

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 19, 2017

The Honorable Rex W. Tillerson
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Tillerson:

On May 16, members of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's security detail were caught on video brutally attacking protesters outside the Turkish Ambassador's residence in Washington, DC and deliberately disregarding police orders to halt their assaults. The video is incredibly disturbing. We urge you to immediately condemn this outrageous attack in the strongest terms possible and use all tools at your disposal so that these men are denied diplomatic immunity and prosecuted to the fullest extent of U.S. law.

Based on the video of the incident, these Turkish security guards should be arrested, prosecuted and jailed. Numerous members of President Erdogan's security detail kicked, punched, and trampled people holding posters who were standing in a park that is clearly not part of the embassy. These Turkish security guards kicked men and women crouched on the ground and disregarded numerous commands by police to cease and desist. According to news reports, nine people were hurt, including two who were seriously injured and taken to the hospital. The blooded faces on the video are shocking.

This kind of behavior by a foreign security detail is reprehensible and cannot be tolerated. These actions are not only criminal, they are affronts to U.S. values. Freedom of speech and freedom to protest may be prohibited in Turkey and offensive to the Turkish President, but they are bedrock U.S. principles that must be safeguarded.

Although the State Department's spokesperson has issued a statement on this matter, more must be done. It is incumbent upon you, as the top diplomat of the United States, to speak out publicly against these actions and, just as importantly, ensure that these men are held fully accountable for their actions.

Sincerely,


CAROLYN B. MALONEY
Member of Congress


JOHN P. SARBANES
Member of Congress



KATHERINE M. CLARK
Member of Congress


ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON
Member of Congress


ROBERT A. BRADY
Member of Congress



DAVID N. CICILLINE
Member of Congress


RAÚL M. GRIJALVA
Member of Congress


DONALD S. BEYER, JR.
Member of Congress


NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ
Member of Congress


DANIEL T. KILDEE
Member of Congress


FRANK PALLONE, JR.
Member of Congress


ZOE LOFGREN
Member of Congress


BRAD SHERMAN
Member of Congress


DANIEL W. LIPINSKI
Member of Congress


JAMES P. McGOVERN
Member of Congress


BRIAN HIGGINS
Member of Congress


JOAQUIN CASTRO
Member of Congress


BOBBY L. RUSH
Member of Congress


MARK TAKANO
Member of Congress

Bill Pascrell Jr

BILL PASCRELL, JR.
Member of Congress

Betty McCollum

BETTY McCOLLUM
Member of Congress

John A. Yarmuth

JOHN A. YARMUTH
Member of Congress

Seth Moulton

SETH MOULTON
Member of Congress

Suzanne Bonamici

SUZANNE BONAMICI
Member of Congress

Charlie Crist

CHARLIE CRIST
Member of Congress

Chellie Pingree

CHELLIE PINGREE
Member of Congress

Jared Huffman

JARED HUFFMAN
Member of Congress

Bill Foster

BILL FOSTER
Member of Congress

Janice D. Schakowsky

JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY
Member of Congress