

# ExxonMobil Chief Rex Tillerson to Be Named Trump's Secretary of State? "Has Close Ties to Putin"

By [Stephen Lendman](#)

Global Research, December 11, 2016

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*Until recent days, his name hadn't surfaced as a leading contender. Citing sources close to Trump's transition team, media reports said his appointment could come in days, neocon John Bolton, urging war on Iran, to "serve as his deputy," according to NBC News.*

Trump called Tillerson "more than a business executive," adding "he's a world-class player...in charge of I guess the largest company in the world," operating globally on every continent in dozens of countries with ties to leaders in major ones, Russia among them.

ExxonMobil ranks eighth in global revenues at \$246 billion, fifth among the world's largest oil companies, Saudi Aramco the leader, China National Petroleum ahead of it in size.

Exxon's interests in Russia date from the Boris Yeltsin years. Center for Strategic and International Studies president John Hamre said Tillerson "had more interactive time with Vladimir Putin than probably any other American with the exception of Henry Kissinger."

In 2011, he signed an agreement with Moscow on Arctic drilling and exploration, halted because of US sanctions, why he's outspoken against them, saying:

We do not support (them), generally, because we don't find them to be effective unless they are very well implemented comprehensively and that's a very hard thing to do.

He supports US energy independence "to insulate this country from the impact of world events on the economy," adding:

The global free market for energy provides the most effective means of achieving US energy security by promoting resource development, enabling diversification, multiplying our supply channels, encouraging efficiency, and spurring innovation.

He opposes government regulations, saying "there are a thousand ways you can be told 'no' in this country."

In 2013, Putin awarded him Russia's Order of Friendship - given to foreign nationals involved in furthering mutually beneficial cooperative relations.

Environmentalists are displeased about an oil giant head in charge of US foreign policy,

Greenpeace spokesman Cassady Craighill saying:

Just when we thought Trump's cabinet could not get farther away from the needs of the American people, he sneaks in a Saturday appointment of Exxon CEO Rex Tillerson as secretary of state.

In this position, Tillerson will try his hardest to silence global initiatives and the right of state attorney generals to hold fossil fuel companies legally accountable for climate change. We will not be silenced, and we will not allow this cabinet of billionaires to steamroll the people.

According to Friends of the Earth president Erich Pica, "Rex Tillerson should be prosecuted for the climate fraud and lying that ExxonMobil has commenced over the years, not nominated as Secretary of State. The Senate must fight Tillerson's appointment for the sake of our climate and country."

His appointment requires Senate confirmation. Republicans and Democrats are sure to grill him on ties to Putin and business relations with Russia. Hawaii's John McCain called his heading State "a matter of concern to me."

Trump said it's "a great advantage" having someone knowing "many of the (world) players."

Tillerson met with Trump privately for the first time last week, a second meeting following on Saturday. He's scheduled to retire from ExxonMobil next year.

Because of his business dealings in Russia and close ties to Putin, his Senate confirmation hearing could be a rough and tumble affair.

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