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July 2, 2020

General Austin Scott Miller
Commander, U.S. Army
Headquarters
Resolute Support and United States Forces-Afghanistan
Kabul, Afghanistan
APO AE 09356

Dear General Miller:

I write to request clarification on the safety and security of United States servicemembers in the wake of recent reports that Russia's military intelligence unit (GRU) covertly offered and made payments to Taliban-linked militants to kill American soldiers in Afghanistan.¹

Numerous public reports reveal that the Russian government offered bounties to kill American soldiers in Afghanistan,² which included the use of a "key [Afghan] middleman who for years handed out money from a Russian military intelligence unit to reward Taliban-linked fighters for targeting American troops."³ Additionally, information gained from U.S. Special Operations Forces (SOF) raids in Afghanistan suggested that the existence of this Russian bounty program was in circulation "in early 2019,"⁴ raising questions about whether this alleged

¹ New York Times, "Suspicions of Russian Bounties Were Bolstered by Data on Financial Transfers," Charlie Savage, Mujib Mashal, Rukmini Callimachi, Eric Schmitt and Adam Goldman, June 30, 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/30/us/politics/russian-bounties-afghanistan-intelligence.html>; NBC News, "White House learned of Russian bounty intelligence in early 2019," Carol E. Lee and Josh Lederman, June 30, 2020, <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/white-house-learned-russian-bounty-intelligence-early-2019-n1232565>; Washington Post, "Russian bounties to Taliban-linked militants resulted in deaths of U.S. troops, according to intelligence assessments," Ellen Nakashima, Karen DeYoung, Missy Ryan and John Hudson, June, 28, 2020, https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/russian-bounties-to-taliban-linked-militants-resulted-in-deaths-of-us-troops-according-to-intelligence-assessments/2020/06/28/74ffaec2-b96a-11ea-80b9-40ece9a701dc_story.html.

² *Id.*

³ New York Times, "Afghan Contractor Handed Out Russian Cash to Kill Americans, Officials Say," Mujib Mashal, Eric Schmitt, Najim Rahim and Rukmini Callimachi, July 1, 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/01/world/asia/afghan-russia-bounty-middleman.html>;

⁴ Associated Press, "AP sources: White House aware of Russian bounties in 2019," James LaPorta, June 30, 2020, <https://apnews.com/425e43fa0ffdd6e126c5171653ec47d1>; New York Times, "Trump Got Written Briefing in February on Possible Russian Bounties, Officials Say," Charlie Savage, Eric Schmitt, Nicholas Fandos and Adam Goldman, June 29, 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/29/us/politics/russian-bounty-trump.html>; NBC News, "White House learned of Russian bounty intelligence in early 2019," Carol E. Lee and Josh Lederman, June 30,

scheme was directly connected to attacks that resulted in the deaths of U.S. troops.⁵ United States SOF are presently in Afghanistan advising the Afghan Special Security Forces on building their counter-terrorism capacity,⁶ and will therefore continue to be in harm's way despite the limited scope of their mission. The operation of a Russian-bankrolled bounty program to kill U.S. and coalition forces would be a brazen use of proxy forces to harm American lives. The reports therefore raise questions about the activities of Special Operations Command that led to the discovery of this alleged scheme and the steps subsequently taken to protect U.S. special operators on the ground in Afghanistan.

I am deeply concerned about credible threats to the safety and security of U.S. servicemembers. Given the seriousness of the alleged Russian-bankrolled scheme to kill our military personnel in Afghanistan, I request answers to the following questions by July 16, 2020:

1. Did raids, interrogations, or other operations by U.S. SOF lead to the discovery of information suggesting the existence of a Russian-funded bounty program to offer and make payments to Taliban-linked militants to kill U.S. servicemembers? If yes, what did you find about this alleged program?
 - a. Did you share what you found with any U.S. officials, including those from the White House, the Department of Defense, the Department of State, and the Intelligence Community (IC)? If yes, please name those officials.
 - b. Did you share what you found with your counterparts in other countries that are part of coalition forces in Afghanistan?
 - c. Did you share what you found with Afghan National Security Forces?
2. If you shared information suggesting the existence of a Russian-funded bounty program with appropriate U.S. intelligence agencies, what more did you learn about the alleged program after those agencies had performed their analyses and assessments?
3. Has the alleged Russian-funded bounty program contributed to attacks on any U.S. or coalition forces? If so, please provide additional information on these attacks and any casualties.
4. What additional force protection measures, if any, did you or your subordinates implement to enhance the protection of U.S. forces under your command after learning of information suggesting the existence of a Russian-funded bounty program? Please describe when such steps were taken.
5. Have any operations by the forces under your command been modified in response to information suggesting the existence of a Russian-funded bounty program to kill U.S. soldiers, and if yes, how?

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

2020, <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/white-house-learned-russian-bounty-intelligence-early-2019-n1232565>.

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ U.S. Department of Defense, "Enhancing Security and Stability In Afghanistan, Report to Congress In Accordance With Section 1225 of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2015, as amended; Section 1521(c) of the NDAA for FY 2017; Section 602(b)(14) of the Afghan Allies Protection Act of 2009 (8 U.S.C. 1101 note); and Section 1520 of the NDAA for FY 2020," June 2020, https://media.defense.gov/2020/Jul/01/2002348001/-1/-1/1/ENHANCING_SECURITY_AND_STABILITY_IN_AFGHANISTAN.PDF.

Sincerely,

/s/

Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator

CC: General Richard D. Clarke, Commander, U.S. Special Operations Command
Lieutenant General Scott A. Howell, Commander, Joint Special Operations Command