

KAY GRANGER
12TH DISTRICT, TEXAS

APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

CHAIRWOMAN,
STATE AND FOREIGN OPERATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE

MEMBER, DEFENSE SUBCOMMITTEE

MEMBER, TRANSPORTATION, HOUSING AND
URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

February 19, 2015

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
1026 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE
BUILDING
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515
(202) 225-5071
FAX: (202) 225-5683

DISTRICT OFFICE:
SUITE 407
1701 RIVER RUN ROAD
FORT WORTH, TX 76107
(817) 338-0909
FAX: (817) 335-5852
kaygranger.house.gov

The President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

The Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) is one of the most serious threats to national security we have faced in modern times. ISIL and terrorists affiliated with ISIL continue to demonstrate their savagery through brutal acts, including the executions of American, Japanese, Egyptian, Iraqi, and Jordanian citizens. You have stated that you have “directed a comprehensive and sustained strategy to degrade and defeat ISIL.” Unfortunately, the Administration’s actions are not consistent with your words. I am seriously concerned by the lack of urgency the Administration appears to be placing on this fight.

You have stated there will be no U.S. combat troops for enduring offensive operations; however, without an effective ground component, ISIL cannot be destroyed. As a result, it is essential we provide our allies and partners the weapons, equipment and training they need to successfully defeat ISIL and other terrorist threats. That is not being done.

The Administration must realize this is a war against violent extremists who want to destroy the U.S. and its allies. There is no excuse for not doing everything within our power to defeat them. We cannot, and need not, do this alone. We have partners willing and eager to fight with us, to be the “pointy end of the spear.”

As Egypt, Jordan, and the Kurds retaliate and defend themselves against ISIL’s heinous acts, U.S. security assistance is being held or delayed by bureaucratic processes and ill-advised policy decisions by your Administration. As a result, our most trusted and capable partners in the region are limited in their ability to fight ISIL.

Since 2013, your Administration has been holding up critical weapons deliveries to Egypt. For example, F-16s and M1A1 Abrams tanks are essential for the Egyptians to fight ISIL and other extremists. Egyptian President al-Sisi has taken decisive and appropriate action in response to the murder of 21 Coptic Christians by using U.S. built F-16s to strike back against ISIL targets in Libya. However, it is more of the same F-16s that your Administration continues to prevent from being delivered to Egypt. They need these planes and the other weapons immediately to continue the fight against ISIL and other terrorists threatening Egypt’s security, but your Administration has refused to use the authority Congress provided you in law to provide Egypt these weapons. There is no clear “Egypt Policy” and as a result, our allies are left confused by U.S. priorities in the fight against ISIL and terrorism in the region.

During His Majesty King Abdullah II's recent visit to the U.S. he expressed his frustration at the slow U.S. response to assist Jordan with tactical airlift, aircraft parts, night vision equipment, and precision munitions. His Majesty has been courageous in taking on the fight against terrorists, and there is no reason the Kingdom of Jordan, a steadfast U.S. ally, should be waiting, sometimes for years, to know how their needs can be addressed. I have talked with Secretary Kerry and he assured me that expediting weapons to Jordan was a priority. It is essential you provide the Secretary the support necessary to do this across the U.S. Government.

For months, the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) has waited for U.S. assistance they have requested. The KRG and the Peshmerga forces have been the key to fighting ISIL in Iraq and the fact that the U.S. is not delivering all possible assistance makes no strategic sense. While we have provided them some weapons, it has been a slow process and we are not providing them all of the heavy weapons required to counter well-armed terrorists. The Iraqi Kurds are our long-time partner who stood with the U.S. in toppling Saddam Hussein. The Peshmerga forces have significant military capabilities, and it is time we provided them the tools and training they need to destroy ISIL.

I have consistently raised my concerns about these issues and have received many explanations and excuses from Administration officials. This must stop now. Our adversaries and partners alike should know with complete certainty that the U.S. is willing to stand with its friends when they need our assistance and be united against our common enemies.

In order to successfully fight and defeat ISIL and terrorists threats that challenge the stability and security of the U.S. and our partners and allies in the Middle East, I am calling on you to immediately release the remaining weapons and funds to Egypt; to provide Jordan the weapons they have requested; and to ensure that the Kurdish Peshmerga have all of the equipment they need. As the Chairwoman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on State and Foreign Operations I am prepared to do everything within my power to make sure this occurs, including placing holds on Congressional Notifications and drafting legislation to hold your Administration accountable.

Sincerely,



Kay Granger
Chairwoman

House Appropriations Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs

CC: The Honorable John Kerry, Secretary of State