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From: Sullivan, Jacob J <SullivanJJ@state.gov>
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For immediate release and posting

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Office of the Spokesman

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STATEMENT BY SECRETARY CLINTON

Statement on Events in Tunisia

The United States continues to closely monitor the rapidly evolving events in Tunisia, where earlier today President Ben Ali left his country following several weeks of demonstrations and popular unrest. We condemn the violence and urge restraint on all sides.

Clearly this is a moment of significant transition in Tunisia and through this period and beyond it is important that the Tunisian government respect the right of its people to peacefully assemble and express their views. We look to the Tunisian government to build a stronger foundation for Tunisia's future with economic, social, and political reforms, and call for free and fair elections in the near future that reflect the true will and aspirations of the Tunisian people.

On my trip to the Middle East this week, I heard people everywhere yearning for economic opportunity, political participation and the chance to build a better future. Young people especially need to have a meaningful role in the decisions that shape their lives. Addressing these concerns will be challenging, but the United States stands ready to help.

The United States has a long and historic relationship with Tunisia. We are committed to helping the people and government bring peace and stability to their country and we hope that they will work together to build a stronger, more democratic society that respects the rights of all people.

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