



UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
2000 DEFENSE PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-2000

POLICY

NOV 11 2014

The Honorable Duncan Hunter  
U.S. House of Representatives  
223 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Hunter:

Thank you for your letter to the President dated August 20, 2014, requesting the designation of a long-term position within the Department of Defense to coordinate and oversee personnel recovery efforts on behalf of detained U.S. nationals. I have been asked to respond on the President's behalf.

As a result of the increased frequency of hostage-taking of Americans overseas, and the recognition of the dynamic threat posed by specific terrorist groups, the President recently directed a comprehensive review of the U.S. Government policy on overseas terrorist-related hostage cases, with specific emphasis on examining family engagement, intelligence collection, and diplomatic engagement policies. This review will seek to integrate innovative and non-traditional solutions to result in recommended actions to improve interagency coordination and strengthen the whole-of-government approach led by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the State Department.

The Department of Defense, as directed by the President and the Secretary of Defense, will continue to leverage all feasible means to secure the release of U.S. persons held abroad. U.S. forces stand ready to execute this mission when called upon in our efforts to ensure every American held in captivity overseas is brought home safely. I appreciate your continued support of the Department and for protecting and returning U.S. persons as a top priority.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Christine E. Wormuth".

Christine E. Wormuth

