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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6225

March 25, 2019

The Honorable Mike Pompeo
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Mr. Secretary:

On February 7, 2019, the Defense Intelligence Agency submitted to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee an unclassified report required under the John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019 (P.L. 115-232). The report describes security cooperation between the Russian Federation and Cuba, Nicaragua, and Venezuela. I am writing for your assessment as to whether any of the transactions described in the report trigger the mandatory sanctions under Section 231 of the Countering America's Adversaries through Sanctions Act (P.L. 115-44).

Specifically, I request your assessment as to whether the following three transactions would trigger sanctions under section 231 of CAATSA:

- Cuba: The report states that Russia and Cuba signed a \$50 million loan agreement in 2018 for the purchase of Russian military hardware and replacement parts.
- Nicaragua: The report chronicles the delivery by Russia of 15 BTR-70M armored personnel carriers, 50 T-72 tanks and two AN-26 transport aircraft.
- Venezuela: The report says that Russia provided Venezuela with 10 refurbished Mi-35M2 attack helicopters in 2017.

The report indicates that Russia is the primary security partner for Cuba, Nicaragua and Venezuela, "a trend that is likely to continue through the duration of the current regimes." In addition to your assessment as to whether any of the transactions in the report, including the specific transactions highlighted above, would be sanctionable under CAATSA, I request that you share your overall assessment of whether any sanctionable transactions have taken place, in classified form if necessary, between the Russian Federation and these three countries.

Sincerely,



Robert Menendez
Ranking Member