

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

January 9, 2020

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

Secretary Pompeo:

As tensions remain high between the United States and Iran, we remain concerned about the risk of hostile action by Iran or its proxies that could target our diplomatic compounds and personnel. Although Iran's multiple surface-to-surface missiles launched against U.S. troops stationed in Iraq on January 8 did not result in casualties, Iranian-backed groups breached the United States Embassy in Baghdad last month, and we understand a number of our diplomatic outposts remain on high alert.

As you well know, Iran has significant capacity for further retaliation directly and through its proxy forces both in the Gulf, the greater Middle East, and around the world. These proxies are capable of attacking Americans and our interests across the globe, including military installations, diplomatic personnel and facilities, oil infrastructure, and our allies, and have not hesitated to do so in the past.

As a result of the Soleimani operation, we understand that a number of our overseas missions, State Department personnel, and their families continue to face heightened security threats. The Department of State and the United States Agency for International Development have personnel in over 250 posts in 180 countries around the world. In order for our diplomats and development professionals to do their jobs effectively, they must be able to engage foreign interlocutors outside of the embassy walls. Each day, buses filled with American Embassy children traverse the streets of foreign capitals, headed to local American schools. Diplomats, development professionals, and their families bear an outsized risk, and we must be vigilant about their security.


One of the top priorities for the United States must remain ensuring that our American diplomats, development professionals, and their families worldwide, to include our mission to Iraq, are protected and secure. To that end, we request an assessment within the next 7 days of the current risk and threat matrix created by the Soleimani killing and a detailed explanation of the Department's plan to protect our embassies, consulates, diplomats, and their families worldwide in the wake of the Soleimani killing, including:

- Current staffing levels at Embassy Baghdad and all other U.S. diplomatic facilities in Iraq, including diplomatic, security, and other personnel;
- Current staffing levels at our diplomatic facilities across the Middle East, including diplomatic, security, and other personnel;

- An analysis of Diplomatic Security staff reductions in Mission Iraq from 2018 through the present;
- Current security posture at Embassy Baghdad and diplomatic facilities across the Middle East;
- Current security posture at all diplomatic facilities in countries where Iranian-backed terrorist incidents have occurred or where Iranian proxies or affiliates have been known to or currently operate;
- Any embassy construction or security standard variances that have been granted, worldwide, that may create risks in the context of this new set of threats;
- An assessment of the risks posed to embassies, consulates, and diplomatic personnel and their families in the wake of the Soleimani killing;
- Long-term strategic plans for the new normal at all overseas missions, given the increased threats as a result of the Soleimani killing;
- The status of conversations with foreign governments regarding U.S. embassy security, as they are obligated to protect and defend our embassies and diplomats;
- An assessment of the capacity and willingness of host countries to provide if-needed support to our diplomatic facilities and personnel;
- Plans for the safe and secure evacuation, of any of our embassies and other U.S. personnel;
- Plans for the safety and security of locally employed staff;
- A discussion of threat indicators leading up to the retaliatory Iran strike, embassy and Department of State consideration of any threat indicators, and any changes to security posture in response to such indicators;
- The plan for intelligence community communication to posts overseas and Diplomatic Security.

Protecting our national security, including that of Americans overseas, is our highest priority. We look forward to your prompt answers to these important questions.

Sincerely,



ROBERT MENENDEZ  
Ranking Member  
Senate Foreign Relations Committee



ELIOT L. ENGEL  
Chairman  
House Foreign Affairs Committee