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May 25, 2016

President Barack Obama  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama:

As Members of the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC), we write to strongly urge the administration to take bold action in the effort to eradicate Boko Haram – the world's deadliest terrorist organization – and ensure the safe return of the more than 200 Nigerian schoolgirls being held captive by Boko Haram.

On April 14, 2014, the world became aware of Boko Haram when 276 girls were kidnapped from their dormitory rooms at the Government Secondary School in Chibok. Fifty-seven of the girls escaped that night, but for more than two years after the mass abduction, 219 remained missing while Boko Haram expanded its reign of terror throughout the region.

Last week, a vigilante group formed to fight Boko Haram found one of the missing girls in the Sambisa forest. Now the mother of a four-month-old girl, she reported to Nigerian officials that six of the Chibok girls have died in captivity and the rest are being kept under tight security in an area of the forest.

Since 2009, Boko Haram has wreaked havoc on the people of northeastern Nigeria and the Lake Chad Region. According to the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP), in 2014, the terrorist group killed 7,512 people, more than any other terrorist organization in the world. In addition, more than 2.3 million people have been forced from their homes, creating one of the fastest growing displacement crises in Africa.

Today, as the world narrowly focuses its fight against terror on the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, Boko Haram remains a rising threat to western ideals and education. Boko Haram continues to pillage communities, rape and traffic women and young girls, kill and recruit men and boys, and use girls as young as eight years old as suicide bombers, because it views western education as a sin. We commend you and your administration for the work it has done to support the Nigerian government in combating Boko Haram, but as this deadly terrorist group's stronghold continues to spread into Chad, Niger and northern Cameroon, we must increase our efforts to urge the regional governments to bring an end to this deadly organization.

For more than two years, Members of the CBC and Congress have stood united in raising awareness of the #BringBackOurGirls movement, demanding the safe return of the missing Chibok girls and ending Boko Haram's carnage. Both chambers of Congress have passed bipartisan resolutions condemning the acts of Boko Haram and encouraging the Nigerian government to do more to curtail the terrorist group's insurgency. Members have held policy forums and press conferences to discuss strategies to combat Boko Haram, and we wear red every Wednesday to show solidarity in our mission to eradicate this deadly terrorist group, and ensure the safe return of every person held captive by this disgraceful organization.



In recognition of the two year anniversary of the abduction of the Chibok schoolgirls, Rep. Frederica S. Wilson (FL-24) led a series of events on Capitol Hill, which culminated with a candlelight vigil in front of the U.S. State Department in an effort to recognize the hundreds of women and children. CBC Chairman G. K. Butterfield (NC-1), Members of the CBC, members of the Armed Services and Foreign Affairs Committees, and five of the escaped Chibok schoolgirls participated in the vigil. The purpose of the event was to encourage the State Department to continue to make the fight against Boko Haram a high priority in our nation's fight against terror, and to remind the world that we will never forget the lives that have been destroyed by Boko Haram.

We strongly urge your administration to take bold action to combat Boko Haram and stop its senseless killing. We cannot stand idly by while thousands more are slaughtered, raped, and sold into human trafficking. For the sake of the people of Nigeria and the Lake Chad region, the U.S. can and should do more to end this genocide. We understand support has been offered through various regional programs and funding mechanisms, including the Global Security Contingency Fund (GSCF) and the Counterterrorism Partnership Fund (CTPF), as well as through bilateral security assistance. While in any situation there are extensive considerations that must be weighed, several areas of need include:

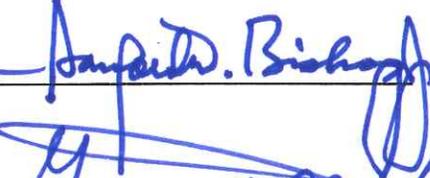
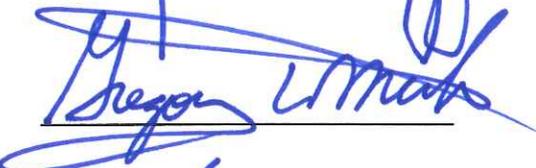
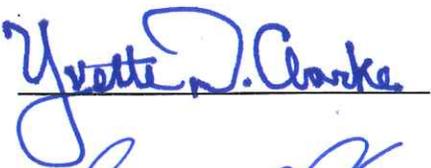
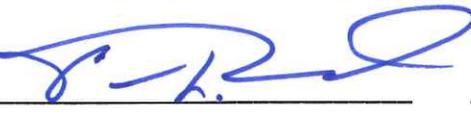
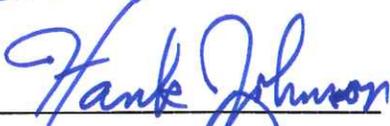
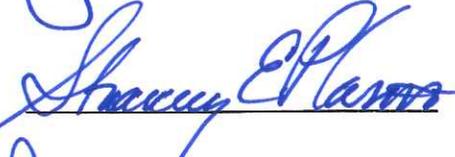
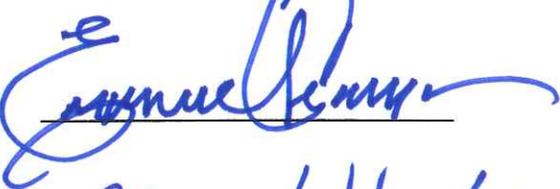
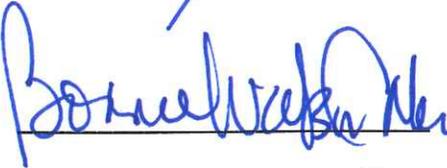
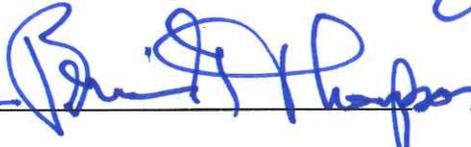
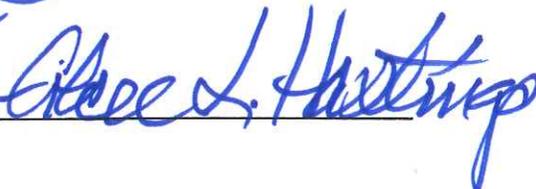
- Assistance in creating conditions for the safe return of the people displaced by Boko Haram's violence
- Reconstruction and development of the Lake Chad Basin area
- Assistance in facilitating long-term security in the region
- Training for prosecutors and judges to implement anti-terrorism laws

We formally request that you take executive action and do all within your power to combat Boko Haram, put an end to this senseless violence, and ensure the safe return of the still-missing Chibok schoolgirls.

We look forward to working with you and hearing from you in response to our request.

Thank you very much.

Very truly yours,

 G. K. Butterfield	 Anna Escobedo Cabral	 Jennifer Bishop
 Frederica S. Wilson	 Lita Stone	 Gregory Ussery
 Yvette D. Clarke	 J. L. [unclear]	 Hank Johnson
 Stacey Plamont	 D. [unclear]	 Emanuel Claver
 Bonnie Weber	 Ben Ray Lujan	 Alice L. Hertzberg

Maryanne Waters Bob Kell Bryant

Darbara Lee Paul Scott Edie Bernice Johnson

Sam Swell Keith Ellison Brenda Lawrence

Covino Jay Beatz Hung

Bob Kanban Louis

W. H. W. A. Denny K. O. Davis Shirley B. Long

Sheila Jackson Lee Lizbeth. Canning

CC: The Honorable John F. Kerry, Secretary of State  
The Honorable Susan Rice, National Security Advisor to the President  
The Honorable Samantha Power, United States Ambassador to the United Nations