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The Honorable Loretta Lynch
Attorney General of the United States
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530-0001

Dear Attorney General Lynch,

It is with great urgency that I write to you about the ongoing atrocities being committed by the Islamic State (ISIS) in Iraq and Syria. Over a year has passed since the declaration of its so-called caliphate and the horrific siege of Mount Sinjar and yet the group and its leaders are still at large. ISIS' predatory acts—largely unaddressed by the Western world—have resulted in the genocide of Christians, Yezidis, Shia Muslims and other religious minorities, an unprecedented refugee crisis and the brutal kidnapping, torture and execution of four American citizens.

Given the overwhelming and publicly available evidence of genocide, I call upon your office to initiate a thorough investigation into individuals who may be criminally liable under U.S. law for genocide and other serious human rights abuses such as slavery. I would urge you to include not only ISIS leaders such as Abu Bakr al Baghdadi, but also individuals who may be supporting the group's genocidal conduct and possible accessories to these awful crimes. I am aware that there will be jurisdictional issues with some of these cases. Nevertheless, given the gravity of these crimes, I would ask that you use as many resources as possible to find evidence of jurisdictional linkage to the U.S. through instruments such as bank accounts, electronic communications, internet activity, etc. And finally, I would urge you to announce that even where there may not be jurisdiction to prosecute under U.S. law, you will endeavor to work with foreign prosecutorial authorities to initiate criminal proceedings in countries that may have legal jurisdiction.

Also, as you are aware, there have been at least four American victims of ISIS. Aside from the larger issues of genocide and massive human rights abuses, the murders of James Foley, Stephen Sotloff, Peter Kassig, and Kayla Mueller deserve accountability. Given they are American citizens, there is jurisdiction for murder and other crimes and I urge you to investigate and prosecute individuals who are criminally liable for their deaths.

As you know, Article II of the 1948 United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment for the Crime of Genocide defines genocide as:

Any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group, as such

- (a) Killing members of the group;
- (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
- (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
- (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
- (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

Since the declaration of its so-called “caliphate,” the Islamic State has committed all of the aforementioned actions against Christians, Yazidis and other religious minorities through a calculated system of persecution, marginalization and destruction.

These atrocities include but are not limited to:

- Numerous mass killings of religious minorities
- The implementation of a “convert, leave, or die” policy for religious minorities
- Public beheadings and crucifixions of those who do not submit to Islamic State ideology
- The enslavement, forced conversion and systematic sexual exploitation of Yazidi women
- Kidnapping of Christian and Yazidi children as young as seven months old
- Brainwashing those children and making them child soldiers
- The displacement of millions of religious minorities into outlying areas.

Furthermore, the insurgency has clearly proven criminal intent to commit genocide—per international jurisprudence resulting from tribunal rulings on the genocides Rwanda and Srebrenica—in the vast litany of propaganda that it regularly circulates. Unlike previous instances of genocide, these perpetrators have made no effort whatsoever to conceal their acts, impetus or mode of operation from the global community. Instead, they have deliberately used modern technology and social media to disseminate footage, images and descriptions of atrocities committed in the name of their totalitarian definition of “pure Islam” on a global scale.

A report released in March 2015 by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner on Human Rights states, “It is reasonable to conclude that some of these incidents, considering the overall information, may constitute genocide.” Furthermore, the report calls for the Security Council “to remain seized of and address, in the strongest terms, information that points to genocide.” Since March, the situation has only gotten worse.

In addition, ISIS is responsible for the executions, torture, kidnapping and rape of American citizens. Because of this brutal insurgency the families of James Foley, Stephen Sotloff, Peter Kassig and Kayla Mueller will never see their loved ones again. These people, two journalists and two humanitarian aid workers, died trying to alleviate the suffering of others, either through direct assistance or by alerting the world to the reality of the monstrosities occurring

in Iraq and Syria. If not for crimes committed against humanity as a whole, the United States must at least seek justice for such horrific crimes committed against her own people.

Your department and this administration as a whole have made great efforts in the realm of international law, judicial accountability and the defense of women. An administration that has taken as much action as this one against sexual assault cannot and should not allow the horrible crimes committed against Kayla Mueller to go unanswered. The Justice Department would be beyond remiss if it were, for example, to take unprecedented actions in its investigation and indictment of international soccer commissioner Sepp Blatter for alleged corruption and not employ the same level of investigative vigor and creativity against the leaders of the Islamic State. If the Justice Department can figure out how to exercise extraterritorial jurisdiction over a case of sports corruption, surely it can do the same for a clearly definable case of genocide. And where there are jurisdictional obstacles to immediate prosecutions, I would implore you to address these publicly so that there is increased pressure for legislative remedies.

In April 2012, President Obama stood before the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and proudly declared “never again” no fewer than five times. In the same speech he also invoked the memories of Rwanda, Srebrenica and Cambodia, all of which were needlessly allowed to continue by a global community that could have acted sooner, but did not. Right now, genocide is currently happening on this administration’s watch, and—just as in the past—history will not be forgiving to those in power who fail to act. The families, communities and memories of ISIS’ victims deserve no less than that justice be unrelentingly sought and unapologetically exercised on their behalf.

The United States Department of Justice should be a beacon of justice and the rule of law to American citizens and citizens of the world alike. Therefore, it cannot stand by as genocide is flagrantly committed and American citizens are the victims of crimes against humanity. Abu Bakr al Baghdadi and all others responsible for these incomprehensible atrocities against American citizens and humanity as a whole must be brought to justice by any and all means necessary. ISIS’ leaders must be indicted, hunted down and brought to justice.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my request.

Sincerely,

Congressman Frank R. Wolf (Ret. 1981-2014)
Distinguished Senior Fellow
21st Century Wilberforce Initiative

Thank You