



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

November 16, 2020

Case No. FL-2020-00059

Melanie Sloan
American Oversight
1030 15th Street NW, B255
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Ms. Sloan:

As we noted in our letter dated October 15, 2020, we are processing your request for material under the Freedom of Information Act (“FOIA”), 5 U.S.C. § 552. The Department has identified one additional responsive record subject to the FOIA. We have determined that the record may be released in part.

An enclosure explains the FOIA exemptions and other grounds for withholding material. Where we have made redactions, the applicable FOIA exemptions are marked on each document. All non-exempt material that is reasonably segregable from the exempt material has been released, and is enclosed.

We will keep you informed as your case progresses. If you have any questions, your attorney may contact Assistant United States Attorney, Sian Jones, at sian.jones@usdoj.gov. Please refer to the case number, FL-2020-00059, and the civil action number, 19-cv-03759, in all correspondence about this case.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Susan C. Weetman".

Susan C. Weetman
Deputy Director
Office of Information Programs and Services

Enclosures: As stated.

The Freedom of Information Act (5 USC 552)

FOIA Exemptions

- (b)(1) Information specifically authorized by an executive order to be kept secret in the interest of national defense or foreign policy. Executive Order 13526 includes the following classification categories:
- 1.4(a) Military plans, systems, or operations
 - 1.4(b) Foreign government information
 - 1.4(c) Intelligence activities, sources or methods, or cryptology
 - 1.4(d) Foreign relations or foreign activities of the US, including confidential sources
 - 1.4(e) Scientific, technological, or economic matters relating to national security, including defense against transnational terrorism
 - 1.4(f) U.S. Government programs for safeguarding nuclear materials or facilities
 - 1.4(g) Vulnerabilities or capabilities of systems, installations, infrastructures, projects, plans, or protection services relating to US national security, including defense against transnational terrorism
 - 1.4(h) Weapons of mass destruction
- (b)(2) Related solely to the internal personnel rules and practices of an agency
- (b)(3) Specifically exempted from disclosure by statute (other than 5 USC 552), for example:
- | | |
|----------------|---|
| ARMSEXP | Arms Export Control Act, 50a USC 2411(c) |
| CIA PERS/ORG | Central Intelligence Agency Act of 1949, 50 USC 403(g) |
| EXPORT CONTROL | Export Administration Act of 1979, 50 USC App. Sec. 2411(c) |
| FS ACT | Foreign Service Act of 1980, 22 USC 4004 |
| INA | Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 USC 1202(f), Sec. 222(f) |
| IRAN | Iran Claims Settlement Act, Public Law 99-99, Sec. 505 |
- (b)(4) Trade secrets and confidential commercial or financial information
- (b)(5) Interagency or intra-agency communications forming part of the deliberative process, attorney-client privilege, or attorney work product
- (b)(6) Personal privacy information
- (b)(7) Law enforcement information whose disclosure would:
- (A) interfere with enforcement proceedings
 - (B) deprive a person of a fair trial
 - (C) constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy
 - (D) disclose confidential sources
 - (E) disclose investigation techniques
 - (F) endanger life or physical safety of an individual
- (b)(8) Prepared by or for a government agency regulating or supervising financial institutions
- (b)(9) Geological and geophysical information and data, including maps, concerning wells

Other Grounds for Withholding

NR Material not responsive to a FOIA request excised with the agreement of the requester

From:	Trita Parsi (b)(6)
To:	<satterfieldd (b)(6)>
Subject:	On Trump's offer to talk to Rouhani
Date:	Mon, 30 Jul 2018 20:01:52 +0000

Greetings,

Last week, Trump threatened Iran with war over Twitter. This afternoon, he offered Rouhani negotiations without preconditions.

If this is Trump's idea of pivoting to diplomacy, it stands little chance of success. If Trump is truly genuine about reaching a "better deal;" with Iran, then there is a proven path with Iran that works. And it entails Trump offering Iran concessions and not just threats and demands.

I write about this in a piece for NBC news today.

Your thoughts are welcome.

Sincerely,
Trita Parsi, PhD

Trump's offer to meet with Iran's President Rouhani won't get us a better deal. We had our chance and lost it.

Iran has offered American deals to end their nuclear programs before, but we preferred belligerency to diplomacy

NBC

Jul.30.2018

Trita Parsi

<https://www.nbcnews.com/think/opinion/trump-s-offer-meet-iran-s-president-rouhani-won-t-ncna895761>

After withdrawing from the Iran nuclear deal and threatening Iran with "consequences the likes of which few throughout history have ever suffered before," President Trump announced on Monday that he wants to meet with President Rouhani without preconditions to craft a new deal.

Trump thinks he can achieve this by sanctioning Iran until the rulers in Tehran beg for mercy. But if history is a guide, there will be no such capitulation by Iran: With the Iranians, one of the most costly things to do, both culturally and politically, would be to show Trump the respect and deference he desires after his aggressive string of insults.

So I am skeptical about Trump's ability to pivot to diplomacy with Iran, but that is not to say that a better deal cannot be achieved. Indeed, better deals have often been on the table — but the United States rejected them at the time.

In March 2003, the Iranians sent a comprehensive negotiation proposal to the George W. Bush Administration through the Swiss ambassador in Tehran. Unlike the Iran nuclear deal, this proposal was not solely focused on nuclear matters: The Iranians offered to help stabilize Iraq, disarm Hezbollah and collaborate against all terrorist organizations (especially al Qaeda). They even offered to sign on to the 2002 Beirut Declaration, recognizing Israeli statehood in return for Israel's recognition of a Palestinian state. And, of course, Tehran offered to open their nuclear program for full transparency.

But the Bush administration believed — much like Trump — that it could secure a better outcome by just continuing to pressure Iran and didn't even dignify Iran with a response. Instead, the State Department reprimanded the Swiss for having delivered the proposal in the first place.

Two years later, the Iranians sent another proposal through the Europeans: Having already expanded their nuclear program, Tehran offered to cap its centrifuges at 2,000. The Europeans didn't even bother to forward it to Washington. STATE-19-0675-G-000002

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).

Sender:	Trita Parsi (b)(6)	
Recipient:	<satterfield (b)(6)	



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

December 31, 2020

Case No. FL-2020-00059

Melanie Sloan
American Oversight
1030 15th Street NW, B255
Washington, DC 20005

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We will keep you informed as your case progresses. If you have any questions, your attorney may contact Assistant United States Attorney, Sian Jones, at sian.jones@usdoj.gov. Please refer to the case number, FL-2020-00059, and the civil action number, 19-cv-03759, in all correspondence about this case.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeanne Miller". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jeanne Miller
Chief, Programs and Policies Division
Office of Information Programs and Services

Enclosures: As stated.

The Freedom of Information Act (5 USC 552)

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Other Grounds for Withholding

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From: (b)(6)
Sent: Mon, 3 Dec 2018 21:44:24 +0000
Subject: FW: Final Guidances - 12-03-18
Attachments: 03_December_2018.docx

Released in Part

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Sent: Monday, December 03, 2018 4:38 PM
To: PA Guidance <PAGuidance@state.gov>
Subject: Final Guidances - 12-03-18

DeControlled

Tonight's duty officer is (b)(6)

FINAL
GUIDANCES

MONDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2018

POSTED	Statement	- Georgia's 2018 Presidential Election
		-
POSTED	Statement	- Iran Test Launches Ballistic Missile Violating UN Security Council Ban
		-
POSTED	Statement	- Hungary: Central European University (CEU)
		-
POSTED	Statement	- Secretary Pompeo to Travel to Brussels
		-
POSTED	Statement	- On the Passing of President George H. W. Bush
		-
POSTED	Statement	- Thailand National Day
		-
POSTED	Statement	- Central African Republic National Day
		-
POSTED	Readout	- Secretary Pompeo's Meeting with Saudi Foreign Minister al-Jubeir
		-
POSTED	Readout	- Secretary Pompeo's Meeting with Mexican Foreign Secretary-designate Marcelo Ebrard
		-
POSTED	Notice to the Press	- The Secretary's Special Representative for Syria Engagement to Deliver Remarks to the Media in the Press Briefing Room

POSTED	Media Note	- <u>United States, Mexico, and Canada Conclude Trilateral Agreement on Environmental Cooperation</u>
POSTED	Media Note	- <u>Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad Travel to Pakistan, Afghanistan, Russia, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Belgium, the United Arab Emirates, and Qatar</u>
POSTED	Media Note	- <u>The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations Announces 2019 Industry Advisory Group Annual Meeting Date</u>
POSTED	Media Note	- <u>Assistant Secretary of State for Consular Affairs Carl Risch Travels to Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic and Colombia</u>
POSTED	Media Note	- <u>U.S.- Argentina Collaboration Advances Prosperity and Security</u>
EAP	Burma	- <u>Burma: PILPG Legal Analysis</u>
EAP	Burma	- <u>Ko Ni Murder</u>
EAP	Korea, North	- <u>DPRK: Humanitarian Aid Policy</u>
EAP	Japan/Korea, North	- <u>DPRK/Japan: SR Biegun Meeting with Japanese Director General Kenji Kanasugi</u>
EAP	Thailand	- <u>Thailand: Delegation of Authority to the Secretary of State to Provide IMET funds to Thailand</u>
WHA	Honduras	- <u>HONDURAS: Berta Cáceres Murder Verdict</u>
WHA	China/Panama	- <u>Chinese President Xi Jinping Visit to Panama</u>
WHA		- <u>G-20 Summit Outcomes</u>
DRL		- <u>Public Release of Security Force Units Vetted and Denied U.S. Assistance Under the State Leahy Law in 2017</u>
ENR		- <u>Keystone XL: Our Response to Federal Judge's Latest Injunction</u>

OES	Poland	- Poland: 24th Conference of the Parties (COP24) of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
POSTED	Interview	- Secretary of State Michael R. Pompeo with Gesell Tobias of Voice of America Latin America
POSTED	Interview	- Secretary of State Michael R. Pompeo With Wolf Blitzer of CNN -
POSTED	Background Briefing	- Senior State Department Official Previewing Secretary Pompeo's Trip to Brussels, Belgium
POSTED	On-the-record Briefing	- Special Representative for Iran Brian Hook -

THERE WAS NOT A DAILY PRESS BRIEFING TODAY.

Official
UNCLASSIFIED

FINAL
GUIDANCES

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THERE WAS NOT A DAILY PRESS BRIEFING TODAY.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Office of the Spokesperson

For Immediate Release

STATEMENT BY HEATHER NAUERT, SPOKESPERSON

November 30, 2018

Georgia's 2018 Presidential Election

The United States congratulates Salome Zourabichvili on her election as President of Georgia.

We welcome the assessment by the OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission that Georgia's presidential runoff was competitive and that candidates were able to campaign freely. We also share the Mission's concerns and those of other international and domestic observers about instances of misuse of state resources for partisan campaigning, among other issues. These actions are not consistent with Georgia's commitment to fully fair and transparent elections, and we urge Georgian authorities to address the shortcomings raised by OSCE/ODIHR and other observers.

The United States will continue to support strongly Georgia's democratic and economic development, territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders, and Western integration and will continue to work with Georgia in the area of electoral and democratic reform.

Cleared:

EUR/FO: (b)(6)

(b)(6)

EUR/FO: DAS GKent

ok

EUR/FO: (b)(6) ok

EUR/Pres: (b)(6) ok

DRL/EUR: (b)(6) ok

P: (b)(6) ok

D: (b)(6) ok

S/P: (b)(6) ok

NSC (b)(6) ok

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Office of the Spokesperson

For Immediate Release

STATEMENT BY SECRETARY POMPEO

December 1, 2018

Iran Test Launches Ballistic Missile Violating UN Security Council Ban

The Iranian regime has just test-fired a medium range ballistic missile that is capable of carrying multiple warheads. The missile has a range that allows it to strike parts of Europe and anywhere in the Middle East. This test violates UN Security Council resolution 2231 that bans Iran from undertaking “any activity related to ballistic missiles designed to be capable of delivering nuclear weapons, including launches using such ballistic missile technology . . .”

As we have been warning for some time, Iran’s missile testing and missile proliferation is growing. We are accumulating risk of escalation in the region if we fail to restore deterrence. We condemn these activities, and call upon Iran to cease immediately all activities related to ballistic missiles designed to be capable of delivering nuclear weapons.

###

**** S statements do not go through Everest. ****

CLEARANCE PAGE:

Lead Bureau:

Drafted:

Clearances:

All lateral,

NSC/interagency if appropriate

7th floor (D, P, R, SP)

SPOX (for PA)

S Approvers (in Public Stmt Decision Memo)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Office of the Spokesperson

For Immediate Release

STATEMENT BY HEATHER NAUERT, SPOKESPERSON

December 3, 2018

Hungary: Central European University (CEU)

The United States Government is disappointed that the Hungarian government and CEU have not concluded an agreement that would allow the university to continue its U.S.-accredited programs in Hungary.

Since the Hungarian government amended its law on higher education in April 2017, we have worked diligently with both parties to find a solution that would allow CEU to preserve these programs in Hungary.

The United States values the role that CEU and other American educational institutions play in building connections between the Hungarian and American people and strengthening the transatlantic bond. The departure of these U.S.-accredited programs from Hungary will be a loss for the CEU community, for the United States, and for Hungary.

###

Approved:

Drafted: EUR/CE: (b)(6)

Cleared: EUR/CE: (b)(6) OK
 EUR/CE: (b)(6) OK
 EUR/PD: (b)(6) OK
 Embassy Budapest: Amb. Cornstein OK
 DRL: (b)(6) OK
 DRL: (b)(6) OK
 ECA/A: (b)(6) OK
 ECA/Press: (b)(6) OK
 D: (b)(6) OK
 P: (b)(6) OK
 S/P: (b)(6) OK
 NSC (b)(6) OK
 EUR/FO: DAS Boyse OK
 R Approvers: (b)(6) OK
 EUR/FO: PDAS Millard OK
 EUR/FO: A/S Mitchell OK
 S Approvers: (b)(6) OK
 PA Press Duty: sent
 SPOX: HNauert OK

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Office of the Spokesperson

For Immediate Release

STATEMENT BY HEATHER NAUERT, SPOKESPERSON

December 3, 2018

Secretary Pompeo to Travel to Brussels

U.S. Secretary of State Michael R. Pompeo will travel to Brussels, Belgium, on December 3 – 5. Secretary Pompeo will participate in the semi-annual meeting of NATO Foreign Ministers to review progress made in implementing the agenda agreed by NATO Heads of State and Government at the Brussels Summit in July. Secretary Pompeo will renew our call that Allies shoulder a fair share of the burden of responsibility to protect against common threats. This means living up to the pledge that all Allies made in 2014 and reaffirmed at the 2018 Brussels Summit – to spend 2 percent of their gross domestic product on defense by 2024 and to invest 20 percent of that in major equipment. Ministers will also discuss transatlantic security issues, as well as NATO operations and partnerships, including NATO’s deepening relationship with critical partners Georgia and Ukraine.

While in Belgium, Secretary Pompeo will also meet with Belgian Prime Minister Michel to discuss how the two countries can partner on areas of mutual concern, such as nonproliferation, as Belgium takes its seat on the UN Security Council for the sixth time.

###

Clearances:

EUR/FO: Assistant Secretary A. Wess Mitchell – RECLEARED Dec. 1 --OK

EUR/FO: PDAS EMillard ok (RECLEARED)

EUR/FO: (b)(6) ok

EUR/FO: ok

EUR/FO: ok

EUR/FO: ok

EUR/WE ok

EUR/Press: (b)(6) ok

IO: (b)(6) ok

J/TIP: (b)(6) ok

EAP: (b)(6) ok

NEA ok

NEA/IR: (b)(6) ok

DRL: (b)(6) ok

P: (b)(6) ok

D: ok

S/P: (b)(6) ok

NSC: (b)(6) ok

S: (b)(6) ok (RECLEARED)

PA: (b)(6) ok

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Office of the Spokesperson

For Immediate Release

STATEMENT BY SECRETARY POMPEO

December 1, 2018

On the Passing of President George H. W. Bush

Devoted husband, loving father, steadfast friend, exemplary patriot: this is how I will always remember President George H. W. Bush. Whether he was serving in the skies over the Pacific during World War II, protecting America at CIA headquarters, or leading our nation in the Oval Office, President Bush was one of America's most consequential and dedicated public servants. In his private life, he was a devoted family man who exuded kindness and respect to everyone he met. I am privileged to have known him as a friend, and I will always treasure the special bond we shared of having led the world's finest intelligence service. Though our hearts are heavy today, we take comfort in knowing he is no longer apart from his beloved wife Barbara. My thoughts and prayers, as well as those of my State Department colleagues, are with the entire Bush family.

###

CLEARANCE PAGE:

Lead Bureau: S

Drafted: Secretary Pompeo

Clearances:

(b)(6) (ok)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Office of the Spokesperson

For Immediate Release

STATEMENT BY SECRETARY POMPEO

Thailand National Day

December 3, 2018

On behalf of the Government of the United States of America, I offer my sincerest and warmest wishes to the Kingdom of Thailand on your National Day. This year marked the 200-year anniversary of the historic U.S.-Thai friendship that has united our two nations through war and peace, hardship and prosperity. Under the leadership of His Majesty King Maha Vajiralongkorn Bodindradebayavarangkun, Thailand continues to prosper, and both our nations benefit from our friendship and alliance as seen in the successful, Thai-led rescue of the Wild Boar soccer team.

We look forward to a successful 2019 in which Thailand will hold national elections and play a leading regional role as Chair of ASEAN. I would like to convey our warmest regards to all the Thai people, and best wishes for a peaceful and prosperous year to come.

###

Approved: EAP: Patricia Mahoney PAM

Drafted: EAP/MLS (b)(6)

Cleared: D: (b)(6) OK
S/P: (b)(6) OK
P: (b)(6) OK
R: (b)(6) OK
EAP/MLS: (b)(6) OK
EAP/MLS: (b)(6) OK
EAP/P: (b)(6) OK
EAP/MLA: (b)(6) OK
EAP/RSP: (b)(6) OK
Embassy Bangkok OK
PA: (b)(6) OK

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Office of the Spokesperson

For Immediate Release

STATEMENT BY SECRETARY POMPEO

Central African Republic National Day

December 1, 2018

On behalf of the Government of the United States of America, I extend my best wishes to the people of the Central African Republic as you celebrate your national day on December 1. The United States applauds the people of the Central African Republic for addressing challenges and hardships over the years. Today, we celebrate the friendship between our two nations. As Central Africans work to create a more peaceful, democratic, and prosperous future, you will find a steadfast partner in the United States. As you celebrate this proud occasion, I would like to extend my best wishes for peace, unity, and prosperity for all Central Africans in the year ahead.

###

Approved: AF – SBO, (b)(6)

Drafted: AF/C – (b)(6)

Cleared: AF/C: (b)(6) OK
AF/PDPA: (b)(6) INFO by request
Emb Bangui: (b)(6) OK
DRL: (b)(6) OK
R: (b)(6) OK
P: OK
D: OK
S/P: (b)(6) OK
AF/PDPA: (b)(6) OK

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Office of the Spokesperson

For Immediate Release

November 30, 2018

READOUT

November 30, 2018

Secretary Pompeo's Meeting with Saudi Foreign Minister al-Jubeir

The below is attributable to Spokesperson Heather Nauert:

Secretary of State Michael R. Pompeo met today with Saudi Foreign Minister al-Jubeir in Buenos Aires on the margins of the G-20 Summit. The Secretary and Foreign Minister discussed a range of regional and bilateral issues including the upcoming talks related to the Yemen conflict as well as the importance of making progress on the investigation into Jamal Khashoggi's death.

###

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Office of the Spokesperson

For Immediate Release

READOUT

December 2, 2018

Secretary Pompeo's Meeting with Mexican Foreign Secretary-designate Marcelo Ebrard

The below is attributable to Spokesperson Heather Nauert:

Secretary of State Michael R. Pompeo met today with Mexican Foreign Secretary-designate Marcelo Luis Ebrard Casaubon in Washington, D.C. Secretary Pompeo congratulated Foreign Secretary-designate Ebrard on the recent Mexican presidential inauguration and the beginning of Ebrard's tenure in office. They discussed our shared commitment to address our common challenges and opportunities for the future.

###

The drafter should include a separate page (following the format of the example below) with approval, drafter, and clearance information. The drafting bureau's senior official (assistant secretary) MUST approve the memo. The drafter also must include his/her full name, telephone extension, and after hours contact information.

Approved: [Regional Bureau]: [name], Assistant Secretary/Senior Bureau Official [initials]

Drafted: [Bureau/Office] – [name], [contact info:] ext. 7-1234 and home/cell: XXXX

Cleared:	D: [name]	OK	[required clearance]
	P: [name]	OK	[required clearance]
	S/P: [name]	OK	[required clearance]
	R: [name]	OK	[required clearance]
	PA: [name]	OK	[required clearance]

Types of clearances

(OK) [Means they cleared]
 (Info by Request) [Only if specified by POC]
 (Info) [Means clearance was requested and not received]

(Click on the link for [detailed guidance regarding clearances](#))



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Office of the Spokesperson

For Immediate Release

NOTICE TO THE PRESS

December 3, 2018

The Secretary's Special Representative for Syria Engagement to Deliver
Remarks to the Media in the Press Briefing Room

The Secretary's Special Representative for Syria Engagement Ambassador James F. Jeffrey and Syria Envoy and Deputy Assistant Secretary Joel Rayburn will brief the media at 3:00 p.m. today in the Press Briefing Room at the Department of State on the results of the Syria Small Group meetings held earlier on Monday in Washington, D.C. with envoys from the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Jordan, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia.

This event is open press coverage. Journalists who plan to cover this event in person must be seated in the Press Briefing Room by 2:50 p.m.

Media representatives may attend this event upon presentation of one of the following: (1) a U.S. Government-issued photo media credential (e.g., Department of State, White House, Congress, Department of Defense or Foreign Press Center), or (2) an official photo identification card issued by their news organization, or (3) a letter from their employer on official letterhead verifying their current employment as a journalist. Additionally, they must present an official government photo identification card (i.e., U.S. driver's license or passport).

The event will be streamed live on www.state.gov.

For further information, please contact the Office of Press Relations at (202) 647-2492 or PAPressDuty@state.gov.

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NEA: (b)(6)

PA: (b)(6)

WH

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Office of the Spokesperson

For Immediate Release

November 30, 2018

MEDIA NOTE

November 30, 2018

United States, Mexico, and Canada Conclude Trilateral Agreement on Environmental Cooperation

Today the United States of America, Mexico, and Canada finalized a new environmental cooperation agreement (ECA). The Agreement will take effect upon entry into force of the USMCA and builds on the long history of trilateral cooperation among the three countries to reduce pollution, strengthen environmental governance, conserve biological diversity, and sustainably manage natural resources.

The ECA supersedes the North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation (NAAEC), which has resulted in two decades of achievements relating to cross border environmental issues. The United States will continue to play a leadership role and will participate in the trilateral environment Council.

The text of the ECA can be found here:

<https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/287944.pdf> and

<https://www.epa.gov/international-cooperation/commission-environmental-cooperation-ccc>

For more information, contact OES-PA-DG@state.gov and follow the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs on Twitter [@StateDeptOES](https://twitter.com/StateDeptOES).

###

Approved: OES/PDAS – Judith G. Garber (ok)

Drafted: OES/PPO: (b)(6)

Cleared by:

- OES/E: (b)(6) (ok)
- OES/PPO: (b)(6) (ok)
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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Office of the Spokesperson

For Immediate Release

MEDIA NOTE

December 2, 2018

Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad Travel to Pakistan, Afghanistan, Russia, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Belgium, the United Arab Emirates, and Qatar

Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad will travel to Pakistan, Afghanistan, Russia, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Belgium, the United Arab Emirates, and Qatar with an interagency delegation from December 2 – 20. He will meet with Afghan government officials and other interested parties to support and facilitate an inclusive peace process in Afghanistan, empowering the Afghan people to decide their nation's fate. Special Representative Khalilzad will be in communication with President Ghani, Chief Executive Abdullah, and other Afghan stakeholders to coordinate closely on efforts to bring the Taliban to the negotiating table with the Afghan government and other Afghans.

On his last trip to the region in November, Special Representative Khalilzad met with men and women active in civil society and peace efforts, members of the media, and other governmental and non-governmental officials. He stressed that all Afghans must have a say in creating a sustainable peace for Afghanistan. The United States remains committed to supporting the Afghan people's desire for peace, and to facilitating a political settlement between the Afghan government and the Taliban that ensures Afghanistan never serves as a platform for international terrorism again.

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Approved: D/SRAR: Molly Phee (ok)

Drafted: SCA/Press: (b)(6)

Cleared:

SCA/FO:	(b)(6)	(ok)
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SRAR:		(ok)
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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Office of the Spokesperson

For Immediate Release

December 3, 2018

MEDIA NOTE

The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations
Announces 2019 Industry Advisory Group Annual Meeting Date

The U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations (OBO) will host a meeting of the Industry Advisory Group (IAG) on Tuesday, May 14, 2019 at the U.S. Department of State, located at 2201 C Street, N.W. Washington, D.C.

This committee serves the U.S. government solely in an advisory capacity concerning industry and academia's latest concepts, methods, best practices, innovations, and ideas related to OBO's mission to provide safe, secure, and functional facilities that represent the U.S. government to the host nation and support our staff in achieving U.S. foreign policy objectives. These facilities should represent American values and the best in American architecture, engineering, technology, sustainability, art, culture, construction execution, and resiliency.

The public may attend this meeting as seating capacity allows. Admittance to the State Department building will be through a pre-arranged clearance list. An open registration announcement will be posted on OBO's website, www.state.gov/obo, and sent through OBO's distribution list approximately 30 days prior to the event date. Those interested in joining OBO's distribution list should [visit our sign-up page](#) or email IAGR@state.gov. A meeting notice will also be published in the *Federal Register* prior to April 29, 2019, in accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act.

For further information, please contact Christy Foushee at FousheeCT@state.gov.

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Drafted: OBO/EA - (b)(6)

Cleared: OBO - (b)(6) ok
OBO/PDD: (b)(6) ok
OBO/SA: (b)(6) ok

OBO/EA: (b)(6) ok
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RM/CFO: (b)(6) ok

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S/P: (b)(6) - info
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PA - (b)(6) - ok

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Office of the Spokesperson
For Immediate Release

December 3, 2018

MEDIA NOTE

Assistant Secretary of State for Consular Affairs Carl Risch Travels to
Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic and Colombia

Assistant Secretary of State for Consular Affairs Carl Risch will travel December 3-7 to Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic and Colombia to participate in a series of meetings with U.S. officials and foreign government authorities.

The Assistant Secretary plans to review consular operations at our Passport Agency in San Juan, and at our U.S. Embassies in Santo Domingo and Bogotá. He will also meet with interagency partners.

While in the Dominican Republic and Colombia, the Assistant Secretary will underscore our deep and sustained commitment on a variety of consular issues, including efficient and equitable visa processing, the welfare and safety of U.S. citizens overseas, collaboration on intercountry adoptions, and the prevention and resolution of international parent child abduction cases.

For press inquiries please contact CAPRESSREQUESTS@state.gov or (202) 485-6150.

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Approved: CA: (b)(6)

Drafted: CA/P: (b)(6)

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CA/Press: (b)(6) (ok)
PA: (b)(6) (ok)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Office of the Spokesperson

For Immediate Release

MEDIA NOTE

November 30, 2018

U.S.- Argentina Collaboration Advances Prosperity and Security

Today, Secretary of State Michael R. Pompeo participated in President Trump's meeting with Argentine President Mauricio Macri on the sidelines of the G20 Summit in Argentina. The President highlighted important progress in the U.S.-Argentina bilateral relationship, including:

- The signing of a framework to strengthen infrastructure and technical cooperation between the United States and Argentina in the energy sector.
- The signing of letters of interest with the Overseas Private Investment Corporation for six projects in Argentina.
- The reopening of Argentina's market to U.S. beef exports.

In addition, the United States and Argentina signed agreements in the following areas:

- An Education Framework Memorandum of Understanding to enhance educational exchange programs
- A Memorandum of Understanding to be signed between the U.S. and Argentine national park services to cooperate on conservation efforts
- A Memorandum of Understanding to strengthen cooperation in health
- A Bilateral Aviation Safety Agreement (BASA) to promote cooperation in aviation safety

During the meeting, President Trump also emphasized the need for close coordination to confront the crisis in Venezuela and for increased bilateral security cooperation to counter terrorism and transnational crime. The United States looks forward to continuing to advance our relationship with the Argentine Republic as we work to promote economic prosperity for the Americas and generate greater opportunities for the American people.

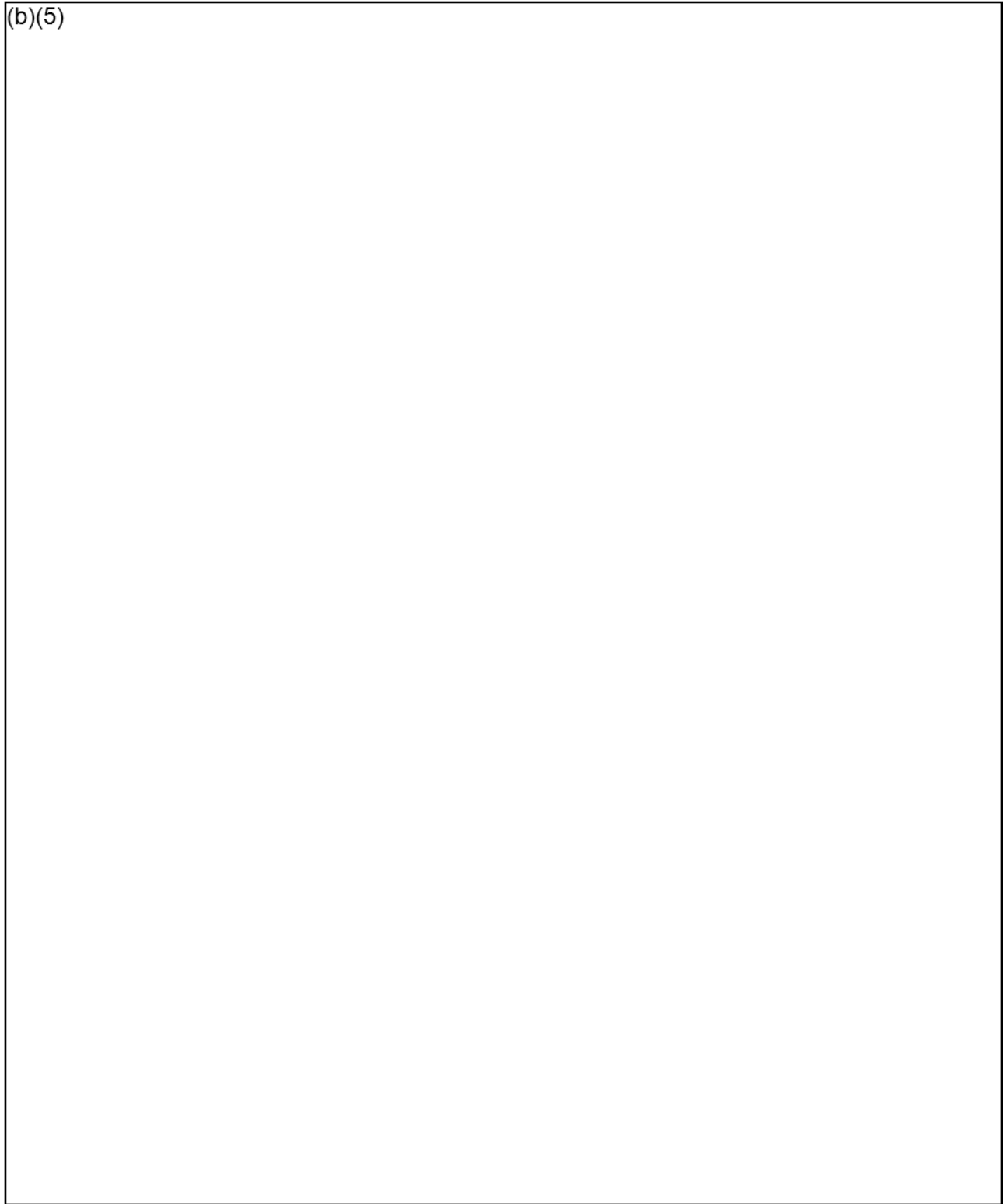
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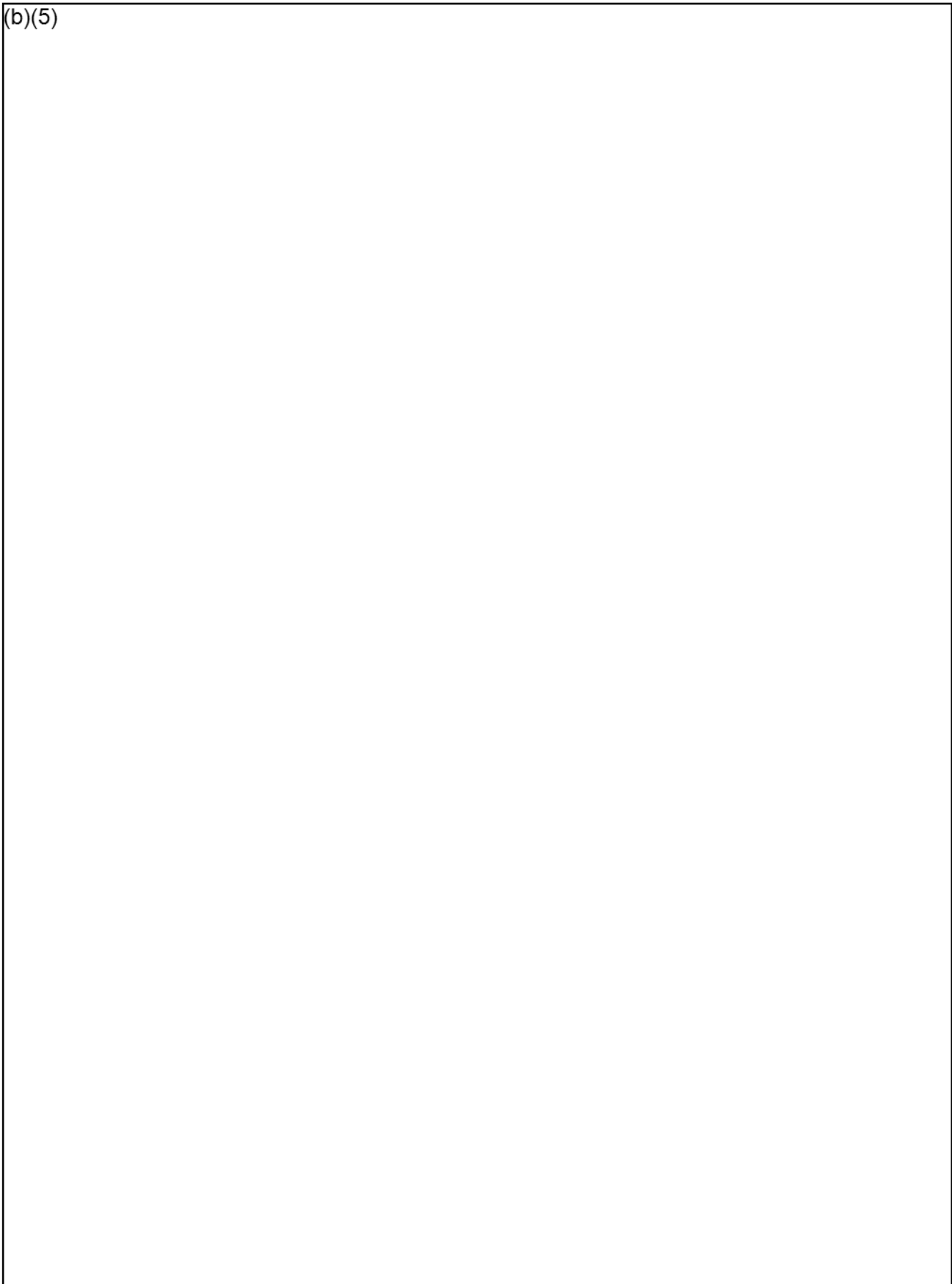
**DRL Press Guidance
November 29, 2018**

Burma: PILPG Legal Analysis

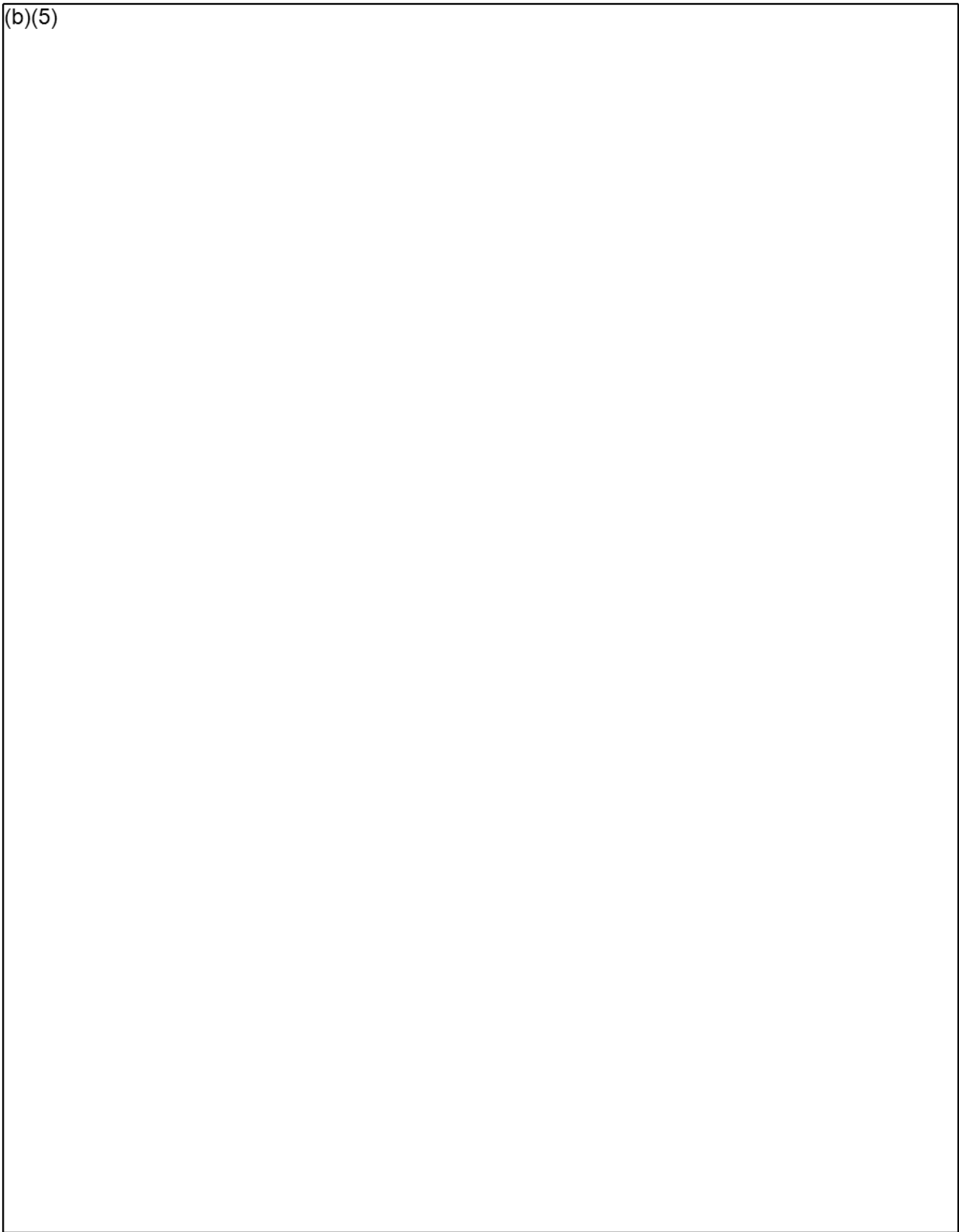
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EAP Press Guidance
November 30, 2018

Burma: Ko Ni Murder

(b)(5)

Background:

Reuters is seeking comment from Embassy Rangoon on the killing of Ko Ni in 2017. The journalist has spoken with a former member of the embassy's LE Staff to contribute to his reporting.

Approved: EAP/FO - (b)(6) (ok)

Drafted: Embassy Rangoon (POC) (b)(6)

Cleared:

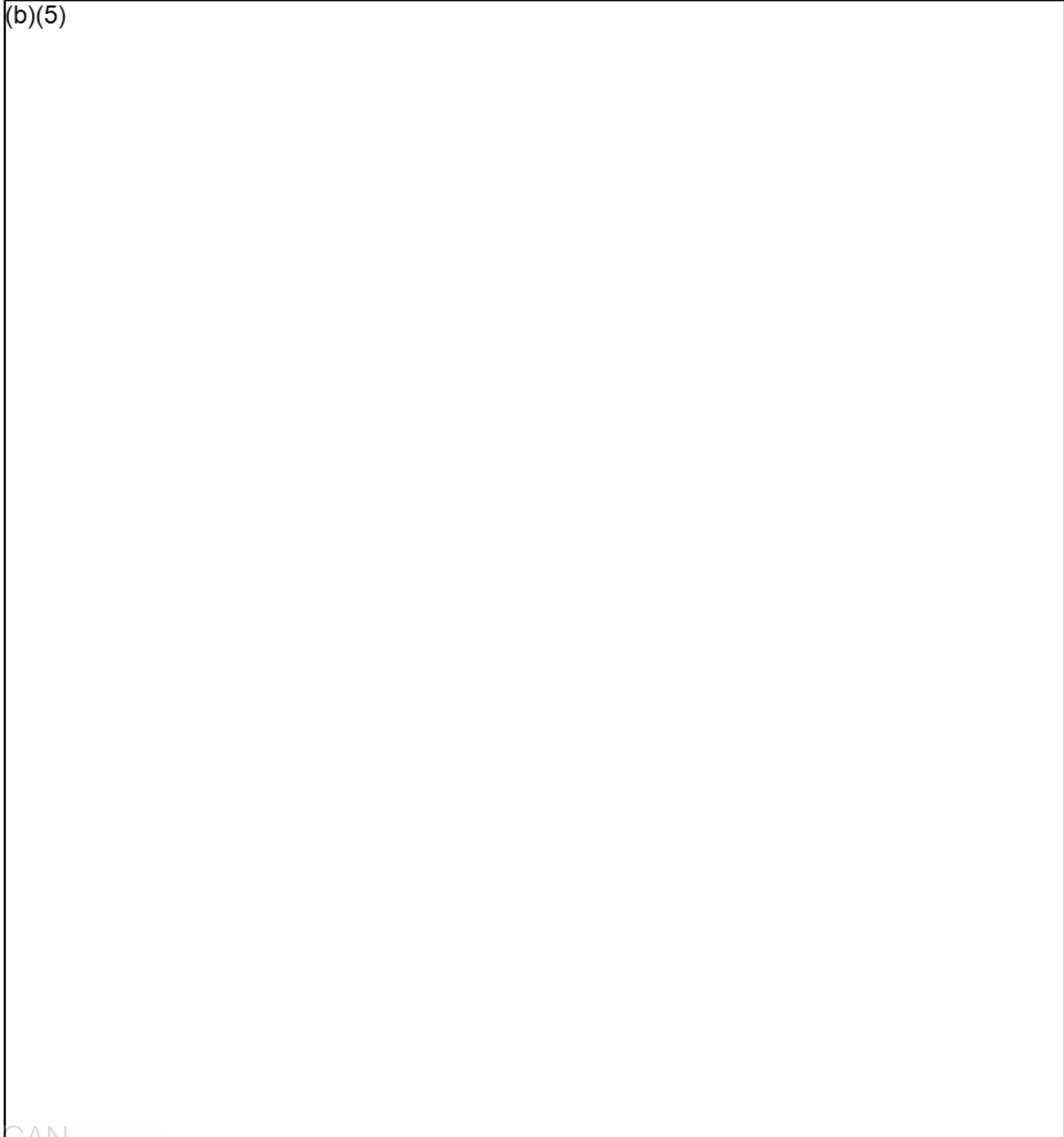
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**EAP Press Guidance
November 28, 2018**

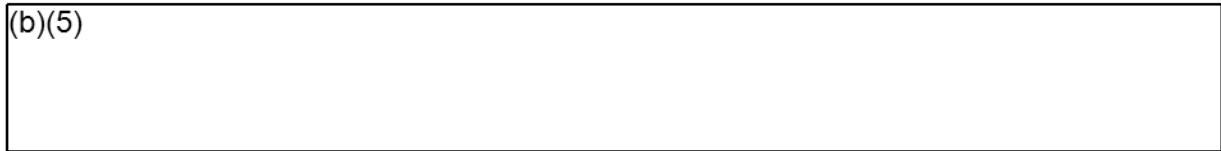
DPRK: Humanitarian Aid Policy

Background: U.S.-based humanitarian aid groups have voiced concerns that Washington’s decision to restrict travel to DPRK has an adverse unintended consequences for the poorest and most vulnerable populations. (b)(5)

(b)(5)



(b)(5)



Approved:	S-DPRK	(b)(6)	(ok)
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Cleared:	S/DPRK:	(b)(6)	(ok)
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	EB:	(b)(6)	(info)
	NSC:	(b)(6)	(ok)

**EAP Press Guidance
December 3, 2018**

**DPRK/Japan: SR Biegun Meeting with Japanese Director General Kenji
Kanasugi**

- U.S. Special Representative for North Korea Stephen Biegun met Japanese Director General of the Asian and Oceanian Affairs Bureau Kenji Kanasugi in Washington November 30 (b)(5)

(b)(5)

Approved: S/DPRK: (b)(6)
EAP/FO: M Knapper (ok)

Drafted: EAP/J - (b)(6)

Cleared: EAP/FO: A/DAS Knapper OK
EAP/J: (b)(6) OK
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EAP/DPRK: (b)(6) OK
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Approved: S/DPRK - (b)(6) ()

Drafted: EAP/K - (b)(6)

Cleared:
S/DPRK - (b)(6) (ok)
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L/EAP - (b)(6) (ok)

Press Guidance
November 30, 2018

**Thailand: Delegation of Authority to the Secretary of State to Provide
IMET funds to Thailand**

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

Background

DeControlled

(SBU) After the 2014 military coup in Thailand, foreign assistance funding for Thailand, including IMET, Foreign Military Financing (FMF), and the Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI) under the Peacekeeping Operations (PKO) account, became subject to the military coup restriction in the annual Department of State appropriations act. Only the Secretary's certification to Congress that a democratically elected government has taken office in Thailand can lift this restriction. The Thai government recently approved the last remaining legislation required to hold elections, which now is planned for February 24, 2019. (b)(5)

(b)(5)

White House Release:

Office of the Press Secretary
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 29, 2018
November 29, 2018

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF STATE

SUBJECT: Delegation of Authority Under Section 614(a)(1) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including section 301 of title 3, United States Code, and subject to fulfilling the requirements of section 614(a)(3) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (FAA), I hereby delegate to you the authority under section 614(a)(1) of the FAA to determine whether it is important to the security interests of the United States to use up to \$1.3 million in International Military Education and Training (IMET) funds to furnish assistance to Thailand without regard to any other provision of law within the purview of section 614(a)(1) of the FAA.

You are authorized and directed to publish this memorandum in the Federal Register.

DONALD J. TRUMP

Approved: EAP/FO: Trish Mahoney (ok)

Drafted: EAP/MLS: (b)(6)

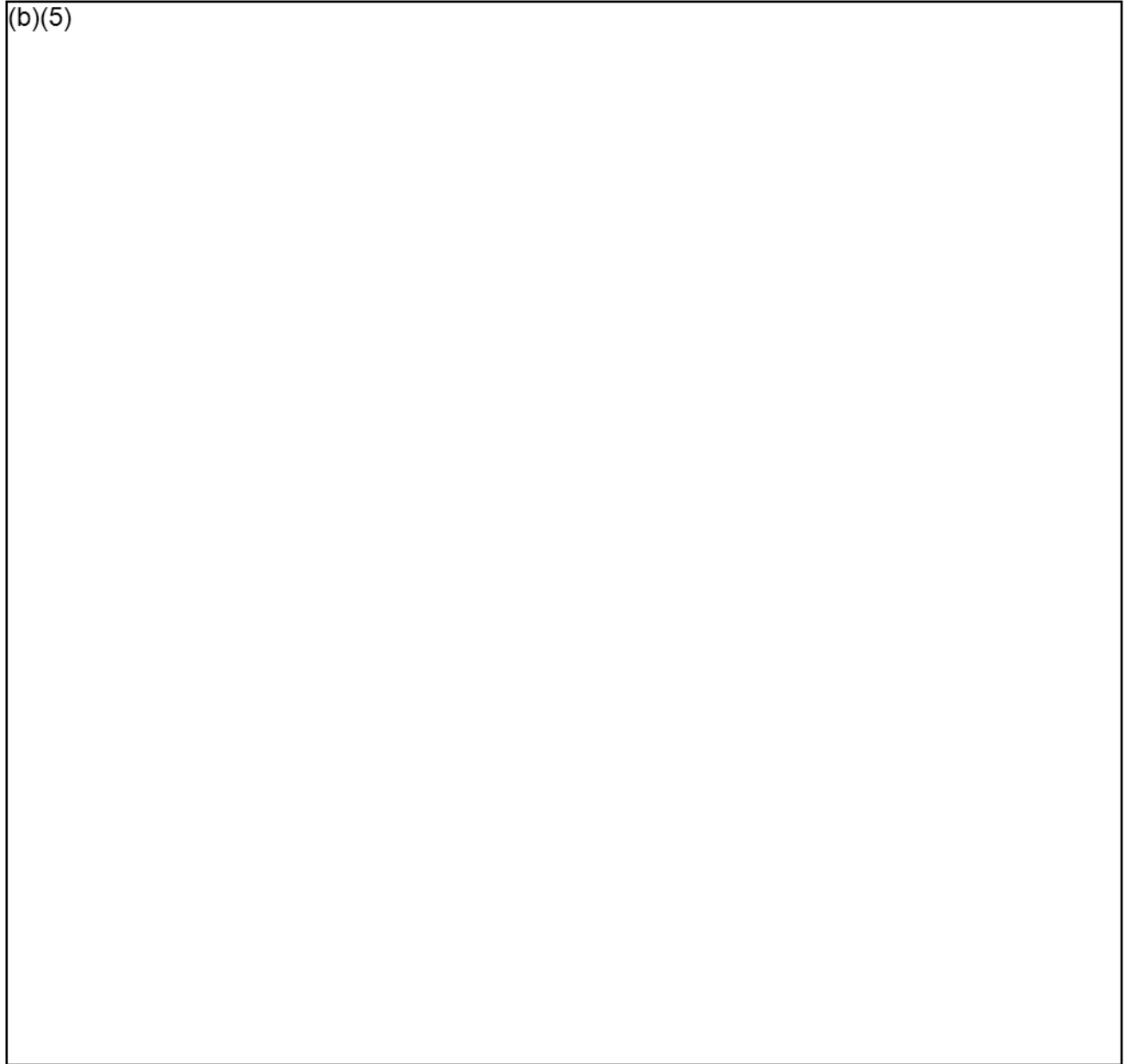
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P: (b)(6) OK
S/P: (b)(6) No response
DRL: (b)(6) OK
EAP/P: (b)(6) OK
PM/SA (b)(6) OK
L: (b)(6) OK
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OSD: (b)(6) OK
H: (b)(6) OK
H/Press: (b)(6) OK
Embassy Bangkok OK
NSC: (b)(6) OK

WHA Press Guidance
December 3, 2018

HONDURAS: Berta Cáceres Murder Verdict

- **The U.S. Embassy in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, sent representatives to observe the hearing in the case of murdered environmental and indigenous activist Berta Cáceres. On November 29, the trial led to murder convictions for seven of the eight defendants.**

(b)(5)



(b)(5)

BACKGROUND: A verdict has been reached in the first trial in the 2016 murder of environmental and indigenous rights activist Berta Cáceres. Seven of the eight defendants were convicted of the murder. Some family members and supporters of the victim declared this is the verdict they were hoping for in this case, while others, including Bertha Cáceres' daughter and current leader of the Civic Council of Popular and Indigenous Organizations in Honduras (COPINH), Bertha Zuniga, decried the decision as insufficient and emphasized that COPINH will continue their struggle to bring the alleged intellectual authors of the crime to justice.

Approved: WHA/FO: (b)(6) [ok]

Drafted: WHA/PDA - (b)(6)

Cleared:

WHA/FO: (b)(6) (ok)

WHA/FO: (ok)

WHA/Press: (b)(6) (ok)

WHA/CEN: (ok)

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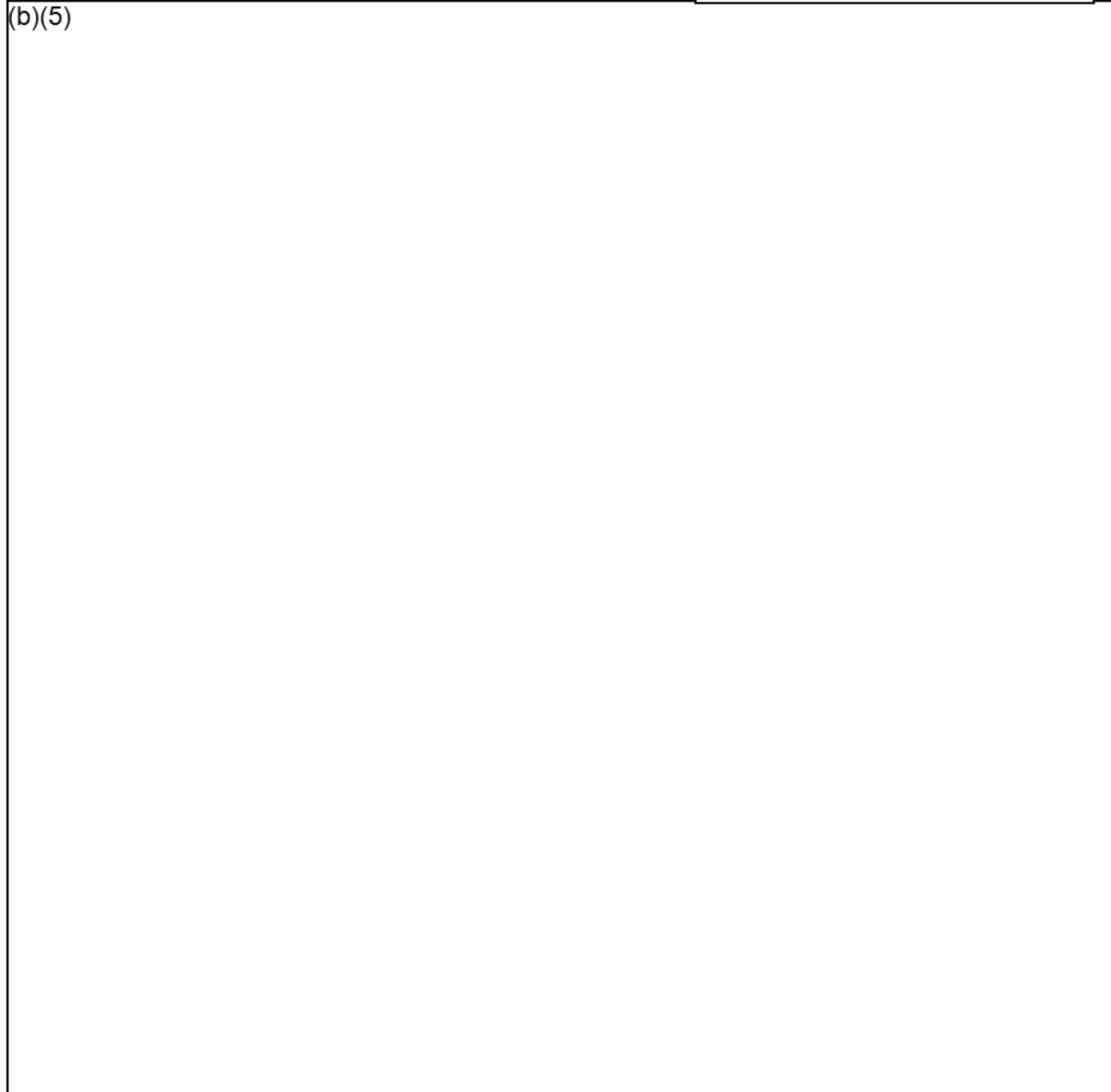
Emb. Tegucigalpa: (b)(6) (ok)

WHA Press Guidance
December 3, 2018

Chinese President Xi Jinping Visit to Panama

[(SBU) BACKGROUND: Chinese President Xi Jinping plans a daylong visit to Panama starting the evening of 12/2 after the G-20. (b)(5)

(b)(5)



Approved: WHA/FO:(b)(6) [ok]

Drafted: (b)(6) IO Panama, (b)(6)

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- WHA/FO:(b)(6) (ok)
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EB + WHA Press Guidance December 3, 2018

G-20 Summit Outcomes

- At the G20 Summit, President Trump reiterated his commitment to promoting economic growth and prosperity at home and abroad.
 - The Group of 20 (G-20) agreed to highlight the importance of “pro-growth tax policies” and committed to “reskilling workers” to take advantage of the economic opportunities presented by technology, consistent with President’s Workforce Development Initiative.

- President Trump sought to advance a global economic system based on fair economic competition and free, fair, and reciprocal trade. The President worked with other leaders to fight unfair trade practices, and to secure fair market access for U.S. goods and services through bilateral trade deals.
 - The G-20 Communiqué commits countries to work together to address unfair trade practices such as steel excess capacity and unilateral digital tax measures.

- The G-20 Communiqué also achieves U.S. objectives by committing all countries to enhance debt transparency and sustainability in infrastructure finance, and committing international financial institutions to better monitor bad debt.

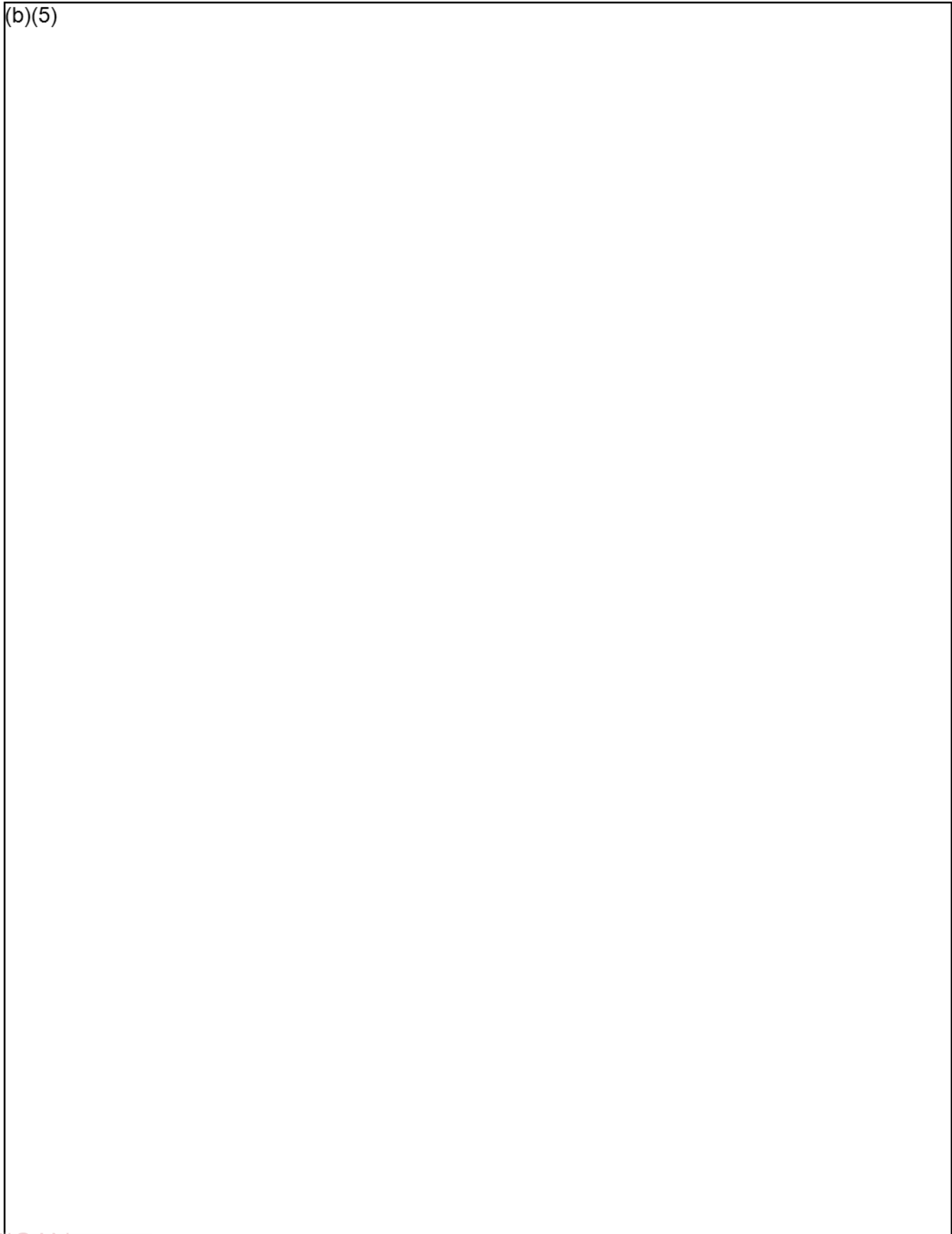
- The President signed the United States–Mexico–Canada Agreement (USMCA) – the largest, most advanced, and most balanced trade deal in our history. The USMCA will make North America the most competitive free, fair, and reciprocal trading bloc in the world.

- Finally, the President also secured G20 recognition of the critical role of women’s empowerment in economic growth, and the role that all sources of

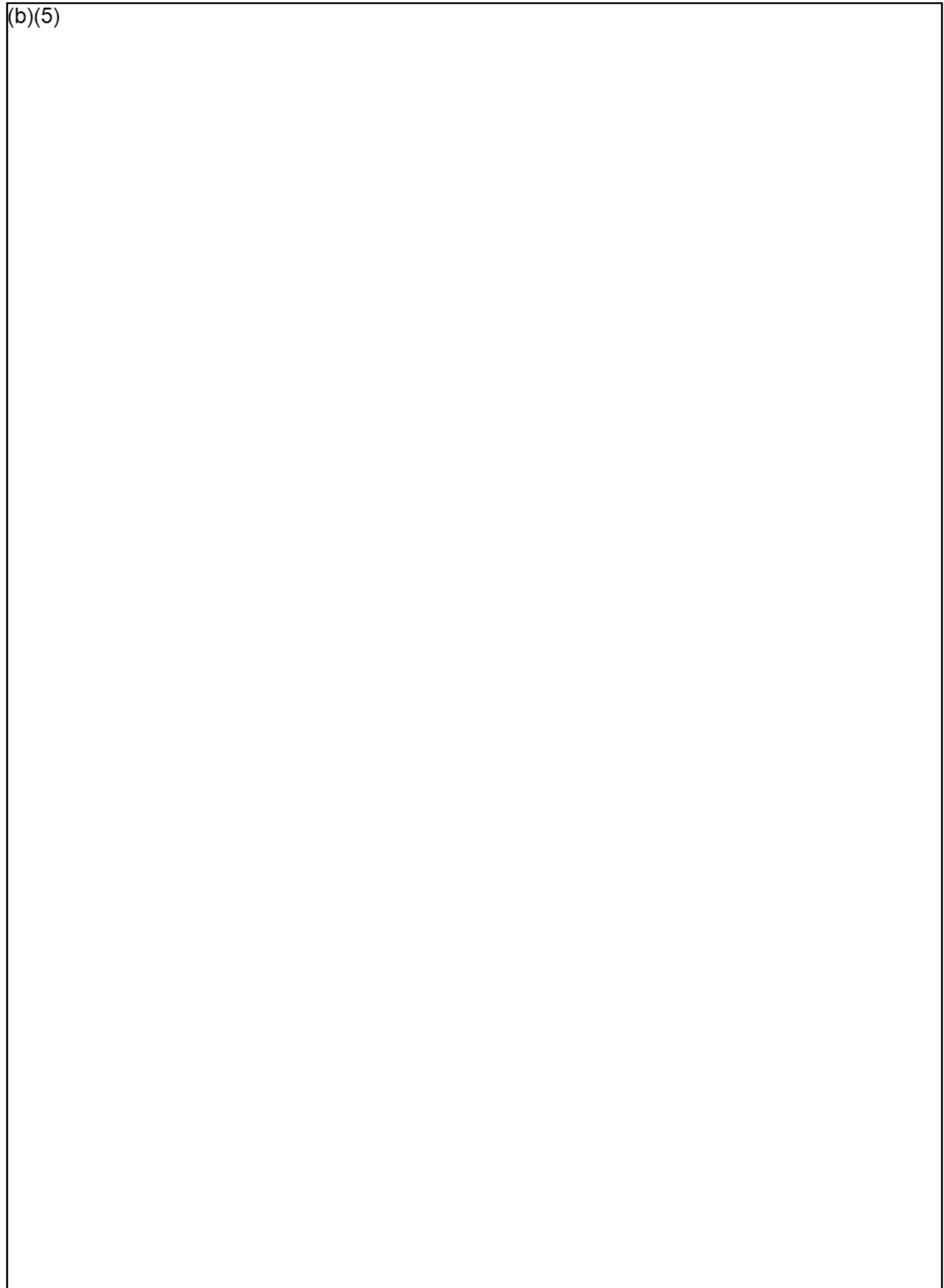
energy play in economic growth, energy security, and energy access, while supporting a healthy environment.

Q&A

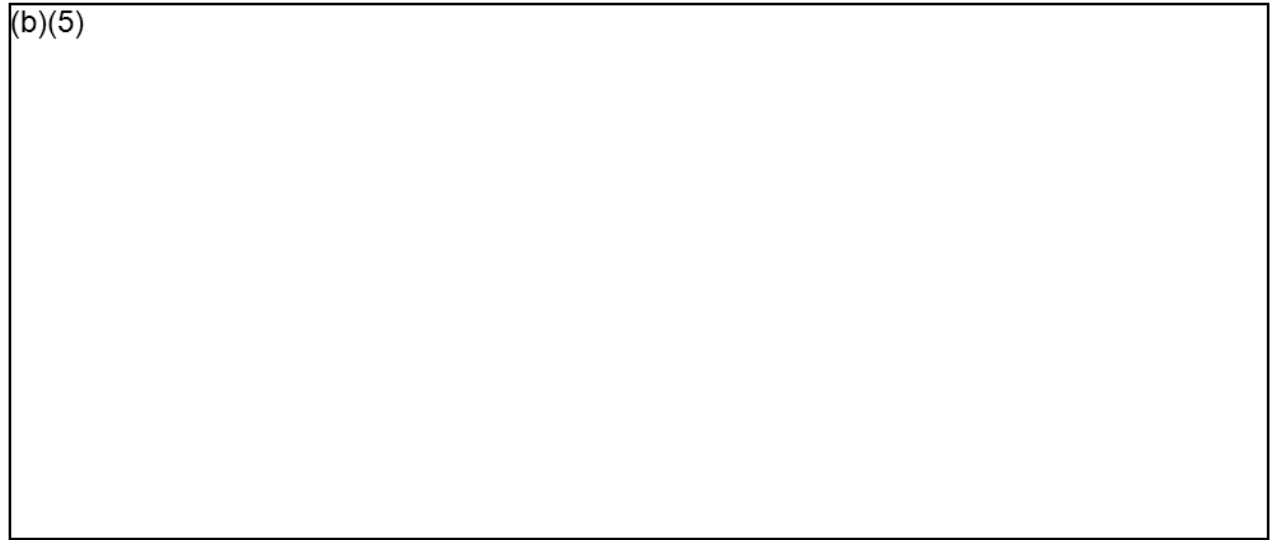
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NSC:	(b)(6)	(info)

**DRL Press Guidance
November 5, 2018**

**Public Release of Security Force Units Vetted
and Denied U.S. Assistance Under the State Leahy Law in 2017**

[Background: This is the first time the Department is publicly releasing a list of units that were vetted and denied assistance under the State Leahy law (section 620M of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended). This requirement was one of several that were added as part of changes to the law in 2011. The Department adopted a phased approach to implementing these requirements, including the requirement to “make publicly available, to the maximum extent practicable, the identity of those units for which no assistance” may be provided under the State Leahy law. Prior to this release, the Department was not able to practicably make public such units, although it notified host governments of such units and offered to brief Congress on such units in a classified setting. The list of units vetted and rejected pursuant to the State Leahy law in 2017 that the Department makes public will be available on the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor’s public website.

Toplines

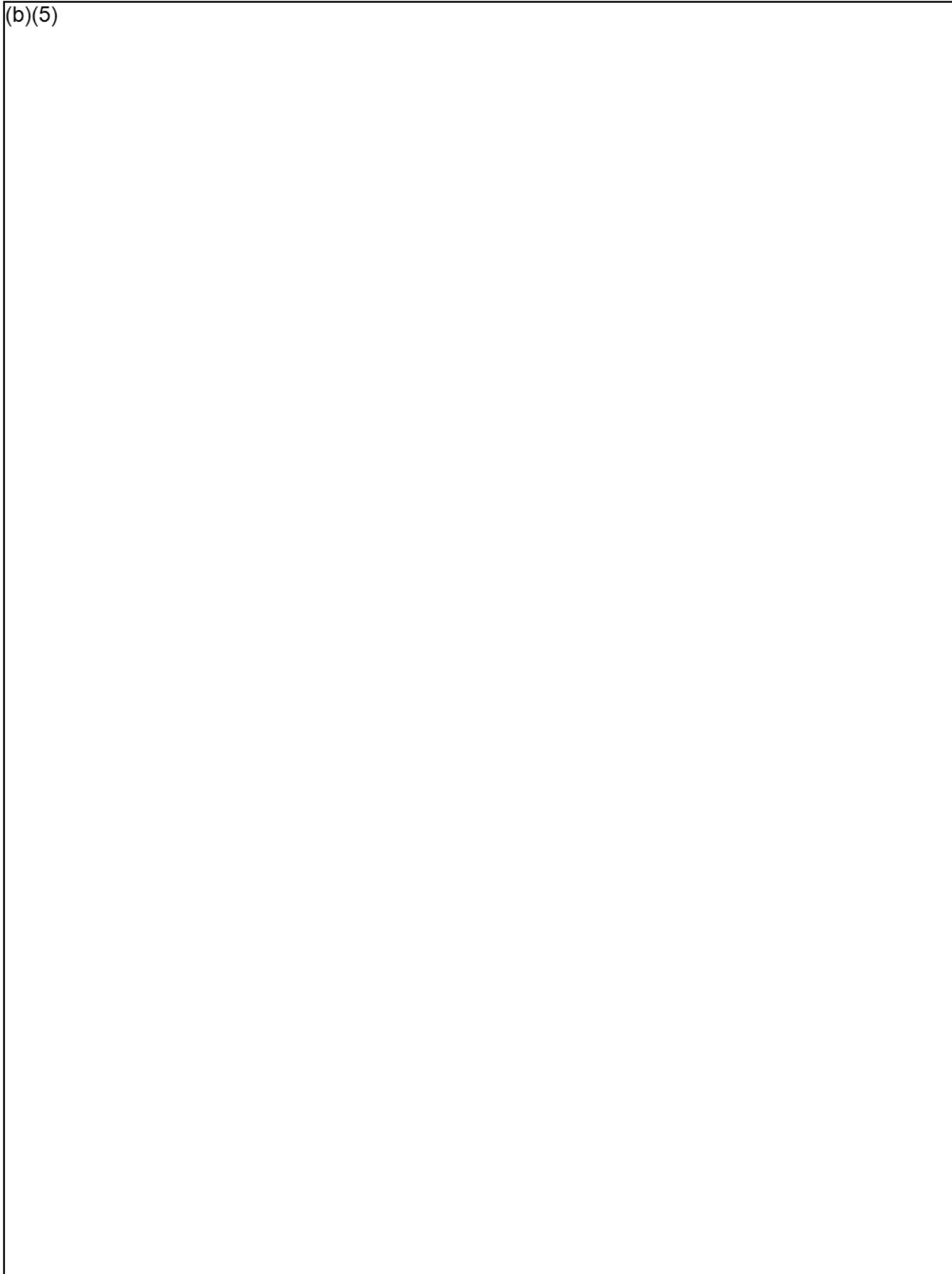
Consistent with the law, the Department is making publicly available a list identifying a number of security forces units that were denied our assistance during 2017.

Advancing respect for human rights and accountability for security forces is a central tenet of United States diplomacy. Our commitment to human rights is reflected in laws that govern security assistance. This Administration is committed to upholding these laws and ensuring that U.S. security assistance accounts for human rights concerns.

This is similar to other tools that the United States uses to make our human rights concerns known, including the annual Human Rights Reports and the Trafficking in Persons Report.

(b)(5)

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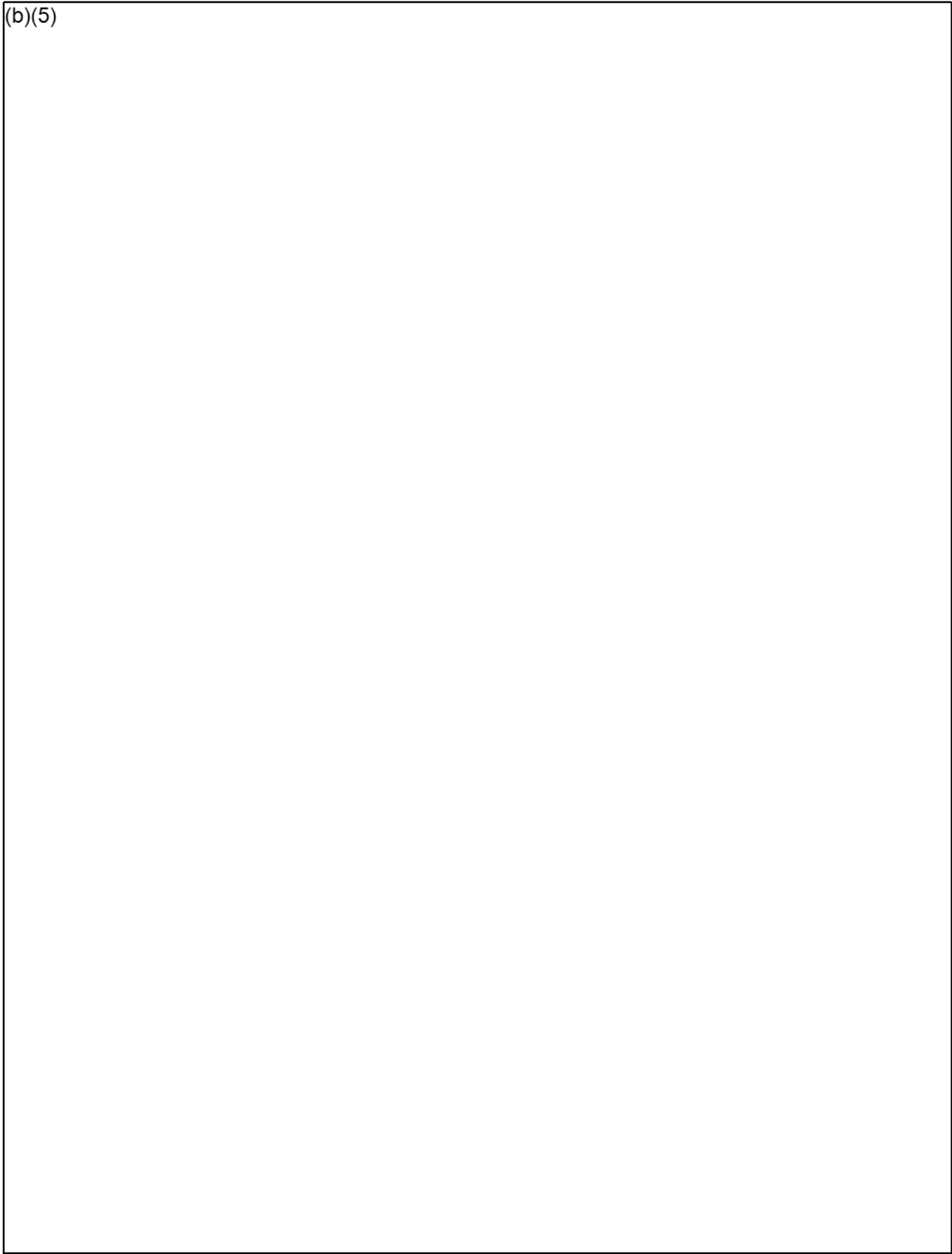


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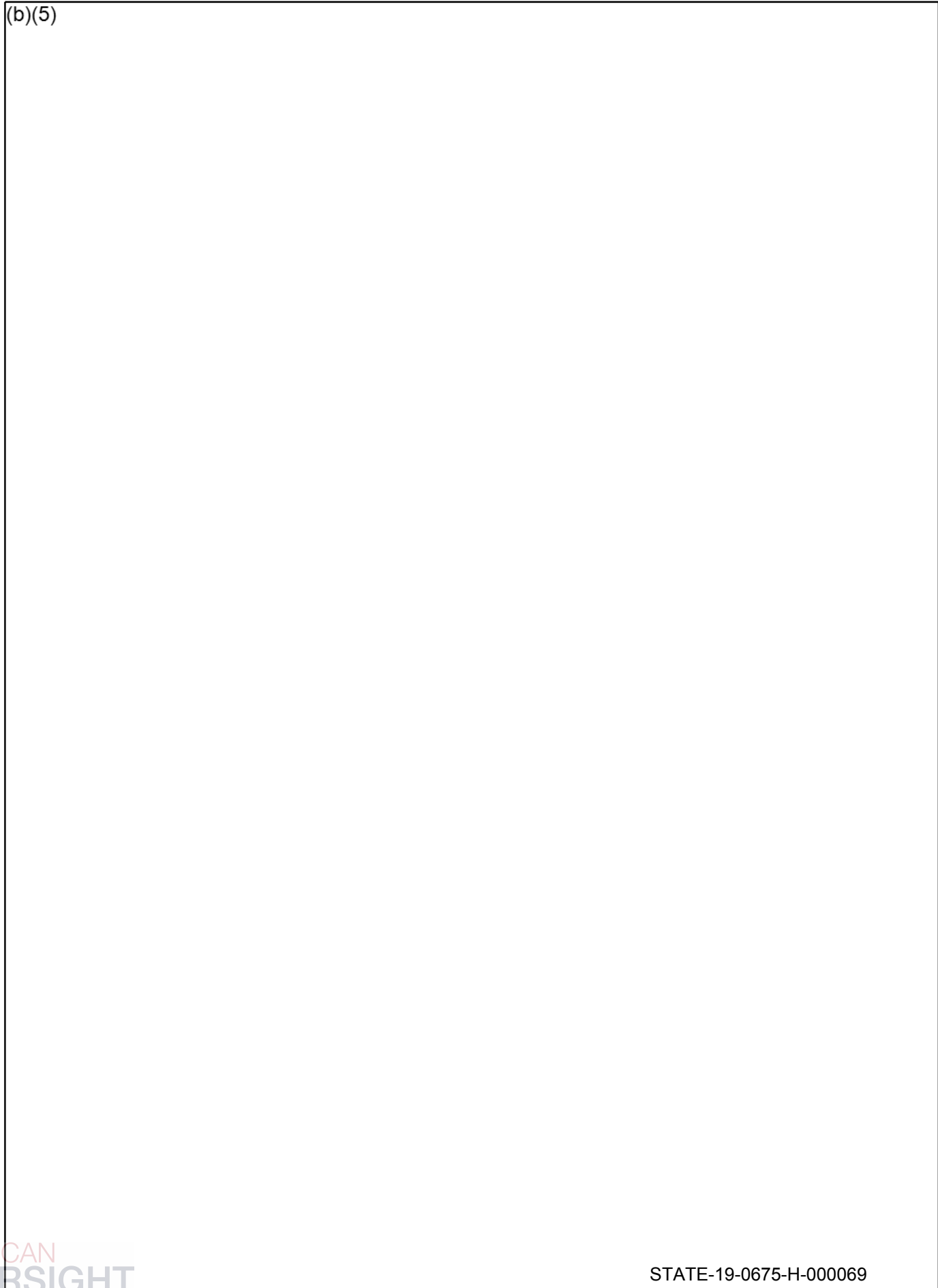
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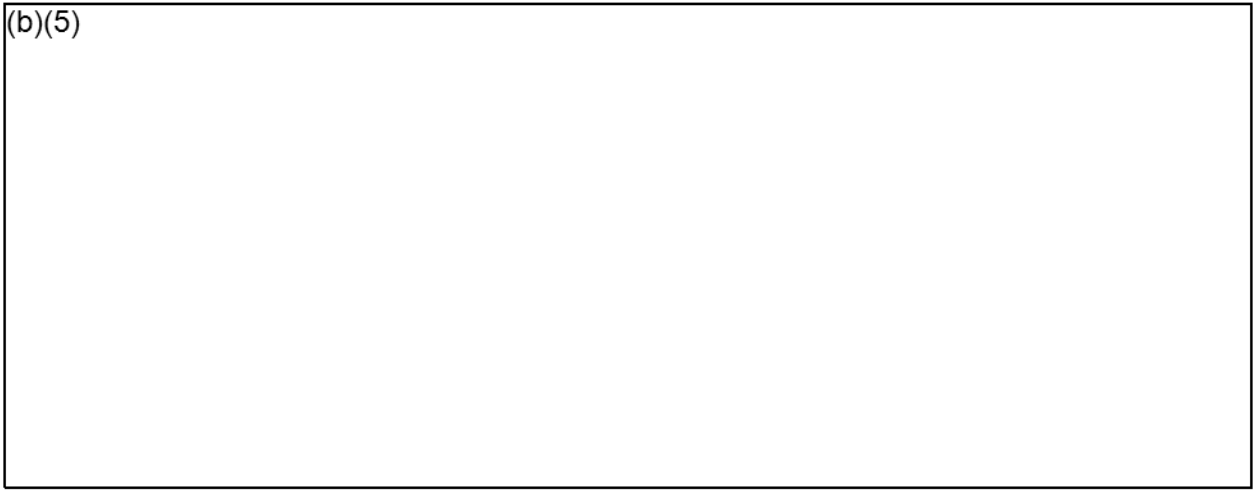


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OES/ENR Press Guidance
December 3, 2018

Keystone XL: Our Response to Federal Judge's Latest Injunction

[(SBU) Background: On Monday, December 3, 2018, the Department published a Federal Register Notice with a Notice of Intent (NOI) to conduct a new, expanded Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) on the proposed Keystone XL pipeline route. This new SEIS is in response to the November 8 order by a Federal district court in Montana. That order blocked any work in furtherance of the Keystone XL project until the State Department completes an update to our 2014 SEIS to take account of new information, including recent oil prices; oil spill information; greenhouse gas emissions and modelling; and cultural resources information. Additionally, the order highlighted legal deficiencies with the lack of a "reasoned explanation" regarding our reversal concerning climate change leadership from 2015 to 2017. TransCanada may appeal the ruling, which would send the case to the 9th Circuit; regardless, we will seek to respond to the judge's ruling through this new SEIS.]

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[(SBU) Additional Background: *On March 23, 2017, the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs issued a Presidential permit to TransCanada Keystone Pipeline, L.P. (TransCanada), authorizing TransCanada to construct, connect, operate, and maintain pipeline facilities, known as Keystone XL, at the U.S.-Canadian border in Phillips County, Montana, for the importation of crude oil.*

On November 20, 2017, the Nebraska Public Services Commission approved a route for the Keystone XL pipeline through Nebraska territory. In its order, the commission approved the “Mainline Alternative Route” (MAR), which was one of several routes that TransCanada, the owner and operator of the pipeline, proposed for approval.

On July 30, 2018, the Department published a Federal Register Notice of Availability for the Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Keystone XL Mainline Alternative Route. The 30-day comment period ended on August 29, 2018.

On August 15, 2018, Judge Morris issued a Partial Order on Summary Judgment that required the Department to supplement the 2014 Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) with an analysis of the Mainline Alternative Route. The Department chose to prepare an SEIS to address these concerns. That Draft SEIS drew extensively from the Draft EA.

On November 8, 2018, Judge Morris issued another Partial Order on Summary Judgment that required the Department to update the 2014 SEIS with regard to new oil spill information; market analysis; greenhouse gas emissions and modelling; and cultural resources surveys. Additionally, the Order requires the Department to give a “reasoned explanation” for the change in position from denial in 2015 to approval in 2017.

The Department is preparing an SEIS that will address the points raised in the November 8 Order and incorporate the information previously included in the SEIS addressing the MAR. The Department is preparing the SEIS consistent with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (as implemented by the regulations of the Council on Environmental Quality, found at 40 CFR 1500–1508). Comments received during the public comment periods for the Draft EA and previous Draft SEIS will be considered in drafting the Final SEIS.]

Approved: OES/PDAS – Judith G. Garber (Ok)

Drafted: (b)(6)

Cleared: OES/E: Brian Doherty, Acting (Ok)
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**OES/EUR Press Guidance
November 30, 2018**

**Poland: 24th Conference of the Parties (COP24) of the UN Framework
Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)**

[Background: The 24th Conference of the Parties (COP24) of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) will take place in Katowice, Poland, December 2-14, 2018. The interagency U.S. government delegation is led by Department of State Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Bureau for Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs Judith Garber. The U.S. delegation also includes senior officials from EPA, DOE, NSC, and the White House. The U.S. position with respect to the Paris Agreement has not changed. Last year, the President announced that the United States intends to withdraw from the Paris Agreement, absent the identification of terms for participation that are more favorable to the American people. The United States continues to participate in negotiations—including those related to guidance for implementing the Paris Agreement—to ensure a level playing field and to negotiate better terms for the United States, its workers, and its taxpayers.]

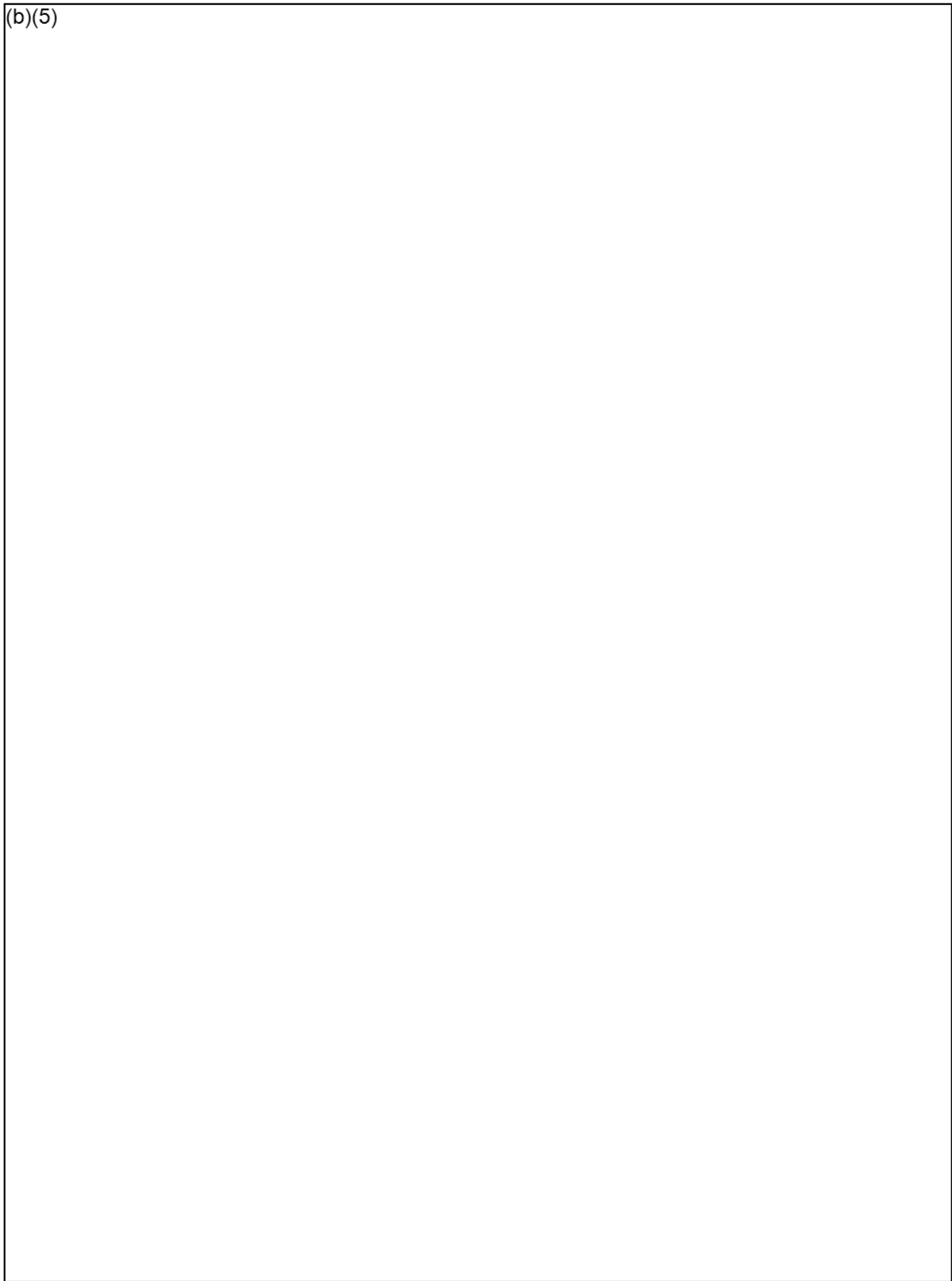
Q: Who is leading the U.S. delegation to COP24?

- **Judith Garber, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs at the Department of State, will serve as the U.S. head of delegation during the High-Level Segment.**
- **U.S. Ambassador to Poland Georgette Mosbacher will represent the United States at the World Leaders Summit on December 3.**
- **Trigg Talley, Director of the Department of State’s Office of Global Change, will lead the delegation for the officials-level meetings in the first week.**

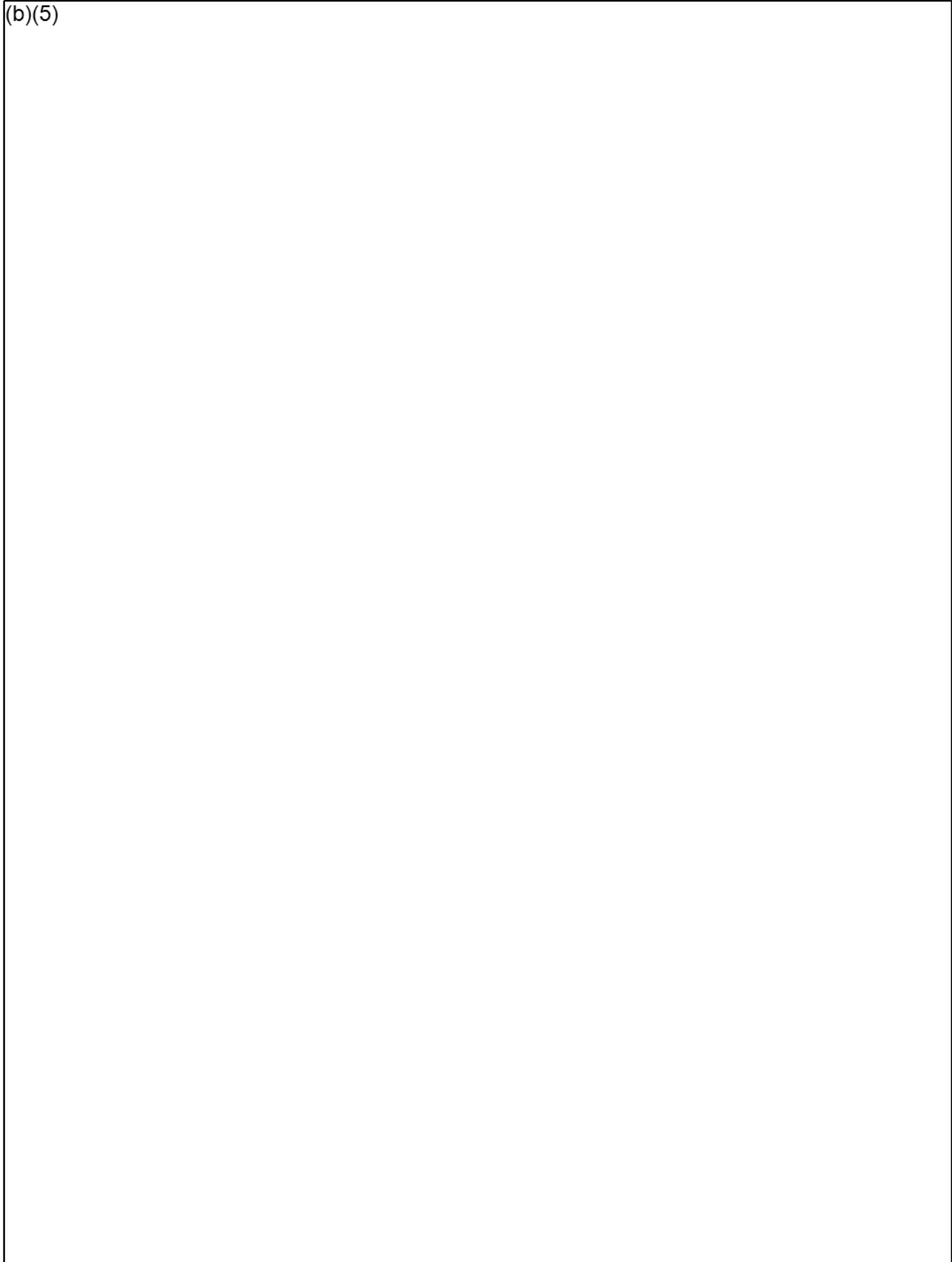
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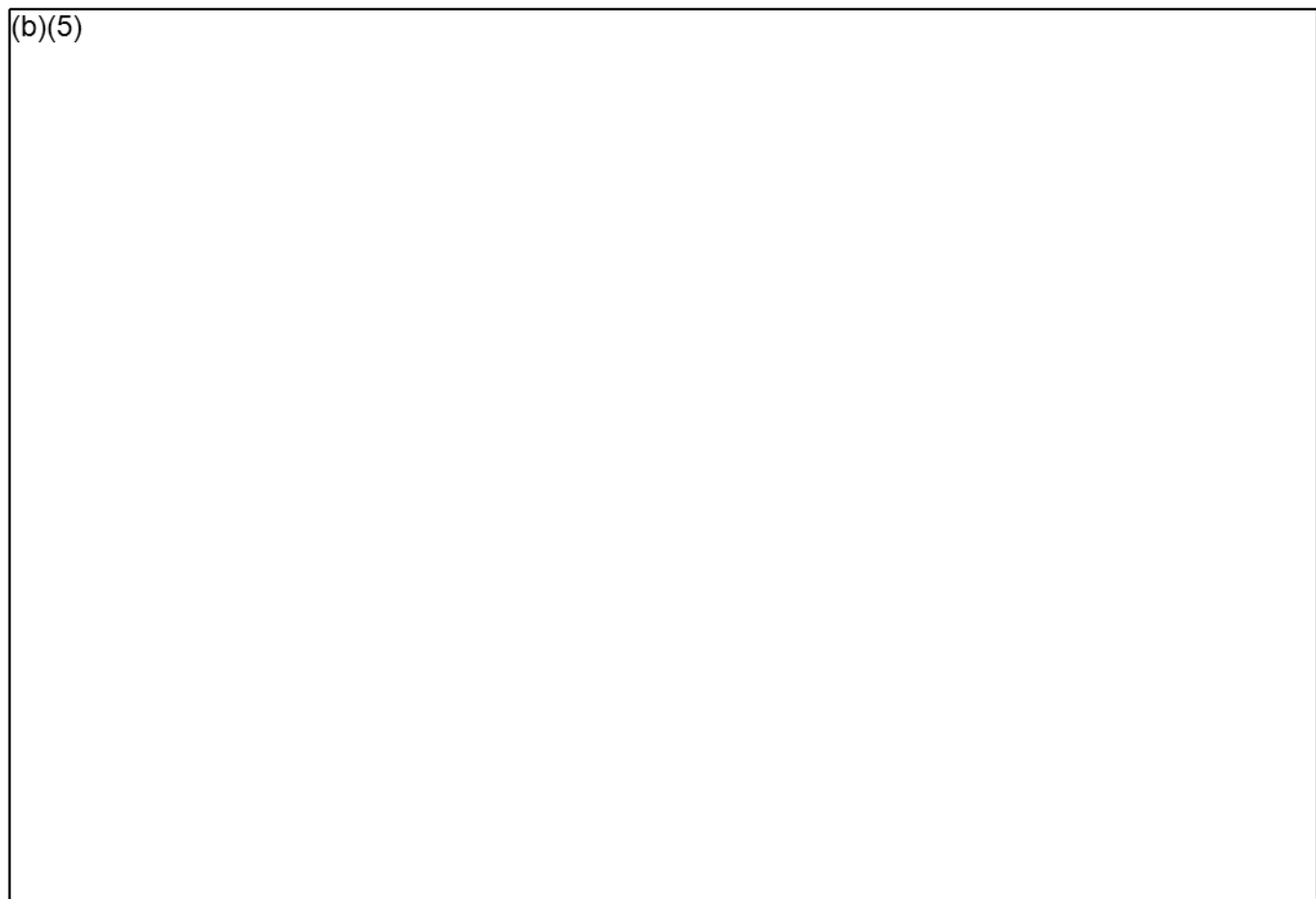
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Approved: OES/PDAS: Judith G. Garber (Ok)

Drafted: OES/PPO: (b)(6)
OES/EGC: [Redacted]

Clearances: OES/E: Brian Doherty, Acting (Ok)

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U.S. Consulate Krakow: [Redacted] (Ok)

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Office of the Spokesperson

For Immediate Release

December 1, 2018

INTERVIEW

Secretary of State Michael R. Pompeo
with Gesell Tobias of Voice of America Latin America

December 1, 2018
Buenos Aires, Argentina

QUESTION: Secretary Pompeo, thank you very much for this opportunity with the Spanish division of Voice of America.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Gesell, it's great to be with you. Thank you for the opportunity.

QUESTION: I just want to begin asking you some thoughts about former President Bush.

SECRETARY POMPEO: So I had a chance to get to know him just a little bit while I served in Congress, and then I held a job that he held as the director of the Central Intelligence Agency. He was a great mentor. He was an incredibly kind man. He was a patriot of the highest order. Susan and I's sympathy go out to the entire Bush family. America will miss this amazing warrior, this amazing leader, this amazing American patriot.

QUESTION: Thank you. Now about the G20: What is the U.S. doing to find common ground with so many leaders with so many different agendas here at the G20?

SECRETARY POMPEO: So it's the case – 20 countries plus some multilateral organizations, lots of different views, but commonly we all share the intense desire to grow economies all around the world, to create prosperity for every citizen of the world, to develop rules that permit that to happen. These are common themes. Sometimes we'll argue about how best to achieve them, but everyone's headed towards the same set of objectives. We know that if we get growth, we get prosperity, we get freedom all around the world, that the lives of hundreds of millions of people will be improved, and that's the mission statement that the G20 gathers around each time it joins its hands together.

QUESTION: This is the first time President Donald Trump visits the region. This could mean a new relationship with Latin America, taking into consideration that China is also getting new friends in the region.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Yes. Look, we consider our relationship with South America, Central America, Mexico to be central to American success. President Trump has been committed to that since the very beginning of his time in office. It's wonderful now that he's

had a chance to get down here. He's known President Macri for a long time, and they had a wonderful meeting yesterday where they came around a set of objectives that our two countries will now begin to implement. And so we're excited about that. We think having a great, close relationship with America is really important, and we are all concerned about China and the way China enters countries. It is not always the case that when China shows up, it's with a good intention for the people of the country they are showing up to ostensibly support. It's most often about China.

QUESTION: About Venezuela, President Trump talk about Venezuela with President Macri. Are there new actions being considered or analyzed to take against Nicolas Maduro government and to help Venezuelans?

SECRETARY POMPEO: I don't have anything specific that I can share with you today, but we've had a number of conversations down here at the G20, and President Trump is very determined. The Maduro regime must restore democracy. They – the current situation is intolerable. The people of Venezuela are suffering and democracy must be restored, and we've done a great deal so far along with many South American countries and Central American countries. We worry. We know we've had migration into Argentina, into other countries here, people fleeing this despot, this dictator in Venezuela. And so I don't have anything specific that I can share with you today, but the determination for all of the countries in the region to join hands with the United States to restore democracy in Venezuela remains strong.

QUESTION: On immigration, hundreds of people from Central America try to enter the United States every day. What the U.S. can do to create more opportunities in Central America, in the region for Central Americans so they don't have the need to look forward for a better life in the U.S.?

SECRETARY POMPEO: Gesell, that's a great question. I've had the chance to get to know my incoming counterpart in Mexico. I've had a chance to work with the Northern Triangle countries. We are determined to do what the new government that'll be sworn in today in Mexico has talked with us about to make sure that we do create opportunities in the Northern Triangle so these people will have better lives there. After all, that's what it's really all about. It's the capacity to live their lives the way they want to with economic success and freedom. We're committed to assisting in that, and in the time that we can't get there, we're also determined to make sure the human rights of the migrants are respected, at the same time enforcing U.S. law.

QUESTION: After this trip, any new trip to visit any country in Latin America for you, Secretary Pompeo?

SECRETARY POMPEO: It's very likely I'll be right back down here just right at the first of the year, and I'm looking forward to that. Nothing to announce, but I'll be back. I've been here a number of times. I'll be back before too long.

QUESTION: Thank you very much for your time.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Thank you, sir.

QUESTION: Thank you.

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Office of the Spokesperson

For Immediate Release

December 1, 2018

INTERVIEW

Secretary of State Michael R. Pompeo
With Wolf Blitzer of CNN

December 1, 2018
Buenos Aires, Argentina

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, thanks so much for joining us.

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

QUESTION: Let's talk about the late President George H.W. Bush. How do you see his legacy?

SECRETARY POMPEO: It's a remarkable American legacy, and they don't make them like that very often. I had the chance to get to know him when I was a member of Congress first and then I held a job that he held at one point, and I remember talking to him just after I was nominated to be the CIA director. He said you'll be great, you'll be awesome. In fact, it was the second-best job I ever had, and he loved that group of people, that talented espionage agency so much. America is worse off today. I want to extend my and Susan's heartfelt sympathy to the entire Bush family.

QUESTION: What lessons can politicians today learn from the life he led?

SECRETARY POMPEO: It was a true life of service. He was also committed to his faith and he was (inaudible) work really hard. Maybe those would be the three things – if you work at it, if you keep your faith, and you have this commitment to serve, good things can happen. Not only to him – he had a remarkable life – but you'll do good work for your fellow man as well. President Bush certainly did that.

QUESTION: He was an amazing man and I was blessed myself to have interviewed him on several occasions. I know if he were here, he'd want us to get to substantive issues, so in his memory, let's talk about some of the major national security issues facing the U.S. right now.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Yes, sir.

QUESTION: Saudi Arabia. Do you believe the Saudi explanation that the crown prince, Mohammed bin Salman, did not know about the murder of Jamal Khashoggi?

SECRETARY POMPEO: Wolf, I've spoken about this a lot. I continue to work on this issue. President Trump and this administration sanctioned 17 people that we came to learn were connected to the murder – heinous murder – of Jamal Khashoggi. All across the United States government we continue to investigate, to try and learn, to make determinations about what happened, and we'll continue to hold those responsible accountable. We've been very clear, very clear about that since literally the very beginning.

We also, Wolf – and this is important – are doing everything we can to make sure that we get it right for America, that we keep the strategic relationship with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and protect the American people. Those two things can both be done and we've done it very effectively.

QUESTION: Because you have said that – and you're a former CIA director, so you understand how U.S. intelligence analysis works – you said there's no direct reporting connecting the crown prince to order the murder of Jamal Khashoggi. Can you confidently tell his four children that he was not involved in that order?

SECRETARY POMPEO: Well, obviously, sitting in an unclassified setting, here's what I can say: I have read every piece of intelligence that is in the possession of the United States government, and when it is done, when you complete that analysis, there's no direct evidence linking him to the murder of Jamal Khashoggi. That is an accurate statement, it is an important statement, and it is the statement that we are making publicly today.

QUESTION: Did the CIA conclude with high confidence that he was involved?

SECRETARY POMPEO: I can't comment on intelligence matters or CIA conclusions. I didn't do it when I was director; I'm not going to do it now.

QUESTION: Because you've seen all the reports in the media about it.

SECRETARY POMPEO: I've seen lots of reports in the media, Wolf. They often are untrue.

QUESTION: So the bottom line is that the U.S. is going to continue to maintain the same relationship, strategic or operation, with Saudi Arabia right now, irrespective of what may have happened?

SECRETARY POMPEO: Today we're working with the Saudis in Afghanistan, we're working with the Saudis to push back against Ayatollah Khamenei, who killed hundreds of Americans, Wolf, and they are an enormous support to us. They are a relationship that has mattered for 70 years across Republican and Democrat administrations alike. It remains an important relationship and we're aiming to keep that relationship with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

QUESTION: Because you're losing support in Congress, even – including among Republicans right now for – to continue U.S. support for the Saudi operation in Yemen. Even Lindsey Graham voted against your position. There were 14 Republican senators who voted against you the other day in the Senate.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Secretary Mattis and I and the President have made very clear we're working to end the hostilities in Yemen. The humanitarian crisis there is of epic proportions, millions of people at or near starvation. This administration has put almost a billion dollars into stopping that humanitarian crisis. The Saudis have put even more money in of theirs. The Iranians, Wolf, have put zero dollars in to stopping that humanitarian crisis, and we are determined to fix the problem of the humanitarian crisis while ensuring that we don't end up with a Hizballah organization on the southern edge of Saudi Arabia.

QUESTION: So U.S. military support for the Saudis in Yemen will continue?

SECRETARY POMPEO: The program that we're involved in today we intend to continue.

QUESTION: Let's talk about Russia, another critical issue. Why did the President decide to cancel what was supposed to be a two-hour face-to-face meeting with the Russian leader?

SECRETARY POMPEO: I can actually answer that. I was there. He canceled it because the Russians behaved in a way that is deeply inconsistent with international law and is outrageous. To have held the Ukrainians that they took in the strait needs to be changed. The President wanted to send a clear, unambiguous message that we find that type of behavior unacceptable, and so he canceled the meeting.

QUESTION: But the Russians – well, the Russians – the Russians have done other awful things and the President went ahead in Helsinki and met --

SECRETARY POMPEO: This happened hours, days before – the series of events unfolded days --

QUESTION: But wouldn't it be a good time for him to have a face-to-face --

SECRETARY POMPEO: (Inaudible) hours and days, Wolf, hours and days before, and the President made the decision that the right thing to do was tell the Russians return the sailors, return the Ukrainian equipment, it's theirs. The people need to be returned to their families, and he wanted to send an unambiguous message that the Russians needed to change that act.

QUESTION: It had nothing to do with the announcement that came just an hour earlier before he boarded Air Force One to fly here to Argentina that Michael Cohen was cooperating with Mueller and all these new information – details about a supposed Trump Tower project in Moscow?

SECRETARY POMPEO: Ludicrous. Washington parlor game.

QUESTION: Well, explain, because it --

SECRETARY POMPEO: I was involved in the decision, Wolf. I can explain (inaudible).

QUESTION: You were aboard Air Force One.

SECRETARY POMPEO: I was aboard Air Force One.

QUESTION: And nobody discussed Michael Cohen?

SECRETARY POMPEO: Wolf, this is the thing that the American people need to understand about Washington, D.C.: It makes stuff up that is wholly unfounded. I was involved in the decision-making process. We evaluated it – we considered the opportunity to speak with him, we considered the message we would send. President Trump made the decision this was the right approach based on the activity that had taken place in the lead-up to the G20 summit.

QUESTION: So is there going to be an opportunity down the road for the President to meet with Putin?

SECRETARY POMPEO: President's made clear the conditions for that meeting.

QUESTION: What are the conditions?

SECRETARY POMPEO: We want the sailors returned, we want the ships returned.

QUESTION: And once the Russians do that, there will be a summit?

SECRETARY POMPEO: President has said he wants to meet. He wants to have a conversation with President Putin. There are lots of things that we need to find paths forward on together, lots of places Americans are at risk. He's trying to find a way to move forward with Russia, and now this jumped in the middle of a time when they could have begun to have a discussion where we might have made some progress. We regret that, but the Russians caused this meeting to be canceled by their behavior in the Kerch Strait.

QUESTION: When is the President going to meet again with the North Korean leader?

SECRETARY POMPEO: I don't know. I hope it'll happen pretty soon. We're working hard at it. I think it'll happen shortly after the first of the year but I don't have any additional information to share with you this morning, Wolf.

QUESTION: What's the problem right now with the North Koreans?

SECRETARY POMPEO: The progress – yes. Well, the progress we've made has been good.

QUESTION: No, what's the problem?

SECRETARY POMPEO: Well, the progress we've made has been good. We're not having missiles launched, there haven't been any nuclear tests. We continue to have conversations about the right next step – that is the right substantive next step, not the process next step of meetings. We're working with partners all across the world – South Koreans, the Japanese. Remember, Wolf, these are global sanctions put in place by the United Nations Security Council which deny North Korea the capacity to improve their economy. That's not going to change, unlike previous administrations that when they got to a point that became difficult wrote checks for tens and hundreds of millions of dollars and let the North Koreans off the hook in that sense. We're determined to fulfill the commitments that were made by Chairman Kim in Singapore and we're working hard at it.

QUESTION: A final question on Mexico. It looks like U.S.-Mexican relations are improving, right? You're off to Mexico for the inauguration of the new president, and the President – President Trump signed together with the leaders of Mexico and Canada the U.S.-Mexico-Canada new trade agreement. But there's still a lot of tension along the border and there's a lot of uproar about whether or not the U.S. should go ahead and build a new wall, spend all that money. What ever happened to the President's commitment for so long during the campaign that Mexico would pay for the wall?

SECRETARY POMPEO: That wall's going to get built. I have already developed a good relationship with my counterpart, Marcelo Ebrard, the incoming foreign secretary of Mexico. We've met a number of times already. I'm unfortunately not going to make the inauguration, as it's taking place today in Mexico, but he'll travel to Washington on what I guess would be his second day in office and we're going to continue to develop this relationship.

It's not just focused on the migration issues that draw all the headlines. There are many economic issues between our two countries and other commercial – we have transnational criminal organizations that we work on together. It's a broad set of relationships. We're going to work to help build the Mexican economy in the southern part of their nation, work with the Northern Triangle countries too. Those are important elements of what we're trying to accomplish, and soon-to-be Foreign Secretary – I guess within hours – Ebrard and I are working hard at it.

QUESTION: And Mexico paying for the wall?

SECRETARY POMPEO: We're going to get the wall built, Wolf.

QUESTION: But will Mexico pay for it?

SECRETARY POMPEO: Wolf, we're going to get the wall built.

QUESTION: I'll leave it on that.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Thank you, sir.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, you've got a busy schedule ahead of you. Thanks so much time for spending some time with us.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Thank you, Wolf. Have a great day.

QUESTION: Thank you.

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Office of the Spokesperson

For Immediate Release

December 3, 2018

BACKGROUND BRIEFING

**Senior State Department Official Previewing Secretary Pompeo's Trip
to Brussels, Belgium**

**December 3, 2018
On Plane en route Brussels, Belgium**

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: I'm glad to have you guys along. I'm happy to talk about pretty much anything you want to talk about, and [Moderator], jump in, but I thought I'd give you a few top lines on why the trip is important, some of the meetings that are going to occur, and then you guys can jump in with all of your questions.

So this is the Secretary's third trip to NATO since he became Secretary of State. I think most of you know he came over the day he was confirmed. He got on the plane. A ministerial, and then he came back for a NATO summit. This is his third trip in the last however many months, eight months or so since he became Secretary. We see this as an opportunity first and foremost to reinforce U.S. commitment to NATO allies, the alliance, Article 5, U.S. commitment to Article 5 ironclad; also engage with very close allies on areas that we agree on, some areas we disagree on, but hoping to in particular talk with some of our major allies about some of the most important international security issues that we're tracking today.

First and foremost, I would say you can expect to see a follow-up on commitments that were made at the 2018 NATO summit, so the July summit, and I would highlight a few. We continue to press allies on following through with their Wales commitments: 2 percent of GDP on defense, 20 percent of defense budgets on major equipment. I would highlight allied Portugal, which recently came forward with a credible plan, 2 percent spending. Also Slovakia just put through major spending increases for the defense budget. Across the alliance, we have seen an historic increase in defense spending since January of 2017.

I would also highlight by way of follow-up on the summit the updated counterterrorism action plan. This is a major set of contributions from the NATO alliance. Really, it's the first time in NATO's history that NATO has gotten deeply into the business of counterterrorism but also developed a strategy and an agenda for the South, the Mediterranean littoral. At this ministerial, we're going to go through a report on NATO's southern dimension but also update the 2017 counterterrorism plan with a heavy emphasis on intelligence sharing.

And we'll also be, by way of follow-up, going through Secretary General Stoltenberg's heroic efforts at a functional review, so bringing the NATO civilian command structure up to speed

with the changes and evolutions that we've had in a strategic setting but also changes in the military command structure.

The second big thing I would highlight is the discussion about the INF treaty. I'm sure all of you have been following this very closely. We intend to engage our allies in a close discussion over the next day and a half on INF. We've been in discussions with – for several days now with European allies on INF.

As all of you know who follow this, this is not a new problem. The U.S. calling out Russia on noncompliance is not a new phenomenon. We've been pressing the Russian Federation for five years now in public about the so-called screwdriver SSC-8 missile which is not INF-compliant. We will be at this ministerial building on the very strong language that came out in the summer NATO declaration and working with allies to chart a joint way forward in how we tackle the problem of Russian noncompliance with INF, and I'm happy to talk more about that in the Q&A.

And then finally, we'll have several sessions of the NATO Atlantic – of the North Atlantic Commission, sessions on Ukraine and Georgia. In that session, we plan to build on recent U.S. statements pressing Russian leadership to release the detained crew members and ships that were taken into custody in the recent Kerch incident. We are calling on European allies to show leadership in tackling a problem that's in Europe's own backyard. The President and Secretary have been crystal-clear in where we stand on the matter of the Kerch incident, Ukrainian – Russian aggression against Ukraine. This administration has provided a lot of things that the previous administration did not want to provide, but we plan in this ministerial to work with allies charting a way forward on how we make progress on these crew members and ships.

We also have a session of the NAC meeting on Resolute Support Mission. The goal is to work with our allies to endorse Ambassador Khalilzad's reconciliation efforts. We had recent elections in Afghanistan and also a donors meetings in Geneva. We want to build on the momentum from those events. Ambassador Hutchison and I will be attending the RSM session. At the last NATO summit, the allies agreed to extend the financial support through 2024 for Afghanistan's security forces. We intend to continue to build on that as well.

I think most of you know that the Secretary is giving a major speech while he is in Brussels. I can provide you a little bit of a preview on that speech. I don't want to get too far ahead of him. It's a great speech. I've read it. This will happen at the German Marshall Fund. The symbolism was deliberate. It was important to us to evoke the memory of George C. Marshall, one of the Secretary's predecessors who helped to create the foundation for the Atlantic alliance. The Bretton Woods system, the foundation for the international order as we know it, most of the major international institutions in the world today grew out of that immediate post World War II moment.

I think you can expect to see the Secretary walk you through a big-picture assessment of how he, how this administration, views the strategic reality in the world: rising revisionist authoritarian powers, number one; and number two, how we view international institutions and the growing gap between the international institutional order on one hand and the scale of the type of strategic challenges that we face on the other. So you can expect to see him share this administration's vision for America's place in the world.

So that's a quick preview. Happy to answer any questions. If there's anything I overlooked, let me know.

MODERATOR: Remember this is on background to a senior State Department official. Go ahead, let's get a question.

QUESTION: Can I ask, do you support Ukraine's call to (inaudible) which you said (inaudible) to the Sea of Azov?

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: I don't want to get ahead of process. We support Ukraine wholeheartedly in its defense of national sovereignty and territorial integrity, and I think our actions have been very clear in that regard. We're looking at a lot of measures both on the U.S. side, coordination with allies, and you'll be seeing more in the days ahead of how we and our allies will jointly message and where appropriate take action. We really want to see European allies do more. The United States I think has been – I think the administration has been forceful and clear up to an including providing a lot of lethal aid to Ukrainians. We want to see European allies take greater responsibility for a security problem that's just 200 miles from Germany's border, and we'll be right there with them every step of the way.

QUESTION: And is this the forum for official (inaudible) six months on INF? There was a lot of speculation in Brussels last week that that's what the speech was going to be used for, but then Stoltenberg said today that no, it's still not time yet.

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: Look, I don't want to get ahead of process. I want to stay focused on our goal right now, which is to be in sync with allies. We want to keep the burden squarely where it belongs – the onus, and that is on Russia for noncompliance. We are determined to stay in sync with our allies in our response to this problem. So the discussions over the next day will be about that, and you can expect to see a decision in due course.

QUESTION: In what?

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: In due course.

QUESTION: Okay. The speech is at 11:00 (inaudible) so --

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: The Secretary's speech?

QUESTION: Yeah.

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: Yeah. I'll let the Secretary's speech speak for itself. As I said, it's big-picture. It's looking at America's role in the world. On INF I don't want to – I don't want to get ahead of ourselves here. We really want to roll up our sleeves and work with our allies on a joint position, and that's what we're focused on right now.

QUESTION: Follow-up on Nike's question. Can you give any more specifics on what you'll be asking for from Europe as far as Ukraine?

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: As far as Ukraine is concerned. So we have some ideas in the United States. I think we've messaged very clearly that it's unacceptable that Russia took this latest step, this act of aggression. We've coordinated very closely over the last several days with European allies both in the NATO format and in the EU format, and right now we're focused on sizing an allied alliance-wide response, having the right size response to what happened at the Kerch. There is a humanitarian dimension to this with the sailors involved. There is an international legal dimension to this with freedom of navigation. And we want our allies to show leadership. It's a problem a lot closer to home for them than it is to us. There's a lot of things that the United States has done and will continue to do for the Ukrainians, but we want to make sure that we come out of this week with a unified position where we're working with allies to have a holistic response.

QUESTION: As you look at the risk metrics there in the Sea of Azov, what's the likelihood or – that you see of Russia trying to repeat in Mariupol some of the operations they had at Donbas?

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: I don't want to speculate on the military situation. I think the facts on the ground are very clear as they stand right now. Russian forces and Russian-backed so-called separatists are waging daily aggression in violations of ceasefire. It's one of the things that we will be addressing at OSCE in a couple of days. We're very watchful. The situation on the ground there is very dangerous. Ambassador Volker is very engaged, as you know, with the Russians, trying to find a clear way – a peaceful way forward. But I think Azov marked – I should say, it was on the Black Sea side – let's say the Kerch Strait act of aggression marked an unmistakable escalation on the part of the Russians, because it was the first time that they were openly using their own forces and being very unapologetic about it.

QUESTION: [Senior State Department Official], there's a sense in Europe that you're backing out of the INF because of concerns about China, not so much about Europe, and that the Europeans feel that you are – that that policy shows that American attention is increasingly diverted from Europe to China. What's your response to that?

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: Well, look, I think if you read the Nuclear Posture Review, it was crystal-clear. Number one, we're committed to arms control, but number two, we have growing concerns about the actions of a lot of American rivals. There's Russia, there's China, there's Iran. I'm not sure it's helpful to disaggregate those when we're talking about the future of INF, because the central problem is that Russia – which is a party to INF – is in flagrant noncompliance. We're talking about five years of repeated U.S. efforts. We've tried on 30 different occasions at very high levels to share with the Russians the information that we have about their systems, to call them into – back into compliance. We've also shared a lot of intelligence with European allies.

I think at this point we have been so engaged with European allies, the one thing I don't question is whether the allies understand where we're coming from. They've seen the material. If you saw the NATO declaration, I think it's crystal-clear. Our central focus is Russia. And there is a China problem; a big portion of the Chinese ballistic arsenal is not in compliance with INF. But I would not say from a U.S. perspective we look at INF to look at the way forward. I wouldn't look at that and say the United States has made a determination on the basis of what Russia has done to do X, Y, or Z. Right now our focus is on sharing what we have with allies, making sure

as I said a minute ago that we're on the same page with a clear way forward. And once we've had those conversations with allies, we'll make a decision and communicate those decisions in concert with our allies.

MODERATOR: Just a couple questions left.

QUESTION: One more, do one more. This is going to be the 70th anniversary of NATO coming up in – it'll be the first major anniversary of NATO where there is not going to be a leaders summit. Europeans are saying that they're not going to have a leaders summit because they don't want Trump to be part of such a big summit because the last summit with Trump was such a disaster. What's your response to that?

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: So we take the – as the Secretary has said on more than one occasion, we take the NATO alliance seriously and the 70th anniversary very seriously. We've been looking very closely with allies at some plans for next year. I don't think we're at a stage where we're sharing those publicly, but we take it seriously. You'll learn more in due course, but it's – we are cognizant of the symbolic value of next year, and you'll hear more about that in the days to come.

QUESTION: Can you talk about the agenda for tonight's meeting with Netanyahu?

MODERATOR: [Senior State Department Official] handles EUR, so not NEA issues. There'll be something more on that later. But we can confirm that the Secretary's meeting with the prime minister.

QUESTION: So you can't speak to the priorities of the pull-aside with the Libyan prime minister either?

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: I'm not deeply involved in that, unfortunately. I follow it closely, but it's not – I wouldn't want to step on my NEA colleagues.

MODERATOR: And [Senior State Department Official] will still – even though we'll be headed back to Washington for President Bush's funeral, [Senior State Department Official] will still be heading to Milan, where he'll be doing some of the OSCE meetings that the Secretary had planned.

QUESTION: Can you tell us about the agenda for Italy, what you're looking to get out of that part of the trip?

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: For OSCE?

QUESTION: What you're looking to get out of the Italy portion of the trip.

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: Right. So OSCE – we want to reaffirm U.S. commitment to the OSCE as a significant platform for security in Europe but also for human rights dialogue in Europe and Eurasia. I think a couple of the agenda items that you will see – number-one agenda item will be Ukraine and Kerch Strait. We are determined to hold Russia accountable for those actions, and OSCE is a great venue for European nations showing

leadership. So you'll see the U.S. focused on SMM, you'll see us focused on ceasefire violations.

And then secondly, as you know, the United States continues to call on Russia to come back into compliance with a family of treaties and obligations under OSCE – Open Skies, conventional forces in Europe. We're in the process of trying to work through a modernization of the Vienna document. The Vienna document is the instrument of OSCE. It provides transparency for military exercises. And those will be the two big focal points.

MODERATOR: Okay. [Senior State Department Official] has to get back to the other part of his job.

QUESTION: Thank you.

MODERATOR: Thanks, everybody.

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Office of the Spokesperson

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ON-THE-RECORD BRIEFING

Special Representative for Iran Brian Hook

December 3, 2018
ERT Brussels, Belgium

MS NAUERT: Brian, go right ahead.

MR HOOK: Great. The Iranian Government claims that its missile testing is purely defensive in nature. How exactly is the world's leading sponsor of terrorism entitled to a claim of defense? In fact, Iran's security concerns are entirely self-generated. Was a plot to bomb Paris defensive? Was the assassination attempt in Denmark defensive? Is smuggling missiles to the Houthis in Yemen to attack Saudi Arabia and the Emirates defensive? Is harboring al-Qaida defensive? Is smuggling heroin through Italy defensive? Is overthrowing the legitimate Government of Bahrain violently – is that defensive?

And so for the last 12 years, the UN Security Council has been telling the Iranian regime to stop testing and proliferating ballistic missiles, and Iran continues to defy the UN Security Council, which is acting like an outlaw regime. Iran's continued testing and proliferation of ballistic missiles shows that the Iran deal has not moderated the Iranian regime as some had hoped. It was a mistake to exclude missiles from the Iran nuclear deal, and it is one of the principal reasons that the United States left it.

Let's take a step back for just one minute. Iran's defense needs would be entirely different if they had not decided to wage sectarian wars of choice for the last 39 years. It's the Iranian regime's foreign policy that has placed Iran into conflict with other nations. Iran today faces no natural threat from its Arab neighbors, Israel, or Afghanistan. Before the 1979 revolution, Iran enjoyed relations with these same neighbors. But today, Iran's military is the largest in the region. Its revolutionary forces are present in nearly every neighboring nation. Its militias spread like a cancer, eroding stability and threatening peace and global trade in both the Strait of Hormuz and the Bab el-Mandeb, which allows them to choke the Suez Canal. So we condemn the launch, as have the Brits and others.

Just a few days ago, we unveiled new evidence of Iran's missile proliferation. Three days later, they test-launched another medium-range missile ballistic missile. We have been warning the world for some time that we are accumulating risk of a regional conflict if we do not deter Iran's missile testing and proliferation. Iran is on the wrong track, and our campaign of maximum economic pressure is designed to starve the regime of revenue it needs to test missiles and to proliferate missiles, for terrorism, conduct cyber attacks and make acts of maritime aggression and many human rights abuses. The Iranian people deserve a government that represents their interests and not just the interests of their violent and corrupt leaders.

MS NAUERT: Thank you. Assuming we aren't asked to sit back in our seats again, we can take some questions. Go right ahead.

QUESTION: What do you say about the fact that the UN resolution itself says it calls upon them to stop testing ballistic missiles?

MR HOOK: Refrain from – yeah. Well, it's – for the last 12 years, the UN Security Council has been consistent in telling Iran to stop testing and proliferating ballistic missiles, and they've said that in various versions over 12 years. They have been consistent, and Iran is defying the council.

QUESTION: If I may, you just mentioned Yemen. Is the – the U.S. (inaudible) for an immediate ceasefire in Yemen (inaudible) to proceed. Now, is this (inaudible)?

MR HOOK: Well we are calling for an urgent ceasefire in Yemen. We also recognize the right of nations who are attacked by Iranian-backed Houthis to protect themselves. And so I think Secretary Mattis and Secretary Pompeo have done a good job of explaining the various parallel tracks that we are advancing in Yemen. The United States and the coalition have provided billions of aid to the people in Yemen who are suffering humanitarian catastrophe. Iran has provided soldiers and weapons and missiles and funding and training of the Houthis, hundreds of millions of dollars over the last few years to organize and train and equip the Houthis, and this war has gone on longer than makes any sense, because in part – large part – the Iranians have made the Houthis much more effective than they otherwise would be. So any --

QUESTION: Okay, Brian. What are your – the remarks – are they prepared for anything in particular or just to come back, in fact, that you're outraged (inaudible)?

MR HOOK: No, no, the Iranian regime has said --

QUESTION: Well I understand that, but I mean, you talked about the quad meeting tomorrow and (inaudible) –

MR HOOK: Well this is a continuing discussion that the Secretary has had with his E3 counterparts about Iran's missile testing and missile proliferation and regional aggression.

QUESTION: Right. To what end? What are you looking to do on this trip related to Iran?

MR HOOK: Well, we are – we would like to see – we would like to see the European Union move sanctions that target Iran's missile program.

QUESTION: Brian, we've given several countries oil waivers, and I know we've talked about – you want to get those exports out of Iran to zero as quickly as possible. With the new missile tests, does that speed up that timeline?

MR HOOK: Well, we had to grant oil waivers to ensure that we did not increase the price of oil. Now that – in 2019 we expect a much better-supplied oil market, and that will put us in a much better position to accelerate the path to zero.

QUESTION: Brian, thanks so much. Everything you've said here is not new with the exception of this idea that you're going to push on the Europeans to propose new sanctions. Is that it? I mean, you said there could be regional conflict.

MR HOOK: No, no, no. What – well, no. What is new is that we are responding to Iran's claim that its missile testing is defensive in nature and that its missile inventory is defensive. It's not defensive in nature. So I laid that out at the beginning.

QUESTION: What specifics can you get into about the nature of the missiles? I mean, are these nuclear-capable type of ballistic weapons?

MR HOOK: Yes. Iran has launched missiles that are capable of carrying multiple warheads, including a nuclear weapon.

QUESTION: Is there anything that you can tell us about the discussions with the Europeans? Because they've resisted so far cooperating with you on Iran and missiles. Are you hoping to get anything beyond more talks and more --

MR HOOK: I wouldn't say that they have resisted cooperating. We have one difference of opinion with the E3 and it's over the Iran nuclear – it's on – over the Iran nuclear deal. We share the same threat assessment.

They – take a look at what Foreign Secretary Hunt said about the missile test. They all know that Iran is acting in defiance of the UN Security Council and their missiles are a threat to peace and security. The Europeans understand that fully and I believe that we are making progress toward getting a proposal tabled in Brussels that would designate the individuals and the entities that are facilitating Iran's missile program. It is a grave and escalating threat. And nations around the world, not just Europe, need to do everything they can to be targeting Iran's missile program.

QUESTION: What's the nature of the concern among the Europeans that kind of stops them from being closer to your side on the sanctions efforts?

MR HOOK: Well, they did – the French did take actions. We've seen the French take actions against the bomb plot in Paris. Denmark's taking action. So we are seeing – the Europeans are doing something.

QUESTION: Slowly (inaudible) --

MR HOOK: Yeah, and so – yes, I would say that they also see the expanding threat, and they also understand that over the last few years, Iran has expanded its threats to peace and security in a range of domains.

QUESTION: The proposal is looking at naming the people involved in the program with the Europeans and they do not necessarily have that (inaudible). Is there any --

MR HOOK: Could you speak a little louder?

QUESTION: What exactly would the proposal say? Would it be – is it – are you looking to identify the people responsible and this is exclusively about missiles or --

MR HOOK: Well, the – yeah, the United States has imposed sanctions on a number of individuals and entities who are supporting Iran’s missile program. We think those sanctions can be effective if more nations can also join us in that effort.

QUESTION: Is there anything you can say about the Secretary’s meeting with Prime Minister Netanyahu today?

MS NAUERT: We’re not confirming anything at this point.

QUESTION: The Israelis have put out a statement.

MS NAUERT: We’re not confirming anything at this point. We’ll let you know.

MR HOOK: I – yeah.

MS NAUERT: We’ll let you know when we can about any additions to the schedule. Brian, I know one thing you’ve been following closely is a special-purpose vehicle.

MR HOOK: Yeah.

MS NAUERT: Do you want to – if there’s anything you want to say about that?

MR HOOK: The United States still continues to see no to little demand for a special-purpose vehicle by any significant corporation. A special-purpose vehicle is like the reverse Field of Dreams; if you build it, they will not come. We just don’t see any evidence that significant corporations want to make use of a vehicle. We have seen only support by major European companies for our sanctions regime because if you are the CEO of a European company and you are given the choice between doing business in the United States market or the Iranian market, that is the fastest decision you will ever make as CEO.

MS NAUERT: Any other questions?

QUESTION: Do you have a sense for how – as these sanctions come on line, how long will it take to get --

MR HOOK: Louder, what?

QUESTION: How long as these sanctions – the oil sanctions – come on line do you expect that it will take the Iranian oil sales to fall below a level --

MR HOOK: Well, we’ve already seen – yeah.

QUESTION: -- to fall below a level at which they’ll stop being able to pay some of these bills in Yemen or Syria?

MR HOOK: Our sanctions have only been in place for a few weeks. The announcement of the President leaving the Iran deal had the effect of causing companies and nations to creak by with their sanctions. As a consequence, we have had nations importing Iranian oil decrease imports by over a million barrels. You will see further decreases in Iranian imports in the coming months. Because 80 percent of Iran's revenue comes from the export of oil, we know that if we can follow the money, which means following the oil, we are going to be able to make a material difference starving the regime of the revenue that it needs to destabilize the Middle East and Europe.

MS NAUERT: Anybody else? All right. Thanks, everybody.

MR HOOK: Okay. Thank you.

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