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COMMITTEE ON
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SUBCOMMITTEE ON
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Congress of the United States
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November 1, 2012

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20500

The Honorable Hillary Clinton
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2291 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear President Obama and Secretary Clinton:

It has been almost two months since the tragic attacks that killed Ambassador Chris Stevens, Foreign Service Office Sean Smith, and U.S. security officers Tyrone Woods and Glen Doherty. In the time that has passed, the American people are left with more questions than answers and their faith in our government has been greatly diminished.

On September 16, 2012, Ambassador Susan Rice made in one of her many television appearances stating "Our current best assessment, based on the information that we have at present, is that, in fact, what this began as, it was a spontaneous---not a premeditated---response to what had transpired in Cairo." Not only was this a premeditated terrorist attack, but it appears as though our intelligence community knew that it was a terrorist attack in its immediate aftermath. According to a *Reuters* report of October 23, 2012, officials at the White House and State Department were advised two hours after the attack on the U.S. mission in Benghazi, Libya that an Islamic militant group had claimed credit for the attack. Rocket propelled grenades, AK-47s, mortars, and artillery used in the attacks are not the usual weapons of choice for a spontaneous mob. Even if the Administration was not sure about these reports, how could Ambassador Rice confidently and repeatedly tell the American people that the attack was the result of an online anti-Muslim film? Does Ambassador Rice have any plans to officially retract her statements of September 16, 2012?

In addition to the confusing statements regarding the cause of the attacks, I am very concerned about the information that has recently surfaced regarding repeated requests for additional security protection at the U.S. mission in Benghazi, Libya. *FoxNews*

reported on October 31, 2012 that an August 16, 2012 cable said that the State Department's senior security officer did not believe that the consulate in Benghazi could be protected. Who at the State Department read this cable and why were insufficient actions taken to protect our foreign service officers in Libya?

It is in our paramount interest to ensure that such a tragic loss of life never happens again. In the aftermath of Libya, are there any outstanding cables or notices from State Department security officers or diplomats requesting additional security protection that either have not been acted on or are not fully implemented?

I am further concerned about the dependence on the February 17 Martyrs Brigade for securing the U.S. mission. Though it is the responsibility of the host nation to provide for the security of foreign embassies and compounds, why did the original security contingency plans depend upon help from the February 17 Martyrs Brigade? We should not be completely dependent upon irregular militias to provide crucial security protection of our diplomatic compounds. Do any of our current compounds in Libya rely on the February 17 Martyrs Brigade for protection? Additionally, do any of our other outposts around the world depend upon the assistance of militia in the event of an attack? I have the utmost respect and honor for the Marines and other service members that guard our foreign embassies and compounds. We should rely upon them, and not irregular militias.

I thank you for your review of this correspondence and look forward to your prompt reply.

Sincerely,



Kenny Marchant
Member of Congress