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Letter to Congressional Leaders on the Global Deployment of United States Combat-Equipped Armed Forces

December 8, 2022

Dear Madam Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

I am providing this supplemental consolidated report, prepared by my Administration and consistent with the War Powers Resolution (Public Law 93–148), as part of my efforts to keep the Congress informed about deployments of United States Armed Forces equipped for combat.

MILITARY OPERATIONS IN SUPPORT OF UNITED STATES COUNTERTERRORISM EFFORTS

In furtherance of counterterrorism efforts, the United States continues to work with partners around the globe, with a particular focus on the United States Central and Africa Commands' areas of responsibility. In this context, the United States has deployed forces to conduct counterterrorism operations and to advise, assist, and accompany security forces of select foreign partners on counterterrorism operations. In the majority of these locations, the mission of United States military personnel is to facilitate counterterrorism operations of foreign partner forces and does not include routine engagement in combat. In many of these locations, the security environment is such that United States military personnel may be required to defend themselves against threats or attacks, and, to that end, the United States may deploy United States military personnel with weapons and other appropriate equipment for force protection. Specific information about counterterrorism deployments to select countries is provided below, and a classified annex to this report provides further information.

Military Operations Conducted Pursuant to the 2001 Authorization for Use of Military Force and in Support of Related United States Counterterrorism Objectives

Since October 7, 2001, United States Armed Forces, including Special Operations Forces, have conducted counterterrorism combat operations, including against al-Qa'ida and associated forces. Since August 2014, these operations have included targeting the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), also known as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), which was formerly known as al-Qa'ida in Iraq. In support of these and other overseas operations, the United States has deployed combat-equipped forces to several locations in the United States Central, European, Africa, Southern, and Indo-Pacific Commands' areas of responsibility. Such operations and deployments have been reported previously, consistent with Public Law 107–40, Public Law 107–243, the War Powers Resolution, and other statutes. These ongoing operations, which the United States has carried out with the assistance of numerous international partners, have been successful in seriously degrading ISIS capabilities in Syria and Iraq. If necessary, in response to terrorist threats, I will direct additional measures to protect the people and interests of the United States. It is not possible to know at this time the precise scope or the duration of the deployments of United States Armed Forces that are or will be necessary to counter terrorist threats to the United States.

Afghanistan. United States military personnel remain postured outside Afghanistan to address threats to the U.S. homeland and U.S. interests that may arise from inside Afghanistan.

Iraq and Syria. As part of a comprehensive strategy to defeat ISIS, United States Armed Forces are working by, with, and through local partners to conduct operations against ISIS forces in Iraq and Syria and against al-Qa'ida in Syria to limit the potential for resurgence of these

groups and to mitigate threats to the U.S. homeland. A small presence of United States Armed Forces remains in strategically significant locations in Syria to conduct operations, in partnership with indigenous ground forces, to address continuing terrorist threats emanating from Syria. United States Armed Forces in Iraq continue to advise, assist, and enable select elements of the Iraqi security forces, including Iraqi Kurdish security forces. United States Armed Forces also provide limited support to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization mission in Iraq. United States Armed Forces, as part of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, remain present in Iraq at the invitation of the Government of Iraq.

As reported on August 25, 2022, I directed precision strikes against a facility in eastern Syria on August 23, 2022. The facility was used by militia groups affiliated with Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps that have been involved in a series of unmanned aerial vehicle, rocket, and mortar attacks against United States personnel and facilities in Syria. Two attacks on August 15, 2022, by Iran-backed militia groups targeted al-Tanf Garrison and Mission Support Site Green Village, both United States bases in Syria. These August 15 attacks followed a series of attacks by Iran-backed militia groups on United States forces and facilities in Iraq and Syria in the 6 months prior. These attacks threatened the lives of United States and Coalition personnel. I directed this discrete military action consistent with my responsibility to protect United States citizens both at home and abroad and in furtherance of United States national security and foreign policy interests, pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct United States foreign relations and as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive.

Arabian Peninsula Region. A small number of United States military personnel are deployed to Yemen to conduct operations against al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula and ISIS. The United States military continues to work closely with the Republic of Yemen government and regional partner forces to degrade the terrorist threat posed by those groups.

United States Armed Forces, in a non-combat role, continue to provide military advice and limited information to the Saudi-led Coalition for defensive and training purposes only as they relate to territorial defense. Such support does not involve United States Armed Forces in hostilities with the Houthis for the purposes of the War Powers Resolution.

United States Armed Forces are deployed to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to protect United States forces and interests in the region against hostile action by Iran and Iran-backed groups. These forces, operating in coordination with the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, provide air and missile defense capabilities and support the operation of United States military aircraft. The total number of United States forces in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is approximately 2,755.

Jordan. At the request of the Government of Jordan, approximately 3,003 United States military personnel are deployed to Jordan to support Defeat-ISIS operations, to enhance Jordan's security, and to promote regional stability.

Lebanon. At the request of the Government of Lebanon, approximately 36 United States military personnel are deployed to Lebanon to enhance the government's counterterrorism capabilities and to support the counterterrorism operations of Lebanese security forces.

Turkey. United States Armed Forces remain deployed to Turkey, at the Turkish government's request, to support Defeat-ISIS operations and to enhance Turkey's security.

East Africa Region. On May 16, 2022, I announced my decision to reestablish a persistent military presence in Somalia, to enable a more effective fight against al-Shabaab. United States Armed Forces have now repositioned from locations within Africa to Somalia. United States Armed Forces continue to counter the terrorist threat posed by ISIS-Somalia and al-Shabaab, an associated force of al-Qa'ida. Since the last periodic report, United States Armed Forces have

conducted one successful airstrike against an al-Shabaab high value target and a number of airstrikes against al-Shabaab in defense of our Somali partner forces. United States Armed Forces remain prepared to conduct airstrikes against ISIS-Somalia and al-Shabaab terrorists. United States military personnel in Somalia train, advise, and assist regional forces, including Somali and African Union Transition Mission in Somalia forces, during counterterrorism operations. United States military personnel are deployed to Kenya to support counterterrorism operations in East Africa. United States military personnel continue to partner with the Government of Djibouti, which has permitted use of Djiboutian territory for basing of United States Armed Forces. United States military personnel remain deployed to Djibouti, including for purposes of staging for counterterrorism and counter-piracy operations in the vicinity of the Horn of Africa and the Arabian Peninsula, and to provide contingency support for embassy security augmentation in East Africa, as necessary.

Lake Chad Basin and Sahel Region. United States military personnel in the Lake Chad Basin and Sahel Region continue to conduct airborne intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance operations and to provide support to African and European partners conducting counterterrorism operations in the region, including by advising, assisting, and accompanying these partner forces. Approximately 1,001 United States military personnel remain deployed to Niger.

Cuba. United States Armed Forces continue to conduct humane and secure detention operations for detainees held at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, under the authority provided by the 2001 Authorization for Use of Military Force (Public Law 107–40), as informed by the law of war. There are 35 such detainees as of the date of this report.

Philippines. United States Armed Forces deployed to the Philippines are providing support to the counterterrorism operations of the armed forces of the Philippines.

MILITARY OPERATIONS IN EGYPT IN SUPPORT OF THE MULTINATIONAL FORCE AND OBSERVERS

Approximately 446 United States military personnel are assigned to or are supporting the United States contingent of the Multinational Force and Observers, which have been present in Egypt since 1981.

UNITED STATES AND NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION OPERATIONS IN KOSOVO

The United States continues to contribute forces to the Kosovo Force (KFOR), led by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in cooperation with local authorities, bilateral partners, and international institutions, to deter renewed hostilities in Kosovo. Approximately 488 United States military personnel are among KFOR's approximately 3,600 personnel.

UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES IN NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION COUNTRIES

Approximately 90,000 United States Armed Forces personnel are assigned or deployed to North Atlantic Treaty Organization countries in Europe, including those deployed to reassure our allies and to deter further Russian aggression.

I have directed the participation of United States Armed Forces in all of the above-described operations pursuant to my constitutional and statutory authority as Commander in Chief and as Chief Executive (including the authority to carry out Public Law 107–40, Public Law 107–243, and other statutes), as well as my constitutional and statutory authority to conduct the foreign relations of the United States. Officials of my Administration and I communicate regularly with

congressional leadership, relevant congressional committees, and other Members of Congress with regard to these deployments, and we will continue to do so.

Sincerely,

JOSEPH R. BIDEN JR.

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Patrick J. Leahy, President pro tempore of the Senate. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Categories: Communications to Congress : Combat-equipped U.S. Armed Forces, letter on global deployment.

Subjects: Afghanistan, deployment of U.S. military forces; Al Qaida terrorist organization; al-Shabaab terrorist organization; Armed Forces, U.S., deployment of servicemembers; Chad, U.S. military detachment; Counterterrorism efforts; Djibouti, U.S. military detachment; Egypt, U.S. military detachment; Guantanamo Bay, U.S. Naval Base in Cuba, detention of alleged terrorists; Iraq, security cooperation with U.S.; Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) terrorist organization; Jordan, security cooperation with U.S.; Kenya, U.S. military detachment; Kosovo, KFOR international security force; Lebanon, U.S. military detachment; Niger, U.S. military detachment; North Atlantic Treaty Organization; Philippines, security cooperation with U.S.; Syria, U.S. and coalition airstrikes; Turkey, security cooperation with U.S.; Yemen, security cooperation with U.S.

DCPD Number: DCPD202201105.