



You are in: [Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs](#) > [Bureau of Public Affairs](#) > [Bureau of Public Affairs: Press Relations Office](#)  
> [Daily Press Briefings](#) > [2004](#) > [Press Briefing Transcripts](#) > [November](#)

## Daily Press Briefing

**Adam Ereli, Deputy Spokesman**

Washington, DC

November 22, 2004

### INDEX:

#### DEPARTMENT

[Comment on the Foreign Affairs Council Report, Secretary Colin Powell s State Department, An Independent Assessment](#)

[U.S. Intentions and Talking Points at Sharm el-Sheik Conference](#)

[Deputy Secretary Richard Armitage s Departure Plans / Department Resignations](#)

#### UKRAINE

[U.S. Position and Likely Actions in Response to Reported Election Fraud](#)

[Senator Lugar s Comment on Reported Election Fraud](#)

[OSCE and EU Statements on Ukrainian Elections](#)

[Inquiry on U.S. Correspondence with Russia Regarding Reported Ukrainian Election Fraud](#)

#### RUSSIA

[Inquiry on U.S. Considerations on Russia s Involvement in Abkhazia, Georgia](#)

#### IRAN

[U.S. Position on EU-3 and Iranian Agreement/Reported Iranian Suspension of Uranium Enrichment](#)

[Inquiry on Whether Secretary Colin L. Powell Will Deliver a Message Directly to the Iranians in Sharm el-Sheik](#)

#### SYRIA

[Inquiry on Whether Secretary Colin L. Powell Will Meet Syrian Foreign Minister in Sharm el-Sheik](#)

#### TURKMENISTAN

[Inquiry on U.S. Support for Turkmenistan Government](#)

## ISRAEL/PALESTINIANS

### U.S. Perspective on Israeli and Palestinian Cooperation/ Palestinian Elections

#### TRANSCRIPT:

12:45 p.m. EST

**MR. ERELI:** Greetings, everybody. If I may, I'd like to begin with -- by calling your attention to a report issued today by the Foreign Affairs Council titled, "Secretary Colin Powell's State Department, An Independent Assessment." This report assesses the progress made by the Secretary and his management team in achieving their goals for the State Department over the last four years. And obviously, I would encourage you to read it for yourselves, but would note that the report says that the achievements have been extraordinary, even historic, and that the Powell team has talked the talk and walked the walk.

We're very pleased that the achievements of the last four years have been noted in this report. Some of the more, I think, important things that have been accomplished are: Increased staffing, meeting the goals of the Diplomatic Readiness Initiative, hiring some 2000 employees above attrition, introducing modern hardware -- IT technology -- throughout the Department and putting in place a four-year replacement cycle.

The rate of building of missions overseas has gone from one per year before 2002 to 13 in the last two years, with 26 more on the way. So this is a record that I think the State Department can be proud of. Clearly more needs to be done and we look forward to building on these accomplishments in the years ahead.

**QUESTION:** You're not going to quarrel with these findings, are you?

**MR. ERELI:** Like I said, there's -- there's a large section of the report about what needs to be done in the future and so it's not completely rosy, but I think it recognizes what's been done and points the way towards what we can focus on in the future.

**QUESTION:** I have a question somewhere. I was going to ask about Ukraine and allegations of fraud and -- does the U. S. have a handle on that yet?

**MR. ERELI:** We -- the United States is deeply concerned over the elections in Ukraine. There are widespread, or -- I'm sorry -- there are reports of widespread abuse and fraud in the second round of Ukraine's presidential elections. We call on the Ukrainian authorities to curb additional abuse and fraud, to uphold its international commitments to democracy and human rights, and to act to ensure an outcome that reflects the will of the Ukrainian people.

I would note a number of responses so far to the elections in -- the second round of elections in Ukraine. Senator Lugar, who is in Ukraine as President Bush's representative for the vote, has issued a statement that said it was apparent to him that, "A concerted and forceful program of electoral fraud and abuse was enacted with either the leadership or cooperation of Ukrainian governmental authorities." The OSCE has released a preliminary statement that said the second-round vote did not meet a considerable number of OSCE commitments and Council of Europe and other

European standards for democratic elections, and also noted that overall the Ukrainian authorities had displayed a lack of will to conduct a genuine election -- a genuine democratic election process.

Finally, the EU said in a statement by its presidency today that the second round of elections has clearly fallen short of international standards and called on the Ukrainian authorities to show restraint, and all sides to express themselves only in a non-violent manner.

What we're doing now is we are consulting with our European colleagues, both here from the State Department and in Kiev, and calling on the Government of Ukraine to end this abuse, to investigate these charges and ensure that the will of the people is respected.

**QUESTION:** Does it mean that the U.S. is not recognizing the Ukrainian elections as legitimate, or what does it mean exactly?

**MR. ERELI:** It means that the results are not final; that there are credible and numerous charges of fraud and abuse; that in order to have confidence in the results of these elections, that these charges need to be thoroughly investigated and cleared up before the international community can have confidence that the results of the Ukrainian elections reflect the will of the people.

**QUESTION:** A follow-up if you don't mind. The candidate -- and I mean Mr. Yanukovich, who is believed to be supported by the Russian President Putin, who was declared a winner -- well, again, it's good for the Russians, I guess, but did you talk to the Russians either in Moscow or here in Washington, or are you planning to talk to the Russians in regard to this issue?

**MR. ERELI:** I'm not aware of any conversations that have taken place with the Russians. Our focus is on dealing with the Ukrainian authorities. It's Ukrainian elections and that's where the conversations -- that's where our conversations are taking place.

**QUESTION:** You see that's kind of a pointed response. Has Russia been stepping over the line so far as the election is --

**MR. ERELI:** I don't have any comment on Russian activities. I'd refer you to the Russians for their position on these elections. Our position, and the position is, that it's important that the standards that Ukraine has committed to be met; that there are observers, independent observers from the United States, from the European community, from the OSCE there to see that these standards are met, and those are the benchmarks that we're looking at.

**QUESTION:** Can I go into it just a little bit? Do you happen to have anything on whether Russia has interfered in the election in Abkhazia?

**MR. ERELI:** No, I don't have anything for you on that today.

**QUESTION:** Because the President of Georgia is citing reports of people being called to the Kremlin.

**MR. ERELI:** Mm-hmm.

**QUESTION:** You know, and --

**MR. ERELI:** Right.

**QUESTION:** And he's not thundering, but he doesn't like what's going on.

**MR. ERELI:** Yeah, we've been very consistent in stating that the issue -- and -- that we support the territorial integrity of Georgia; that the issues in Georgia be resolved peacefully through political dialogue; and again, that we are working with all the parties, including Russia and the OSCE, to see that this kind of dispute resolution is the way the situation is handled, as opposed to, you know, threats of intimidation or other kinds of actions.

**QUESTION:** If we could go back to Ukraine for a second? As I'm sure you're aware, there have been tens of thousands of protestors, according to our reports, primarily peacefully protesting against the election results. And as I presume you're aware, Ukraine's Prosecutor General, Interior Ministry and its security services issued a joint statement saying that they would put down any lawlessness "quickly and firmly." And I wonder if you would want to, yourselves, not just echo what the EU said, but call for restraint on the part of the Ukrainian authorities as they deal with what appear to be largely peaceful protests after what your own Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman suggests is a rigged election.

**MR. ERELI:** Obviously, passions are running high. The United States, in Ukraine as elsewhere, is a firm supporter of the right of people to express their opinions freely and peacefully, with an emphasis on, I guess, both of those: freely and peacefully. It is our position that the will of the people in these elections needs to be respected; that the process needs to be peaceful; and in that sense we support and underscore what the European Union said in its statement in calling upon the authorities to show restraint and all sides to express themselves only in a non-violent manner.

**QUESTION:** Adam, in the weeks and months running up to this runoff, U.S. officials from medium level all the way up to the President over the weekend, have threatened to "review our relations with Ukraine" in the event that you got a result like this one, one that you believe is unfree and unfair.

Have you begun to review your options for possible sanctions or possible punitive -- other punitive steps that you might take?

**MR. ERELI:** Should this -- should, in the final analysis, this election prove to be fundamentally flawed and tarnished, we would certainly need to review our relations with the Ukraine and consider further steps against individuals who had engaged in fraud. Our hope is, our expectation is, that the Government of Ukraine, that the Ukrainian officials will act now to ensure that that eventuality doesn't come to pass.

**QUESTION:** So even at this late date, and this late date being after the election has happened, they can still come around and make the election okay?

**MR. ERELI:** I think if we see that the allegations of fraud and abuse have been investigated, dealt with and that there is evidence and indications that the will of the people has been respected, has been met, and that the election results

reflect that, then I think that will give credibility to the process that would influence whatever actions we take.

If, however, the observations of groups like the OSCE, Freedom House, Senator Lugar and others who have seen very disturbing patterns of abuse, intimidation of voters, destruction of ballot boxes, that sort of thing -- if those aren't effectively dealt with, then we will have a situation in which we would have to -- in which we would consider the results tarnished and would have to consider what's -- what responses to the -- in the relationship would be appropriate.

**QUESTION:** I'm sorry. I thought you considered the results tarnished now.

**QUESTION:** Yeah.

**MR. ERELI:** Well, the final results. Remember, the results aren't final. We have not yet -- they are not yet done with all of the tallying and have not pronounced the results final, so I am not saying at this point that we have a -- that we're at the end of the process.

**QUESTION:** Do you have in your own mind an idea of what the results would look like if in fact, the will of the Ukrainian people -- as you put it -- is respected in this election?

**MR. ERELI:** I think it would look like -- that the incidences of abuse and intimidation and fraud were either corrected or not of sufficient degree to fundamentally alter the outcome of the election.

**QUESTION:** Well, true or false? You're upset because your guy doesn't look like he's going to win in the official results?

**MR. ERELI:** False. We don't have a preference. What we're looking for in this election is what we look for in elections everywhere, that the people of Ukraine freely choose their next president. These allegations of abuse, I think, indicate that that process was not respected.

**QUESTION:** Adam, are you calling for new elections in Ukraine right now?

**MR. ERELI:** No, I'm not calling for new elections.

**QUESTION:** You are not. And you mentioned before the necessity of investigation of fraud and abuse. Now, is there any timeframe you have given to your Ukrainian colleagues or whoever you talked to over there in Kiev?

**MR. ERELI:** I don't have a timeframe to share with you.

**QUESTION:** There's time enough to undo what you say has tarnished the balloting. And there's time enough to meet U.S. expectations or U.S. --

**MR. ERELI:** I would say not U.S. -- U.S., European.

**QUESTION:** Everybody.

**MR. ERELI:** Everybody, international community.

**QUESTION:** It still can be fixed?

**MR. ERELI:** These concerns can be addressed if they're addressed in a meaningful way. But I would underscore what Senator Lugar said, which is that it's the responsibility of the President of Ukraine to take -- to address these concerns and to take decisive action in the best interest of his country.

Yes.

**QUESTION:** Adam, isn't the heart of this matter that Mr. Yushchenko is basically an ally with the European community and that, in effect, Moscow has been somewhat pulling the strings, doesn't want that? What, aside from who is actually elected as -- in these elections, what resolves that problem?

**MR. ERELI:** Yeah. This is a similar question to what I was just asked. And as I said earlier, this is not a question about support for one candidate or another candidate. This is a question about support for the democratic process, for people being able to -- without intimidation or harassment or the threat of violence -- to be able to freely express their opinion, and for that opinion to be accorded its due weight in a fair and transparent process. That, up until now, has not happened in the Ukraine.

It is not too late to, I think, address these concerns. But obviously, quick and decisive action on the part of the Government of Ukraine is required.

**QUESTION:** And Abkhazia, do you have anything?

**MR. ERELI:** I don't have anything for you on Abkhazia.

**QUESTION:** No, I don't mean so much the Russian influence. You know, there's the former president has refused to -- he turned down an offer to be, I don't know, I guess the prime minister. And the Georgian president, in a telephone interview with several news agencies and analysts, you know, two-thirds of the people stayed away. He doesn't recognize the election.

Do you guys have an opinion on that election?

**MR. ERELI:** Let me see if I can get you something on that.

**QUESTION:** Can we just go back to Ukraine for one second?

**MR. ERELI:** Mm-hmm.

**QUESTION:** Now I forgot what I was going to ask, so --

**MR. ERELI:** We can go back.

**QUESTION:** I'll bring it --

**MR. ERELI:** I'll give you a credit.

**QUESTION:** Can we go to Iran?

**MR. ERELI:** Okay, with the footnote that we might go back to Ukraine.

**QUESTION:** Happy to footnote.

**MR. ERELI:** Okay.

**QUESTION:** Do you believe that the Iranians have ceased all enrichment-related activities and that they are, at least so far, keeping to their agreement with the EU-3?

**MR. ERELI:** We don't know, is the short answer. It is our understanding that International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors are currently in Iran trying to verify that Iran has, in fact, suspended all enrichment-related activity. We expect that these inspectors will report to the Director General; and that the Director General will report to the Board of Governors during its meeting on November 25th in Vienna.

Obviously, as we've said earlier, this is a situation we've been in before, where Iran has said they would suspend and then subsequently went on to renege on those commitments. So obviously, our interest is seeing not what they say, but what they actually do.

**QUESTION:** And you don't expect to get -- you know, we've got Mr. ElBaradei having told reporters in Vienna, "I think pretty much everything has come to a halt right now." That's not good enough?

**MR. ERELI:** There has been no report to the Board of Governors, so I'll just wait until we have the findings of the inspectors as presented formally to the Board of Governors by the Director General before pronouncing on what we believe has or hasn't been done.

**QUESTION:** And you don't expect that before the next Board meeting on the 25th?

**MR. ERELI:** Right.

**QUESTION:** Okay.

**MR. ERELI:** Yes.

**QUESTION:** A follow-up with that.

**MR. ERELI:** Mm-hmm.

**QUESTION:** Iranian Foreign Minister said with -- on interview with CNN few hours ago, said that they are going to evaluate our agreement with fellow European in next three months. Do you know anything about this evaluation after three months?

**MR. ERELI:** This was a statement by the Foreign Minister of Iran?

**QUESTION:** Yes.

**MR. ERELI:** This is an agreement between Iran and the EU-3. So it's not something that we really have a comment on other than to say it's important that Iran meet its commitments to the IAEA. So far, it has not done so. It has a bad track record. We are -- we consulted with the EU-3 on this deal, but we leave it to them and the Iranians to comment on its provisions and on next steps. Obviously, this would be an issue under discussion at the Board of Governors meeting and we'll -- you know, we'll be making our views clear.

**QUESTION:** This is a very -- I mean, you have a straightforward message. Would the Secretary deliver this to the Iranian Foreign Minister in Sharm el-Sheikh?

**MR. ERELI:** This has been a question, I think, that's been answered numerous times over the last couple of days.

**QUESTION:** Airtight.

**MR. ERELI:** The Secretary will be in the same meeting, along with others, as the Iranian Foreign Minister, and we will have an opportunity, I think, to make known our views on a number of issues, particularly related to Iraq and the need to support Iraqi stability, security and reconstruction. I don't know if this issue will come up or in what context.

**QUESTION:** You don't know if it will come up?

**MR. ERELI:** Or in what context.

**QUESTION:** And in context, do you mean in what format, like bilaterally or multilaterally?

**MR. ERELI:** No, whether it be in a plenary or not a plenary or, you know, in some other form. So I just can't speak to it.

**QUESTION:** You still can't rule out the possibility that they might actually have a small U.S.-Iranian meeting in Sharm el-Sheikh?

**MR. ERELI:** I would echo what the Secretary and Deputy Secretary have said before, which is that we're going to

this meeting the way we've gone to previous international gatherings, and that's how we're going to handle it.

**QUESTION:** But the Deputy Secretary, we don't have the privilege of asking him questions because he does these things -- you know, with foreign networks and all, and he called it in the last one I saw, "a speculative question." What's speculative about it? We're not speculating. We're asking the State Department to tell us of their meeting. Who's speculating?

**MR. ERELI:** I was asked to rule out a possibility, and that's the speculation.

**QUESTION:** No, no, what's I'm saying is you just referred to the Deputy Secretary, and I just, Friday, read his latest transcript. I think -- was it Al Jazeera? I can't remember. And the interviewer asked the straightaway question. He said that's speculation. Well, of course it's speculation. But what is the U.S. position? What's speculative about it?

**MR. ERELI:** The speculation is will there be a meeting, could there be a meeting, might there be a meeting, may there be a meeting?

**QUESTION:** Right.

**MR. ERELI:** And I just said what our position is. And our position we're going to Sharm to meet with a number of countries concerned about the future of Iraq, including Iran, and we will take that opportunity to call for support -- we'll call for those countries to support Iraqi security and reconstruction and to cease from actions that undermine either one of those opportunities.

Yes.

**QUESTION:** Yeah, on another subject. A group --

**MR. ERELI:** Saul? Same subject.

**QUESTION:** Will the Secretary meet Syrian Foreign Minister in Sharm el-Sheikh?

**MR. ERELI:** I'd refer you to the party. I don't know what the latest on his schedule is.

Yes.

**QUESTION:** Yeah. A group calling itself "The Government in Exile of the Republic of East Turkistan" held a press briefing downtown today. And their spokesman mentioned several times this group having "U.S. Government approval," to establish itself and to operate. Does this organization have any support from the U.S. Government?

**MR. ERELI:** It doesn't ring a bell with me. I'll check and see what our position on this group is, but we recognize that -- we recognize and have relations with the official Government of Turkmenistan.

**QUESTION:** No, no.

**QUESTION:** No, it has nothing to do with Turkmenistan. This is --

**QUESTION:** It's part of China.

**QUESTION:** Western China.

**MR. ERELI:** Oh. I'm sorry. Thank you.

**QUESTION:** These are the Uighur.

**MR. ERELI:** The Uighurs. Let me see if I have anything for you on this group.

**QUESTION:** And can you check and see if you really do support fully the Government of Turkmenistan, which, as I recall, is run by an increasingly authoritarian guy who has named the calendar after himself and clamped down on pretty much all aspects of human rights there?

**MR. ERELI:** We recognize the Government of Turkmenistan is the --

**QUESTION:** Well, be careful.

**MR. ERELI:** -- the legitimate government of Turkmenistan and that's who we have relations with.

**QUESTION:** Okay. But, remember, you don't recognize governments; you recognize states.

**MR. ERELI:** Recognize -- okay. Thank you. (Laughter.) I will deal with the Government of Turkmenistan, as the -- what -- represent -- as the Government of Turkmenistan.

Any other corrections with my briefing?

(Laughter.)

Yeah.

**QUESTION:** Over the weekend, Adam, there were a couple of, shall we say, you know, small incidences that happened at the APEC summit in Chile. And I'm just wondering if you can tell us, without referring or getting permission from the White House to speak about this, whether, at a diplomatic level at the State Department, or at Ambassador Kelly's level or Assistant Secretary Noriega's level or anything, if this -- kind of these security problems that involved the President were raised with the Chilean Government.

**MR. ERELI:** I'll have to check. I'm not aware that they were, but let me check and see if there's anything I have that I

can share with you on it.

Yeah.

**QUESTION:** Adam, with the up -- forthcoming meeting in Sharm el-Sheikh, is the State Department, federal government, going to bring up aspects of media bias, such as with Al Jazeera? Also, the problem with religious clerics which has been partly causing unrest, both in the Sunni and Shiite communities, and put forth a plan where perhaps some of the militants and terrorists don't get a footing to disrupt both the elections in Iraq as well as in the Palestinian areas?

**MR. ERELI:** I really don't want to get into a discussion here of what we're going to be -- what our talking points are going to be in Sharm tomorrow. I don't have anything specific for you on Al Jazeera, certainly not on rivalries between political or different ethnic groups or religious groups in Iraq.

The point for us in going to Sharm is to help strengthen regional and international support for the Interim Iraqi Government, to help strengthen regional cooperation in tackling the insurgency and to broaden international support for the political and reconstruction process in Iraq.

Others might have specific issues that they raise, such as that you mentioned, but really, our approach is going to be to try to focus on positive things that the international community and Iraq's neighbors can do to help the Interim Government get a handle on the security situation, provide a good environment for upcoming elections and move ahead in rebuilding the country and providing the people of Iraq with the material needs that they have.

**QUESTION:** Could I ask you -- on another subject? Is that all right?

**MR. ERELI:** Another subject? Sure. Wait. You want a follow-up?

**QUESTION:** Yes. As of yesterday, there were reports that the Fatah group, which you're not necessarily kind to, has gone up to Beirut for discussions with respect to the forthcoming election January 9th in the Palestinian territories. You're -- in Iraq and elsewhere -- you're talking about insurgencies from influencing elections. Do you think and do you -- or see that the election could be disrupted from outside on January 9th?

**MR. ERELI:** The Secretary spoke to this just a few hours ago. I don't really have a lot to add. He spoke -- said he had very good meetings with the Palestinian and Israeli officials, that we have a moment of opportunity to move forward in helping develop a strong and activist and positive Palestinian leadership; that work between the Israelis and the Palestinians in facilitating elections with as broad a participation as possible is moving forward and is in a positive direction.

He also underscored the critical importance of the Palestinian Authority acting to curb violence by groups such as the ones that you mentioned. And that remains an indispensable part of a peaceful future for the region.

So those were the, I think, the highlights of the Secretary's trip, or visits with his Israeli and Palestinian partners. As far as internal Palestinian developments, I'd leave it to them to comment on.

**QUESTION:** I guess there's an obsession with personnel. If you happen to know -- the Deputy Secretary's plans? The Secretary was clear. He said he would stay on the job until the successor was named, and the successor was named almost before the words were out of his mouth. And he said he would see the process through the confirmation process, might stay a month or two.

What about the Deputy Secretary? Does he stay -- is he following -- you know, the phrase was used, "In together, out together." Is he following the same general proposition when there's -- when his post is filled, he'll -- you know, in an orderly way will depart? Or is there some other scheme or scenario in mind?

**MR. ERELI:** No, he will depart in an orderly way, I can assure you that.

**QUESTION:** Well, I'm sure -- well, I don't know. Look, I'm looking for timetables.

**MR. ERELI:** Look, let me put it this way. This is going to -- you don't need to spend a lot of ink on this because this is going to be -- this is going to be a very smooth, orderly, cordial, well-coordinated transition.

The Secretary and Secretary-designate have already begun talking to each other about how to manage it, about issues. So it's a process that's already begun. I think what's, you know, what we all, here, look forward to working closely, as the Secretary and his -- and the Secretary-designate have done, with all our counterparts to make it basically seamless. And I think that's the way to characterize the plans of the Deputy Secretary as well as others who may be leaving.

**QUESTION:** Well, I wasn't suggesting any disruption. I just know that there's a successor named for the Secretary and none for the Deputy Secretary. So I wonder if the Deputy Secretary --

**MR. ERELI:** Is there a successor named for the Deputy?

**QUESTION:** No, I said -- I hope I didn't say it wrong. I said the Secretary's successor, or would-be successor, we have the name, but not for the Deputy Secretary.

**MR. ERELI:** Right, right, okay.

**QUESTION:** So I was trying to figure out what his timetable is.

**MR. ERELI:** Again, his timetable will be whatever works for the Department, for the new Secretary, based on her plans. And those are still in the process of being worked out, and so I can't get into specifics because they're not there yet, but as I said, as a general proposition, you can rest assured that they'll be cordial and orderly and seamless.

**QUESTION:** Real quickly to follow up, were there any other resignations?

**MR. ERELI:** Not that I have to -- not that I've been made aware of.

**QUESTION:** I've remembered my question on Ukraine, which is, when you did speak about the potential consequences for

-- if things aren't resolved in the post-election process, you mentioned a review of the relations, and then you said additional actions against people --

**MR. ERELI:** Engaging in fraud, individuals engaging in fraud.

**QUESTION:** Right. Yeah. By that, you're talking about these visa bans, asset freezes, that -- things that --

**MR. ERELI:** That's the nature of the thing, yeah, the nature of the actions.

**QUESTION:** Well, and then but for the -- for the larger, for the broader country-to-country tie, what kind of things could be envisioned with that? Is it aid?

**MR. ERELI:** Again, I don't want to get in, at this point, to get ahead of ourselves. Let's see what the results are; let's see what the final results are; let's see how this process unfolds; and then we'll decide on what we think is appropriate.

**QUESTION:** Okay. Well, then, forget about Ukraine specifically. When you guys speak generally of "reviewing your relations" with Country X --

**MR. ERELI:** I think it's the whole range of things: It's the bilateral programs, the kinds of bilateral programs we have; the level of engagement, both, you know, economic, military, cultural; it's working -- you know, the kind of interactions we have in international fora; it's, so, you know, it's the full range of options and I don't want to focus on any one particular area because I don't -- I just don't think we're there yet.

**QUESTION:** All right. Ukraine does receive this military training, though, right? Right now?

**MR. ERELI:** I'd have to check, but I'm pretty sure. I don't know which military --

**QUESTION:** It's called --

**MR. ERELI:** IMET?

**QUESTION:** It's IMET.

**MR. ERELI:** You're talking about IMET? Yeah.

**QUESTION:** Isn't that --

**MR. ERELI:** I think so. I'm not sure if it's --

**QUESTION:** Isn't that generally one of the first things on the block to go when a country has a -- when something undemocratic happens in a country?

**MR. ERELI:** Again, I don't want to make a general rule about these sorts of things.

**QUESTION:** All right. And my last question has to do with something you were asked about on Friday, which was this big prisoner release in Burma. You didn't seem too impressed with it at the time, noting that Aung San Suu Kyi and U Tin Oo remained in -- in prison.

**MR. ERELI:** Right.

**QUESTION:** But it does appear as though at least some of those who were released were significant senior NLD leaders. Do you have anything more to say about that than you had to say on Friday?

**MR. ERELI:** I don't. I'll see if our experts want to add to what we said on Friday.

Yes.

**QUESTION:** Sorry, I thought the briefing starts at 1:00, so maybe --

**MR. ERELI:** Sorry, we started a little early.

**QUESTION:** Well, it says at 1:00. So I just wanted to know if you talked about the Secretary's visit to Palestine and Israel? And if you didn't, I just wanted to follow on one line, which is that the Secretary was supposed to encourage the Israelis to withdraw their forces from the West Bank and Gaza in preparation for the election -- if there is any feedback on that, if there is any Israeli reaction and whether there is some kind of talk of ceasefire before any election can really take place, whether the Secretary has talked to both sides about it?

**MR. ERELI:** I did speak to it a little bit. The Secretary also spoke to it a few hours ago when he gave a press conference in Jericho. And he said that -- in that press conference -- that the Israelis had told us earlier that they'll do everything they can to permit freedom of movement and access for voters on election -- for voters and candidates, and that, really, cooperation and coordination at this point seems to be going very well.

**QUESTION:** So no details? It's just a general thing?

**MR. ERELI:** I'd, again, refer you to what the -- the words of the Secretary. I don't really want to elaborate since he just spoke a few hours ago.

**QUESTION:** Thank you.

**MR. ERELI:** Thank you.

(The briefing was concluded at 1:25 p.m.)

## DPB #191

Released on November 22, 2004

 [BACK TO TOP](#)



[Updates](#) | [Frequent Questions](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Email this Page](#) | [Subject Index](#) | [Search](#)

The Office of Electronic Information, Bureau of Public Affairs, manages this site as a portal for information from the U.S. State Department. External links to other Internet sites should not be construed as an endorsement of the views or privacy policies contained therein.

[About state.gov](#) | [Privacy Notice](#) | [FOIA](#) | [Copyright Information](#) | [Other U.S. Government Information](#)