

INTERNATIONAL SECURITY / MIDDLE EAST UPDATE
June 9 - 16, 2011

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1. [U.N. Human Rights Council Action on Syria \(06-15-2011\)](#)

U.S. Department of State, Press Statement by Ambassador Eileen Chamberlain Donahoe, Geneva, Switzerland, June 15, 2011

Press Statement Following the Delivery of a Joint Statement by Human Rights Council Members on the Situation in Syria

Just six weeks ago the Human Rights Council held a Special Session on the urgent human rights crisis emerging in Syria. At that session, the Council unequivocally condemned the use of violence against peaceful protestors by Syrian authorities, and called upon the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to urgently dispatch a mission to Syria to investigate the Government's ongoing violations of its citizens' human rights. But the Syrian government has chosen intransigence and not allowed the High Commissioner's office to enter Syria to investigate the Government's ongoing human rights violations and crimes.

Regrettably, since the urgent Special Session, the already troubling human rights situation in Syria has continued deteriorated. The Syrian government continues to use its military and security forces against peaceful protestors, and over 1000 civilians have died. The region and the wider international community have been shocked by horrific reports of torture and arbitrary arrests, and widespread use of lethal violence against peaceful protestors. Today, the Human Rights Council has spoken again and used its voice to pressure the Syrian authorities to stop these human rights violations. The international community demands the immediate halt of violent repression by Syrian security forces, and calls on the Syrian authorities establish credible, independent and transparent investigations into these abuses, and accountability for those who perpetrated them, and

to allow unfettered access to the OHCHR mission to investigate allegations of human rights violations.

We believe that this statement will show the resolve of the international community to support human rights at a time of great conflict, unrest, and transition throughout the Middle East.

The United States strongly supports the universal rights of the Syria people, including the rights of peaceful assembly, freedom of expression, and the ability to determine their own destiny. These are human rights. They are universal. They are not negotiable. They must be respected in every country. And they cannot be denied through violence or suppression.

Text of the Joint Statement Delivered at the 17th Session of the Human Rights Council on Syria follows:

Mr. President,

On April 29, the Human Rights Council adopted Resolution 16/1 which unequivocally condemned the use of lethal violence against peaceful protesters in Syria. It called for Syria to launch a credible and impartial investigation and to prosecute those responsible for attacks on peaceful protesters, to allow humanitarian access, and to cooperate fully with and grant access to the mission of the High Commissioner. The Council decided to remain seized of the matter.

Since the 16th Special Session of the Human Rights Council, the situation of human rights in the Syrian Arab Republic has dramatically deteriorated. On June 3, Secretary General Ban Ki-moon demanded an immediate end to the violent repression by security and military forces so that a genuine and inclusive dialogue could take place, leading to the comprehensive reforms and change called for by the Syrian people. The Secretary General also reiterated his call for a full, transparent and independent investigation into the killings.

On June 9, the High Commissioner for Human Rights urged Syria to halt its assault on its own people. She condemned the Syrian authorities' unrelenting violent crackdown on peaceful protestors across the country, stressing that "It is utterly deplorable for any government to attempt to bludgeon its population into submission, using tanks, artillery and snipers." HC Pillay expressed particular concern about reports of civilians fleeing in the wake of recent threatening statements by Government officials. She urged States to keep their borders open for refugees fleeing Syria. The High Commissioner urged authorities to cooperate with her Office by granting her mission access to Syria "to investigate all alleged violations of international human rights law and establish the facts and circumstances of such violations and of the crimes perpetrated."

Likewise, the UN Secretary General's Special Advisers on the Prevention of Genocide and the Responsibility to Protect have noted that the systematic and widespread attacks appear primarily to have targeted the civilian population. This underscores the need for an independent, thorough, and objective investigation. Ten UN special procedure mandate holders have also spoken out about the human rights abuses in Syria. They have called on the Syrian government to stop the use of force against peaceful protestors, for credible, independent and transparent investigations into these abuses to take place, and accountability for those who perpetrated them.

Mr. President,

The cross-regional group of 54 States that have joined together to make this Statement fully share all these concerns.

More than 1000 people peacefully protesting for democracy, respect for human rights and long-due reforms have reportedly been killed to date, and thousands arbitrarily detained. Credible observers provide daily reports of killings, arbitrary detention, and torture of men, women, and children. These reports must be independently verified. We call on the Syrian authorities to launch a credible and impartial investigation and bring those responsible for unlawful attacks against civilians to justice as called for in Special Session Resolution 16/1 and to cooperate fully with the OHCHR mission and allow them immediate access.

The continued violence, multi-day curfews and military lockdowns are restricting access to basic goods and services, such as health care, medicines and food, causing great concern for the situation of children, the elderly, the sick and wounded, as well as refugees and other vulnerable groups. Injured and wounded people must be allowed to seek treatment without fear of reprisals.

We call upon the Syrian Government to respect the will of its people and to implement reforms, taking meaningful steps to end censorship, restrictions on journalists and independent observers, and state control of the media. We also call on the Syrian Government to respect freedom of expression and of association and assembly and immediately lift restrictions on the media and the Internet that silence dissent. Arbitrary arrests, detention and torture, including of protestors, of human rights defenders, of representatives of the media, political dissidents, and young children must cease immediately.

In closing Mr. President,

Our strong cross-regional group of States urges the Government of Syria to cooperate with this Council to ensure that the human rights of all in Syria are fully respected. We reiterate our call on the Syrian Arab Republic to immediately allow the mission of the High Commissioner unfettered access to investigate and establish the facts and circumstances surrounding all violations and abuses of international human rights law.

Thank you Mr. President.

2. Obama Committed to Ratifying Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (06-14-2011)

By Stephen Kaufman
Staff Writer

Washington — The Obama administration will urge the U.S. Senate to ratify the 1996 treaty that bans all nuclear testing, and U.S. officials say they are in a position to make a strong case to overcome the objections lawmakers had when it came up for consideration in 1999.

In remarks to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Organization in Vienna June 14, Assistant Secretary of State for Arms Control, Verification and Compliance Rose Gottemoeller said President Obama has an “unshakable commitment” to see the treaty ratified and entered into force.

The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty’s ratification is an essential step of Obama’s vision of a world without nuclear weapons, which he articulated in an [April 2009 speech in Prague](#), she said.

The president’s vision has led the United States to redefine its use of nuclear weapons in its national defense strategy; convene a 47-nation Nuclear Security Summit to lock down vulnerable nuclear

materials over a four-year period; ratify the U.S.-Russia arms cut treaty (New START) to reduce nuclear arsenals to their lowest levels since the 1950s; and join with other members of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty to strengthen one of the world's oldest nonproliferation initiatives.

Gottemoeller said the December 2010 debate over New START has helped to prepare the Obama administration for "an equally thorough and robust debate" with U.S. lawmakers over the CTBT. "We do not expect it will be easy or happen quickly, but we will work hard to make it happen," she said.

When the Senate failed to ratify the CTBT by the required two-thirds majority in 1999, senators expressed concerns over whether the agreement could be effectively verified to prevent other countries from violating it, Gottemoeller said.

Despite the Senate's action, the United States has not conducted a nuclear test since 1992, and it is bearing the full costs of operating and maintaining the 31 stations of the International Monitoring System (IMS) that the treaty has assigned to the United States for verification purposes.

"These actions tangibly demonstrate the commitment of the United States to prepare for the entry into force of this treaty," Gottemoeller said.

She called for the completion of the IMS, which is currently at 85 percent, and said a fully functioning verification system will serve "as a strong deterrent for any state party contemplating a nuclear test" and will support arguments for its ratification.

Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security Ellen Tauscher [told the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace](#) in Washington May 10 that the Obama administration has three main arguments in favor of CTBT ratification.

"One, the United States no longer needs to conduct nuclear explosive tests, plain and simple. Two, a CTBT that has entered into force will obligate other states not to test and provide a disincentive for states to conduct such tests. And three, we now have a greater ability to catch those who cheat," Tauscher said in her prepared remarks.

The United States is in "a curious position" when it comes to the CTBT, she said.

"We abide by the core prohibition of the treaty because we don't need to test nuclear weapons. And we have contributed to the development of the International Monitoring System. But the principal benefit of ratifying the treaty, constraining other states from testing, still eludes us. That doesn't make any sense to me and it shouldn't make any sense to the members of the Senate," Tauscher said.

If the treaty enters into force, it will be difficult for other countries to advance their nuclear weapons capabilities, since they would "risk either deploying weapons that might not work or incur international condemnation and sanctions for testing," she said.

[3. Assistant Secretary Gordon on U.S. Policy in the Balkans \(06-14-2011\)](#)

Remarks by Philip H. Gordon, Assistant Secretary, Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs
Keynote Address to the Conference: "*The Western Balkans: Progress, Stagnation or Regression?*" at the Hotel Europe, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, June 14, 2011

U.S. Policy in the Balkans

Thank you very much. It really is an honor and a pleasure for me to be back in Sarajevo, particularly with so many good friends and colleagues in the room. This conference comes at a very timely moment. I am glad to see Bosnia and Herzegovina getting the high-profile attention it deserves and to be able to lend the voice and perspectives of the United States to the discussion.

Let me begin by thanking the conference hosts for having me here and for organizing this conference: The Center for Transatlantic Relations at Johns Hopkins University SAIS, especially Executive Director Dan Hamilton, and the America-Bosnia Foundation, especially President Sasha Toperich. CTR and the America-Bosnia Foundation are uniquely equipped to put on such a conference and they have done a superb job of assembling an outstanding group of scholars and practitioners. I would also like to thank the conference sponsors, including the U.S. Embassy in Sarajevo, led by Ambassador Patrick Moon, who is also here today. Indeed, it is a tribute to the importance and timeliness of this conference that in a difficult economic climate, so many internationally renowned foundations – 15 in all from the United States and Europe – have so generously contributed. Finally, let me thank Mike Haltzel, not just for organizing this conference but for his long and constant dedication to Balkans issues, first in the United States Senate and more recently in his role at SAIS.

I first visited Sarajevo in 1994, at a time when Bosnia and Herzegovina was still in the grips of the terrible war that would take the lives of over 100,000 people and displace millions of others. I don't need to remind this audience of the horrors that took place during those dark years or of all the hard work Bosnians have done since then to rebuild this country. The United States and NATO, particularly, made an enormous investment in peace and stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina. And with our help, but mostly as a result of your own efforts, Bosnia and Herzegovina has come a long way since.

For the United States, our commitment to Bosnia and Herzegovina is an integral part of our long-standing commitment to a Europe that is whole, free, democratic, and at peace. We believe strongly in the idea that all of Europe must join the Euro-Atlantic institutions and realize the benefits of stability and prosperity. The Balkans are a critical part of Europe—historically, geographically and culturally and its future lies within the Euro-Atlantic institutions. The United States will always support an open door to the European Union and to NATO and we will always be ready to help countries to walk through that door.

As part of this commitment, we take pride in what we have done with and for the Bosnian people. And our commitment continues in the Obama Administration, as demonstrated by the persistent diplomatic attention that Bosnia and Herzegovina receives. Vice-President Biden came here on one of his very first trips as Vice President, in May 2009; Secretary of State Clinton traveled here this past October, and Deputy Secretary of State Jim Steinberg has visited this country six times during his tenure, more than any other country in the world except Japan. Congress also takes a deep interest in developments here, as the frequent Congressional delegations to Sarajevo will attest.

Many officials in this administration have deep a personal connection with Bosnia. Our professional identities, our understanding of international diplomacy, and even our careers were forged in the crucible of the Balkans War of the 1990s. Over the years, the United States has sent tens of thousands of American soldiers and diplomats to establish and keep the peace. We've invested roughly 1.5 billion dollars to help rebuild, strengthen public institutions, foster better education and promote economic development. We provide \$300 million a year to help Western Balkans countries

meet EU and NATO requirements. We are deeply and personally invested in the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In short, we have been your friends. And friends sometimes need to speak to each other bluntly. Bosnia and Herzegovina has made great progress since the horrors of the 1990s. But in the last four or five years, it has not moved in the right direction. There has been a dangerous rise in nationalist rhetoric. The institutions of the state and the Dayton settlement have been brazenly challenged. There have been attempts to roll back the reforms that are necessary for Bosnia and Herzegovina to join the EU and NATO. In general, Bosnian politicians have been too willing to stoke ethnic fears and to privilege their own personal political interests over the needs of the people they are supposed to represent.

If this does not stop – and again I owe it to my friends here to be blunt – then Bosnia risks being left behind, as the rest of the region moves forward.

We can already see this happening. With the help of the international community, many states in this region are making progress: Slovenia joined the EU in 2004; Albania and Croatia joined NATO in 2009; Croatia's EU candidacy is steadily advancing, following the favorable recommendation by the European Commission just last week. Macedonia will join NATO as soon as its name dispute is resolved. Kosovo recently celebrated the 3rd year of its independence and continues to progress as a multi-ethnic democracy. Montenegro, only five years since independence, already has EU candidacy status and is a full participant in NATO's Membership Action Plan. Serbia has applied for EU candidacy and is making progress along that path, including through the recent arrest and extradition of Ratko Mladic.

Of course, all of these countries still have a lot of work to do to realize their aspirations: Serbia and Kosovo particularly need to advance in their dialogue and to work creatively to resolve their differences before they can move much further along their path to EU membership. Throughout the Balkans, people are free from violence, but they often do not have jobs. Hatreds have eased but dangerous nationalism and prejudice persists.

So Bosnia is hardly the only country in the region to face major challenges. But whereas other countries in the region are managing to make progress, however halting, in their efforts to join Europe—Bosnia and Herzegovina is not.

To get back on the right path, Bosnia must be able to function as a state that can deliver results for all of its citizens. Reforms are needed for their own sake, but they are also necessary to meet EU requirements and the country's international obligations. Only greater integration into Europe will provide the stability and opportunity that the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina want for their children.

Bosnia's leaders specifically need to make progress in three areas: government formation, respect for state institutions and the Dayton Framework, and governmental reform.

Government Formation

The first is state-level government formation. It has been eight months since the elections and this country still does not have a state-level government. Without a broad-based coalition government, Bosnia cannot make the decisions necessary to progress on the Euro-Atlantic reform agenda.

Efforts in the parliament to start the process for appointment of Chairman of the Council of Ministers are a step in the right direction. But it is disappointing that we still have not seen a serious initiative from any political party leader to form a governing coalition.

There is no time to lose. Unless a government is formed soon, the economic consequences will be felt far and wide. Moody's has already downgraded the country's credit rating from "stable" to "negative" due to the stalemate. Deficit spending will result in budget shortfalls in both entities later this year, but the IMF and other international financial institutions have made clear that Bosnia and Herzegovina will not be able to access additional lending until a new state government is in place. Pensioners, veterans and other vulnerable groups whose benefits have already taken a hit will see deeper reductions.

Every day that passes without a government Bosnia and Herzegovina falls further behind its neighbors and increases the risk that Bosnia and Herzegovina will fall off the European path. In this context, it is irresponsible for any party to block formation of a government based on maximalist demands, be it a claim on a certain number of positions in the Council of Ministers or for a specific ministerial appointment. All must be prepared to compromise. Those who refuse to consider any compromise are playing into the hands of those who seek to undermine Bosnia and Herzegovina's capacity to function as a state. I will be meeting this afternoon with some of the major party leaders and will be looking forward to hearing from the constructive ideas about how to form a state-level government in the very near future.

The responsibility to form a government that can advance the well being of the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina should supersede any personal or political concern.

Respect for State Institutions and the Dayton Framework

Second, Bosnia and Herzegovina's politicians need to demonstrate their commitment to the Dayton Framework and their willingness to abide by the decisions of state institutions.

Like other members of the international community, the United States has repeatedly reaffirmed our support for the Dayton framework – one state, two vibrant entities, three constituent peoples – to reassure all the peoples of the country that their future is secure within Bosnia and Herzegovina, and that the goal is a more functional -- not a more centralized -- country, capable of meeting European integration requirements.

Similar efforts at reassurance have been made by some politicians in Sarajevo, including by President Bakir Izetbegovic, who has made conciliatory statements and offered greater flexibility on key reforms required by NATO and the EU. In return, others have intensified separatist rhetoric and sought to undermine Bosnia and Herzegovina's state institutions and OHR.

One of the most recent challenges to the state was the April 13 decision by the RS assembly to call a referendum on High Representative decisions and on the legitimacy of the BiH Court and Prosecutor's Office.

The RS decision to step back from a referendum has headed off an immediate crisis. I hope that the leadership in Banja Luka uses this opportunity to reevaluate its approach—the challenges made by the RS assembly to the Dayton Framework are not acceptable. They are incompatible with the goal of European integration. The leaders and the people of the RS need to decide whether they want to have a relationship with the United States and with Europe or not.

Those who think they can outwait us and our Allies on the Peace Implementation Council Steering Board are wrong. As I have already made clear, the United States has a significant personal and political investment here. We will not give up on Bosnia and Herzegovina or its people.

We will continue to defend and strengthen existing state institutions, like the BiH State Court and Prosecutors Office, which are doing critical work to combat terrorism, organized crime and to bring war criminals to justice; and the Indirect Tax Administration, which had ensured a dedicated revenue stream for the BiH government.

We will continue to promote further reforms, including of the constitution, as are necessary for a functional state and for Bosnia and Herzegovina to meet EU accession requirements. And we will stand behind the High Representative and his decisions. We will not permit the closure of the Office of the High Representative until the agreed reform agenda is completed.

We also welcome the EU's determination to play a leading role in supporting positive change and protecting against threats to stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina. EU High Representative Ashton has named Peter Sorensen, a senior diplomat with 15 years of experience in the Balkans, to lead this EU effort. As Secretary Clinton wrote last week in an article co-authored with UK Foreign Secretary Hague, the United States "will be strongly supportive of Ambassador Sorensen, using all of the levers available to achieve progress, while working in close partnership with the Peace Implementation Council and the Office of the High Representative."

And we will be prepared to take measures against any individuals and organizations that threaten to undermine the stability, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina. All levels of government in Bosnia must accept and respect Dayton.

Governmental Reform

Finally, Bosnia and Herzegovina must move forward with the governmental reforms necessary for NATO and EU integration.

Bosnia and Herzegovina's future lies in its integration into Europe, specifically membership in NATO and the EU. Once the state level government is formed, we expect Bosnia and Herzegovina to move forward quickly to resolve the defense property issue so that it can participate in NATO's Membership Action Plan. The EU has made clear that Bosnia and Herzegovina must take three steps in order to be considered for candidate status: establish a serious process to change the constitution to accommodate the Sejdic-Finci decision, act on state aid provisions, and conduct a census. In addition, Bosnia and Herzegovina needs a well-functioning government at the state level that will have the power to engage effectively with Brussels and to participate effectively in the EU accession process.

We are convinced this is possible while protecting and preserving the decentralized government structures established in the Dayton constitution.

But it will require reform, including of the constitution. The most immediate change necessary to comply with basic EU human rights standards following the European Court of Human Rights ruling in the Sejdic-Finci case. And there will need to be additional changes over the longer term to ensure the state has sufficient functionality and decision-making capacity to comply with EU and NATO standards. Although the EU accession process will be difficult, it is the only viable alternative for this country. Threats to abandon the process or not participate are incompatible with the needs of the people.

Reform is also imperative in the entities. The Federation has far more government than it can afford. Years of mismanagement, corruption and political infighting by the previous government have exacerbated the problem. Last year the government had to adopt emergency austerity measures just to avoid bankruptcy and the new Federation government still faces serious funding issues. The most recent EU progress report singled out the Federation in particular as being incompatible with EU accession criteria.

The new Federation government has gotten off to a good start. It has a fresh opportunity to make progress on privatizations, which have languished for years due to corruption and political infighting, as well as on education and economic reforms.

We regret that the HDZ parties declined to accept a compromise that would have included them in the coalition. No political party can claim the exclusive right to represent an entire ethnic group.

But we also recognize the concerns of those citizens who feel that the new government does not include representatives that they elected or who are committed to representing their interests.

It is incumbent upon the new government to demonstrate that it is acting in the interests of all of the entity's citizens. It is understandable that Bosnian Croats, as the least numerous of the three constituent peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina, are concerned about their status within the Federation. But redrawing new internal boundaries to add a new entity or other layers of complexity to an already overly complicated government is unrealistic. We welcome recent steps by HDZ parties to participate actively in the Federation parliament.

The Republika Srpska faces its own serious economic challenges. The entity has exhausted all of its reserves from the RS telecom and oil refinery privatizations and now faces a \$500 million deficit. Last year the RS economy grew at an anemic 1 percent. The forecast for this year is not much better. Provocative political rhetoric and attacks on the independence of the state judiciary is driving away foreign investment, which is a tenth of what it was just three years ago. The Republika Srpska would be much better off if its leaders focused more improving the economy and thus on serving the needs of the citizens rather than on promoting greater division within the country. A positive step would be to discuss with the Federation ways to harmonize their regulations and to promote inter-entity economic cooperation.

The Path to Europe

These steps together constitute a path toward Europe. If Bosnia and Herzegovina's politicians make the necessary choices and compromises, we will be there to help with resources and political support. As Secretary Clinton said here in October, "The bonds between Bosnia and Herzegovina and the United States have been forged through harsh trials and historic triumphs and today we remain committed."

But you should understand that our commitment will mean little if Bosnia and Herzegovina cannot summon the will to help itself. We stand ready to advise, assist and support, but we cannot do it alone. We need partners who share this vision and who are prepared to compromise for the greater good.

The people of Bosnia and Herzegovina deserve better; they deserve a Euro-Atlantic future. The young people of this country, particularly, want and deserve to join the European mainstream, to travel and work abroad, and to take advantage of all that the modern world has to offer. There are

courageous actors in this country, many of whom are represented at this conference, who understand what needs to be done. Each of you has responsibility to work in interests of all Bosnians and Herzegovinians, to work across ethnic lines, and to avoid feeding ethnic fears. We are confident that, in so doing, you can overcome your divisions and build a European state, just like so many other Europeans before you.

No one can do this for you. But I can tell you that if you try, the United States will be with you every step of the way.

Thank you very much.

4. Gates Says NATO Security Gains in Afghanistan Can Be Sustained (06-10-2011)

By Merle David Kellerhals Jr.
Staff Writer

Washington — Defense Secretary Robert Gates says the gains made in Afghanistan by the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) over the past two years can take root and be sustained over time with proper allied support.

“Far too much has been accomplished, at far too great a cost, to let the momentum slip away just as the enemy is on its back foot,” Gates said in a June 10 speech to the Security and Defense Agenda conference in Brussels. His remarks came at the end of nearly three days of meetings by the NATO defense ministers.

It is Gates’ final meeting with NATO as secretary of defense. After 45 years of government service in the Central Intelligence Agency and the Pentagon, he retires at the end of the month. Current CIA Director Leon Panetta has been nominated by the president to become the next defense secretary and recently completed his confirmation hearing before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. He is not expected to have any opposition in the full Senate.

Gates told security experts that troop-contributing nations must continue supporting the security mission and not withdraw forces on their own timelines because of the risks that would create for other nations’ forces. The United States is considering the size and pace of a troop drawdown beginning in July, but Gates said, “I can tell you there will be no rush to the exits.” That troop drawdown is now being studied by the Defense Department and President Obama, and it will be based on conditions in Afghanistan.

Gates said the vast majority of the U.S. surge forces that arrived in Afghanistan over the past two years will remain through the summer season, and some troops will be reassigned from areas as those areas are transferred to Afghan control.

“As the Taliban attempt their inevitable counterattack designed to increase ISAF casualties and sap international will, now is the time to capitalize on the gains of the past 15 to 18 months — by keeping the pressure on the Taliban and reinforcing military success with improved governance, reintegration, and ultimately political reconciliation,” Gates told the security experts.

Afghanistan has been NATO’s first major test of the 21st century, and it has exposed shortcomings, Gates said: Members of the 28-nation alliance must examine new approaches to procurement,

training, logistics and sustainment to meet the demands placed on a security alliance that is more than a half-century old.

“In the final analysis, there is no substitute for nations providing the resources necessary to have the military capability the alliance needs when faced with a security challenge,” Gates told the conference.

Gates said that the president believes it would be a grave mistake for the United States to withdraw from its global responsibilities. But he also acknowledged that domestic demands for less government spending and smaller government will affect the resources devoted to national security.

“The relevant challenge for us today, therefore, is no longer the total level of defense spending by allies, but how these limited and dwindling resources are allocated and for what priorities,” he said.

DEFENSE MINISTERIAL

During the NATO defense ministers’ meetings, they endorsed a decision to extend the NATO-led coalition air operations over Libya for an additional 90 days from the end of June, NATO Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen said. “This sends a clear signal that NATO will stay the course and will keep up the pressure for as long as it takes to bring this crisis to an early conclusion,” he said June 8.

For the first time in three years, the 29-member NATO-Russia Council defense ministers met to address a range of issues, including work on missile defense, Libya, Afghanistan and shared projects.

The defense ministers discussed the European missile defense plan for the first time since the 2010 Lisbon NATO Summit. The summit set in motion renewed NATO-Russia discussion on theater missile defense, as well as discussions on possible ways to cooperate on territorial missile defense, according to NATO.

“While the defense ministers agreed that NATO and Russia are coming closer to reaching agreement on the key principles which should govern this cooperation, more work will need to be done over the next few months,” a NATO statement said June 8.

The Security and Defence Agenda (Future of NATO)

[As Delivered by Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates](#), Brussels, Belgium, Friday, June 10, 2011

5. U.S. Endorses IAEA Action Against Syria on Nuclear Site (06-10-2011)

By Jeff Baron
Staff Writer

The International Atomic Energy Agency's board, meeting in Vienna, has taken the rare step of sending a violation of its rules to the U.N. Security Council.

Washington — The United States is applauding the effort by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to hold Syria to account as a nuclear scofflaw.

Syria has been under international scrutiny in recent weeks for killing hundreds of people and jailing thousands during peaceful pro-democracy demonstrations. But the action against it June 10 came for something it did in secret years ago: the construction of what the IAEA board of governors says seems to have been a nuclear reactor designed to produce large amounts of weapons-grade plutonium.

An Israeli bombing raid in 2007 destroyed the Dair Alzour site in the Syrian desert.

The IAEA has sent the matter to the U.N. Security Council for further deliberations.

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton called the IAEA board's vote "an important step given the troubling findings in the IAEA's latest report — including Syria's demonstrated refusal to cooperate with the IAEA investigation and its attempts to construct a secret nuclear reactor with the assistance of North Korea. We fully welcome the IAEA's actions today to address this issue with the seriousness it deserves."

Like other signatories to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), Syria has an obligation to cooperate with IAEA investigators and to report its nuclear activities.

"Syria is challenging the authority of the IAEA and the integrity of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty regime," [Clinton said in a statement](#). "The only way Syria can demonstrate that it has come back into full compliance with the NPT is by cooperating with the IAEA and providing the necessary information and access."

[A statement from the White House press secretary](#) said the IAEA board's decision "marks a significant action by the international community to uphold the nonproliferation rules of the road."

"The United States remains determined to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons," the White House statement said. "We will work with partners and allies around the world to stand together to insist that every country meet its responsibilities or be held accountable for its actions."

Daryl Kimball, executive director of the Arms Control Association in Washington, said the IAEA's unusual action reflected "a great deal of frustration" over Syria's failure to respond to the agency's efforts to investigate the reactor site. "We think it's an important step because it demonstrates that failure to comply with IAEA safeguards has consequences," Kimball said. "The next step is for Syria to follow through with its pledge of cooperation."

Kimball said the IAEA action isn't just about Syria: "It's about every country. The IAEA safeguard system is, in many ways, the backbone of the effort to make sure that peaceful nuclear energy is not used for military purposes. And if one country disrespects safeguards, doesn't follow the letter of their obligations, let alone the spirit, then that sets a dangerous precedent."

6. TNC Is Legitimate Representative of Libyan People, Clinton Says (06-09-2011)

By Stephen Kaufman
Staff Writer

Washington — Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton says the United States recognizes Libya's Transitional National Council (TNC) as "the legitimate interlocutor for the Libyan people,"

and is offering its support to the group to help ensure “an inclusive process” when Libya transitions from Muammar Qadhafi’s regime.

Speaking in Abu Dhabi June 9, Clinton said the TNC “is the institution through which we are engaging the Libyan people alongside our work with civil society,” and that the United States wants to see “Libyans coming together to plan their own future and a permanent inclusive constitutional system that will protect the rights of all Libyans.”

The secretary’s remarks came after meetings of the Libya Contact Group, a coalition of Arab and non-Arab representatives that is leading international efforts to support the political transition in Libya. She also met with TNC Executive Bureau Chairman Mahmoud Jibril.

Clinton told reporters there have been “numerous and continuing discussions” between U.S. officials and “people close to Qadhafi,” and the topics include “the potential for a transition,” but she said “there is not any clear way forward yet.”

She announced earlier in the day that the United States is giving \$26.5 million in new humanitarian assistance for people who have been affected by the conflict between Qadhafi’s security forces and the Libyan people. The new funding brings the total amount of U.S. humanitarian assistance to nearly \$81 million.

Clinton also welcomed nearly \$300 million in TNC financial assistance from Kuwait and Qatar through a newly established temporary financial mechanism, and said all of the contact group members are “working to put the TNC on firmer financial footing.”

She said the Obama administration is continuing to provide nonlethal assistance to the TNC and the United States is allowing American companies to buy oil from the council. President Obama has asked the U.S. Congress to pass legislation that will authorize the use of Libyan assets that were frozen under U.S. sanctions.

Clinton said a group of U.S. senators have agreed on a framework that would allow the frozen assets to be used for humanitarian aid in Libya.

U.S. officials “are doing all we can” to help the TNC better organize itself and build governing institutions. Clinton said there have been “very open conversations” between them and TNC representatives. “They know and we know there’s a long road ahead,” she said.

The Obama administration and others in the contact group hope to “help them to improve their capacity to serve as the transition leader of Libya.”

“What we seek are open, fair, legitimate elections ... that will determine what the makeup of the next government of Libya will be,” Clinton said, and the TNC “is in a position to guide and lead that process.”

[Clinton Briefing on Libya Contact Group Meeting](#)
[U.S. Officials’ Briefing on Libya Contact Group Meetings](#)
[Fact Sheet: U.S. Humanitarian Assistance in Libya Crisis](#)

7. U.S. Sanctions Iranian Security Forces for Rights Violations (06-09-2011)

By Jeff Baron
Staff Writer

Washington — The United States is marking the second anniversary of the violent repression of Iran's opposition by imposing sanctions on the security forces involved in the crackdown.

The sanctions announced June 9 against Iran's Islamic Republican Guard Corps, the Basij militia, the national police and police commander Ismail Ahmadi Moghadam are the most recent in a series imposed on Iranian officials and organizations for violations of human rights.

“The United States stands with all Iranians who wish for a government that respects their human rights, their dignity and their freedom, and we call on the Iranian government to end its systematic human rights abuses and political hypocrisy,” [Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton said](#) in a statement. “Today's sanctions reflect our commitment to hold accountable those governments and officials that violate human rights and deprive their citizens of the opportunities and future they deserve.”

“The bite, if you will, of these sanctions is only one element,” State Department deputy spokesman Mark Toner told reporters. “It also sends a clear message that we won't abide by Iran's continued human rights abuses. As I said, we've seen since the June 2009 disputed presidential elections a consistent pattern of abuses going after activists, political parties. And today's efforts, which are part of an exhaustive process, as you know, that the Treasury Department undertakes, are an effort to call international attention to those people.”

Under the sanctions, any property the organizations or Moghadam have an interest in is blocked, and American individuals and companies can't transact business with them. Moghadam and members of the Iranian security forces also will be subject to U.S. visa restrictions.

The sanctions are based on an order issued by President Obama in September 2010 to punish those involved in Iran's human rights abuses since the elections. In a statement, Michael Posner, the assistant secretary of state for democracy, human rights and labor, said the new sanctions “demonstrate that law enforcement agencies not only have a responsibility to enforce the law but also to live up to universal human rights commitments and Iran's own constitution.”

The United Nations, the European Union, the United States and other countries also have sanctioned Iran for violating agreements about its nuclear program. Those sanctions also have hit the Republican Guard Corps and companies it controls, and many top Iranian officials are under visa bans for the European Union as well as the United States.

[Facts on Sanctions Against Iranian Human Rights Abusers](#)
