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One Hundred Seventeenth Congress
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Foreign Affairs
2170 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
www.foreignaffairs.house.gov

November 23, 2021

The Hon. Antony J. Blinken
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Blinken,

We are alarmed by the Houthis' ongoing detention of U.S. Embassy Locally Employed Staff (LES) and their storming of the U.S. Embassy compound. Above all, we call on the Houthis to immediately release all U.S. and U.N. staff and end their harassment of U.S. Embassy LES and breach of our diplomatic compound. If the Houthis fail to comply, we urge you to exercise all available leverage to secure the release of the detained LES and ensure the well-being of our LES in the future, including via relocation, if necessary.

The Houthis' actions are a clear violation of international law and basic principles of human rights. We must respond robustly to these provocations to prevent such abuses in the future, whether in Yemen or elsewhere, and whether against LES of the United States or any other nation. We urge you to work with our partners to ensure that there is universal condemnation of these despicable actions. We are particularly grateful that the Government of Oman has already played a helpful role in working to secure the release of some U.S. Embassy LES, and hope that the United States and Oman will continue to work closely together.

The Houthis' military capabilities are enabled by Iran, which has long supported the group with weapons and training. We urge you to continue working with the Department of Defense and other parts of the U.S. government to ensure that adequate resources are devoted to disrupting this destabilizing partnership, including by intercepting weapons smuggled by Iran to the Houthis.

The United States cannot tolerate a breach of our sovereign territory or attacks on LES. In order to succeed in our diplomatic mission around the world, LES must have confidence that they are protected from assault or reprisal. We stand ready to work with you to hold the Houthis accountable for these shameful violations.

Sincerely,



MICHAEL T. McCAUL
Ranking Member
House Foreign Affairs Committee



GREGORY W. MEEKS
Chairman
House Foreign Affairs Committee