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Congress of the United States
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COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY
SUBCOMMITTEES
HEALTH CARE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES
NATIONAL SECURITY, THE BORDER AND
FOREIGN AFFAIRS

February 8, 2024

The Honorable Lloyd J. Austin
Secretary
U.S. Department of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20301

RE: Oversight of the Deadly Attack on Tower 22 in the Middle East

Secretary Austin:

I am writing seeking clarification about the Department of Defense's (DOD) presence in the Middle East. On January 28, 2024, a drone strike in Jordan killed three United States service members and injured over forty others. Most of the injured are members of the 1st Battalion, 158th Infantry Regiment, or "Bushmasters," of the Arizona National Guard, including Guardsmen from Phoenix, Tucson, Florence, Prescott, and Buckeye.¹ Due to the severity of their injuries, three of these Arizonan Guardsmen had to be medically evacuated for critical treatment.²

Last September, more than 350 Arizona Guardsmen deployed to the Middle East as part of Task Force Spartan in support of U.S. Central Command's Operation Spartan Shield. (OSS) OSS is tasked with force protection, humanitarian assistance, and operational support of U.S. and allied forces in the Middle East. Each year from Fiscal Year 2020 to Fiscal Year 2022, OSS received over \$1 million for facilities and base support.³ It is not clear which bases received these funds.

According to Pentagon spokeswoman Sabrina Singh, you have "no higher priority than protecting our forces and taking care of our people."⁴ I have no greater priority than protecting the interests of Arizonans and conducting oversight of their tax dollars spent abroad.

¹Arizona Department of Emergency and Military Affairs. (2023, September 1) *The Adjutant General's Annual Report 2023*. [DEMA Annual Report 2023.pdf \(az.gov\)](#)

²Rodriguez, Faith. (2024) Arizona Army National Guard troops recovering from drone attack. *KYMA-DT*. [Arizona Army National Guard troops recovering from drone attack - KYMA](#)

³Office of the Secretary of Defense. (2021, June) *Justification for Component Contingency Operations the Overseas Contingency Operation Transfer Fund*. [FY2022 OCOTF J-Book.pdf \(defense.gov\)](#)

⁴Erin Blanco and Lara Seligman. (2024) Intel officials warned well before Tower 22 attack of increased risks from drones. *Politico*. [Intel officials warned post Oct. 7 of increased Iranian drone threat to U.S. troops - POLITICO](#)

Therefore, I respectfully request the following information:

- How many military bases, of any type (whether called an outpost or tower), does the U.S. operate in Afghanistan, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Turkey, and Yemen?
 - How many U.S. service members are stationed at each of these facilities?
 - How many total U.S. service members are stationed in the countries listed above?
- What is the purpose of each U.S. facility?
- Under what congressional authorization or law were these facilities established in those countries?
- Has each facility obtained the permission of the host country to be located within their borders?
 - If not, please identify the U.S. facilities present in countries that have not given consent.
- Please produce a copy of all consent agreements provided by the host countries.
- What is the short-term purpose of these facilities?
- What is the long-term purpose of these facilities?
- Is there an exit plan to return our service members home from these foreign facilities?
 - If yes, please provide a copy of that plan.
 - If not, please provide a detailed explanation why there is not a plan.
- Was U.S. humanitarian aid provided to any of the countries identified above?

Although this is a request from me in my official capacity, alternatively, consider this a federal Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request. If you withhold information for any reason, please identify the type of information withheld and the reason for withholding it from Congress and the American people.

Thank you for your immediate attention to this matter. I look forward to providing our injured and fallen service members and their families with ample answers for this attack.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Paul A. Gosar, D.D.S." The signature is stylized and includes a large, looped initial "P" at the beginning.

Paul A. Gosar, D.D.S.
Member of Congress (AZ-09)