



COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Subcommittee Hearing Statement of Chairman Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS)

Current Status of ISIS and Al Qaeda

June 15, 2022

The country faces so many threats from white supremacists and militia extremists, cyber criminals, pandemic diseases, authoritarian governments, and extreme weather caused by climate change. But the reason this Committee was formed, and the Department of Homeland Security was established, is the threat we face from international terrorists.

Nearly 21 years later, the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, remain the worst we have seen on American soil. The fact that was the last complex foreign terrorist attack on U.S. soil is a testament to the hard work of our homeland security, intelligence, law enforcement, and military personnel. Together we have made progress in degrading groups like ISIS and al Qaeda – and have even destroyed parts of their networks.

The Department of Homeland Security, the National Counterterrorism Center, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation – all of whom the Subcommittee will hear from today – have been essential to this accomplishment. They have done important work tracking evolving threats, working with partner nations to build layered defenses, pursuing a campaign to debilitate the groups' plans and operations, and collaborating with other government partners to stem the tide of fighters joining their ranks.

Yet the work of these agencies continues, because the perverse ideology espoused by ISIS and al Qaeda and their commitment to violence and murder persist.

Al Qaeda and ISIS affiliates continue to pop up across the globe—in Yemen and Syria to Somalia, Nigeria, and beyond. Although they appear to threaten mostly local or regional targets, all of the groups and their offshoots desire to attack the United States. Today, Members will hear specifics about this objective, terrorists' ability to meet it, and how the agencies continue to work to diminish that capacity.

While most of today's hearing will likely take place in a classified setting, I assure the American people that this Committee and the agencies testifying are dedicated to keeping these threats far away from our shores.

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