

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

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March 6, 2018

The Honorable James N. Mattis
Secretary of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301

Dear Mr. Secretary:

On October 4, 2017, a contingency of Nigerien soldiers accompanied by U.S. special forces were ambushed in the area of Ouallam, Niger. Although U.S. and Nigerien forces inflicted substantial casualties on the enemy, four U.S. service members and five Nigerien soldiers were tragically killed in the attack. Several U.S. and Nigerien soldiers were also severely injured.

The Committee has been working cooperatively with the Department to examine the events of October 4. Following the attack, the Committee requested a member briefing on October 24, 2017, which the Department provided on November 9, 2017. In addition, Rep. Russell, the Vice Chair of the Subcommittee on National Security, traveled to Ouallam and Arlit, Niger last month to conduct bipartisan oversight of the incident on behalf of the Committee and meet with U.S. and partner forces in the area. The Department provided considerable support and access for the CODEL.

During the November 9 briefing, Department officials referenced an internal investigation of the attack. We understand the investigation is now or will presently be complete. To assist us with our continued oversight of this matter, please provide a copy of the complete report of the 15-6 investigation, including any attachments thereto, upon completion. Should your response include classified documents, please provide those directly to the Committee under separate cover.

Please contact Liam McKenna of the Committee majority staff at (202) 225-5074 with any questions about this request. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Trey Gowdy



Steve Russell
Subcommittee on National Security

cc: The Honorable Elijah E. Cummings