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The Homeland Security News Briefing

TO: THE SECRETARY AND SENIOR STAFF

DATE: SUNDAY, APRIL 17, 2016 7:00 AM EDT

TODAY'S TABLE OF CONTENTS

LEADING DHS NEWS:

- + [SCOTUS To Hear Oral Arguments On Obama's Immigration Executive Actions Monday.](#)
- + [Carter, Sources: US Seeks To Intensify Effort Against ISIL.](#)
- + [District Judge Seals Most Records In Court Case Involving Petraeus.](#)

IMMIGRATION:

- + [NYTimes: SCOTUS Should Rule For Administration In Immigration Case.](#)
- + [NHCLC President: SCOTUS Should Protect "Vulnerable" Immigrants.](#)

US COAST GUARD:

- + [Coast Guard Rescues Three From Sailboat Near Savannah, Georgia.](#)

OFFICE OF HEALTH AFFAIRS:

- + [CDC: Only 4 Percent Of Nearly 5,000 Travelers Screened Tested Positive For Zika.](#)

TERRORISM INVESTIGATIONS:

- + [Saudi Arabia Threatens To Sell Up To \\$750 Billion Of US Assets Over 9/11 Bill.](#)
- + [Cotton: Obama "Minimizes" Terrorism Threat.](#)
- + [Benghazi Panel Report Could Be Released Before Conventions.](#)
- + [WPost Analysis: US Special Operations Play Central Role Helping Foreign Forces.](#)
- + [Judge: Administration Cannot Deport Convicted Terrorist To Pakistan.](#)
- + [Two European Parliament Drivers Found With ISIL Propaganda.](#)
- + [US Transfers Nine Yemeni Detainees From Gitmo To Saudi Arabia.](#)
- + [Inmate In New York Terror Case Hospitalized In Coma After Suicide Attempt.](#)

COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM:

- + [US Attorneys Reassure Muslims Of Commitment To Fighting Anti-Islamic Backlash.](#)

NATIONAL SECURITY NEWS:

- + [State Department Seeks To Increase Pace Of Resettling Syrian Refugees In US.](#)
- + [Pope Francis Brings Three Syrian Refugee Families To Vatican.](#)
- + [WPost: US, EU Must Continue To Pressure Ukraine On Reforms.](#)
- + [Zarif: Iran, EU Will "Put Pressure" On US To Help Tehran Enter Global Financial System.](#)
- + [Cuba's Castro Dismisses Idea Of Implementing Capitalist System.](#)
- + [Families Of Americans Arrested In Egypt, UAE Upset By Administration's Inaction.](#)
- + [Russian Aircraft Intercepts US Plane.](#)
- + [NYTimes Analysis: Cold War-Era Tensions Emerge In New Nuclear Arms Build-Up.](#)
- + [IMF Panel Promises "More Forceful" Policies To Promote Growth.](#)
- + [NYTimes Analysis: Shipping, Aviation Under Pressure To Cut Emissions.](#)
- + [Doha Meeting Threatened By Regional Political Rivalries.](#)
- + [UN Confirms New Sexual Abuse Allegations Against Soldiers In Congo.](#)
- + [Magnitude-7.8 Earthquake Kills 77 In Ecuador.](#)

- + [Death Toll From Japan Earthquake Rises To 41.](#)
- + [Greece's Creditors Propose Contingency Measures For Bailout.](#)
- + [Hollande's Approval Rating At Historic Low.](#)
- + [NYTimes: EU, US Must Convince Poland To Curb Anti-Democratic Behavior.](#)

Leading DHS News:

SCOTUS TO HEAR ORAL ARGUMENTS ON OBAMA'S IMMIGRATION EXECUTIVE ACTIONS

MONDAY. [The Hill](#) (4/16, Fabian, 862K) reports the Supreme Court hearings on President Obama's executive actions on immigration will be "critical" for his legal team, which "will ask the justices to lift a lower court injunction that blocked the implementation of the programs, which would allow millions of undocumented immigrants to live and work in the U.S. without fear of deportation." The Hill explains a split ruling "would hand a victory to Texas and the states," but "if the justices agree the states do not have standing, the case could be thrown out and the administration could start putting the programs in place." The [Philadelphia Inquirer](#) (4/17, Matza, 641K) explains that "with immigration issues galvanizing the electorate this year, advocates for undocumented immigrants and supporters of mass deportations have a lot invested in the outcome."

SCOTUS Decision Could Impact More Than 4 Million Undocumented Immigrants. In a more than 1,300-word article, the [New York Times](#) (4/16, Preston, Subscription Publication, 12.03M) describes how the Supreme Court ruling could affect "more than four million unauthorized immigrants," who will either "will have a chance to come out into the open or will remain, perhaps for years, in a twilight underground." In a nearly 1,450-word article, the [Atlanta Journal-Constitution](#) (4/17, Redmon, 1.1M) examines how the case will "help decide Obama's legacy as well as the fate of millions of immigrants without legal status."

Meanwhile, the [Miami Herald](#) (4/16, Chardy, 803K) reports pro-immigration activists plan to travel to Washington DC for "a large rally on the Supreme Court steps" on Monday "to show support" for the Administration's stance. The [Wall Street Journal](#) (4/17, Jordan, Subscription Publication, 6.74M) adds that anti-immigration groups say they are not planning to hold counter protests on Monday.

CARTER, SOURCES: US SEEKS TO INTENSIFY EFFORT AGAINST ISIL. Defense Secretary Carter on Saturday said he will gather advise from commanders in the near future on ways to strengthen the US effort against ISIL and make the recommendations to President Obama. Limited reporting quotes Carter during his comments in the United Arab Emirates, but the New York Times cites Administration sources as explaining specifics that will likely be carried out as part of the strategy. Media coverage also highlights likely US efforts to secure additional support from Gulf allies, especially for helping to rebuild Iraqi locations impacted by the fighting.

The [AP](#) (4/16, Baldor) reports Carter said Washington wants to expand its role in the fight and is "only limited by our own ingenuity" and ideas. Carter also expressed confidence the White House will approve recommendations, "saying nothing he has asked President Barack Obama for yet in the conflicts has been turned down." [The Hill](#) (4/16, Hellmann, 862K) reports Carter "said the US may change the nature of its military campaign against the terror group, saying there could be more rapid targeting of ISIS as intelligence on the ground improves."

The [New York Times](#) (4/16, Schmidt, Schmitt, Subscription Publication, 12.03M) reports that while Carter did not provide specifics of the plan, Administration sources indicate the US "is preparing to broaden its military campaign...by increasing the number of Special Operations forces who advise Syrian rebels, and it is also considering the addition of Army attack helicopters to the fight against militants in Iraq." According to the Times, the "goal would be to accelerate what United States officials said on Saturday was momentum behind Iraqi security forces and American-backed rebels in Syria fighting the terrorist organization." The Times says the White House "is prepared to add dozens of Special Operations forces" to those already in Syria to advise and assist rebels. Meanwhile, the Times highlights the "plans for Iraq are more complicated" due to the current "political turmoil" in the country and the sensitive nature of proposing US assistance.

[AFP](#) (4/16) reports Carter arrived in the United Arab Emirates on Saturday for a “six-day Gulf tour aimed at galvanizing support for Iraq” against ISIL. AFP says “Washington is eager to see the Gulf Arab monarchies do more to help Baghdad.” AFP quotes Carter as saying, “The success of the campaign against ISIL in Iraq does depend upon political and economic progress as well.” Carter also said, “It’s important that we continue to support’ Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi in his efforts to build a ‘multisectarian’ country.”

[Voice of America](#) (4/16, Babb, 60K) reports Obama, who will later join Carter in Saudi Arabia, “will most likely ask” the US allies in the region “for contributions to rebuild areas of Iraq damaged by the fight against IS when he speaks with Gulf partners.” Carter said, “That’s a global effort in which many countries can make a contribution.” Carter added, according to [Reuters](#) (4/16, Torbati), “For the defeat of ISIL to stick in Iraq and Syria, these badly broken places destroyed by ISIL, pillaged by ISIL, mistreated by ISIL, are going to need to be rebuilt.” Carter added that a global oil price slump was hampering Iraq’s reconstruction efforts.

DISTRICT JUDGE SEALS MOST RECORDS IN COURT CASE INVOLVING PETRAEUS. The [AP](#) (4/15, Bridis) reported District Judge Amy Berman Jackson on Thursday “accepted objections by the Justice Department” to allow “the most sensational court records to remain sealed in the now-abandoned lawsuit over leaks in the investigation” that culminated in the resignation of former CIA Director David Petraeus. According to Berman, the Administration’s lawyers “have identified compelling confidentiality, privacy and law enforcement interests served by maintaining those records under seal that outweigh any need for public access.” The AP explained “the case included FBI files and deposition testimony from or about such senior U.S. government officials as Petraeus; Defense Secretary Ashton Carter; former Defense Secretary and CIA Director Leon Panetta; Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson; Marine Gen. John R. Allen, then-commander of U.S. forces in Afghanistan; former Pentagon chief of staff Jeremy Bash; former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton aide Phillippe Reines; and former Pentagon and CIA press secretary George Little.”

Immigration:

NYTIMES: SCOTUS SHOULD RULE FOR ADMINISTRATION IN IMMIGRATION CASE. The [New York Times](#) (4/16, Subscription Publication, 12.03M) editorializes the Supreme Court “should” rule in United States v. Texas based upon “precedent as well as longstanding practice” and thus “reject the plaintiffs’ absurd claim.” The Times praises President Obama’s executive actions on immigration as “a sensible response” to inaction from Congress, adding that it is “both smart politics and humane policy, and it falls well within Mr. Obama’s authority.”

NHCLC PRESIDENT: SCOTUS SHOULD PROTECT “VULNERABLE” IMMIGRANTS. In an op-ed in the [Sacramento \(CA\) Bee](#) (4/17, Rodriguez, 569K), Samuel Rodriguez, the president of the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference (NHCLC), urges the Supreme Court to consider “the vulnerable people who love their adopted country, but are held back by outdated policies and targeted by hateful rhetoric,” when it rules on United States v. Texas. He warns “A hard-hearted approach to immigrants and immigration will not help us move toward solutions.” However, Rodriguez admits that Congress “has the ultimate responsibility” to develop “an immigration process that respects individuals and families, strengthens the rule of law, builds our economy and makes us safer.” He concludes, “I pray that compassion fills the hearts of our leaders in Congress, our president and the Supreme Court justices. Real people’s lives and futures hang in the balance.”

US Coast Guard:

COAST GUARD RESCUES THREE FROM SAILBOAT NEAR SAVANNAH, GEORGIA. [ABC World News Tonight](#) (4/16, story 10, 0:20, Llamas, 14.63M) reported that the Coast Guard rescued three people on board a sailboat that was stranded and unable to steer thanks to “churning seas and wild winds” near Savannah, Georgia. ABC World News Tonight reports that the crew is currently “recovering from seasickness and dehydration.”

Office of Health Affairs:

CDC: ONLY 4 PERCENT OF NEARLY 5,000 TRAVELERS SCREENED TESTED POSITIVE FOR ZIKA. [CNN](#) (4/15, Goldschmidt, 3.96M) reported the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on Friday said that of 4,534 people screened for the Zika virus from January through March, “just over 4% tested positive for the virus,” while “more than 94% tested negative and another 1% had an unspecified virus in the same family as Zika, such as dengue or yellow fever, or may have been vaccinated against a related virus.” CNN added that the CDC’s Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report “sheds some light about the risk for travelers to the more than 40 countries and territories where the virus is circulating.” CNN said that according to Health and Human Services Secretary Sylvia Burwell “An estimated 40 million people travel between the continental United States and areas infected with the Zika virus.”

However, the [Daily Mail](#) (4/15, Parry, 4.92M) and [Breitbart](#) (4/15, Hope, 2.1M) added that the CDC report also confirmed the first case of sexually transmitted Zika virus in a gay couple, meaning the “virus can be transmitted through anal sex, as well as vaginal sex.”

Researchers Making “Inroads” In Understanding Zika. The [Baltimore Sun](#) (4/14, Cohn, 712K) reported that researchers nationwide “are beginning to make some inroads” in understanding the Zika virus, but the CDC “said more research is needed to determine the extent of the effects from Zika and what can be done to stop the infections.”

More Zika Cases Confirmed In New Jersey, Texas. [New Jersey Local News](#) (4/15, Caffrey, 703K) reported New Jersey health officials on Friday told the Camden County Health Department that a local woman “has tested positive for the Zika virus, making her the eighth travel-related case of the virus in the state.”

The [Dallas Morning News](#) (4/15, Farmer, 1.24M) added the Dallas County Health and Human Services on Friday “reported the sixth case of Zika virus in the county.” The individual “was infected during a recent trip to Jamaica.”

Terrorism Investigations:

SAUDI ARABIA THREATENS TO SELL UP TO \$750 BILLION OF US ASSETS OVER 9/11 BILL.

There was limited coverage of Saudi Arabia’s threat to sell its US assets if Congress passes a bill that would allow Riyadh to be held responsible by American courts. The reporting almost universally cited the New York Times story first reported the news.

The [New York Times](#) (4/15, Mazzetti, Subscription Publication, 12.03M) reports Saudi Arabia has told the White House and some lawmakers that “it will sell off hundreds of billions of dollars worth of American assets held by the kingdom if Congress passes a bill that would allow the Saudi government to be held responsible in American courts for any role in the Sept. 11, 2001” terrorist attacks. According to the Times, Saudi Foreign Minister Adel al Jubeir “delivered the kingdom’s message personally last month during a trip to Washington, telling lawmakers that Saudi Arabia would be forced to sell up to \$750 billion in treasury securities and other assets” prior to them possibly being frozen by US courts. However, [Fox News](#) (4/16, 9.42M) reports on its website that “economists are purportedly skeptical about the Saudis making good on their vow to sell the assets, considering such a move would be difficult to execute and could severely hurt that country’s economy, which depends on the US dollar.”

[Reuters](#) (4/16, Ali) cites the New York Times story as saying the Saudi threats have been the topic of discussions in recent weeks between lawmakers and Administration officials. The [New York Daily News](#) (4/16, Mcshane, 3.7M) reports the White House is encouraging Congress to consider the financial and diplomatic impact that would result in the relationship with a longtime ally. [The Hill](#) (4/16, Hellmann, 862K) “Briefing Room” blog reports the Administration has also argued the bill “would put Americans at legal risk overseas.” On its website, [CNN](#) (4/16, Kludt, Labott, Barrett, 3.96M) quotes a “senior administration official” as responding to the question of whether President Obama would veto the bill by saying “rather than entertain a hypothetical, we believe there needs to be more careful consideration of the potential

unintended consequences of its enactment before proceeding with legislation.” The official added, “We would welcome opportunities to engage with the Congress on that discussion.”

COTTON: OBAMA “MINIMIZES” TERRORISM THREAT. [The Hill](#) (4/16, Hensch, 862K) “Briefing Room” blog reports Sen. Tom Cotton on Saturday said President Obama “minimizes” the threat of terrorism and downplays Americans’ fears. Cotton said, during the GOP weekly address, “We live in a dangerous world – and the dangers are ever increasing, particularly from radical Islamic terror.” Cotton added that recent terrorist attacks “make this all too clear” and Americans “are understandably fearful about their safety and security.” However, Cotton said, “But President Obama wants us to ‘chill out.’ He believes overreaction to terrorism is a graver threat than terrorism itself. He minimizes the threat of terror attacks, even as these savages cuts off the heads of Americans and inspire or direct radicals to blow themselves up in public places.”

BENGHAZI PANEL REPORT COULD BE RELEASED BEFORE CONVENTIONS. [The Hill](#) (4/16, Hattem, 862K) reports the House Select Committee on Benghazi “has quietly begun to draft its long-awaited report, and could release it weeks before this July’s political conventions,” according to Rep. Mike Pompeo, who told [The Hill](#) on Friday that the committee is “starting to begin to put together the report” and “getting to the tail end of the investigative phase.”

WPOST ANALYSIS: US SPECIAL OPERATIONS PLAY CENTRAL ROLE HELPING FOREIGN FORCES. A 2,143-word [Washington Post](#) (4/16, Mekhennet, Ryan, 8.98M) analysis reports that US Special Operations have played a “central but little-known role ... in helping foreign forces plan and execute deadly missions against militant targets.” The Post indicates the US has provided such operation support to a “growing list of countries beyond the active battlefields of Iraq and Afghanistan,” though much of it is taking place in Africa and in response to the emergence of militant groups aligned with al Qaeda and ISIL. However, the article says such support “has done little to change the overall security picture in countries with deep political and economic problems.”

JUDGE: ADMINISTRATION CANNOT DEPORT CONVICTED TERRORIST TO PAKISTAN. [Reuters](#) (4/16, Shiffman) reports US Immigration Judge Michael Straus has ruled the Administration cannot deport 22-year-old Mohammed Khalid, who was arrested in 2011 on terrorism charges for plotting to murder a Swedish cartoonist. The court cited concerns that Khalid would face torture if he were returned to Pakistan.

TWO EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT DRIVERS FOUND WITH ISIL PROPAGANDA. According to [Reuters](#) (4/16, Thomasson), German magazine *Der Spiegel* reported that two drivers contracted by the European parliament were found in possession of compact discs containing ISIL propaganda material.

US TRANSFERS NINE YEMENI DETAINEES FROM GITMO TO SAUDI ARABIA. The [New York Times](#) (4/16, Savage, Subscription Publication, 12.03M) reports the US on Saturday transferred nine Yemeni detainees from Guantanamo Bay detention center to Saudi Arabia, “completing a long-sought diplomatic deal ahead of a planned visit to Riyadh by President Obama in the coming week.” [Bloomberg News](#) (4/16, Plungis, 2.92M) reports the Pentagon stated, “The United States is grateful to the government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for its humanitarian gesture and willingness to support ongoing US efforts to close the Guantanamo Bay detention facility,” and reiterated that both the US and Saudi Arabia coordinated “to ensure these transfers took place consistent with appropriate security and humane treatment measures.”

The [Washington Post](#) (4/16, Ehrenfreund, 8.98M) reports the detainees included Tariq Ba Odah, whose lawyer, Sondra S. Crosby, indicated “faces persistent, serious medical risk” because of his participation in a hunger strike. However, military officials indicated Ba Odah’s medical condition is stable.

INMATE IN NEW YORK TERROR CASE HOSPITALIZED IN COMA AFTER SUICIDE ATTEMPT. The [AP](#) (4/15, Peltz) reported Ahmed Ferhani, a 31-year-old Algerian man who is an inmate at the Attica prison convicted of plotting to bomb synagogues in New York City, has been hospitalized and is in a medically induced coma after he “tried to kill himself in prison after guards tormented him because of his terror case, his lawyers said.” The AP mentions his attorney claimed Ferhani had “recently wrote to U.S.

Attorney General Loretta Lynch, saying he'd kill himself if guards' abuse continued," although the Justice Department "couldn't immediately say what became of Ferhani's letters."

Countering Violent Extremism:

US ATTORNEYS REASSURE MUSLIMS OF COMMITMENT TO FIGHTING ANTI-ISLAMIC BACKLASH. The [AP](#) (4/16) cites reporting from the Salt Lake Tribune that US Attorney John Huber visited the Khadeeja Islamic Center, the largest mosque in Utah, on Friday and vowed that "his office will do its best to protect the rights of the Muslim community." The AP explains that Huber's "visit is part of a nationwide effort by the U.S. Department of Justice to counter a backlash against Muslim, Arab, Sikh and South Asian Americans."

The [Denver Post](#) (4/16, Robles, 881K) reports US Attorney John Walsh met Saturday with community leaders, "activists and people of different faiths" in Denver, where he "gave a presentation on the work his office is doing...to protect civil rights and combat violent extremism including training people to secure their houses of worship, and an anti-bullying effort in six schools where students will participate in a mock trial of a hate crime." As "there is no single profile" leading to radicalization, Walsh insisted, "The solution is not the federal government. The solution has to be a community solution."

National Security News:

STATE DEPARTMENT SEEKS TO INCREASE PACE OF RESETTLING SYRIAN REFUGEES IN US. [The Hill](#) (4/16, Wong, 862K) reports the State Department "is hoping to bring an average of nearly 1,500 Syrian refugees to the United States per month...to meet President Obama's target of settling 10,000 refugees in the country by September." The Hill explains the State Department is currently conducting a "surge operation" in Jordan "to process the rest of the Syrian refugees in as little as three months and leave them enough time" to satisfy the September deadline. Larry Bartlett, the State Department's director of the Office of Refugee Admissions, recently told The Hill that "putting more officers in one place" will allow the US to "conduct more interviews." Bartlett said, "Partly we have a backlog because we don't have enough officers to interview people."

WPost Criticizes US' "Double Failure" On Syrian Refugee Crisis. The [Washington Post](#) (4/16, 8.98M) editorializes the Administration's "slow pace" of resettling Syrian refugees "is a double failure," as it shows the US is both "falling pathetically short of its own ideal of providing a haven to those fleeing persecution and violence" as well as hurting American allies. The Post calls on the Administration to "do what is needed to meet its initial goal of 10,000," but adds that the US government "should dramatically increase its target goal so as to take in a fair share of the refugees fleeing the terror of the Islamic State and the Syrian civil war." The Post warns that "a continued failure to assist vulnerable Syrians will erode US moral leadership and will be judged harshly for generations to come."

POPE FRANCIS BRINGS THREE SYRIAN REFUGEE FAMILIES TO VATICAN. The [Washington Post](#) (4/16, Witte, Faiola, 8.98M) reports Pope Francis on Saturday visited the Moria refugee detention facility on the Greek island of Lesbos in "his strongest statement yet on migrant rights." The [AP](#) (4/16, Gatopoulos, Winfield, Becatoros) reports Francis brought 12 of the Syrian refugees with him to Italy in an act he called "purely humanitarian." The 12 refugees who accompanied Pope Francis "will be supported by the Holy See and cared for initially by Italy's Catholic Sant'Egidio Community." The [Los Angeles Times](#) (4/16, Petrakis, 4.1M) reports Pope Francis used his authority as a head of state to take the three Muslim refugee families with him on his return trip to the Vatican, and his action did not violate the European Union-Turkey agreement. Two of the families migrated from Damascus and one family escaped from ISIL-held Deir Ezzor.

The [New York Times](#) (4/16, Yardley, Subscription Publication, 12.03M) reports Francis called on European leaders and citizens to overcome "the inevitable fears associated with this massive and formidable phenomenon" associated with the migrant crisis. Francis said, "Human history is made up of countless migrations, sometimes out of an awareness of the right to choose freely, and often dictated by external circumstances." The [Wall Street Journal](#) (4/16, Rocca, Stamouli, Subscription Publication,

6.74M) reports Francis' challenged leaders to address the migrant crisis "in a way worthy of our common humanity." Francis called the crisis "the greatest humanitarian catastrophe since the Second World War." Francis also condemned Europe's border closings, saying, "Humanity [should] build bridges and recoils from the idea of putting up walls."

WPOST: US, EU MUST CONTINUE TO PRESSURE UKRAINE ON REFORMS. In an editorial, the [Washington Post](#) (4/16, 8.98M) asserts that as Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko has "moved decisively to consolidate his control," the US and EU must adopt "robust intervention" to ensure the country continues to enact economic and political reforms.

ZARIF: IRAN, EU WILL "PUT PRESSURE" ON US TO HELP TEHRAN ENTER GLOBAL FINANCIAL SYSTEM. [Reuters](#) (4/16, Sharafedin, Fioretti) reports Iran asked the European Union to pressure the US to allow Tehran back into the global financial system. While Tehran hosted an EU team led by foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini, Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif welcomed the bloc's support for his country's efforts to join the WTO. During a press conference with Mogherini, Zarif said Tehran and the EU will "put pressure on the United States to facilitate the cooperation of non-American banks with Iran." Zarif and Mogherini issued a joint statement saying the EU "will support and assist Iran to become a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO), and will pursue opening a full EU diplomatic mission in Tehran."

CUBA'S CASTRO DISMISSES IDEA OF IMPLEMENTING CAPITALIST SYSTEM. The [AP](#) (4/16, Weissenstein) reports Cuban President Raul Castro – during a two hour, twice-a-decade Cuban Communist Party meeting – asserted that despite Havana's new "recognition of the existence of private property," transforming Cuba into a capitalist country "is in no way the goal." The AP says Castro "spent relatively little time addressing his decision to normalize relations with the United States." However, in what the AP describes as "a brief moment of attempted levity, he derided American democracy as a sham, saying he saw no difference between Democrats and Republicans." Castro said, "It's as if we had two parties in Cuba and Fidel led one and I led the other." The [New York Times](#) (4/16, Burnett, Subscription Publication, 12.03M) reports Castro urged citizens to be "alert, more than ever" because "powerful external forces" like the US aim to "create agents of change to end the revolution." Castro added that his nation's economic progress was stunted by "the weight of the obsolete mentality" and the "worst that a revolutionary can do, whether they are a communist or not, is to cross their arms in the face of problems."

FAMILIES OF AMERICANS ARRESTED IN EGYPT, UAE UPSET BY ADMINISTRATION'S INACTION. In a nearly 1,350-word article, the [New York Times](#) (4/16, Fahim, Subscription Publication, 12.03M) reports the families of Americans arrested in Egypt and the United Arab Emirates "have complained of a lack of high-level attention from American officials – stemming, they fear, from the Obama administration's reluctance to confront" the two countries, which are viewed as some of "its strongest strategic partners in the Arab world." According to the Times, the "frustrations" of these families "illustrate the distinct challenges faced by Americans imprisoned by their government's allies."

RUSSIAN AIRCRAFT INTERCEPTS US PLANE. [AFP](#) (4/17) reports the Pentagon released a statement condemning a Russian SU-27 jet's Thursday intercept of a US Air Force reconnaissance plane that was operating in international airspace. Spokeswoman Laura Seal called the action "unsafe and unprofessional," adding, "More importantly, the unsafe and unprofessional actions of a single pilot have the potential to unnecessarily escalate tensions between countries." The incident occurred just two days after a Russian plane flew within 30 feet of the USS Donald Cook.

NYTIMES ANALYSIS: COLD WAR-ERA TENSIONS EMERGE IN NEW NUCLEAR ARMS BUILD-UP. A 1,878-word [New York Times](#) (4/16, Broad, Sanger, Subscription Publication, 12.03M) analysis reports Cold War-era tensions are threatening to emerge in a new but aggressive build-up of "smaller, less destructive nuclear weapons" by the US, Russia, and China. At the Nuclear Security Summit in Washington earlier this month, President Obama cautioned against the "ramping up new and more deadly and more effective systems that end up leading to a whole new escalation of the arms race." The Times highlights how the US largely blames Russia for its "intransigence" in adhering to a 2010 arms control treaty. The article maintains this is "an old dynamic playing out in new form as an economically

declining Russia, a rising China and an uncertain United States resume their one-upmanship.”

IMF PANEL PROMISES “MORE FORCEFUL” POLICIES TO PROMOTE GROWTH. [Bloomberg News](#) (4/16, Mayeda, 2.92M) reports “global finance ministers and central bankers” attending the IMF’s International Monetary and Financial Committee meeting on Saturday “pledged to step up their efforts to support growth, as chances rise of a broader slowdown.” In a statement, the IMF panel also vowed to “employ a more forceful and balanced policy mix” to generate more global economic growth. Bloomberg adds the comments “reflects policy makers’ concern that expansion will slow, after the IMF this week downgraded its global outlook again, warning that a prolonged period of slow growth has left the world economy at risk of slipping into stagnation.”

The [AP](#) (4/16, Crutsinger, Danilova) reports the global finance officials “hope...stronger growth can boost long-stagnant wages and combat a rising backlash against globalization.” However, IMF Managing Director Christine Lagarde said, “Clearly the question is how much is going to get done back home.”

NYTIMES ANALYSIS: SHIPPING, AVIATION UNDER PRESSURE TO CUT EMISSIONS. A 1,029-word [New York Times](#) (4/16, Fountain, Subscription Publication, 12.03M) analysis reports the commercial aviation and ocean shipping industries were not included in the Paris climate deal, but governments and advocacy groups are stepping up the pressure on both “to take stronger steps to curb pollution.” According to the Times, a number of nations in Europe, Africa and the South Pacific have formed a coalition to lobby the UN International Maritime Organization to develop an emissions reduction strategy. Similarly, groups have also targeted the UN International Civil Aviation Organization to “adopt as strict a system as possible” with purchasing offsets, or “emissions reductions from renewable energy or conservation projects,” which airlines have already been looking into.

DOHA MEETING THREATENED BY REGIONAL POLITICAL RIVALRIES. The [Wall Street Journal](#) (4/16, Faucon, Said, Subscription Publication, 6.74M) reports tensions between Saudi Arabia and Iran could threaten any possible agreement at the Doha oil meeting on Sunday. Iran on Saturday said it would not send representatives to the meeting. The Journal indicates regional political tensions may be impacting economic policy, citing School of Oriental and African Studies fellow Adel Hamaizia as saying the problem “seems to be all about the Saudi-Iran rivalry.” Analysts are warning investors not to expect too much in terms of production cuts from OPEC countries.

[Bloomberg News](#) (4/16, Mahdi, 2.92M) further adds Iranian oil minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh indicated Iran could not agree to any deal, which he said “would amount to self-imposed sanctions on the country which is restoring crude production after the removal of a ban on its shipments.” However, Kuwaiti Oil Minister Anas Al-Saleh indicated “he was ‘optimistic’ about the possibility of reaching a freeze in Doha.” According to Gulf Research Center director John Sfakianakis, “A no-show by the Iranians is actually positive for the Doha talks as all know that they wouldn’t agree at this stage.”

Draft Agreement Reached In Doha . [Reuters](#) (4/16, El Gamal) reports a draft agreement from the Doha meeting indicates average daily production would not exceed January 2016 levels and would remain in effect until October 1, after which a progress review would take place. A final agreement has not yet been reached.

UN CONFIRMS NEW SEXUAL ABUSE ALLEGATIONS AGAINST SOLDIERS IN CONGO. [Reuters](#) (4/16, Ross) reports the UN peacekeeping mission for the Democratic Republic of Congo on Saturday said it received new allegations of sexual assault by its troops.

MAGNITUDE-7.8 EARTHQUAKE KILLS 77 IN ECUADOR. The [AP](#) (4/17, Solano) reports a magnitude-7.8 earthquake struck Ecuador’s central coast, killing at least 77 people in Manta, Portoviejo, and Guayaquil. The Pacific Tsunami Warning Center cautioned the earthquake may cause tsunami waves along the coastline. Vice President Jorge Glas, in a televised address, told residents in affected areas to remain calm but evacuate to higher ground as a precautionary measure. The earthquake’s aftershocks measured up to a 5.6 on the Richter scale.

DEATH TOLL FROM JAPAN EARTHQUAKE RISES TO 41. The [AP](#) (4/16, Press) reports “the two

nights of increasingly terrifying earthquakes” that struck southern Japan killed 41 people, wounded about 1,500, and left almost 200,000 southern Japanese homes without electricity and 400,000 without running water. According to Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, rescue efforts are threatened by heavy rain-induced mudslides.

The [New York Times](#) (4/16, Soble, Subscription Publication, 12.03M) reports Japanese chief cabinet secretary, Yoshihide Suga indicated rescue teams are attempting to save survivors from the over 50 collapsed buildings and the national public broadcaster NHK reported that tens of thousands of residents have relocated to temporary shelters. The Meteorological Agency suggested that Thursday’s earthquake was likely a “foreshock” of the much larger one on Saturday and warned that more earthquakes may follow as the seismic fault line settles.

GREECE’S CREDITORS PROPOSE CONTINGENCY MEASURES FOR BAILOUT. The [Wall Street Journal](#) (4/16, Walker, Dendrinou, Subscription Publication, 6.74M) reports Greece’s creditors are contemplating requesting additional austerity measures that would be implemented if Athens does not meet its fiscal targets. The Journal says the effort is aimed at solving differences between Europe and the IMF that could jeopardize the Greek bailout. Officials indicated the proposal would require Greece to add contingency measures of up to about 3 billion euros – in addition to the 5 billion euros already being negotiated, if the targeted budget surpluses are not reached.

HOLLANDE’S APPROVAL RATING AT HISTORIC LOW. The [Washington Post](#) (4/16, Mcauley, 8.98M) reports French President François Hollande, in a Thursday television interview, urged his traditional base – predominately Socialists and younger citizens – to continue supporting him during his 2017 presidential reelection campaign. The results of a poll conducted in March suggested that Hollande’s approval levels have dropped to a historic low of 17 percent.

NYTIMES: EU, US MUST CONVINCe POLAND TO CURB ANTI-DEMOCRATIC BEHAVIOR. In an editorial, the [New York Times](#) (4/16, Subscription Publication, 12.03M) warns that a new resolution passed by the European Parliament criticizing Poland’s right-wing government for ignoring the country’s top court “is not likely to sway Jaroslaw Kaczynski and his fellow nationalists in the ruling Law and Justice Party, who believe that it is their mission to zealously defend socially conservative Catholic values and Polish sovereignty against a secular EU and a multiethnic Europe – even if that means trampling on the rule of law.” The Times says “it is incumbent on the European Union – and on the United States, which the Poles rightly see as their close ally and protector against Russia – to make clear to the Polish government that the rule of law is not a take-it-or-leave-it imposition by the ‘old EU,’ but a central tenet of the democracy Poland signed on to.”

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