

United States Senate

November 4, 2015

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The Honorable John F. Kerry
Secretary of State
U.S. State Department
2201 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Kerry,

I am writing you to register my deep concerns over reports of the October 29 attack on Camp Liberty that killed more than 20 residents and injured dozens more.

The Mukhtar Army, a Shiite militia supported by Iran, has claimed responsibility for the rocket attack on Camp Liberty and threatened more strikes as long as residents remain in Iraq. These threats are especially troubling as Iranian-backed Shia paramilitary groups have grown increasingly active and influential in Iraq, and they must be taken seriously. Moreover, continued attacks on residents and other recent events call into question the Iraqi government's commitment to uphold its agreement to ensure the safety and well-being of these residents.

As Iran's malign involvement in Iraq grows, the security situation around Camp Liberty is increasingly dire. It is clear that immediate actions must be taken to ensure the safety and security of the residents of Camp Liberty. With this in mind, please respond to the following questions:

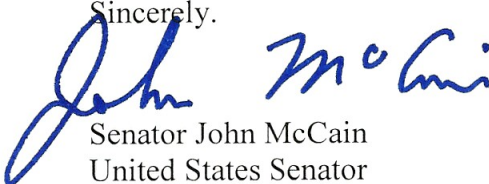
1. What information does the Administration have concerning the attack and the current security situation of Camp Liberty?
2. Has the Administration undertaken an investigation to ascertain the full extent of this unprovoked attack and identify those responsible?
3. Has the Administration investigated allegations that Iraqi government officials, including National Security Advisor Falah Fayyad who is responsible for oversight of Camp Liberty, were complicit in the attack?
4. Is the Administration working with the Government of Iraq to procure protective T-walls, sandbags, bulletproof vests, and other non-lethal protective equipment to protect residents in the case of future rocket attacks?
5. What further actions will be taken by the Administration to ensure the future safety of the residents?

6. Given Camp Liberty's proximity to Baghdad International Airport, has the Administration considered the requirements to bring Camp Liberty within the aerial perimeter of U.S. air protection to ensure that the firing of missiles or mortars would not be permitted on the camp?
7. Why has the refugee resettlement process not been completed to date, and what is now being done to expedite the resettlement of the men, women, and children of Camp Liberty who continue to be under direct threat?

Given the deteriorating conditions in Iraq, I believe our current efforts should focus on the approximately 2,300 residents whose lives are at stake in Camp Liberty. In a recent Senate Armed Services Committee hearing, multiple witnesses testified to the fragile security conditions and vulnerability of the Camp's residents. Their testimony made clear that these residents have repeatedly been the victims of daily harassments that have decreased quality of life, blocked access to food and critical medical care, denied of non-lethal protective equipment, and endured rocket attacks and violent raids that have resulted in the deaths of more than 100 men, women, and children. Yet despite the atrocious conditions and continued danger to residents, the United States has remained ineffective, and even reluctant, in responding to our humanitarian obligations to protect the residents and facilitate their swift relocation to a secure location.

Again, I urge you to continue to push for the protection of the residents of Camp Liberty and to expedite the refugee resettlement process. We made a commitment to protect these Iranian dissidents and, as we move forward, I look forward to working with you to fulfill this commitment.

Sincerely.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "John McCain". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "John" and last name "McCain" clearly distinguishable.

Senator John McCain
United States Senator