

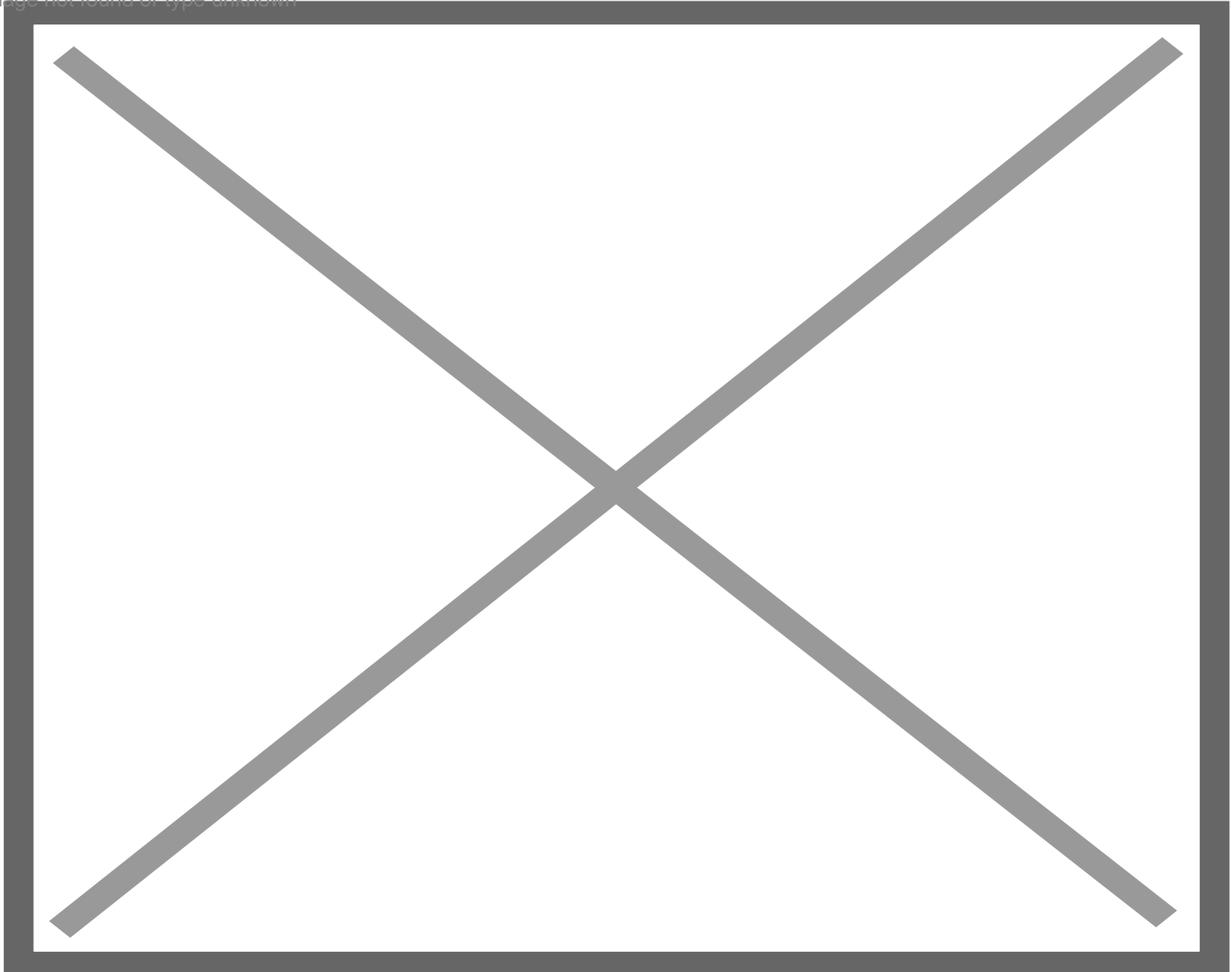
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Mike Pompeo Currently in Jamaica Meeting With Select Caribbean Leaders as Barbados and Trinidad Boycott

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Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Senator the Hon. Kamina Johnson Smith (second right), greets United States Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo (right), on his arrival at the Norman Manley International Airport on Monday (January 21) By. ADRIAN WALKER

JAMAICA — United States Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo, arrived in Jamaica on Tuesday for his two-day working visit.

His plane landed at the Norman Manley International Airport in Kingston at approximately 6:04 p.m., where he was met by Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Kamina Johnson Smith, the Government of Jamaica said.

The visit comes even as major Caribbean players like Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago [decided not to send their foreign ministers to a planned meeting](#), citing a potential attempt to divide CARICOM nations.

“We don’t look to pick fights. I don’t look to pick fights, but I am conscious that if this country does not stand for something, then it will fall for anything,” Barbados Prime Minister Mia Mottley said recently. “As chairman of CARICOM, it is impossible for me to agree that my foreign minister should attend a meeting with anyone to which members of CARICOM are not invited. If some are invited and not all, then it is an attempt to divide this region.”

Soon after the Government of Trinidad and Tobago followed Ms. Mottley's lead. “PM Mottley has the full support of the Government and the people of Trinidad and Tobago in outlining our principles and vision of Caribbean unity. In the expectation of Caribbean unity, the Prime Minister of Barbados speaks for Trinidad and Tobago,” said T&T Prime Minister Keith Rowley.

For its part, Jamaica sees no problem with the meeting, which included leaders from Jamaica, The Bahamas, Belize, St Kitts, Haiti, Dominican Republic, St. Lucia and St. Marteen.

Jamaica Foreign Affairs Minister Kamina Johnson Smith said "There is nothing unusual or divisive about such meetings. All countries, large and small, have a sovereign right to engage bilaterally with any other country, beyond any regional or hemispheric arrangements."

Mr. Pompeo was set to hold bilateral talks with Jamaica Prime Minister Andrew Holness, at Jamaica House, and engage in round-table discussions with Caribbean officials at The Jamaica Pegasus hotel in New Kingston.

Mr. Pompeo is expected to deliver a policy speech on the Caribbean’s critical importance to the U.S., and the country’s renewed commitment to closer ties, based on shared values, interests and economic prosperity.

He departs the island Wednesday afternoon.

The visit seeks emphasize the deepening of United States relationships with the Caribbean.