunity to meet with Foreign Secretary Ebrard and to speak with him in the context of the summit, but Mexico – we are gratified to have a relationship with Mexico that is broad and deep, meaning that we have had and we will continue to have a number of occasions to engage with our Mexican neighbors, not only at this summit but in future engagements in the days and weeks ahead.

Humeyra.

QUESTION: Ned, just to – not to beat a dead horse on that, but AMLO basically said, quote, "There can't be a Summit of...Americas if not all countries of the American continent are taking part." So what is your response to that?

MR PRICE: Well, as the host of the summit, we do have wide discretion in terms of invitations. We greatly value the diversity of opinions that we've heard from our neighbors in the hemisphere about participation in the summit, what that should look like, what that should not look like. In recent weeks, senior officials, including Secretary Blinken, have been in constant contact or near-constant contact, I should say, with our counterparts through the hemisphere – throughout the hemisphere. Secretary Blinken has spoken on a number of occasions to Foreign Secretary Ebrard to hear Mexico's perspective on this question. We have also heard the perspectives of other neighbors in the hemisphere.

We, again, recognize and respect the position of our allies in supporting – in support of inclusive dialogue. We also note, as I have, that non-governmental representatives will be in attendance from Cuba, from Venezuela, and from Nicaragua. Participants from those three countries have registered to take part in stakeholder events.

QUESTION: Just – I mean, where do you think this incident leaves U.S.-Mexico bilateral relations? Can you say that it's completely unscathed?

MR PRICE: We have a broad and deep relationship with Mexico. We will be able to explore and to delve into elements of that relationship with our Mexican neighbors this week in Los Angeles. We will have engagements with our Mexican neighbors in the coming days and weeks beyond that. So certainly there are diversity of opinions when it comes to who should be invited to the Summit of the Americas. The United States, as I mentioned before, as the convener of this particular summit has broad discretion. We have done our best to incorporate the viewpoints of the hemisphere. When it comes to our Mexican partners, we look forward to engaging with the foreign secretary.

Francesco.

QUESTION: Yeah, media at the White House just confirmed today that those three countries weren't invited. Does that mean that until the end, possible, potential invitation of one of them or three of them was on the table? And what made the balance go on the side of not inviting them?

MR PRICE: Well, I can tell you that we were in discussions with our hemispheric neighbors until very recent hours. And, in fact, Secretary Blinken had an opportunity to speak most recently with Foreign Secretary Ebrard last night. We have been in regular contact with other neighbors throughout the hemisphere; we've been in contact with civil society stakeholders; we've been in regular contact with Congress as well.

When it comes to the participation and the issues that have been at the fore, I think it is unfortunately notable that one of the key elements of this summit is democratic governance. And these three countries are not exemplars, to put it mildly, of democratic governance. In recent days alone, the Cuban regime has tried two artists on charges that actually criminalize the freedom of speech and artistic expression in Cuba. Diplomats and the press were barred entry to their trials. We're anxiously awaiting the verdicts.

But again, these most recent – this most recent suppression of freedom of expression is a hallmark of what we have seen from this Cuban regime over the course of years, but especially since the protest of July 11th last year. Since those protests, this is a regime that has not countenanced peaceful opposition. Of course, we've seen these two ongoing trials. We're awaiting the verdict in these cases.

But these are not isolated incidents. We have seen this regime arrest, detain, hold without charge, hold incommunicado, individuals who were doing nothing but expressing the universal right that they have to assemble peacefully, to express their views, and views that did not happen to correspond with the views of the Cuban regime for that supposed offense. They have been detained. They have been deprived of their liberty. They have been deprived of rights that should be universal.

The same, of course, could be said of what has happened in Nicaragua, where we've seen an increasingly constricted space for civil society, and of course, Venezuela under the Maduro regime, a regime that we don't recognize and we continue, of course, to recognize the leadership of interim President Juan Guaidó.

QUESTION: Do you mean that absent these most recent steps by Cuba, an invitation at some level could have been possible? Or were you sharing some more precise demands on something to do on

democracy, et cetera?

MR PRICE: I'm not saying that. I am saying that the challenges that these three regimes pose to some of the central tenets of the Summit of the Americas that is to be held this week, those challenges were just insurmountable when you talk about bringing together a summit where democratic governance, democratic values, is on the agenda.

Now, of course we have worked closely, we have listened carefully, to other countries, to important stakeholders in the region. Many of our neighbors have voiced their opinions, their good faith opinions about what a Summit of the Americas should look like in terms of representation. We will continue to have an opportunity to discuss the issues that are at the heart of this summit with those partners, and we'll have an opportunity to discuss the issues that are at the heart of the summit with civil society representatives, including the civil society representatives that will be in attendance, or at least that have registered, from these three countries – Cuba, Venezuela, and Nicaragua.

Said.

QUESTION: Thank you. A very quick question. Will Guaidó be represented? Will he attend? Will he be represented in the summit?

MR PRICE: We expect that representatives of the interim government of Juan Guaidó will participate in the summit.

Yes.

QUESTION: Just one final point.

MR PRICE: Sure.

QUESTION: I mean, you certainly cannot wish these countries away. I mean, are you – you've had some sort of animosity with Cuba for 60 years and so on. You cannot just wish them away. Why not include them in these discussions? I mean, I asked you this on (inaudible) the other day. I mean, you don't want just the countries that you agree with. You want countries that you disagree with in the summit.

MR PRICE: Well, Said, our policy towards each of these countries – Nicaragua, Venezuela, and Cuba – is predicated on one thing, and that is furthering or advancing the democratic aspirations of the Cuban people, the Venezuelan people, and the Nicaraguan people. Of course we can't just wish the challenges, the profound challenges to democratic governance, away in any of these three countries. That is not what we have done. But as I said before, in recent weeks in at least one of these cases, in all three in one way or another, the challenge to democratic governance has only been underlined by the actions of these regimes.

When it comes to our approach to all three countries, we have taken steps, including steps in recent weeks with at least a couple of these countries, that at least in our estimation seek to advance the democratic aspirations, the aspirations of these three peoples to live in a more freer, more open society. We have taken concrete steps. We will continue to do what we can to advance the cause of liberty, to advance the cause of democracy, that these three peoples so desire.

Kylie.

QUESTION: Can we go to Russia unless —

MR PRICE: Anything else on the summit? Sure, I'll take two quick summit questions. Sure.

QUESTION: My question is foreign policy advisor – Foreign Policy advisor to the President of Azerbaijan Hikmet Hajiyev —

MR PRICE: We'll come to other regions in a moment. Anything else on the Summit of the Americas? All right. Let's go – sorry, Kylie. We'll – and then we'll come back.

QUESTION: Just back to your opener, then. I'm just wondering if you can explain to us if there will be any costs for Russia if they do, in fact, kick out these Western journalists that they are now threatening, and if the – if you guys at the State Department found out about these retaliatory steps that they are considering directly, or if you found out about them in the same way that the journalists did from the Kremlin?

MR PRICE: My understanding is that we found out the same way all of you did when your colleagues were summoned to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and essentially read a riot act that was a litany of false equivalence.

Look, Russia has already suffered devastating reputational costs, and of course, any effort to further suppress or constrict the ability of independent journalists to operate freely inside Russia will incur further reputational costs for Moscow, as if those costs needed to be underlined any further.

But I think what we've seen is that regardless of the steps that Russia attempts to take, their efforts to fully suppress, to fully clamp down on truthful information is going to be – those efforts are going to be futile. And we have already seen that. We have seen even senior Russian Government officials express and air their grievances, their profound disagreements, with the policy choices of the Kremlin, most notably the choice that the Kremlin has taken to wage a brutal war against Ukraine, to air those disagreements publicly. In the earliest days of this war of choice, this unjustified war, we saw thousands, tens of thousands of individuals across dozens of Russian cities peacefully take to the streets. Many of them were detained, many of them were arrested, for doing nothing more than, again, exercising what should be the universal right to freedom of assembly.

And so the point is that even as Russia tries to put forward these false arguments, these lies to justify their – what is a clear and apparent effort to intimidate independent journalists, Russia will not be able to fully suppress the dissent even within their own system to this brutal war against Ukraine. There could be no means of doing that because we know that opposition to this conflict is so widespread even inside of Russia, where, unfortunately, the Russian people are fed a steady diet of lies and propaganda and disinformation. But even the Kremlin's efforts to clamp down on the organs of information and even their efforts to intimate reporters have failed, and information continues to make its way through what is undoubtedly a very constricted information environment.

QUESTION: And just a quick question. Do you know what prompted this? I mean, obviously we've seen them increasingly clamp down on news outlets and good information, but was there a specific incident? Do you think it's the sanctions from May that you guys put on to three Russian-controlled news agencies? Do you have any idea?

MR PRICE: It's difficult to say and I wouldn't want to venture a guess. I believe the Russian Federation has publicly attributed it to the designations that we enacted against Russian-backed or Russian Government entities. These are entities that had been primary sources of foreign revenue for the Kremlin to the tune of hundreds of millions of dollars, a key driver in terms of foreign funding for the Kremlin, or at least a significant source of foreign investment.

Of course, in justifying what is unjustifiable – because it is nothing more than an attempt to intimidate independent journalists – we have seen this false equivalence, putting on the same plane your colleagues, your colleagues whom you know to be independent-minded, impartial, doing what they can

under a very difficult operating environment, to uncover and to report the truth, to what are propaganda arms of the Russian Government.

QUESTION: Sorry, Ned. How many senior Russian Government officials are you aware of who have voiced their opposition and disagreement to their policy?

MR PRICE: I believe I said that some senior Russian Government officials have.

QUESTION: Yeah. How many?

MR PRICE: We have seen certainly former —

QUESTION: One?

MR PRICE: Former Russian Government officials go —

QUESTION: That was one.

MR PRICE: — go on state TV even. We've seen a senior official in Geneva also —

QUESTION: Well, I mean senior official. He was like the number three or four guy. I'm not saying there aren't any. I'm just wondering — you seem to say that, like, there's some big groundswell of opposition within —

MR PRICE: No, I pointed to you —

QUESTION: — senior government officials —

MR PRICE: — pointed to examples.

QUESTION: But okay. Well, a former official going on television, this guy who's the analyst who was widely pointed to, and then the one guy in Geneva?

MR PRICE: And Matt, I think what you have seen from thousands of people, tens of thousands of people take to the streets —

QUESTION: But I get —

MR PRICE: It is not confined to two people, of course.

QUESTION: Well, fine, but you said senior Russian Government officials. So I just want to make sure I understand who.

QUESTION: Right, right. Yes, Alex.

QUESTION: A follow-up before you shut this on how they treat their own reporters. We have the latest example of Andrei Soldatov. He is known for his coverage of Russian security service, a very well-known journalist. He got — basically, he learned that he is on the wanted list, and also his bank accounts got frozen this morning. How do you read that news? First of all, them being able to freeze a bank account of their own reporter and at the same time put him on a wanted list? Secondly, can I get a reaction to the mere fact that this is basically another example of their litany of, let's say, attacks over their own journalists?

MR PRICE: I'm not immediately familiar with the specific case your raised. If we have a specific

comment, we'll offer it, but what you describe certainly sounds in the vein of what appears to be a concerted campaign on the part of the Kremlin to intimidate independent journalists. The Russian Government, the Kremlin has a long track record of pursuing those who have attempted to put a spotlight on it, including its security services. And of course, history is unfortunately riddled with examples of independent journalists and truth-tellers whose reporting has been suppressed, or in some cases, much worse has befallen them. And there are even recent examples of what appears to be very clear examples of the Russian Government pursuing and subjecting even to intimidation and to violence those who would attempt to expose corruption, malfeasance, wrongdoing on the part of the Russian Government.

Anything – yes.

QUESTION: On Russia still.

MR PRICE: Yes.

QUESTION: So how does the U.S. view Russia's renewed bombing of Kyiv? Is this President Putin sending a message to the West about the arms that it's sending to Ukraine to now, or the return to a broader military objective than the Donbas? And does the renewed bombing campaign of Kyiv change operations at Embassy Kyiv at all?

MR PRICE: Well, there have been a number of examples of Russia's brutality where we have had to question whether there was any military objective undergirding it, or whether it was just an attempt to terrorize the population of Ukraine, including the civilian population of Ukraine, and targeting sites on the outskirts of Ukraine could clearly fall into that category.

The attacks that we've seen in recent days, however, of course, are not limited to the capital. The U.S. embassy in Kyiv noted that Russia's bombardment hit a historic Orthodox monument in Donetsk in eastern Ukraine, a sacred site in Ukraine that had served as a refuge, a place of refuge for fleeing civilians since the brutal war in Ukraine began. These attacks have been senseless, what appear to be senseless affronts to Ukraine's people, to Ukraine's government as well.

The ongoing violence continues to take the form of attacks that have injured or killed civilians, destroyed civilian infrastructure, and that follows previous strikes that have hit civilian hospitals, schools, religious sites, the infamous strike on a theater in Mariupol, a busy railway station of civilians attempting to flee for their lives. There have been clear examples of Russia's brutality that amount to war crimes, and we have made public our assessment that Russia's forces have committed war crimes in the context of this campaign.

Not only do we continue to stand with our Ukrainian partners to provide them the security assistance that they have put to extraordinary effect to defend their freedom, to defend their democracy, to defend their country, but we have also provided our Ukrainian partners with economic support, with humanitarian support, and we've continued at the same time to impose those significant costs – the costs that we promised well before Russia's – the start of Russia's full-scale invasion on February 24th that you've seen in the form of financial sanctions and export controls.

QUESTION: Do the attacks on Kyiv specifically – do they alter plans for operations at Embassy Kyiv, or none – there's —

MR PRICE: There's been no change in our posture. As you know, we resumed embassy operations at Embassy Kyiv last month. Since then, our team at the embassy has continued to engage with Ukrainian officials, to engage with the Ukrainian people, including representatives of civil society as well.

QUESTION: Russia and Serbia?

MR PRICE: Sure, Russia and Serbia.

QUESTION: Do you have anything on Russia's Foreign Minister Lavrov decision to cancel a planned visit to Serbia after three countries – Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Bulgaria – decided to close their air space to Lavrov's airplane? Moscow has made a condemnation and also a senior Russian official even threatened to – these three countries with a missile strike.

MR PRICE: Well, these were sovereign decisions regarding the airspace of these three sovereign countries. It reflects Europe's commitment to hold Russia accountable for its unprovoked, for its unjustified aggression in Ukraine. We urge Serbia to focus on its stated goal of EU membership, including aligning its foreign and security policies with the rest of Europe.

Kylie.

QUESTION: (Off-mike.)

QUESTION: Can you comment – I'm sorry – can you comment on Serbia president's decision to host Lavrov and also Serbia's refusal to implement EU sanctions against Russia?

MR PRICE: Well, to your question, we have consistently urged Serbia to take steps that advance its European path, including diversifying its energy sources, to reduce energy dependence on the Russian Federation, and aligning its foreign and security policies with the EU. We have sought and we continue to seek to be a partner to Serbia to assist in its efforts to enhance its energy security for the long term.

QUESTION: How —

MR PRICE: Anything else on Russia-Ukraine? Kylie?

QUESTION: (Off-mike.)

QUESTION: How —

MR PRICE: Sure.

QUESTION: How will – I'm sorry – how will U.S. and NATO ensure, like, these three countries are protected from the threats from Russia? Thank you.

MR PRICE: These three countries that closed their airspace? Well – is that what you mean? Well, all three countries are NATO members, and the commitment to Article Five on the part of all three is ironclad. Of course, we marked Montenegro's fifth anniversary of NATO membership just yesterday, and North Macedonia's second anniversary in March.

Kylie.

QUESTION: Just on the food crisis, can you just bring us up to date on efforts to get grain out of Ukraine? It's been a few weeks now since Blinken made his plea to the UN for countries to get on board, so where are you guys at? Are there routes out of the country that have been identified and are up and running at this time?

MR PRICE: We have continued to be in very close dialogue and communication with key partners in this effort – with our European allies, with Turkey in terms of its efforts, and with the UN. And just last

week, a UN delegation briefed the United States, including senior members of our team here, on efforts to coordinate maritime security on the Black Sea. Of course, we don't comment on the details of these private discussions, but this has been a priority topic of discussion with our counterparts at the UN. We'll continue that close coordination with the UN delegation and with the Government of Ukraine on ways to mitigate impacts of global food insecurity from President Putin's war in Ukraine.

This is a war that not only has brutalized, and in many ways terrorized, the people of Ukraine, but it has put at risk food security around the world. There are approximately 84 merchant ships, some laden with wheat and corn, and about 450 seafarers are trapped at Ukrainian ports. Not only is there grain aboard these vessels, but there are about 22 million tons of grain sitting in silos near the ports that also needs to move out to make room for the newly harvested grain. In addition, Russia has actually taken aim at ships at sea. They have taken aim at grain silos. They are continuing to effectively implement what amounts to a blockade of Ukraine's ports.

So we are having conversations, of course, with Ukraine in the first instance, but also with important allies and partners coming out of the Secretary's engagements in New York last month, where he led the session at the UN Security Council, and also in the General Assembly. That was billed as a call to action. We feel that we were successful in bringing together much of the world to focus on this problem. The challenge is now clearly in sight, and we are working closely with countries in the region to help to facilitate the export of Ukraine's grain and other foodstuffs. But we're also working with countries who have been impacted by Russia's blockading of the ports, Russia's targeting of vessels containing wheat and other foodstuffs. We'll continue to keep the focus on this.

Janne.

QUESTION: Do you have estimation for when that dialogue will lead to movement of the grain?

MR PRICE: This is something that we are working on every single day, so I can't put a date on it, but it is among our highest priorities here. As you know, the Secretary later today will actually convene a group of stakeholders from the NGO community and also from the private sector together with Secretary Vilsack. When it comes to the challenge of Russia's war against Ukraine, this has been a – among our highest priorities, because the impacts of Russia's action are not only confined to what they're doing inside Ukraine, but countries around the world, including countries in Africa – both North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa – have really borne the brunt of this. Ukraine, until Russia's invasion, was a breadbasket for the world – exports of wheat, exports of fertilizer.

Russia too has the potential to export its wheat, its fertilizer, its other foodstuffs. We have been very deliberate and careful in designing our sanctions policy. Contrary to what the Russian Federation is putting forward, there are very clear and delineated carveouts in our sanctions policy to ensure that we are doing absolutely – to ensure that we aren't doing anything that would limit or otherwise constrict Russia's ability to export food and fertilizer.

QUESTION: Ned, just super quickly on Kylie's question. Lavrov's going to Turkey on Wednesday. Is that, like, a big meeting that you guys are also following, and would you expect maybe, like, a breakthrough after that on the grain issue?

MR PRICE: I don't know if we should expect breakthroughs. Of course we'll be watching closely. We'll be talking with our Turkish allies in the aftermath of that visit. Again, we are supporting all diplomatic efforts that are carefully and closely coordinated with Ukraine – nothing about Ukraine without Ukraine – that have the potential to increase Ukrainian exports of food and fertilizer to the global marketplace.

QUESTION: And just so – when you say we shouldn't expect breakthroughs, so you don't necessarily see this, like, meeting over there as, like, unlocking anything or, like, leading to results. You mean to

say that this is still going to be a long haul; it's going to take more than that.

MR PRICE: This is a challenge that has built up since February 24th when Russia began its war on Ukraine. You have referred to a meeting between two countries, Russia and Turkey, neither of which, of course, is Ukraine. So I am confident that one meeting alone won't be able to solve this challenge. This will be a challenge that will, of course, need to involve Ukraine at the center of anything that we collectively do to facilitate the export of Ukrainian food and fertilizer.

Janne.

QUESTION: Thank you, Ned. I have two questions on —

QUESTION: Can we ask one more on Russia, please? On — one more, please.

MR PRICE: Okay.

QUESTION: The new sanctions —

QUESTION: These locations, you know, not —

MR PRICE: We'll do two more on Russia/Ukraine, and then I promise we'll move on. I'll come right back to you, Janne; sorry. Alex, you've already had one, so let me just, for equity, go back. Michele.

QUESTION: Yeah, the new sanctions that Russia impose today on U.S. personalities and secretaries.

MR PRICE: I don't have a reaction other than the fact that I think it highlights the asymmetry between our countries. Of course, the United States is a banking center; it's a financial center. It is a country where citizens from the world seek to travel to, where citizens from the world seek to educate themselves and their families. So of course there's always going to be an inherent asymmetry between the steps that the Russian Federation puts forward and what we, together with our allies and partners, do in response to Russia's brutal war against Ukraine.

Janne.

QUESTION: Thank you, Ned. I have two questions on North Korea and China. North Korea fired eight ballistic missiles yesterday. What actions did United States take immediately in response to North Korea's missile launch?

MR PRICE: Well, I would refer you to the Department of Defense, and they can share details of the live-fire exercises that they conducted in the aftermath of the most recent provocations. But as you've likely heard, we did condemn the DPRK's multiple ballistic missile launches. These launches are in violation of multiple UN Security Council resolutions. They pose a threat to the DPRK's neighbors and to the international community more broadly. As you've heard from us before, we do remain committed to a diplomatic approach to the DPRK. We call on them to engage in dialogue. At the same time, we have an ironclad commitment to our allies in the ROK in Japan. And not only is our deputy secretary of state in Seoul at this very moment, where she will have an opportunity to engage bilaterally with her South Korean and Japanese counterparts, but also trilaterally, underscoring the importance of trilateral engagement and coordination.

It also happens that our Special Envoy for the DPRK Sung Kim is also in South Korea, and he too has been in touch with his trilateral counterparts — his South Korean, his Japanese counterparts. He was in immediate or near-immediate contact with them in the aftermath of the most recent provocations. That coordination will continue, but just as importantly, that shared resolve to confront this challenge and to find ways to advance what is our overarching objective, the complete denuclearization of the Korean

Peninsula, that will remain front and center in our trilateral agenda.

QUESTION: But China said – China noted that North Korea fires missiles because the United States did not engage in dialogue within North Korea. What is the U.S. position on China's claims of responsibility to the United States for North Korea's missile provocations?

MR PRICE: Well, I won't comment on the PRC's characterization of our policy, but I'll make very clear what our policy is. Our policy is to seek dialogue, to seek engagement with the DPRK. Any country that puts the responsibility on us for the lack of dialogue, the lack of engagement, is either ill-informed or is propagating falsehoods. And the fact is that we have made clear for months now, since the earliest days of this administration, that we believe that diplomacy and dialogue provides the most effective means by which to promote our shared objective, a shared objective that emanated from a comprehensive policy review that we conducted last year, where we determined that our goal, a goal we now share with our trilateral allies, is the complete denuclearization of the DPRK.

We believe we can achieve that most effectively through diplomacy and dialogue, which we have consistently offered. We have made clear both publicly and privately to the DPRK that we harbor no hostile intent towards the regime. Much to the contrary, it would be far preferable if we were able to engage in that diplomacy and dialogue.

QUESTION: But this issue goes to UN Security Council resolutions. But if China and Russia will veto, so how are you going to be responsible for this again, repeated these issues all the time, China and Russia's vetoes. How are you going to respond to this?

MR PRICE: Well, we have called on members of the international community, certainly members of the UN Security Council's permanent five, to be responsible stakeholders in the UN Security Council as a preeminent forum for addressing threats to international peace and security.

When it comes to security in North Asia, in this particular region, there is no greater threat to international peace and security. So it is incumbent on all members of the international community to enact and to continue to abide by international sanctions. It is profoundly disappointing, as you heard from Ambassador Thomas-Greenfield late last month, that certain members of the P5 have not fulfilled the obligations that they have as members of the P5 – again, an organization that is charged with being the preeminent forum to discuss threats to international peace and security. But all the while, we will continue to promote accountability. There are other means by which we can promote that accountability. We have our own authorities. Our partners and allies have authorities that we can coordinate just as we work on defense and deterrence together with our partners in the region.

QUESTION: (Off-mike.)

QUESTION: Could we follow-up upon North Korea?

MR PRICE: One more on North Korea and then we'll move on.

QUESTION: Then Afghanistan.

QUESTION: Thank you, Ned. Just following up on Janne's point on China and Russia, how can the U.S. respond if the DPRK were to conduct a nuclear test? Would you be – would unilateral actions be the only option left to the U.S., given China and Russia's veto at the UN Security Council?

MR PRICE: Unilateral actions are never going to be the most attractive or even the most effective response, and that is especially the case because we are gratified that we have close allies in the form of Japan and the ROK bilaterally, trilaterally. There are a number of allies and partners of ours,

not only in the Indo-Pacific but around the world, who understand and appreciate the threat that's posed by the DPRK's WMD programs – that is to say, its nuclear weapons program and its ballistic missiles program.

So we remain concerned that the DPRK could seek a seventh nuclear test in the coming days. It's a concern we've warned about for some time. I can assure you that it is a contingency we have planned for, and it has been a concerted topic of discussion with allies and partners.

Yes.

QUESTION: And then just quickly, after last month's vote, Ambassador Thomas-Greenfield said that the U.S. would continue to seek unity and compromise at the UN with regard to the DPRK. Given that China, Russia were the only two who vetoed, has the ambassador engaged directly with China and Russia how to move forward —

MR PRICE: I would need to refer you to her team for that. We do engage regularly our partners in New York on this. But for any particular conversations, I need to refer you to her.

Afghanistan? Nazira.

QUESTION: Thank you very much. As you know, Taliban establishing a good relationship with India. Indian officials visited the Taliban in Kabul, and they agreed to train some personal security people, maybe army, police or something else. Do you have any comment on that? Although Pakistan and Indian relationship is worse. They don't have any good relation. Taliban, they get two part. One go to India and the other one maybe there. (Inaudible.)

MR PRICE: Well, there are a number of countries around the world that have a discrete set of interests in Afghanistan and who predicate their engagement with the Taliban on those interests. We too have interests when it comes to Afghanistan. We've spoken to many of them. It is human rights, respecting the basic and fundamental human rights of all of Afghanistan's citizens, including its women and girls, its minorities; ensuring safe passage for those who wish to depart the country – of course, that includes for U.S. citizens, for LPRs, for those who have worked on behalf of the United States Government over the years as well.

It is inclusive governance and doing what we can to support the formation of a government that represents the Afghan people, including their aspirations; the counter-terrorism commitments that the Taliban has committed itself to, both publicly and privately, including vis-à-vis al-Qaida, but also ISIS-K; and of course the idea that no legitimate entity should hold hostages, and in the case of Afghanistan, Mark Frerichs continues to be on our mind. We've made very clear that for our relationship to improve whatsoever with the Taliban, we'll be looking very carefully at their actions towards Mark Frerichs, who has been in custody for far too long.

India similarly has a set of interests when it comes to the Taliban. Different countries will engage with the Taliban in different ways. We have a team on the ground in Doha that is responsible for, as appropriate, engaging with the Taliban on our set of interests just as other countries do.

QUESTION: Thank you.

MR PRICE: Yes. Let me move around. Yes, sir.

QUESTION: Foreign Policy Advisor to the President of Azerbaijan Hikmet Hajiyev scheduled to meet with Assistant Secretary of State Karen Donfried at the State Department. What issues will be discussed?

MR PRICE: Well, as you alluded to, Assistant Secretary Donfried will meet with the Foreign Policy Advisor Hajiyev in Washington today. The advisor is also having meetings with several other administration officials, including our National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan. Assistant Secretary Donfried will convey to Mr. Hajiyev the U.S. interest in facilitating direct engagement between Azerbaijan and Armenia, including our role as a Minsk Group co-chair and our support for recent EU efforts to bring both countries together. This is something that Secretary Blinken has had an opportunity to engage with the leaders of these two countries on in recent days and recent weeks. It continues to be something we wish to promote.

QUESTION: Thank you.

MR PRICE: Yes.

QUESTION: Can I follow up —

MR PRICE: Let me move around, Alex. Just let me try and — yes.

QUESTION: Appreciate it, Ned. Thank you. Is there a change in your position on the sale of F-16s to Turkey?

MR PRICE: We have — we continue to discuss with our NATO Ally how we can work together as Allies. Of course, we don't speak to any transactions that have not been notified to Congress. Turkey has made no secret of its desire to invest more heavily in the F-16 program. That's not something that we're in a position to speak to publicly.

QUESTION: And then the SDF commander in Syria, Mazloun Abdi, he says that in the event of Turkish invasion into northeast Syria, they will allow Assad regime's air defense to protect the region's skies. Do you have a position on that?

MR PRICE: Well, our position is one that you've heard for some time now, ever since this hypothetical, ever since this potential operation was first raised. We have emphasized that we remain deeply concerned about discussions of potential increased military activity in northern Syria, and in particular, its potential impact on the civilian population there. We have continued to call for the maintenance of existing ceasefire lines. We would condemn any escalation beyond those lines. It's crucial for all sides to maintain and to respect those ceasefire zones to enhance stability in Syria and to work towards a political solution to the conflict.

I've previously made the point that we expect Turkey to live up to the commitments that it made in October of 2019, including the commitment to halt offensive operations in northeast Syria. Any new escalation beyond those existing ceasefire lines could prove to be especially costly setbacks — costly setbacks to our collective efforts to counter Daesh, the efforts of the counter-ISIS coalition, but also to our efforts to promote political stability within Syria.

QUESTION: If I may, Ned, in the previous administration, before the last Turkish invasion into northeast Syria, the administration was calling on Turkey the same things that you're calling Turkey, and that didn't work, obviously. Are you optimistic that this time there will be anything different?

MR PRICE: Look, I want to be optimistic about it. I don't want to be pessimistic about it. What we can do is to make very clear where the United States of America stands on this. This is something that we have had an opportunity to discuss, including at senior levels, with our Turkish allies. We've made very clear to them our concerns with any renewed offensive in northern Syria.

Said.

QUESTION: Ned, thank you. On the Palestinian-Israeli issue, Ned, yesterday marked the 55th anniversary of the '67 war. That's 55 years of occupation for the Palestinians that they had to endure and still endure. I think over a period of 24 hours, four Palestinians were killed. They held a three-year-old child and they made him take off his t-shirt at a checkpoint. The whole world saw that.

So my question to you – I mean, I know you don't want to express any optimism or pessimism – how long this should – this thing should go on? I mean, hasn't – is it time for this occupation to end? I mean, morally speaking, how much should this military occupation go on, generation after generation?

MR PRICE: Said, our goal from the first day of this administration has been to do everything that we can to promote and to advance a two-state solution precisely because a two-state solution, we believe and successive American administrations have believed, is the most effective means by which to secure Israel's identity as a Jewish and democratic state, but also to fulfill the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people to live in dignity and security and peace in a country of their own. This has been at the heart of our policy. We have spoken out against steps that have the potential to be setbacks towards the prospect of a two-state solution.

QUESTION: So can you tell us at least one thing that you have done to bring this solution, this two-state solution, a bit closer in the last six months?

MR PRICE: Said, we have also been clear that we are not on the cusp, unfortunately, of a two-state solution. We're likely not even on the cusp of direct negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians to discuss the contours of a two-state solution. Our goal since the very start has been to set the stage to create an environment in which diplomacy, including diplomacy toward – between Israelis and Palestinians is more likely to be effective. And I can point to a number of steps that we have taken, including the resumption of humanitarian funding for the Palestinian people, including the resumption of contact between the United States and the Palestinian leadership. That is something that unfortunately had taken a hit in the last administration. We think it was profoundly counterproductive to the prospects of stability in the region, to the prospect ultimately of a two-state solution.

QUESTION: And the last administration, they closed the consulate that was open for so many – for a long, long time. And you have not taken any steps to reopening that.

But I know you don't like me to cite figures and numbers, but I'm going to tell you a couple of figures. Since the beginning of the year, 14 Palestinian kids – children – have been killed by the Israelis. Over the past 55 years, 1.5 million Palestinians have been imprisoned, most of them unfairly – most of them unfairly. Including administrative detentions. Can you at least tell your allies, the Israelis, that they should end this practice of administrative detention?

MR PRICE: Said, we've been very clear where we stand. We believe Israelis and Palestinians deserve equal measures of stability, of security, of freedom, and importantly of dignity. That is really at the heart of our efforts to set the stage for a two-state solution. It's been at the heart of everything we have attempted to do in the region.

Yes, sir.

QUESTION: Hi. There was a *Washington Post* story saying that the PRC is secretly building a naval facility in Cambodia for the exclusive use of its military. That's supposed to be a ground station for the BeiDou navigation technology. Do you have any comment about that?

MR PRICE: I don't have a comment on the specific story you reference, but it is consistent with credible reporting we've seen from the PRC – that the PRC is engaged in a significant ongoing construction project at Ream Naval Base. As we've said, an exclusive PRC military presence at Ream

could threaten Cambodia's autonomy and undermine regional security as well. We and countries in the region have expressed concerns about the lack of transparency on the intent, the nature, the scope of this project, as well as the role that the PRC military is playing in its construction and in its post-construction use of the facility.

The Cambodian people, neighboring countries, ASEAN, and the region more broadly would benefit from more transparency. We've made a very similar point in terms of the Pacific and the Pacific Island nations. We have seen the PRC attempt to put forward a series of shadowy, opaque deals that they would like to see signed in the dead of night with no input or transparency, and even limited visibility on the part of the governments in question. So this has been a pattern on the part of the PRC.

QUESTION: Sorry, Ned. What's the date on that guidance you just read?

MR PRICE: Sixth of June, 2022.

QUESTION: Well, okay. Does it give any metadata? (Laughter.) When did you first start raising your concerns about the Chinese construction at Ream?

MR PRICE: It was last year, I can tell you.

QUESTION: Was it more like two years ago? Maybe it was before – before your time.

MR PRICE: I wasn't here two years ago, but I can tell you this administration has been consistent in that.

QUESTION: Yeah, well, is there something that has happened new other than this just one report that has increased your concern?

MR PRICE: I will tell you, Matt, we – I am happy to take any and all questions that people throw my way. Your colleague asked me a question about —

QUESTION: No, no, I understand that. I'm just wondering —

MR PRICE: — concern of Ream Naval Base, so —

QUESTION: No, I just want to know if there's any – why – is the concern greater than it was, like, a year ago?

MR PRICE: I don't – I can't tell you why *The Washington Post* wrote that report.

QUESTION: I'm not asking you that. I'm asking you about your response to the question, which is that – like, has the concern increased for some reason?

MR PRICE: Our concern certainly has not abated.

QUESTION: Okay.

MR PRICE: Humeyra.

QUESTION: Just one thing on the Summit of Americas. You said representatives of Guaidó will participate. So you guys don't expect him to show up?

MR PRICE: We will have more details on the mechanics and the specifics of participation, I am sure, in the coming days.

QUESTION: Yes, but I mean, is he coming or not?

MR PRICE: We will have more details on all of that as the week unfolds.

QUESTION: Are these representatives participating in person or virtually?

MR PRICE: It's a different way of asking the same question, and I will give you the same answer. We will —

QUESTION: No, no. I mean, are the participants coming in person, or are they going to be in a laptop screen?

MR PRICE: I can understand the interest you have in this, and we will have —

QUESTION: Yes, it's tomorrow. (Laughter.)

MR PRICE: We will have answers for you throughout the course of the week. Yes.

QUESTION: Ahead of the Security Council vote on cross-border operations for Syria next month, how concerned is the U.S. that Russia will dismantle what remains of that cross-border mechanism? And is there any dialogue with the Russians at the UN right now on this?

MR PRICE: So I would need to refer you to my colleagues at the UN to speak to their engagement on this. But as you know, Linda Thomas-Greenfield was just in the region late last week. She went there to put a spotlight on the indispensability of this remaining border crossing. It is a border crossing that facilitates much needed, desperately needed humanitarian support for the Syrian people.

We – the United States believes, and many of our allies and partners around the world believe, that we should not allow the profound differences we have with Russia or any other country to stand in the way of humanitarian assistance to make it to the people of Syria. This is not something that should be treated as a bargaining chip. This is not something that should be used for political favor or advantage. This is about lives. This is about livelihoods. This is about the ability of millions of Syrians who are at grave risk of food insecurity to continue to subsist and to live.

QUESTION: But just to follow up, how would you describe contingency planning for if they succeed in shutting it down?

MR PRICE: Our focus right now is on a reauthorization of the border crossing. I wouldn't want to get into contingency planning.

Yes.

QUESTION: Just a more general question on nuclear threats, because the IAEA chief pointed to evidence that both North Korea and Iran are making great strides in this arena. Now, you've outlined the administration's strategy for diplomacy, but taken as a whole is any of this a wakeup call that it's time maybe for a recalibration?

MR PRICE: For a recalibration of?

QUESTION: Of your strategy.

MR PRICE: Of our strategy towards the DPRK and Iran?

QUESTION: On nonproliferation.

MR PRICE: Look, we have a strategy towards both countries. Obviously, they're very different countries entailing very different strategies.

When it comes to the DPRK – we have already talked about this to some extent during the briefing – our objective is to see the complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. We believe we can achieve that most effectively through dialogue and diplomacy. We are doing what we can to signal very clearly to the DPRK regime that we are ready, willing, and able to engage in that dialogue and diplomacy.

Now, it is no secret as we've already talked about in the course of this briefing that the DPRK appears to be in a period of provocation. This has tended to be cyclical. We've seen periods of provocation; we've seen periods of engagement. It is very clear at the moment that we are in the former. We are doing what we can to give way to a period that is marked more by the latter.

When it comes to Iran, look, the unfortunate reality is that Iran's nuclear program was in a box. It was in a confined box until May of 2018, when the decision was made on the part of the previous administration to essentially give Iran a get out of nuclear jail free card. And since then Iran has been in a position to advance its nuclear program in ways that would have been prohibited under the JCPOA and to do so in the context – in a context where we have not had the stringent verification and monitoring regime that the JCPOA affords us.

So in one sense we know a very credible solution to the challenge we face with Iran's nuclear program, and that's the JCPOA. Now, it remains a very big question mark as to whether we will get there. Regardless of whether there is a JCPOA or not, President Biden has committed that Iran will never be in a position to obtain a nuclear weapon. If we are in a position to mutually return to compliance with the JCPOA, that will be the vehicle by which we fulfil that commitment, but we are equally determined and we are engaging with allies and partners around the world in the absence of a JCPOA to ensure that even in the case that we are unable to get there that Iran will not be able to acquire a nuclear weapon.

Rich, there.

QUESTION: One more on the summit.

MR PRICE: Let me please go to Iran. We've covered Summit of America pretty extensively, I think.

QUESTION: On Saudi Arabia, there appears to be two major delegations coming to visit the United States, the commerce minister in the middle of this month and the investment minister at the end. Are those precursors to a meeting with MBS, or is there any more detail you can provide on a potential meeting there?

MR PRICE: I'm not in a position to provide any more detail on potential presidential travel. As you know, the White House has said that they are working on a visit to the Middle East. He has accepted an invitation from Prime Minister Bennett of Israel to travel to Israel in the coming weeks, and we may have more to say, or I should say the White House I expect will have more to say on that front at the appropriate time.

What we are doing with Saudi Arabia is precisely what we are doing with countries around the world, and that is forging a relationship that first and foremost advances U.S. interest. Just as the President was recently in Japan and South Korea engaging with the leaders of ASEAN, he'll be at the Summit of the Americas this week. Our engagements with countries around the world are predicated on the idea that these relationships need to serve American interests and to be consistent with American values.

I think over the course of the past 16 months we have been in a position to forge a relationship with Saudi Arabia that does that. And you saw another piece of evidence just last week when it was announced by the UN another extension, or I should say an extension, a two-month extension, to the humanitarian truce in Yemen. This, of course, would not have been possible without the tireless efforts of Special Envoy Lenderking under the direction of Secretary Blinken and President Biden, but of course the UN Special Envoy Hans Grundberg, but also the support of our Saudi partners. We have also worked and Saudi Arabia has done quite a bit to mend regional divides – the exchange of ambassadors with Lebanon, healing rifts within the Gulf as well.

And of course, we have common interests in terms of the threats that Saudi Arabia faces, has faced, from Yemen. There are – these are not only threats to the kingdom and to Saudi Arabia's citizenry, but there are 70,000 Americans who live in the kingdom who have been put at risk by the spate of hundreds of cross-border attacks that we have seen in recent months.

So we are working with our Saudi partners on all of these common interests. We can do all of that while keeping human rights at the center of our foreign policy.

QUESTION: Just one quick question on U.S.-Saudi relations?

MR PRICE: Sure.

QUESTION: I think it was last year that Blinken continued to say that the relationship between the U.S. and Saudi Arabia needs to be recalibrated, and you reiterate that as well. Has that process of recalibration concluded, or are you guys still in the process of recalibrating the relationship?

MR PRICE: Well, in some ways our relationships with countries around the world is like our efforts here at home; we're always striving for a more perfect union. We're always striving for a more perfect relationship. The same could be true of countries around the world. I think what we've seen over the course of the past 16 months with our Saudi partners, compared to where we were in January of last year to where we are now just a few days after the humanitarian truce was extended in Yemen, speaks to the progress that we've seen. It's a relationship that is now on steady footing. It's a relationship that allows us to advance, to protect, to promote our interests, just as we have continued to put values – values we share with countries around the world – front and center in that.

QUESTION: So it's on more steady footing now than it was last year at this time?

MR PRICE: I think that is safe to say.

Yes. Let me – yes, sir.

QUESTION: On Taiwan.

MR PRICE: Yes.

QUESTION: Taiwan's opposition party leader, Eric Chu, is in Washington right now. Is there any plan that a State Department official will meet him here in the State Department?

MR PRICE: I am not aware of any planned meetings, but we will let you know if we have anything to read out.

Yes.

QUESTION: Ned, going back to Iran, now that the first day of the IAEA Board of Governors meeting has opened, I guess you can talk more about the report on Iran. The director general said that Iran

has a considerable amount of enriched uranium and it could be only weeks before it could have enough fissile material for a bomb. Is that the same timeline you're looking at, the Biden administration is looking at, for calling it quits with the negotiations should Iran not do anything to revive the talks?

MR PRICE: We share a great deal of information with the IAEA. We have full faith and confidence in the IAEA. The assessment that you heard from the director general today is largely consistent with our own assessments. The fact is that when the JCPOA was implemented, when it was fully in effect, the breakout time was about 12 months. It was about a year. In the course of the past two years, that breakout time – or I should say since May of 2018; I suppose that's three years now, four years now – that breakout time has dwindled significantly. We are now no longer talking about months, unfortunately, but we are talking about weeks or less.

The time frame for potentially resuming – mutually resuming compliance with the JCPOA, again, isn't based on a date on the wall. It is not based on a – whether it's a week or a month from now. It is based on assessments that are ever evolving. These assessments are updated based on every piece of relevant information. And as long as a mutual return to compliance with the JCPOA conveys nonproliferation benefits that the status quo does not, we will pursue a mutual return to compliance with the JCPOA.

As I said, the breakout time that we have now is quite short. The prospect of a mutual return to compliance would still prolong that breakout time fairly significantly if we were successful in negotiating a mutual return to that. That remains a big question mark. We'll have to see what the coming period – where that leads us.

QUESTION: Well, it sounds like you're actually going to wait until Iran is at the threshold of becoming a nuclear state.

MR PRICE: We are not waiting for anything. We are every day engaging with our allies and partners in this effort. And again, as long as it is in the national security interests of the United States, we will continue to pursue a mutual return to compliance. But either way, as I said before, President Biden has a commitment. He has made a solemn commitment that Iran will never be in a position to acquire a nuclear weapon.

QUESTION: Can I ask you about your —

QUESTION: (Off-mike.)

MR PRICE: Let —

QUESTION: Your phrase you said – because I haven't heard it before. Maybe I have and I've just forgotten about it, but this idea that you said – in response to a question a few questions ago, you said the last administration essentially gave Iran a “get out of nuclear jail free card.” Is that new? I don't remember hearing that before.

MR PRICE: I don't recall having said that before, yes.

QUESTION: Okay. So is it – so can I just drill down into that a little bit? Is it your – is the administration's position that the JCPOA was, in fact, a nuclear jail?

MR PRICE: It put Iran's nuclear program —

QUESTION: So it wasn't a nuclear jail?

MR PRICE: It confined it. It put it in a box.

QUESTION: Okay. Well, that's an interesting way to try and get the Iranians – describe it – to describe it, to get the Iranians back into it. You're saying come on into the cell, guys.

MR PRICE: My job here is to —

QUESTION: Fair enough.

MR PRICE: — explain what we're trying to do for U.S. national security interests.

QUESTION: Fair enough, I just wanted – I just – okay. And then the “free” part of it, is it also this administration's position that the Iranians paid no price at all?

MR PRICE: I think you may be reading a bit too much into a comment that was maybe a bit too flip, but —

QUESTION: Oh, okay. All right. Well, I just wanted to – because sometimes – remember we had “sanctions hygiene” that was – and I just want to make sure that I understand where you're coming —

MR PRICE: Yeah. All right. We have gone on for quite a while. I'll take a quick —

QUESTION: I have one on Iran and one on Lebanon. What was the purpose of Special Envoy Malley's visit last week to the Central Command in Florida?

MR PRICE: The special envoy routinely engages with members of the interagency. He works closely with leadership across the government. He in fact leads an interagency team. That team actually includes a senior military advisor. And so he went to CENTCOM to meet with the CENTCOM commander as part of that regular work.

QUESTION: And on Lebanon, do you have any comment on the increased tension between Israel and Lebanon over the off-shore drilling in a disputed area? And are you planning to send Mr. Amos Hochstein to Beirut and Israel on this question?

MR PRICE: I don't have any travel to announce or to preview at this time, but as you've heard from us before, the Israel-Lebanon maritime border, that's a decision for both Israel and Lebanon to make. We believe that a deal is possible if both sides negotiate in good faith and realize the benefit to both countries. To that end, we do strongly support efforts to reach a mutually beneficial agreement.

Alex, last question.

QUESTION: Ned, thank you so much. Two questions on Russia-Ukraine. You also owe me an Azerbaijan follow-up.

MR PRICE: I owe you a what? Sorry.

QUESTION: An Azerbaijan follow-up.

MR PRICE: Ah. Sounds like three questions. Okay.

QUESTION: So Sunday's strikes on Kyiv. Ukraine demands new sanctions in response to Sunday's strikes. It's the first time in weeks. And also characterizes missile attack on Kyiv as an act of terrorism. Do you share that characterization? Was it an act of terrorism?

And secondly, you mentioned Ambassador Sullivan's interview. He was quoted today as saying Russia should not close its embassy in the U.S. I get the sentiment that when ambassador talked about that, this is two-way road. But I wonder how comfortable you are in terms of seeing Russian diplomats wandering around, feeling they are part of international community just as normal after everything they have done on Ukraine, just pick up from where they left off.

MR PRICE: Well, I would dispute somewhat that characterization. Not only is Moscow's economy in shambles, we've seen sky-high inflation; we have seen estimates that the Kremlin – that the Russian economy will contract by between 11 and 15 percent this year; more than a thousand multinational companies have fled the Russian marketplace. But Russia is diplomatically isolated in a way that it never has been before. You should ask Moscow how it plans to vote in terms of the next Human Rights Council meeting, just to give you one example. This is a country that is now, in many ways, a pariah on the international stage. We have seen countries distance themselves from Moscow. This is not only confined to private sector companies.

So that said, the ambassador's point is a completely valid one and one we believe in. We believe that lines of communication, lines of dialogue, are always important, but they are especially important at – during times of increased tension or, in this case, even conflict or war. We want to see those lines preserved. It's why we have been very vocal in speaking out against the unjustified steps that the Russian Government had taken vis-à-vis our diplomatic presence in Moscow. Our goal is to see those lines of communication maintained.

QUESTION: And on Sunday's strike, isn't it – was it an act of terrorism, as Ukraine wants ?

MR PRICE: You can attach any number of labels to it. What we are doing is working with our Ukrainian partners to provide them with the support they need – security assistance, economic assistance, humanitarian assistance – just as we impose costs on the Russian Federation.

QUESTION: And lastly, you mentioned direct engagement on Azerbaijan/Armenia. The Secretary, in fact, offered his help with border efforts. Other than just bringing both sides together, what does that mean in practice? Do you have different maps, or what are you offering that – if Brussels does not —

MR PRICE: During a recent engagement, the Secretary did allude to support for those efforts. It includes border demarcation efforts, ways that we can help Armenia and Azerbaijan continue to make progress in terms of this conflict.

Thank you all very much.

Stay connected with the State Department:



External links found in this content or on Department of State websites that go to other non-Department websites should not be construed as an endorsement of the views or privacy policies contained therein.

Update your subscriptions, modify your password or email address, or stop subscriptions at any time on your [Subscriber Preferences Page](#). You will need to use your email address to log in. If you have

questions or problems with the subscription service, please contact subscriberhelp.govdelivery.com.



This email was sent to (b) (6) using GovDelivery Communications Cloud on behalf of: U.S. Department of State, 2201 C Street NW, Washington, DC 20520

From: White House Press Office
Subject: [EXTERNAL] in-town pool report 5: meeting attendees
To: Good ander, Margaret V. (OAG)
Sent: May 19, 2022 11:33 AM (UTC-04:00)

From: Burke, Melissa
Sent: Thursday, May 19, 2022 11:17 AM
To: Wranglers
Subject: [EXTERNAL] in-town pool report 5: meeting attendees

From the White House:

In attendance for the trilateral meeting in the Cabinet Room with the President, Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson of Sweden, and President Sauli Niinistö of Finland:

U.S. Manifest:

The President
The Vice President
T.H. Lloyd Austin, Secretary of Defense
T.H. Jake Sullivan, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs
T.H. Erik Ramanathan, Ambassador of the United States to Sweden
T.H. Eric Green, Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Russia and Central Asia
Mr. David Fabrycky Director for NATO and European Affairs, National Security Council

Finland Manifest:

H.E. Sauli Niinistö, President of Finland
H.E. Mikko Hautala, Ambassador of Finland to the United States
Dr. Hiski Haukkala, Secretary General and Chief of Cabinet
Ms. Aliisa Tornberg, International Affairs Adviser

Sweden Manifest:

Her Excellency Magdalena Andersson, Prime Minister of Sweden
Her Excellency Karin Olofsdotter, Ambassador of Sweden to the United States
Mr. Oscar Stenström, State Secretary for Foreign Affairs to the Prime Minister of Sweden
Mr. Robert Rydberg, State Secretary for Foreign Affairs at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Melissa Nann Burke
Washington Bureau Chief
The Detroit News | (b) (6)

This email was sent to

(b) (6)

[*why did I get this?*](#)

[unsubscribe from this list](#)

[update subscription preferences](#)

White House Press Office · 1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW · Washington, DC 20500-0003 · USA

From: White House Press Office
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Foreign Pool Report No. 1 - departure/no questions
To: Good ander, Margaret V. (OAG)
Sent: May 19, 2022 12:34 PM (UTC-04:00)

From: Nikki Schwab
Sent: Thursday, May 19, 2022 12:08 PM
To: Wranglers ; Perez, Angela D. EOP/WHO
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Foreign Pool Report No. 1 - departure/no questions

Welcome to President Joe Biden's first trip to Asia as POTUS. I'll be your print pooler for the first leg. It's 74 degrees, sunny with fluffy white clouds and slightly breezy here at Joint Base Andrews.

The motorcade pulled up to the JBA tarmac at 12:03 p.m.

President Biden stepped out of the Beast at 12:04 p.m. He saluted and briefly spoke with the greeter. Biden waved at pool but didn't answer shouted questions.

He stopped at the top of the stairs to salute and then wave. He stepped on board AF1 at 12:05 p.m.

There are about two to three dozen people gathered outside the terminal watching the departure.

Karine Jean-Pierre and Jake Sullivan are expected to gaggle around 3:30 p.m. EST. I'll send along an Otter link in case playback isn't great.

We'll be wheels up to Alaska shortly.

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

Disclaimer

This e mail and any attached files are intended for the named addressee only It contains information, which may be confidential and legally privileged and also protected by copyright Unless you are the named addressee (or authorised to receive for the addressee) you may not copy or use it, or disclose it to anyone else If you received it in error please notify the sender immediately and then delete it from your system Associated Newspapers Ltd Registered Office: Northcliffe House, 2 Derry St, Kensington, London, W8 5TT Registered No 84 2 England

This email was sent to

(b) (6)

[*why did I get this?*](#)

[unsubscribe from this list](#)

[update subscription preferences](#)

White House Press Office · 1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW · Washington, DC 20500-0003 · USA

From: White House Press Office
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Foreign Pool Report No. 2 - traveling with POTUS
To: Goodander, Margaret V. (OAG)
Sent: May 19, 2022 12:36 PM (UTC-04:00)

From: Nikki Schwab
Sent: Thursday, May 19, 2022 12:11 PM
To: Wranglers ; Perez, Angela D. EOP/WHO
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Foreign Pool Report No. 2 - traveling with POTUS

Passing along from the White House -

Travelling with the President to Joint Base Andrews:

Jen O'Malley Dillon, Assistant to the President & Deputy Chief of Staff
Jake Sullivan, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs
Annie Tomasini, Assistant to the President & Director of Oval Office Operations
Kate Bedingfield, Assistant to the President & Director of Communications
Karine Jean-Pierre, Assistant to the President & Press Secretary
Yohannes Abraham, Deputy Assistant to the President & Chief of Staff and Executive Secretary for the NSC
Carlyn Reichel, Special Assistant to the President & Senior Director for Speechwriting & Strategic Initiatives
Stephen Goepfert, Special Assistant to the President & Personal Aide to the President
Meghan Hays, Special Assistant to the President & Director of Message Planning
Amb. Rufus Gifford, Chief of Protocol at U.S. State Department
Charlie Fromstein, Director of Visits and Diplomatic Affairs

Travelling with the President to Osan Air Base, Republic of Korea

Gina Raimondo, Secretary of Commerce
Jen O'Malley Dillon, Assistant to the President & Deputy Chief of Staff
Jake Sullivan, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs
Annie Tomasini, Assistant to the President & Director of Oval Office Operations
Kate Bedingfield, Assistant to the President & Director of Communications
Karine Jean-Pierre, Assistant to the President & Press Secretary
Ryan Montoya, Deputy Assistant to the President & Director of Scheduling & Advance
Yohannes Abraham, Deputy Assistant to the President & Chief of Staff and Executive Secretary for the NSC
Stephen Goepfert, Special Assistant to the President & Personal Aide to the President
Edgard Kagan, Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for East Asia and Oceania, National Security Council
Meghan Hays, Special Assistant to the President & Director of Message Planning
Carlyn Reichel, Special Assistant to the President & Senior Director for Speechwriting & Strategic Initiatives
Adrienne Watson, Special Assistant to the President & Senior Director for Press and NSC Spokesperson
Thomas Winslow, Special Assistant to the President and Senior Advisor to the Deputy Chief of Staff
Dan Kritenbrink, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs at U.S. State Department
Amb. Rufus Gifford, Chief of Protocol at U.S. State Department
Charlie Fromstein, Director of Visits and Diplomatic Affairs
Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

Disclaimer

This e mail and any attached files are intended for the named addressee only It contains information, which may be confidential and legally privileged and also protected by copyright Unless you are the named addressee (or authorised to receive for the addressee) you may not copy or use it, or disclose it to anyone else If you received it in error please notify the sender immediately and then delete it from your system Associated Newspapers Ltd Registered Office: Northcliffe House, 2 Derry St, Kensington, London, W8 5TT Registered No 84 2 England

This email was sent to

(b) (6)

[*why did I get this?*](#)

[unsubscribe from this list](#)

[update subscription preferences](#)

White House Press Office · 1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW · Washington, DC 20500-0003 · USA

From: White House Press Office
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Foreign Pool Report No. 3 - arrival in Alaska
To: Goodlander, Margaret V. (OAG)
Sent: May 19, 2022 7:19 PM (UTC-04:00)

From: Nikki Schwab <(b) (6)>
Date: May 19, 2022 at 2:57:51 PM AKDT
To: Wranglers <(b) (6)> "Perez, Angela D. EOP/WHO"
<(b) (6)>
Subject: Foreign Pool Report No. 3 - arrival in Alaska

Air Force One was wheels up at 12:14 p.m. EST.

National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan and press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre kicked off the gaggle at 3:35 p.m. EST and wrapped at approximately 4:34 p.m. EST.

It's our understanding that playback was choppy so I'll be sending out a rough transcript that the pool pulled together in the next report.

From now on all times are local.

AF1 was wheels down at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson for a refueling stop at 2:56 p.m.

We had no other visitors to the press cabin during the first leg of our journey to Seoul.

More TK

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

Disclaimer

This e-mail and any attached files are intended for the named addressee only. It contains information, which may be confidential and legally privileged and also protected by copyright. Unless you are the named addressee (or authorised to receive for the addressee) you may not copy or use it, or disclose it to anyone else. If you received it in error please notify the sender immediately and then delete it from your system. Associated Newspapers Ltd. Registered Office: Northcliffe House, 2 Derry St, Kensington, London, W8 5TT. Registered No 84121 England.

This email was sent to

(b) (6)

[why did I get this?](#)

[unsubscribe from this list](#)

[update subscription preferences](#)

White House Press Office · 1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW · Washington, DC 20500-0003 · USA

From: White House Press Office
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Foreign Pool Report 3a - gaggle transcript/notes
To: Good ander, Margaret V. (OAG)
Sent: May 19, 2022 7:19 PM (UTC-04:00)

From: Nikki Schwab (b) (6)
Date: May 19, 2022 at 3:14:28 PM AKDT
To: Wranglers (b) (6) >, "Perez, Angela D. EOP/WHO"
(b) (6)
Subject: Foreign Pool Report 3a - gaggle transcript/notes

Here's a rough transcript/notes from the Sullivan/Jean-Pierre gaggle. As always, please check against the White House transcript.

A shout-out to CNN's Betsy Klein and AP's Aamer Madhani for their help transcribing.

Pool is holding on Air Force One while staff gets COVID-tested.

JAKE SULLIVAN GAGGLE

Q: How concerned are you about the possible missile or nuclear tests by the North Koreans while we are there? And what would it mean for the visit?

So first we've been forthcoming ... there is a genuine possibility and real risk of some kind of provocation while we're in the region, whether in South Korea or Japan. That could take the form of a nuclear test. The seventh nuclear test North Korea has conducted. It could take the form of a missile test. There have been a number of missile tests this year ... We are prepared for those eventualities, we are coordinated closely with both the ROK and Japan. We know what we will do to respond to them. We have communicated with not just our allies, but also with China. And this could cause the United States really to increase our fortitude in terms of defending our allies and cause adjustments to the way that our military is postured in the region.

As far as the trip is concerned, I think all it would do is underscore, it would underscore one of the main messages that we are sending on this trip, which is that the United States is here for our allies and partners. We are here to help define deterrence and defense for the ROK and Japan. We will respond to any threats and any aggression decisively. We want cooperation from these two countries bilaterally. And U.S.-ROK-Japan cooperation trilaterally. Strengthening in the face of any further provocations by North Korea. ...

Q: Can you talk about what the United States is doing to bring North Korea to the table for any kind of talks right now?

... since the very beginning of this administration, they have reached out to North Korea to say that we are prepared to sit down and talk without preconditions, to discuss a pathway forward to make progress toward the ultimate goal of the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. And we have proposed to do that on an action-to-action basis. We are prepared to take steps if they are prepared to take steps in service of that ultimate goal. We have communicated that directly to the North Koreans through different channels, we have communicated that through our allies and partners, we have also spoken with the PRC about our willingness to do that. Thus far North Korea has not displayed any indication of willingness to engage in any meaningful or constructive diplomacy. And as long as they continue to refuse to do so we'll continue to stay on the course we're on, which is to impose pressure and to coordinate closer with our allies and to respond to provocations with clarity ...

Q: Has North Korea indicated they wanted a meeting with President Biden?

We have not gotten any indication to that effect.

Q: If Turkey decides they're going to block Finland and Sweden from joining NATO do you think an F16 deal should go through?

I don't want to answer a hypothetical question because our view is that ... the Turkish concerns about the accession of Sweden and Finland that have been expressed by President Erdogan and others can be addressed and can be resolved. And today when the president met with President Sauli Niinisto and Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson, the president of Finland and the prime minister of Sweden, he indicated that they're both intending to speak directly to President Erdogan and their teams are going to engage directly with senior Turkish officials. We're there to support that effort in any way but we think they can work through this and ultimately Finland and Sweden will be admitted as members.

Q: Have any of the checklist items Turkey wants been addressed yet to date?

The two NATO aspirants have had additional conversations with the Turks, they will have further very high-level consultations with them over the course of the next days. And they will work through this between them. I don't want to speak for the Fins or the Swedes. What they feel they want to do as part of their effort to bring Turkey to a place where they support their membership. President Biden is very clear (inaudible) ... I've spoken with my Turkish counterpart, Secretary Blinken has spoken with his Turkish counterpart Ultimately this is an issue Turkey has raised vis-a-vis Finland and Sweden. This is not a U.S. issue. Other than it being a U.S. issue in that we want to see it resolved in a way that brings these two members into the alliance. We're confident that that is going to happen. I don't think we're going to get to the point ... (interrupted by the next question)

Q: Can you talk about security guarantees and what that means in the interim of accession. How do you guarantee Sweden and Finland's security?

Well we are going to work very closely with Finland and Sweden to deter any aggression against either of them and, of course, we'll be prepared to work with Finland and Sweden to respond to any aggression that occurred. And that's on the basis of a very deep existing partnership we already have with these two countries. ... I'm not going to get into the specifics of what that looks like, only that to - our respective militaries to work through.

The United States will be there for Finland and Sweden if anything were to occur between now and the time that they are fully admitted ...

This is in the period between now and when they're full members of NATO.
We are prepared to work with them and deter aggression.

As a practical matter, any would-be aggressor should be on notice that the United States will be there for Finland and Sweden in the event.

Q: Are there any plans for the president to engage directly with President Erdogan?

Not at the moment. But the president made clear that the United States is prepared to do whatever we're asked to do to be supportive in resolving this issue. ...

Q: On a slightly different note, CNN reported today that Biden would be meeting with MBS soon, can you confirm that and provide us with any details?

I cannot confirm that. No.

Q: Will the president be addressing the issue of the \$7 billion in Iranian funds frozen in South Korean banks?

At technical and expert levels we discuss that issue with the South Koreans on a regular basis. This is bound up with the sanctions imposed on Iran's nuclear program. I don't know if it will be on the agenda for the presidents.

Our view is that the sanctions should be enforced. ...

Q: On Ukraine aid, presuming the bill passes the Senate today, are there plans for the president to sign it while he's abroad and he had said in a statement that funding could have run out as early as today, is there a contingency if there were a gap, were there any consequences if there's even a short gap in funding?

(Sullivan is told that the bill has since passed)

So the president does intend to sign the bill while he's on the road so he can sign it expeditiously. ... There won't be a gap for that very reason. ...

So we will have the kind of continuity of support that we asked for. And for that we are grateful for the bipartisan backing that we've got from the Congress, who stepped up and did this from a timely fashion.

Q: Can you share your reaction to China saying this is becoming a "dangerous" situation in regards to Taiwan? Are you aware of that report?

I did not see the specific phraseology in dangerous, but they've offered formulas of that sort for months now, I don't think anything particularly new in that statement. Our view that we've expressed many times is that we are concerned about peace and stability across the Taiwan strait and the ratcheting up of tensions and we believe China is contributing to the ratcheting up of those tensions through provocative military activities around Taiwan and around the strait. But we've been equally clear that our policy toward Taiwan has not changed. We support the One China policy, the three joint communiques, the Taiwan relations act, the six assurances and we remain committed to supporting peace and stability across the Taiwan strait and to assuring there are no unilateral status changes to the status quo.

From our perspective, our position has been very consistent and we believe that it would help if the PRC dialed-down the actions and activities that we think are contributing to tensions.

Q: There was a report this morning that China was going to replenish its strategic oil reserves with oil from Russia - does that cross the red line that you've laid down for them in terms of cooperating with Russia on evading sanctions?

We have banned Russian oil to the United States, but we have not imposed sanctions on the sale of Russian oil elsewhere and therefore other countries purchasing Russian oil are not contravening the sanctions that we have laid out. Now of course the Europeans are contemplating a Russian oil ban, which we support, which President Biden made clear when he issued the ban that we did that we are in a particular position given we are an energy producer. Europe's in a different position.

Q: Is that accurate though, what China is doing with Russia?

So we have seen the statement about it but we have not yet seen the action taken to that effect.

Q) Russia/stalemate/Is time on Russian side?

"I certainly understand the question. There's something tragic in time being on the side of a country that is losing young men in large numbers by the day as Russia is suffering."

Sullivan notes "Korea and Japan have really stepped up in significant ways to support this effort" regarding sanctions against Russia."

Q) AMLO said today answers to his concerns on excluding countries for upcoming summit are coming in the next day or two? Do you have an answer for him? Are you going to address his concerns?

“We are having constructive conversation with President Lopez-Obrador. Senator Dodd our special representative for the summit spent two hours with him on Zoom yesterday.... It was a good exchange of views. Ambassador Salazar will be engaged today. I am not going to get into the details of what our candid concerns, conversations back and forth. We’ll have something more to say on this” ... He added nothing to announce today.

Q) Preview on Samsung visit

The President will be met by President Yoon at this Samsung facility, along with leadership from Samsung. The facility is a very similar model to what Samsung will build in the United States and that significant multi billion dollar investment ...in the U.S. will (mean) good paying jobs for Americans and very importantly it will mean more supply chain resilience” in the United States.

Biden will get a chance to take a tour and then speak about the investments Samsung in creating American jobs and advance U.S. competitiveness.

“The final thing he will reinforce is that this ecosystem of high technology among democracies and free societies needs to be protected against predation by other countries.”

Q) Any agreements coming on export controls on high tech with South Korea and Japan?

“ I think we’re going to have some very robust discussions on export controls....I don’t expect we’re going to have some specific announcements, because what we’re looking to do is to align our approach around a set principles and then on a case by case basis as opposed to some new initiative or some new formula. We actually believe there is a substantial convergence that will be on display on this trip on this issue with Korea and Japan. “

Q) Sullivan’s Yang Jiechi call on Wednesday. What was he trying to convey to Chinese ahead of the trip?

“ I am no going to say too much because I actually value the opportunity to engage with Yang in a way that allows for the free exchange of perspectives back and forth without it all being laid out in the press.” He added, “I will say that I was quite direct with him about our concerns about North Korea’s nuclear missile activities and our that this not in China’s interests. It’s not in America’s interests...China should contemplate taking whatever steps it can to reduce the possibility of a provocative” act.

Sullivan added they covered Taiwan and some other issues.

Q) Did you meet with Pakistan’s chief recently?

He said he hasn’t met with the new chief. Notes he met previous ISI chief about a year ago.

Q) Was Yang call intended to set up another Xi-Biden call?

“It was not, although I wouldn’t be surprised if in the coming weeks President Biden and President Xi speak again. But this was not specifically laying the ground for a call....”

Q) Why haven’t Biden administration officials been speaking frequently as of late?

“I actually think the cadence is not usual...” Sullivan notes he spent the whole day with Yang Jiechi in Rome and “seven or eight weeks later we had good long conversation yesterday.” Says Secretary Blinken speaks with his Chinese counterpart on similar cadence.

“We are certainly not intending to present any notion that we are slowing or somehow constraining our high-level

diplomatic engagement with China.”

Q) Is administration ready to levy secondary sanctions against China for assisting North Korea? Are you satisfied China isn't helping Russia and taking heed to U.S. warnings not to help Moscow avoid sanctions?

“We have not seen evidence thus far of China supplying military equipment to Russia for its (inaudible) in Ukraine nor have we seen evidence that China is systematically” helped Russia avert western sanctions. “That’s something

“not going to make any threats about secondary sanctions” on NK

Q) Criticism about tariffs on China doing more harm on US businesses than China. If that’s case, why not lift them?

The president has asked his economic team, his foreign policy team to engage in a consistent review of our trade policy toward China. There are discussion right now about how to move forward with the challenges poses to the economy, national security...and how to move beyond the trade approach of the previous administration. I think we’ll ultimately make a series of decisions on that following the opportunity to get advice from his team and I’m not going to say anything else in public on that”

Q) Why skip the DMZ this trip? Too dangerous?

“The president has been to the DMZ before. It’s not that it’s too dangerous.”

Notes Biden went to DMZ he visited South Korea in 2013 as VP.

“He felt on this trip rather than repeat” the DMZ visit Biden wanted to opportunity to actually see where the rubber hits the road in terms of US-ROK forces sitting side-by-side and “managing a theater”

“He’ll do that at the air base. He’ll get the opportunity to get briefed on the strategic pitch in way that can actually show him more than going and standing at the DMZ.”

Q) Is the President going to engage with Hyundai on the expected EV factory announcement in Georgia? How important is getting to know Yoon and Kishida--who are new on the scene--for the president on this trip?

“You’ve heard the president say before that--he refers to this Tip O’Neil expression that all politics is local-- He says all politics is personal, he says all foreign policy is personal. It is fundamentally about these personal relationships with leaders. So in both cases he looking for the opportunity to just spend time to get to know these leaders, so that they have a feel for one another. And then when they need to pick up the phone in a crisis or to respond to a major world event, there’s a baseline of trust and understanding and almost like a common operating language as they go forward.”

“He’s already built that to a certain extent with Prime Minister Kishida. They did meet in Glasgow last year and had the chance to extended video conversations.” Sullivan said Biden has only spoke briefly on the phone with Yoon, who was just took office last week.

Yoon is meeting with Biden when he arrives in South Korea. He’ll also take part in the air base visit with Biden. Sullivan noted that with Kishida is hosting a small dinner for Biden. “It will give them a chance to talk just as humans as opposed to world leaders.”

“Yes, he’ll meet with the CEO of Hyundai in Seoul” before he leaves on Sunday.

“He’ll have the opportunity to say thank you for the significant investment” in the United States.

COVID FUNDING ABROAD

“Can’t give you an exact dollar figure but it is more than any other country” continuing efforts to get shots in arms with

the funding that is out there

PM KISHIDA + PRESIDENT YOON

Biden feels “all politics is personal, all foreign policy is personal. It’s fundamentally about these personal relationships with leaders,” Sullivan said. In both cases, he’s looking to “get to know these leaders” so that “when they need to pick up the phone in a crisis or respond to a major world event, there’s a baseline of trust, understanding, and almost like, a common operating language.” Already built that with PM Kishida when they met last year and “extended video conversations.” Spoken “briefly” with Yoon, opportunity to “build that relationship from the ground up.” Will have a small meeting with Yoon “to get to know one another.” With Kishida, will have a “small dinner” and an opportunity to “talk as human.”

HYUNDAI

Biden will meet with the CEO of Hyundai in Seoul before departing on Sunday, will have the opportunity to say thank you for significant investment in the US, Sullivan said.

SAUDI DEPUTY DEFENSE MINISTER MEETING

Sullivan called him an “important adviser across a range of issues.” They spoke about economics, energy.

POTUS TO MBS

Sullivan declined to comment or speculate on travel to the Middle East.

INDO PACIFIC ECONOMIC FRAMEWORK

Sullivan previewed a “wide-ranging and comprehensive set of countries from across the region” and a “mix” of economies. He called it a “modern negotiation designed to deal with modern challenges,” reiterating some of his points from Wednesday’s briefing.

DECLASSIFIED INTEL ABOUT MARIUPOL TORTURE

Sullivan declined to speak beyond information released Thursday, “Other than to say that we warned before the conflict began that we were likely to see brutality and repression by Russia in occupied areas and we are seeing it in cities and towns... But we are also seeing increasingly is the reality of the Ukrainian populace pushing back against this in these areas.” He cited “concern in Moscow” that hopes the occupied Ukrainians would see Russians as “liberators or brothers” is “not bearing out.” He said it would put pressure on the long term efforts to occupy those areas

NORTH KOREA

There are “no indications” that North Koreans are prepared to sit down and negotiate with the US, Sullivan said. He did not know if Trump is still in touch with Kim Jong Un.

KARINE JEAN-PIERRE

BABY FORMULA

Biden has “directed his administration to do everything possible to ensure that there is enough safe infant formula in the country available for families that need it,” Jean-Pierre said, citing Biden’s move to invoke the Defense Production Act. She outlined how the DPA authority works and walked through some examples of how it would work, including prioritizing formula manufacturers with the manufacturers of can labels. She also highlighted efforts to speed up formula imports from abroad through DOD-contracted aircraft. She called it a “top priority.”

Pressed on criticism from Sen. Wyden that Abbott fell short of its corporate responsibility, she said Biden's goal right now is to "do everything in his power" to get the US in a better place with formula supply. She noted that the FDA "stepped in" with Abbott, which "voluntarily" shut down its Michigan plant. Asked again about criticism of Abbott, she said, "We understand the outrage. We see how mothers and parents are dealing right now in this situation," she said, noting that as a mom she had a child who was allergic certain formula, "I know how this feels... clearly I'm not dealing with this in its current form, which is something we're trying to deal with."

As for how soon there will progress from the DPA move, she said Biden was working to "cut the red tape" and increase supply, but did not provide a timeline.

The US is working with manufacturers abroad to identify existing stockpiles and there will be more details to share.

Asked why it took so long for the President to act on the DPA, she said, "We've been doing this for months. We've been working on this for several months now and the DPA was always on the table. We're always examining, trying to figure out the best way to do this, but there were other actions as I just listed that we have been doing. This is a building on, the DPA and the Operation Flyover is just an added addition to items that we've announced just a couple days ago. So we have not been sitting on this. We have been doing everything in our power to move forward as quickly as possible."

Asked whether the White House would heed Sen. Patty Murray's calls to appoint a formula coordinator, Jean-Pierre declined to say whether that was under consideration and said the White House would "continue working closely" with the lawmakers involved in the issue.

GAS PRICES

Jean-Pierre reiterated that curbing high gas prices is a "priority" for the President and outlined recent steps. "We are doing everything that we can" to address high prices, she said. She declined to comment on whether price caps were on the table. Pressed on whether there were other tools to deal with the high prices, she reiterated that the prices are attributable to "Putin's price hike." Asked whether Americans should be driving less or altering plans, Jean-Pierre said it wasn't the White House's place to say.

REPLACEMENT THEORY

Jean-Pierre called replacement theory "a conspiracy theory that is really dangerous" and cited some of Biden's remarks earlier this week. She drew some contrasts with Republicans on economic plans (this was in response to a question on midterm messaging).

TRUMP TELLING DR. OZ TO DECLARE VICTORY

Jean-Pierre declined to comment and said she hasn't spoken to the President about this. She reiterated Biden's support for Democratic candidate John Fetterman.

Nikki Schwab

Senior U.S. Political Reporter
Washington, D.C.



MailOnline | London | New York | Hollywood | Washington

T: (b) (6)

E: (b) (6)

Disclaimer

This e-mail and any attached files are intended for the named addressee only. It contains information, which may be confidential and legally privileged and is so protected by copyright. Unless you are the named addressee (or authorised to receive for the addressee) you may not copy or use it, or disclose it to anyone else. If you received it in error please notify the sender immediately and then delete it from your system. Associated Newspapers Ltd. Registered Office: Northcliffe House, 2 Derry St, Kensington, London, W8 5TT. Registered No 84121 England.

This email was sent to

(b) (6)

[*why did I get this?*](#)

[unsubscribe from this list](#)

[update subscription preferences](#)

White House Press Office · 1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW · Washington, DC 20500-0003 · USA

From: White House Press Office
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Foreign Pool Report No. 4 - Alaska departure/POTUS sighting
To: Goodander, Margaret V. (OAG)
Sent: May 19, 2022 9:02 PM (UTC-04:00)

From: Nikki Schwab
Date: May 19, 2022 at 8:33:41 PM EDT
To: Wranglers , "Perez, Angela D. EOP/WHO"
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Foreign Pool Report No. 4 - Alaska departure/POTUS sighting

The pool spotted President Biden on the tarmac as we returned to AF1 from COVID testing. He was getting on the plane the same time as the pool. It was unclear what drew him outside, but it's 66 degrees, sunny and a snow-peaked mountain range is in view.

He was dressed more casually than when he boarded, sporting what appeared to be a navy Air Force One zip-up jacket and matching pants.

AF1 was wheels up at 4:33 p.m.

Next stop: Seoul, South Korea.

And if you haven't had enough gaggle coverage, the White House has also provided a link to clean audio:

Gaggle with Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre and National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan aboard Air Force One en route Anchorage, Alaska: <https://youtu.be/Jd1GCwXdk04>

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

Disclaimer

This e-mail and any attached files are intended for the named addressee only. It contains information, which may be confidential and legally privileged and also protected by copyright. Unless you are the named addressee (or authorised to receive for the addressee) you may not copy or use it, or disclose it to anyone else. If you received it in error please notify the sender immediately and then delete it from your system. Associated Newspapers Ltd. Registered Office: Northcliffe House, 2 Derry St, Kensington, London, W8 5TT. Registered No 84121 England.

This email was sent to

(b) (6)

[why did I get this?](#)

[unsubscribe from this list](#)

[update subscription preferences](#)

White House Press Office · 1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW · Washington, DC 20500-0003 · USA