

Chairman Johnson Opening Statement
“Terror in Europe: Safeguarding U.S. Citizens at Home and Abroad”

Tuesday, April 5, 2016

As submitted for the record:

Good morning. Thank you for joining us today.

The purpose of this hearing is to understand the terrorist threat in Europe and what it means for our security.

On March 22, 2016, ISIS-linked terrorists bombed the airport entry hall and train station in Brussels -- killing 32, including four Americans.

Our hearts go out to the victims and their families.

The attacks in Brussels follow a series of ISIS-linked terrorist attacks, including the November atrocities in Paris, in which hundreds have been killed and many more wounded.

To be clear, ISIS and other terrorist groups are a threat to the United States and the American people.

We saw that in San Bernardino, in Garland, Texas, and elsewhere.

The grave threat against the West, including American interests at home and abroad, requires us to assess the state of our security.

Today, we will ask three questions.

First, what are the root causes of the terrorism threats in Europe?

Second, how is the threat from ISIS and other terrorist organizations changing?

Third, what do the challenges in Europe and the changing terrorism threat mean for our security? And what actions must we now take to protect the American people?

Over the past 15 months, we have passed laws to improve the security of our borders, strengthen the Department of Homeland Security, and protect the American people. But I know there is more that we must do.

We will be holding a follow up hearing later this month where government officials will testify.

I am thankful we have a panel of top experts here today to help us understand these challenges and discuss how we can improve our security.

I look forward to your testimony.