

INTERNATIONAL SECURITY UPDATE
September 24 - October 1, 2014

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1. [Obama, Military Hail Signing of U.S.-Afghan Agreement \(09-30-2014\)](#)

DoD News, Defense Media Activity

WASHINGTON, Sept. 30, 2014 – Newly sworn-in Afghan President Ashraf Ghani today signed the bilateral security agreement between his government and the United States, as well as a status of forces agreement with NATO.

The agreements mark an historic day in the U.S.-Afghan partnership that will help advance our shared interests and the long-term security of Afghanistan,” President Barack Obama said in a statement released by the White House.

Ghani was sworn into office yesterday and shares power with Abdullah Abdullah, the country’s chief executive, in the new Afghan Government of National Unity.

The signing of the agreements enables U.S. and NATO forces to continue to assist the development of Afghan security forces past the end of this year.

Agreements enable critical missions

“This agreement represents an invitation from the Afghan government to strengthen the relationship we have built over the past 13 years and provides our military service members the necessary legal framework to carry out two critical missions after 2014: targeting the remnants of Al Qaeda and training, advising, and assisting Afghan National Security Forces,” Obama continued.

“The signing of the BSA also reflects the implementation of the Strategic Partnership Agreement our two governments signed in May 2012,” he said.

Also today, Afghan and NATO officials signed the NATO Status of Forces Agreement, giving forces from allied and partner countries the legal protections necessary to carry out the NATO Resolute Support mission when ISAF comes to an end later this year, the president said in his statement.

Agreements follow historic Afghan election

“These agreements follow an historic Afghan election in which the Afghan people exercised their right to vote and ushered in the first peaceful democratic transfer of power in their nation’s history,” Obama said. “The BSA reflects our continued commitment to support the new Afghan Unity Government, and we look forward to working with this new government to cement an enduring partnership that strengthens Afghan sovereignty, stability, unity, and prosperity, and that contributes to our shared goal of defeating Al Qaeda and its extremist affiliates.”

The president also saluted the “extraordinary service of our men and women in uniform who continue to sacrifice so much in Afghanistan on behalf of our security and the Afghan people. The American people are eternally grateful for their efforts.”

Strengthening Afghan forces

In a statement issued today, Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel called the agreements “an important step forward” for Afghanistan’s new government.

These agreements “will enable American and coalition troops to continue to help strengthen Afghan forces, counter terrorist threats, and advance regional security,” Hagel said in his statement.

“As the Afghan people celebrate their nation's first peaceful and democratic transfer of power, I look forward to working with President Ghani, Chief Executive Abdullah, and other members of Afghanistan's new government,” Hagel added.

The defense secretary saluted Army Gen. John F. Campbell, commander of the International Security Assistance Force and U.S. Forces in Afghanistan, and U.S., Afghan and partner nation troops.

“I also thank General Campbell, the men and women of ISAF, and their partners in the Afghan National Security Forces as we bring our combat mission to an end and build an enduring strategic partnership with the people of Afghanistan,” Hagel said.

Chairman hails agreements, praises Afghan forces

Army Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, also welcomed today’s signing of the bilateral security agreement.

"After 12 years of investment and partnership, today's decision by the Afghan government to approve the Bilateral Security Agreement is a welcome one," Dempsey said in a statement issued today. "It validates that we have a willing partner as we move forward and provides certainty of our continued presence there in 2015. It also paves the way for a continuing NATO presence."

Dempsey also praised the Afghan security forces' "tenacity and unity."

"Their success, through two elections and protracted political uncertainty -- is enormous," Dempsey said in his statement. "While they are excellent fighters, their forces are still maturing at the institutional level and our efforts there over the next year will be key to the long-term sustainability of their forces."

Centcom commander congratulates Afghan people

U.S. Central Command commander, Army Gen. Lloyd J. Austin III, congratulated the people of Afghanistan on their "historic, peaceful transfer of power" in a statement released today.

Ghani and Abdullah "are to be commended for their cooperation and shared demonstrated commitment to their country and their fellow citizens," the general said.

There is still difficult work to be done in Afghanistan, particularly with respect to the formation of the national unity government, Austin noted.

"However, I am hopeful that the leadership will do the right things going forward," he continued. "And, certainly today's signing of the Bilateral Security Agreement between the governments of the United States and Afghanistan signaled progress. This pact paves the way for further cooperation and close collaboration between our countries."

The U.S.-Afghanistan partnership "is an important one," Austin said.

"And as we prepare to transition to a traditional security cooperation mission in the coming years, we remain committed to providing the necessary support to our Afghan partners and, in particular, to their national security forces," the general said.

"They have come a long way and are doing an outstanding job taking the fight to the enemy and defending their sovereignty. I am confident that all Afghans will continue to do what is required to seize this historic opportunity and to keep their country safe," Austin said.

Biographies:

[Chuck Hagel](#)

[Army Gen. Lloyd J. Austin III](#)

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2. [Obama: ISIL Presents a Hybrid Threat \(09-29-2014\)](#)

By Jim Garamone
DoD News, Defense Media Activity

WASHINGTON, Sept. 29, 2014 – The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant is a hybrid threat, President Barack Obama said last night on the CBS program “60 Minutes.”

ISIL is a terror network with territorial ambitions and some of the strategy and tactics of an army, Obama told reporter Steve Kroft.

While the group is a threat regionally and possibly at home, “This is not America against ISIL,” the president said.

“This is America leading the international community to assist a country with whom we have a security partnership with to make sure that they are able to take care of their business,” he added.

The United States and coalition partners are providing airstrikes, supplies, training and assistance to Iraqi and Kurdish forces. The United States has launched airstrikes against ISIL targets in Syria. American service members are advising and assisting Iraqi forces and are beginning the process of training Syrian moderates. All this will take time, Obama said.

A generational challenge

“I think this is going to be a generational challenge,” the president said. “I don’t think that this is something that’s going to happen overnight.”

Changing the way people think and relate to each other is the heart of a solution, Obama said. “What our military operations can do,” he added, “is to just check and roll back these networks as they appear and make sure that the time and space is provided for a new way of doing things to begin to take root.”

The U.S. intelligence community underestimated ISIL, and intelligence analysts overestimated the fighting capabilities of Iraqi forces, the president said.

The new Iraqi unity government led by Prime Minister Haidr al-Abadi is a good start, the president said, but he emphasized that it’s only a start.

Not just a military problem

“We cannot do this for them, because it’s not just a military problem, it is a political problem,” Obama said. “And if we make the mistake of simply sending U.S. troops back in, we can maintain

peace for a while. But unless there is a change in not just Iraq, but countries like Syria and some of the other countries in the region, think about what political accommodation means and think about what tolerance means.”

The world is paying attention and participating, the president said, noting that Arab nations are joining the United States, Britain, France, Belgium and others in airstrikes against ISIL.

Yet while other nations participate, Obama said, America leads. “We are the indispensable nation,” the president said. “We have capacity no one else has. Our military is the best in the history of the world. And when trouble comes up anywhere in the world, they don't call Beijing, they don't call Moscow. They call us. That’s the deal.”

And the United States will answer, Obama said. When there are disasters in the world or when war threatens, the world turns to the United States.

“That's how we roll, and that's what makes this America,” he said.

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[‘Decisive’ Air Power Thwarts ISIL’s Capabilities, Official Says](#)

3. U.S. Rejects Russia’s Discrimination against Crimean Minorities (09-29-2014)

Warsaw, Poland — The U.S. delegation publicly rejected the Russian Federation’s targeted discrimination against Tatars and other ethnic minorities in Crimea during the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe’s (OSCE’s) September 29 Human Dimension Implementation Meeting session on national minorities. The meeting is held against the backdrop of threats to the fundamental principles upon which European security and the OSCE itself were founded, including key commitments on the rights of persons belonging to national minorities.

U.S. Head of Delegation Brian Atwood stated his strong recommendation that the Russian Federation end its siege on human rights in Crimea, including its discrimination against minorities and its characterization of Crimean Tatars as extremists.

Recent attempts by the Russian Federation Ministry of Foreign Affairs to smear Crimean Tatars as “extremists” underscore the long-standing practice of applying broadly worded anti-extremism laws to target individuals as well as ethnic and religious groups with which Russian authorities do not agree. Unfortunately, human rights in Crimea continue to dramatically deteriorate for those who oppose Russian occupation or are members of ethnic or religious minorities.

Atwood concluded that the United States rejects the application of Russia’s repressive laws in Crimea. The United States does not and will not recognize Russia’s unilateral attempt to “annex” Crimea.

4. Operation United Assistance Helps in Liberian Ebola Fight (09-29-2014)

By Cheryl Pellerin

DoD News, Defense Media Activity

WASHINGTON, Sept. 29, 2014 – The Defense Department’s contribution to the fight against Ebola in Liberia is taking shape as more service members and building supplies arrive in Monrovia, Pentagon spokesman Army Col. Steve Warren said here today.

DoD is working in support of the U.S. Agency for International Development, or USAID, the lead agency for the U.S. government's range of efforts against the Ebola outbreak in West Africa.

According to the World Health Organization, or WHO, the ministries of health in Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia have reported 6,553 probable, confirmed and suspected cases of Ebola virus disease and 3,083 deaths in the Ebola outbreak as of Sept. 23.

Among the three nations, WHO notes, Liberia has reported the highest number of cases, at 3,458, and deaths, at 1,830.

U.S. service members in Monrovia

Warren said that about 150 U.S. service members are now in the Liberian capital Monrovia, conducting a range of activities in support of USAID, as U.S. Africa Command sets up a joint force command headquarters there to support U.S. military activities.

Army Maj. Gen. Darryl A. Williams, commander of U.S. Army Africa, Africom's Army component, commands the joint center and Operation United Assistance.

Warren said a 25-bed hospital arrived over the weekend, its parts distributed among three C-17 aircraft. The hospital, which he said came from Kelly Air Force Base in San Antonio, will be dedicated to treating health care workers who become infected with Ebola.

"There's a groundbreaking ceremony scheduled for today," Warren added, "and we expect the 25-bed hospital will be up and running sometime in the middle of October."

Forty more personnel also arrived over the weekend, he said. Thirty-four will be dedicated to setting up the hospital, and six will set up a mobile laboratory.

Ebola treatment units forthcoming

"We are planning to set up 17 Ebola treatment units, each with a 100-bed capacity," Warren said. "These have not yet begun to flow in, but we do anticipate having the initial units set up and functional in the next several weeks." As they are completed, he added, the units will be turned over to the Liberian government and staffed by local and international health care providers, not by military personnel.

WHO reported that 360 Ebola treatment beds were available in Monrovia as of Sept. 21. Completing the 17 new units will add 1,700 more treatment beds to help the desperately sick population in that city and beyond.

Warren said the Operation United Assistance personnel also will set up a training facility for health care workers near Monrovia, as well as an intermediate staging base in Senegal.

"The president has made it very clear that this is a national security priority," Warren said. "The Department of Defense is moving as fast as it possibly can to support USAID in this effort."

Global Health Security Agenda

On Sept. 26, President Barack Obama hosted representatives of 44 countries at the White House for a summit on the Global Health Security Agenda.

The GHSA encompasses a group of capabilities that all countries eventually must have to make the world safer and more secure. As nations gain capabilities, such as disease surveillance and reporting, they will be able to act together as an international community to prevent, detect and respond to all infectious disease outbreaks.

“Ebola will not be the last biological threat we face,” the chair of the GHSA, this year the United States, said in a statement released after the summit.

“Even today, in other parts of the world, highly pathogenic avian influenza, the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome coronavirus, and drug-resistant bacteria continue to pose serious threats to the health and well-being of all people,” the statement said.

“The same resolve we are demonstrating in the face of Ebola,” it added, “must be sustained so that robust health systems are in place to enable a more rapid and effective response to the next outbreak, no matter what the source.”

The summit announced over 100 new commitments to implement 11 action packages, including specific targets and indicators that will be used as a basis for making sure that national, regional and global capacities are developed and maintained over the long term.

The action packages and commitments made to them will form the core GHSA work over the next five years, the statement said.

Grand Challenge for Development

After the summit, Obama announced a Grand Challenge to help health care workers fight Ebola. On Sept. 27, USAID Administrator Rajiv Shah posted a notice about it on his blog.

“This Grand Challenge for Development will unite the global community in the quest for ingenious ideas that deliver practical and cost-effective innovations in a matter of months, not years,” he wrote.

He asked for new ideas to help ensure that treatment sites, communal transport units and burial sites don’t become infection sources, and for new solutions that strengthen the safety and increase the comfort of protective suits worn by health care workers -- from improving the fabric design to measuring a health worker's temperature and heart rate.

“We need new ways to simplify clinical processes, including point-of-care diagnostics. And we need new tools that continue to create a safer clinical environment, including improving infection control and waste disposal,” Shah wrote.

With international partners, he added, the United States will translate the expertise and ingenuity of scientists, innovators, engineers and students worldwide into real solutions.

“With your bold thinking and engagement we can give health workers the tools they need to win this fight,” Shah said.

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[Obama: U.S. to Lead on Global Health Security Challenge](#)

[Obama: U.N. Will Mobilize Countries to Fight Ebola Outbreak](#)

[Obama Details Major Increase in U.S. Ebola Response](#)

5. President Obama: America Is Leading the World (09-27-2014)

In his weekly address September 27, President Obama reiterated the forceful and optimistic message of American leadership that he delivered in his speech before the United Nations General Assembly earlier in the week. America, he said, is leading the world against the most-pressing challenges, including the fight to degrade and destroy ISIL, the effort to stop the Ebola epidemic and the movement to confront the threat from climate change.

Remarks of President Barack Obama

Weekly Address: America Is Leading the World

Hi, everybody. American leadership is the one constant in an uncertain world. That was true this week, as we mobilized the world to confront some of our most urgent challenges.

America is leading the world in the fight to degrade and ultimately destroy the terrorist group known as ISIL. On Monday, our brave men and women in uniform began air strikes against ISIL targets in Syria. And they weren't alone. I made it clear that America would act as part of a broad coalition, and we were joined in this action by friends and partners, including Arab nations. At the United Nations in New York, I worked to build more support for this coalition; to cut off terrorist financing; and to stop the flow of foreign fighters into and out of that region. And in my address to the UN, I challenged the world -- especially Muslim communities -- to reject the ideology of violent extremism, and to do more to tap the extraordinary potential of their young people.

America is leading the effort to rally the world against Russian aggression in Ukraine. Along with our allies, we will support the people of Ukraine as they develop their democracy and economy. And this week, I called upon even more nations to join us on the right side of history.

America is leading the fight to contain and combat the Ebola epidemic in West Africa. We're deploying our doctors and scientists -- supported by our military -- to help corral the outbreak and pursue new treatments. From the United Kingdom and Germany to France and Senegal, other nations are stepping up their efforts, too, sending money, supplies, and personnel. And we will continue to rally other countries to join us in making concrete commitments to fight this disease, and enhance global health security for the long-term.

America is engaging more partners and allies than ever to confront the growing threat of climate change before it's too late. We're doing our part, and helping developing nations do theirs. At home, we've invested in clean energy, cut carbon pollution, and created new jobs in the process. Abroad, our climate assistance now reaches more than 120 nations. And on Tuesday, I called on every nation -- developed and developing alike -- to join us in this effort for the sake of future generations.

The people of the world look to us to lead. And we welcome that responsibility. We are heirs to a proud legacy of freedom. And as we showed the world this week, we are prepared to do what is necessary to secure that legacy for generations to come.

Thanks, and have a great weekend.

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[Kerry at Global Health Security Agenda Summit](#)

[U.S. Envoy to U.N. Power on Efforts against Ebola](#)

[Facts on Global Health Security and Epidemic Threats](#)

[Press Briefing on ISIL by Hagel, General Dempsey](#)

6. Kerry: Afghanistan's Triumph of Statesmanship, Compromise (09-27-2014)

The following op-ed by Secretary of State Kerry was published in the Washington Post September 27.

Afghanistan's Triumph of Statesmanship and Compromise

By John Kerry

On Monday in Kabul, the Afghan people will inaugurate their next president, one who will work in tandem with the country's first-ever chief executive officer — marking the first democratic transfer of power in Afghanistan's history and the first peaceful leadership transition in more than 40 years.

This moment was not easily arrived at, and it belongs primarily to the millions who courageously went to the polls to vote in April and June in defiance of Taliban threats. The voters' message was unequivocal: No improvised explosive device and no suicide bomber would stand in the way of their country's democratic future. The moment belongs also to Ashraf Ghani and Abdullah Abdullah, two statesmen who put their country's interests first and came together to form a government of national unity following a very contentious election.

The United States supported a credible, transparent and inclusive electoral process without favoring any particular candidate. It was precisely because of our clear neutrality and commitment to the Afghan democratic process that both sides invited our support when serious allegations of electoral fraud emerged after the runoff election. Of course we helped the candidates address both the electoral fraud and the potentially dangerous political divide that the candidates were facing, but Afghans and Afghans alone made the tough decisions.

And for those at home who are quick to question Afghanistan's democracy, they might ask themselves whether they believe that — in less than 90 days — two U.S. presidential candidates could transform a bitter and hotly contested campaign into a unity government with an exceptionally strong mandate to govern. (Flipping the pages of our own history back to the 2000 election, the answer might provoke some humility or at least some perspective on how difficult it can be.) No, the process wasn't simple. Yes, there were many high-wire moments when it seemed just as likely that Afghanistan's political future could lurch in dangerous directions. But in the end, statesmanship and compromise triumphed. Perhaps Washington could take a lesson from Kabul.

Where do we go from here? Afghanistan's new government is built on a common vision for economic reform, honest government, security and peace. Both Ghani and Abdullah ran their campaigns on platforms of inclusive, broad-based government. The government of national unity is their way of honoring those promises.

Those promises must now be met in actions, not words. The tough decisions among Afghans did not end with the unity government or with this inauguration — in fact, they're only beginning. The Afghan people and their new government face serious economic and security challenges. Continued U.S. and international assistance, along with the economic reforms that Afghanistan's new political leaders promised, will help the country ameliorate its budget shortfall. President Ghani and CEO Abdullah promised their voters that they would sign the U.S.-Afghanistan Bilateral Security Agreement as one of their first acts in office. It will provide the legal framework for the United States to continue to train, advise and assist Afghan national security forces, so Afghanistan will never again be a haven for terrorists.

But even as the path ahead is challenging, we already have proof of concept that Afghanistan can beat the odds: Just look at the important strides in the past decade. Afghans are living longer and healthier lives, girls are in school and a remarkable free media keeps citizens informed. Afghan troops are fighting and dying for their country, but they are holding ground. Together with the international community, the security and economic assistance we pledged in Chicago and Tokyo will be crucial to that progress in the next decade.

The gains of the past decade — for the security of our country and our allies and in the lives of the Afghan people — have been won with blood and treasure. They must not be lost. I reminded the men who now lead Afghanistan that we were committed to their country for the long haul but that we measured that commitment in our ability to credibly look a combat-disabled American veteran or a Gold Star mother in the eye and tell them that, going forward, Afghans themselves would compromise and govern as selflessly and effectively as Americans fought and sacrificed for them and with them the past 10 years. Our job now is to support Afghanistan for the Afghans — and to stay committed to a country of people who believe in a better future with an inclusive government that serves them all. Even as this political transition concludes and as Afghanistan takes responsibility for its own security, we must continue to support that aspiration.

Related Articles:

[Kerry on New Leadership in Afghanistan](#) (09-29-2014)

[7. Kerry: Under U.S. Leadership, World Will Defeat ISIS \(09-26-2014\)](#)

This commentary by Secretary of State John Kerry was originally published in the Boston Globe on September 26.

The United States has long faced threats from a lethal brand of terrorism that perverts one of world's great religions. We have been relentless in targeting Al Qaeda and its affiliates, but the Islamic State, also known as ISIS or ISIL, now poses a profound and unique threat to the entire world.

What we are confronting is nothing less than a violent extremist enterprise. It has employed violence, intimidation, and genocidal brutality to impose its will across large swaths of Syria and Iraq. The Islamic State controls more territory than Al Qaeda ever has, which means it has access to money on an unprecedented scale to finance its mayhem.

With American leadership, the world is responding with a unity that shows these criminals that we will not allow them to divide us or force their nihilistic vision on helpless people, regardless of ethnicity, religion, or nationality. On Wednesday [September 24], the United Nations Security

Council unanimously passed a resolution condemning the gross abuses carried out by the Islamic State in Syria and Iraq.

There is a vigorous international debate under way about what it means to destroy the Islamic State, about how effective and resilient the growing coalition will be, and about how the strategy will unfold in the coming months.

Here at home, I understand why Americans are weary about U.S. involvement in the volatile Middle East. People are right to ask tough questions, and we have a responsibility to answer them.

I am proud to work for a president who asks questions before using military force because, after all, I remember the words of the conservative Edmund Burke: “a conscientious man would be careful how he deals in blood.”

Let’s start by explaining what this fight is not. It is not a clash of civilizations. Muslim scholars are outraged about the Islamic State’s brutality and perversion of Islam, calling its savagery deviant and heretical. Sunni and Shiite alike have joined forces against this outrage. The coalition represents a unified response, as evidenced by the remarkable and unprecedented participation of five Arab countries in the air strikes in Syria. And that’s just the beginning. There is a role for every nation, from helping to dry up outside funding and stopping the flow of foreign fighters to taking direct military action and providing humanitarian assistance.

This is not the prelude to another U.S. ground war in the Middle East. President Obama has said repeatedly that U.S. ground troops will not engage in combat roles. He means it. I volunteered to serve and fought in a war I came to believe was a mistake. I take that lesson seriously. This will not be another one of those interventions.

Finally, this campaign is not about helping President Bashar Assad of Syria. We are not on the same side as Assad — in fact, he is a magnet that has drawn foreign fighters from dozens of countries to Syria. As the president has said, Assad lost legitimacy a long time ago. We are embarking on an important effort to train and equip vetted members of Syria’s opposition who are fighting the Islamic State and the regime at the same time. By degrading the Islamic State and providing training and arms to the moderates, we will promote conditions that can lead to a negotiated settlement that ends this conflict.

So how do the United States and the more than 60 countries that have joined the effort so far succeed? Military action is a key component of the campaign. The Islamic State rules at the barrel of a gun and the blade of a knife, and that’s the only language its adherents seem to understand. But as the president said, America is not in this fight alone. Iraqi and Kurdish troops are fighting on the ground now, and over the months the moderates in Syria will become a more effective force as we provide training, equipment, and military advice.

But our strategy is broader. One important step is reducing the number of foreign fighters flocking to the black flag of the Islamic State. These foreigners, including many from the United States, pose an immediate danger on the battlefield and a longer-term threat if they are allowed to return to their home countries. So every country must detect and disrupt the recruitment by the Islamic State, because keeping fighters from making it to the war is more effective than taking them out after they arrive. And every country must increase its vigilance in monitoring those who return from the battlefield.

We must work to strangle the Islamic State's funding. The Islamic State has reaped millions of dollars from its sales of pirated oil, extortion rackets, and illegal taxes on businesses in the territory it controls. Ending its taxes and extortion will require winning back territory, but the world can act now to dry up the black market for the oil the Islamic State is smuggling across parts of Iraq, Syria, Turkey, and Iran. The illicit oil provides a large share of the Islamic State's financing for its terror and there are forceful steps we can take to disrupt it.

The evil that the Islamic State represents is not something that Iraq or the region can take on alone. We face a common threat and it requires a common response. Acting together, with clear objectives and strong will, we can protect the innocent, contain the danger, and demonstrate that our ideals are more powerful than those who seek to impose their warped beliefs at the point of a gun. The Islamic State is odious, but it is far from omnipotent — it will be defeated.

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8. Kerry at Friends of Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty Ministerial Meeting (09-26-2014)

Secretary of State John Kerry at the Friends of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Ministerial, United Nations Headquarters, New York, New York

SECRETARY KERRY: Thank you, Fumio. Thank you very, very much. Mr. Secretary-General, let me begin by thanking you for an extraordinary week here at the United Nations. I think this has been an UNGA that's been as seized with the issues of the day as forcefully and as directly as at any time, and we're very appreciative for all of the UN's efforts to make that happen. And I can tell you that everybody here with respect to the CTBT will say "Ban forever," I promise you. (Laughter.)

It's a privilege to join the friends of the CTBT ministerial because we are here in pursuit of a very noble goal, and that is to ensure that one day our children and our grandchildren will live in a world where the very real threat of nuclear weapons is a subject to be read about in the history books and not in the newspapers, not as a matter of daily currency. And I am mindful of what Fumio said about representing the one country in the world that has seen nuclear weapons in time of war. We learned, all of us, the awesome power that we've sought to contain ever since that time, and I believe it is containable. And I might say that I'm proud that President Obama has been pushing to reduce America's arsenal along with Russia, and that we did manage to pass, when I was in the Senate, the START Treaty.

But the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban treaty has thus far eluded for various reasons. It remains a critical part of our effort to strip the world of these weapons. Some people don't think that's possible. I don't agree. It's interesting when you have Henry Kissinger, George Shultz, former secretaries of Defense and State all joining together saying it is possible. So people need, obviously, to embrace the notion that how we resolve conflicts has to change dramatically. That's the purpose

of the UN. How we deal with each other has to change. But if we lose the ability to envision that change, we lose something very special in the human spirit, and I think everybody here understands what I mean. We have to believe in the possibility of changing the way we resolve conflict, and if we do, then deterrence by nuclear weapons is something that can change.

So any time we work cooperatively to address the threat of nuclear weapons, we do make the world a safer place, and I have said to people who are doubters about the capacity to take this deterrence away – I've said to them, "Every step you take towards it – whether you get there tomorrow or in 50 years or what – makes the world a safer place. There is no question about that."

The interim agreement that we struck with Iran, the P5+1, has made the world safer because a nuclear stockpile that was at 20 percent has been reduced to 1 – and nothing. And inspections are taking place and there is greater certainty about possibilities than there was before it went into place. And it remains our fervent hope that Iran and the P5+1 can in the next weeks come to an agreement that would benefit the world and it would deal, ultimately, with the issues that are contained in the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty.

So I come here to reiterate the Obama Administration's unshakable commitment to seeing this treaty ratified and entered into force. And though we have not yet succeeded in ratifying it for pure political, ideological reasons – not substance, I assure you – we nevertheless are pledged to live by it, and we do live by it, and we will live by it.

Last week, U.S. Secretary of Energy Ernie Moniz made clear a very compelling case for the value of stockpile stewardship in the context of this treaty. And I'll say just a word about our commitment to the verification regime. Part of that commitment means engaging the American people, our citizens, on the treaty's merits. And I know some members of the United States Senate still have concerns about this treaty. I believe they can be addressed by science, by facts, through computers and the technology we have today coupled with a legitimate stockpile stewardship program.

So let me be crystal-clear about what this treaty is and what it isn't. This treaty is about diminishing our reliance on nuclear weapons. It's about reducing dangerous competition among nuclear powers. It's about responsible disarmament, and ultimately it's about advancing international peace and security by building a different structure on which we can all rely.

I also want to be clear about what this treaty isn't. This treaty isn't just a feel-good exercise. It's in all of our national security interests, and it's verifiable. In fact, its verification regime is one of the great accomplishments of the modern world. The international monitoring system is nearly complete; it is robust, it is effective, and it has contributed critical scientific data on everything from tsunami warnings to tracking radioactivity and nuclear reactor accidents.

What this treaty does is simple: It sets standards and enforces the kind of verification measures that the United States already has in place, and that's why we remain a strong supporter of the treaty. And we continue to be the single largest contributor to its budget. In fact, we've already provided more than 40 million above our assessment over the past two years. As the United States Senate considers ratification, it will require assurances not only that an effective, operational, and sustainable verification regime is in place, but that other nations are committed to sustaining it. That's why we urge the seven other Annex II states to accelerate their efforts to ratify the treaty and urge all signatory states to provide the resources necessary to complete the verification regime. Let me be clear: There is no reason for the Annex II states to wait for the United States before completing their own ratification process, and this treaty is a national security imperative for all of us.

So I close by just saying that President Obama and I believe that this time we're living in, with all the conflict of ISIL and failed and failing states and Ebola and conflicts that we wish did not exist, still could become an age of construction, not destruction. A lot of that depends on the people in this room and on the leaders who are not here but were here this week, and it certainly depends on our willingness to fulfill a promise to our children and what they will inherit.

So we have to act with courage in the months ahead – days, weeks, and months ahead, and we know that our goal of a nuclear-free world may be a lofty one. But believe me, it is absolutely one worth fighting for, especially in an age where dirty bombs and nuclear materials and all of these other dangers exist. We would be better off, clearly, emphasizing the passage of the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty so that we will never again see additional nuclear powers, and so that the existing nuclear powers will continue to move to eliminate these weapons from Earth.

Thank you, Mr. Secretary-General. (Applause.)

Related Articles:

[State Dept. Briefing on Trilateral Talks on Iran Nuclear Program](#)

9. G7 Foreign Ministers' Joint Statement on Ukraine (09-25-2014)

The foreign ministers of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States and the High Representative of the European Union issue a joint statement September 25 on the situation in Ukraine.

We, the Foreign Ministers of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, the United States and the High Representative of the European Union, express our continued grave concern on the situation in eastern Ukraine.

We welcome the Minsk agreements of 5 and 19 September as an important step towards a sustainable, mutually agreed cease-fire, a secure Russian-Ukrainian border and the return of peace and stability to eastern Ukraine with the establishment of a “special status” zone, which is to be empowered with a strong local self-government under Ukrainian law. We condemn the ongoing violations of the ceasefire agreement.

The ceasefire agreement offers an important opportunity to find a durable political solution to the conflict, in full respect of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Russia must immediately meet its own commitments of the Minsk agreement, including by withdrawing all of its forces, weapons and equipment from Ukraine; securing and respecting the international border between the two countries with OSCE monitoring; and ensuring that all hostages are released. Russia must also ensure that all commitments of the Minsk agreement be met and the political process within Ukraine continues. We commend the efforts Ukraine has made to implement its responsibilities under the Minsk agreement, such as passing legislation on amnesty and a “special status” for parts of eastern Ukraine.

We commend the OSCE's key role through the Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) and within the Trilateral Contact Group in helping de-escalate the crisis. The OSCE has been assigned a crucial role as the monitoring mechanism in the implementation of the Minsk agreement, which we fully support. We call on all OSCE states to help provide the organization all support necessary to fulfill

these responsibilities, and to support an expansion of the SMM. We urge the Governments of Russia and Ukraine to fully facilitate and support this expansion.

We reiterate our condemnation of Russia's illegal attempted annexation of Crimea.

We reiterate our condemnation of the downing of the Malaysia Airlines aircraft on 17 July 2014 with the loss of 298 innocent lives and welcome the internationally respected recent publication of the preliminary report on the tragedy. We call for immediate, safe and unrestricted access to the crash site to enable independent experts to swiftly conclude their investigations, also in order to hold accountable those responsible for the event.

On the threshold of the coming winter, Ukraine faces difficult economic and social challenges, partially caused by the conflict forced upon the country. We commit ourselves to help Ukraine to recover from this massive economic setback and to rebuild its economy. To this end we will closely work together and coordinate with other donors and international financial institutions. We welcome the upcoming donors' and investors' conferences organized by Ukraine with the support of the European Union. We encourage the Ukrainian leadership to continue with necessary political, economic and rule of law-related reforms. We trust that the early parliamentary elections will be free, fair and fully in line with international standards.

We stand united in the expectation that this crisis will be solved with respect for international law, and Ukraine's sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence. In the course of the past weeks, we have put in place additional coordinated sanctions affecting Russia. Sanctions are not an end in themselves; they can only be rolled back when Russia meets its commitments related to the cease fire and the Minsk agreements and respects Ukraine's sovereignty. In case of adverse action, however, we remain ready to further intensify the costs on Russia for non-compliance.

We welcome the ratification of the Association Agreement and Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) by the European Parliament and the Verkhovna Rada on 16 September. In accordance with the agreement reached at the trilateral meeting between the EU, Ukraine and Russia on 12 September on the implementation of the DCFTA, the EU intends to postpone the provisional application of the trade-related provisions until 31 December 2015, while maintaining the EU's autonomous trade measures to the benefit of Ukraine, as agreed upon at the trilateral meeting between the EU, Ukraine and Russia on 12 September. This will help stabilize the Ukrainian economy in this difficult time. We welcome that the trilateral talks between Ukraine, Russia and the EU will continue. It is equally important to continue the discussions between Russia, Ukraine and the EU on resolving outstanding energy issues.

Related Articles:

[United with Ukraine: Hope, Progress, and the Challenging Road Ahead](#)

10. State Dept. on Designations of Foreign Terrorist Fighters (09-24-2014)

U.S. Department of State, Office of the Spokesperson

As part of the effort to counter the threats posed by foreign terrorist fighters, the Department of State has designated ten individuals and two groups as Specially Designated Global Terrorists (SDGT) under Executive Order (E.O.) 13224, which imposes sanctions and penalties on terrorists and those providing support to terrorists or acts of terrorism. As a result of the designations, all property subject to U.S. jurisdiction in which these individuals or groups have any interest is

blocked and U.S. persons are generally prohibited from engaging in any transactions with them or to their benefit.

Formed in February 2013, **Jaish al-Muhajireen wal-Ansar (JAMWA)** is a Chechen-led terrorist organization based in Syria that consists primarily of foreign fighters. Cooperating with other violent extremist organizations in Syria, including al-Nusrah Front and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), JAMWA has launched deadly assaults against civilian communities, and kidnapped civilians and other foreigners in Syria.

Formed in August 2013, **Harakat Sham al-Islam (HSI)** is a Moroccan-led terrorist organization operating in Syria principally composed of foreign fighters. HSI has carried out terrorist attacks and engaged in kidnappings against civilians with other violent extremist organizations in Syria, including al-Nusrah Front.

As of mid-July 2014, **Amru al-Absi** was selected as ISIL's provincial leader for Homs, Syria, in the Aleppo region. As a principal leader of ISIL in Syria, he has been in charge of kidnappings.

Salim Benghalem is a Syria-based French extremist and ISIL member, who carries out executions on behalf of the group. In 2007, Salim was convicted and sentenced to prison in France for a 2001 murder. Today, Benghalem is the subject of a European arrest warrant because of his activities on behalf of ISIL.

In May 2013, **Mohammed Abdel-Halim Hemaida Saleh** was arrested in Egypt by authorities for plotting to attack Western embassies in Cairo. Saleh is a member of al-Qa'ida and believes in conducting attacks against American and Israeli interests. As of mid-2013, Saleh had been recruiting suicide bombers to send to Syria and had been planning terrorist activities against unspecified targets in Europe.

Lavdrim Muhaxheri is a Kosovar Albanian foreign fighter for ISIL who operates in both Syria and Iraq. Muhaxheri made international headlines in July 2014 after uploading to Facebook graphic photos of himself beheading a young man.

Murad Margoshvili is a well-known Chechen leader in Syria who built a terrorist training base in Syria near the Turkish border, where newly arrived foreign fighters received combat training. He is also the leader of Junud al-Sham, a militant group that fights alongside other extremist groups in Syria.

Nusret Imamovic is a Bosnian terrorist leader operating in Syria. After his arrival, Imamovic actively supported violent extremism, and is now believed to be fighting with al-Nusrah Front.

Muhannad al-Najdi is a Syria-based al-Qa'ida facilitator of Saudi nationality. Prior to traveling to Syria in 2013, al-Najdi was involved in facilitation and operational planning in support of attacks in Afghanistan. Since at least 2010, al-Najdi has also been involved in the development of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) for use in Afghanistan and Syria.

Abdessamad Fateh, also known as Abu Hamza, is a member of a Scandinavia-based network of extremists allegedly linked to al-Qa'ida, and has traveled to Syria.

Abd al-Baset Azzouz has had a presence in Afghanistan, the United Kingdom, and Libya. He was sent to Libya in 2011 by al-Qa'ida leader Ayman al-Zawahiri to build a fighting force there, and

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mobilized approximately 200 fighters. He is considered a key operative capable of training al-Qa'ida recruits in a variety of skills, such as IED construction.

Maalim Salman was chosen by now-deceased al-Shabaab leader Ahmed Abdi aw-Mohamed (aka Godane) to be the head of African foreign fighters for al-Shabaab. He has trained foreign nationals who were seeking to join al-Shabaab as foreign fighters, and has been involved in operations in Africa targeting tourists, "entertainment establishments," and churches.

Additionally, the Department of State has nominated several previously-designated foreign terrorist fighters and related entities at the UN 1267/1989 al-Qa'ida Sanctions Committee, including Abdallah Azzam Brigades, Ansar al-Shari'a in Tunisia, Seifallah Ben Hassine, Ibrahim Suleiman Hamad Al-Hablain, Ahmed Abdullah Saleh al-Khazmari al-Zahrani, Azzam Abdullah Zureik Al-Maulid Al-Subhi, and Anders Cameroon Ostensvig Dale. Maalim Salman was also listed at the UN Somalia Sanctions Committee today.
