HIGHLIGHTS OF Q&A WITH STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN NED PRICE REGARDING CHINESE GENOCIDE STATE DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING, MARCH 8, 2021

QUESTION: I have a few questions on the ongoing genocide in China. I know that the Biden administration is reviewing their China policy. But are you guys planning to impose a cost on China more so than the Trump administration did for carrying out this genocide that you guys have declared is a genocide against the Uyghurs and other Muslim minorities in China?

MR PRICE: Well, to put a fine point on it, the Secretary has made clear that in his judgment, genocide was committed against the Uyghurs in Xinjiang. The PRC also has committed crimes against humanity in Xinjiang against the Uyghurs who, of course, are predominantly Muslim, and members of other ethnic and religious minority groups, and that includes imprisonment, torture, and forced sterilization and persecution. These atrocities, we have made the point, shock the conscience. They can't be ignored, and they must be met with serious consequences.

You asked what the United States will do. I think the question that we are posing to likeminded allies and partners around the world is: What collectively can we do not only to impose costs on China for what has transpired, but in order to ensure that these – seek to ensure that these atrocities do not continue going forward?

Again, our China policy is predicated on our core sources of strength, and we've talked about those sources of strength from this podium before. An important one – two important ones I would flag in this context – but number one, our values. They give us, together with our international partners and allies, a comparative advantage. But two, it is that system of partnerships, that system of alliances that in many ways is the envy of countries, especially our competitors and our adversaries the world over, because our competitors know that our system of partnerships and alliances is unrivaled. And it gives us a unique system of what DOD might call force multipliers, and that is precisely the tool that we seek to leverage going forward in imposing costs on China for this behavior and making clear that these sorts of atrocities must not continue going forward.

QUESTION: Can I ask you a grammatical question just about your response to the – Kylie's first question when you said that genocide – that the Secretary's determined that genocide was committed? Is it the administration's belief that this is not an ongoing thing?

MR PRICE: So Secretary Blinken, in his confirmation hearings, made that judgment.

QUESTION: No, no, no – I get. The question is the tense. Do you think – do you think it only happened in the past, or is it continuing now?

MR PRICE: So the Secretary made clear that, in his judgment, genocide was committed against Uyghurs, and we're using that tense.

QUESTION: That's exactly my question.

MR PRICE: We're using that tense because the Secretary was speaking in the context of his confirmation hearings at that moment in time.

QUESTION: Well can you say now, today? That was a month ago.

MR PRICE: These – the questions of genocide, questions of crimes against humanity, these are always questions that our bureaus are looking at – it's not only the Department of State but also our interagency partners – are looking closely at to form an assessment as to whether these are ongoing.

QUESTION: Well —

MR PRICE: At that moment in time, it was the judgement of Secretary Blinken that genocide had been committed in Xinjiang, just as it was the judgment of Secretary Pompeo, as I understand it, that genocide was committed.

QUESTION: Yes. So is it fair to say that the situation that is happening right now is under review, and so it is not —

MR PRICE: It is —

QUESTION: Like, you have not determined that it is continuing to happen?

MR PRICE: I would – I would make the point that these reviews are always ongoing. It is not that we have to formally initiate a review. Relevant entities, whether it is GCJ, whether it's EAP, whether it's our Legal Adviser's Office, are always evaluating information as we get it. And so, of course, we are closely evaluating, analyzing what may be going on in the ground in Xinjiang, elsewhere in China, elsewhere around the world.