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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1306

July 31, 2014

The Honorable John Kerry
Secretary of State
2201 C. St. NW
Washington, DC 20520

The Honorable Jack Lew
Secretary of the Treasury
1500 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20220

Dear Secretary Kerry and Secretary Lew:

With the conflict in the Middle East raging at a level not seen in years, I'm writing to express my grave concerns with the State Department's active partnership with Qatar, a strong backer of the U.S.-designated Foreign Terrorist Organization, Hamas. I, too, strongly support working to quell the violence between Israel and Hamas, but U.S. cooperation with Qatar at the very same time they are providing material aid and support to an active and ferociously violent terrorist organization only serves to tacitly endorse and encourage this unacceptable behavior. Qatar's assistance to Hamas should at the very least raise serious questions about the applicability of U.S. sanctions laws. I hope the State and Treasury Departments are investigating these potentially serious violations, and not merely overlooking unlawful behavior because it is expedient.

As Treasury Under Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence, David Cohen, noted in March, Qatar "has for many years openly financed Hamas." In October 2012, Qatar's emir, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani, pledged over \$400 million to Hamas on a visit to Gaza. And, last month, a Palestinian Authority spokesperson indicated that Qatar's government was "undertaking to transfer \$20 million for a period of 3 months" to Hamas loyalists in Gaza.

Doha is home to Khaled Mashal, the head of Hamas's political bureau who, in a recent press conference on Qatar's Al Jazeera Arabic, blessed the kidnapping of three Israeli teens that set off the current crisis and insisted Hamas's military branch reports to him and his bureau. On July 23, the channel interrupted more than half an hour of its primetime programming to carry his entire press conference laying out Hamas's various demands for ending its current wave of attacks against Israeli civilians.

It is also worth noting that Israeli security services recently indicated that they intercepted a courier in April who had returned from Qatar with money, directives, and a cell phone for clandestine Hamas cells in the West Bank. Last year, Qatar's government chartered a private airplane to transport Hamas Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh to Doha along with Yehia Sinwar and Rawhi Mustaha, considered founders of Hamas's military wing.

Nor is Hamas the only terrorist group that seems to benefit from Qatari policies. Under Secretary Cohen has said that Qatar is a particularly "permissive jurisdiction" for terrorist finance, enabling private funding to flow to Al Qaeda's Syrian affiliate Jabhat al-Nusra and the terrorist group now known as the Islamist State. The State Department's latest Country Reports on Terrorism described Qatar's policies in this regard as "inconsistent," "lacking," and having "significant gaps."

While I share your desire to reach an immediate ceasefire to stop the violence and restore relative stability to the region, I am deeply concerned that your close work with Qatar in pursuit of a Gaza ceasefire rewards, bolsters, and legitimizes Qatar's longstanding sponsorship of the terrorist organization Hamas. The severity of the current conflict and possibility for even greater escalation underscores why we must hold Qatar and all those who sponsor terrorism accountable for these reprehensible crimes rather than look the other way as Doha enables terrorism against Israel.

Very truly yours,



PETER J. ROSKAM
Member of Congress