



One Hundred Thirteenth Congress
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20515

September 13, 2013

The Honorable John Kerry
Secretary
U.S. Department of State
2201 C St. NW
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Kerry,

Today, the Committee on Homeland Security released a report entitled, “Boko Haram: Growing Threat to the U.S. Homeland.” This report reflects the Committee’s grave concern over the threat Boko Haram poses to U.S. persons and interests abroad, and because of their growing capacity and alliance with al Qaeda, to the U.S. Homeland. Our report identifies several steps the United States can take to help Nigeria fight Boko Haram. In particular, we write to urge you to designate Boko Haram a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO).

On July 12, 2013, the United Kingdom added the Nigerian Islamist extremist organization Boko Haram to its list of Proscribed Terrorist Organizations (PTOs). On June 4, 2013, the Nigerian government also declared Boko Haram a banned terrorist group. As we have written to the Department of State in previous letters, Boko Haram presents an increasingly grave threat to American and Western interests in Africa, and may pose a threat to the U.S. Homeland. While our allies take this threat seriously, the Department of State has yet to designate Boko Haram as an FTO.

As you know from your time as Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, this issue is important to many members of Congress from both parties and in both chambers. On September 13, 2011, Representatives Patrick Meehan and Jackie Speier sent Secretary of State Clinton a letter asking that she investigate whether Boko Haram should be designated an FTO. On March 30, 2012, and again on May 18, 2012, the Committee on Homeland Security sent Secretary Clinton additional letters urging her to immediately designate Boko Haram an FTO. Additionally, Representative Meehan introduced the Boko Haram Terrorist Designation Act of 2012 in the House, which was joined by a companion measure in the Senate introduced by Senator Scott Brown. This measure has been reintroduced in the Senate this Congress. This Committee also released a report in 2011 that detailed the danger of Boko Haram’s increasing lethality and willingness to attack Western targets. Congress will continue to monitor this threat and

remain eager to see such a barbaric organization, allied with al Qaeda, added to the FTO list.

Boko Haram has repeatedly demonstrated its commitment to waging violent jihad. Its growing sophistication and relationship with al Qaeda elements in Western Africa cannot be ignored, and we must provide our Intelligence Community (IC) and law enforcement agencies with every tool available to defeat this adversary. As we have written before, the Department of State failed to designate al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula and Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan until after these organizations attempted attacks against the Homeland. We cannot make the same mistake with Boko Haram.

We must stand together with Nigeria against this terrorist organization, and ensure that support for its activities is prohibited by law. An FTO designation would assist our British and Nigerian partners, and reiterate our commitment to fighting terror around the globe.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Committee at (202) 226-8417.

Sincerely,



MICHAEL T. McCAUL
Chairman
Committee on Homeland Security



PATRICK L. MEEHAN
Chairman
Subcommittee on Cybersecurity,
Infrastructure Protection, and
Security Technologies



PETER T. KING
Chairman
Subcommittee on
Counterterrorism and
Intelligence