Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

September 16, 2025

The Honorable Marco Rubio
Secretary of State
Department of State
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Mr. Secretary,

We write to you regarding two recent violent attacks on American citizens and your Department's unacceptable lack of answers to our questions in previous correspondence about these cases.

On January 3, 2025, several of us wrote to then-Secretary Blinken asking several questions about the September 6, 2024, fatal shooting in the West Bank by an Israeli soldier of 26-year-old Turkish American Aysenur Ezgi Eygi. In his May 1, 2025, response to our letter about Ms. Eygi, Bureau of Legislative Affairs Senior Official Paul Guaglianone did not answer any of our questions and referred us to the Department of Justice (DOJ).

In a letter to President Trump, you, and Attorney General Bondi on June 27, 2025, several of us called for an independent investigation of the October 13, 2023, tank and machine gun attack in southern Lebanon by Israel soldiers against a group of foreign journalists wearing press insignia and standing on an open hilltop, which killed one and wounded six others, including American citizen Dylan Collins. In his July 17, 2025, response to our letter about the attack in southern Lebanon, Mr. Guaglianone stated that the Department "has no higher priority than the safety and security of U.S. citizens overseas," that the Department "defers to the Israeli government for any information on their internal investigations," and he referred us to DOJ for more information regarding attacks against U.S. citizens abroad.

We did contact DOJ but have not received a response. We are not aware that DOJ is investigating either of these shootings of American citizens. We continue to believe that DOJ should conduct a thorough investigation of these terrible incidents and that those responsible should be held accountable.

In the meantime, the Israel Defense Forces "investigated" itself. They did not interview any of the victims or witnesses and, as far as we are aware, closed their investigations without taking any action.

We agree that the Department of State's highest priority is the safety and security of U.S. citizens overseas. The Department does not meet that duty when it accepts a foreign military's perfunctory "investigation" of a targeted attack against an American by its armed personnel.

Independent investigations found that at the time Ms. Eygi was shot she was not engaged in any protest activity nor was she in the vicinity of anyone who was. Of course, even had she been peacefully protesting, that would not excuse shooting her. She posed no threat to the soldier who shot her—who was on a rooftop 200 meters away—nor to anyone else. Answering our questions about the killing of Ms. Eygi does not require the Department of State to conduct its own investigation. The information requested is either currently known to the Department or not known to the Department and obtainable from the relevant Israeli authorities. We therefore again request answers to each of our questions at the earliest possible time.

Multiple media and human rights organizations have analyzed video and audio evidence of the October 13 attack in southern Lebanon, identified the types of munitions used, scrutinized the location of the journalists in relation to the location of the soldiers, and interviewed the victims. Their investigations found that the journalists were easily identifiable as members of the press, were not located near the area where Hezbollah militants had fired rockets, posed no threat to the soldiers, and were intentionally targeted. We have enclosed questions about the October 13 attack, the answers to which are presumably known to the relevant Israeli authorities. We would appreciate your responses to each of these questions at the earliest possible time.

Thank you for your assistance.

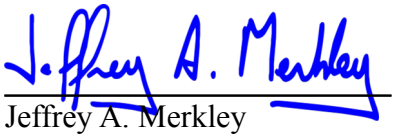
Sincerely,

Peter Welch
United States Senator

Patty Murray
United States Senator

Maria Cantwell
United States Senator

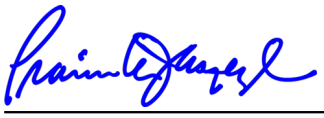
Bernard Sanders
United States Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator

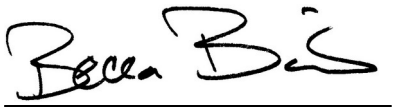
Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator

Joaquin Castro
Member of Congress



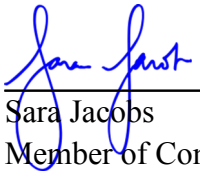
Pramila Jayapal
Member of Congress

James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



Becca Balint
Member of Congress

Delia C. Ramirez
Member of Congress



Sara Jacobs
Member of Congress