



DEPARTMENT OF STATE

STATEMENT OF

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BEFORE THE

HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS SUBCOMMITTEE ON TERRORISM,
NONPROLIFERATION, AND TRADE

HEARING ON
THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S REWARDS PROGRAMS: PERFORMANCE
AND POTENTIAL

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Good Morning/Afternoon, Chairman Royce and members of the subcommittee. I would like to thank you for your continued support and interest in the U.S. Department of State's rewards programs. Currently, the Department manages three rewards programs—the Rewards Program for Information on Terrorism, better known as “Rewards for Justice,” which is administered by the Bureau of Diplomatic Security; the Narcotics Rewards Program, administered by the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement; and the War Crimes Rewards Program, administered by the Office of Global Criminal Justice. I will make a brief statement on the Bureau of Diplomatic Security's Rewards for Justice program.

The Rewards for Justice program, or RFJ, is the Department of State's counterterrorism rewards program. The Department considers RFJ to be one of the U.S. Government's most valuable assets in the fight against international terrorism. The mission of the program is to prevent terrorist acts, to disrupt terrorist planning, and to bring terrorists to justice in a court of law, U.S. or foreign. The secondary goals of the program are also important: to deter terrorist operations, to decrease geographic safe havens for terrorists, and to restrict terrorists' freedom of movement.

Since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, RFJ has taken on a prominent role, as the program represents the public face of U.S. efforts to prevent acts of international terrorism and to bring to justice those responsible for acts of terror. I would like to share with you today some background on the program, its history, and some of its success stories.

History of the RFJ Program

The RFJ program was established by the 1984 Act to Combat International Terrorism. RFJ has since developed into a global interagency effort, led and administered by the Department of State's Bureau of Diplomatic Security. Since the program's inception, RFJ has paid over \$100 million to more than 70 individuals who have provided vital information that has prevented or favorably resolved acts of international terrorism against U.S. interests and brought to justice some of the world's most notorious terrorists.

The legal authority for the program, Section 2708 of Title 22 of the U.S. Code, provides the legislative framework under which rewards can be offered and for

which reward payments can be made. Under these statutory requirements, the State Department or other U.S. agencies may propose that a reward be offered for information on particular acts of terrorism or those who perpetrate them. These reward proposals are carefully vetted by the Interagency Rewards Committee and ultimately approved by the Secretary of State.

If a reward for information on an individual terrorist is approved by the Secretary of State, the terrorist is placed on RFJ's Most Wanted List. The Most Wanted List is one of the most visible representations of the U.S. Government's efforts to combat international terrorism. RFJ's reward offers are broadcast first and foremost via its Website, www.rewardsforjustice.net, and its toll-free phone number, 1-800 US REWARDS. At the RFJ Website, visitors can access information about reward offers in 28 languages, and tipsters can submit tips anonymously. As part of its advertising efforts, RFJ works closely with U.S. embassies and consulates around the world, other U.S. Government agencies, and foreign governments to ensure that our reward offers receive wide dissemination. Advertising campaigns use paid ads in newspaper, radio, and television in international media, social media engagement, billboards, flyers, leaflets, and miscellaneous advertising materials such as matchboxes, posters, and pens. RFJ has held advertising campaigns in such countries as Afghanistan, Colombia, Madagascar, Ethiopia, Iraq, Kenya, Pakistan, and the Philippines.

A reward may be paid to an individual who provides information leading to the arrest or conviction of those conspiring, attempting, or committing an act of international terrorism against U.S. persons or property or those aiding or abetting in the commission of such acts. A reward may also be paid for information that prevents such acts from occurring in the first place; for information identifying or locating those holding key leadership positions in a terrorist organization; and for the disruption of the financial mechanisms of a foreign terrorist organization. The Interagency Rewards Committee acts as an advisory board and carefully considers all nominations for reward payments. The Committee, in turn, makes recommendations to the Secretary of State regarding the suitability of reward payments. All rewards are made ultimately at the discretion of the Secretary. The Attorney General also must concur with the decision to pay a reward in any case where the Department of Justice has jurisdiction. Because of the program's sensitive nature, RFJ protects the identity of anyone providing information and receiving reward payments. The Secretary of State also has the authority to take appropriate measures to ensure the protection of informants and the informant's family. Congress is notified within 30 days of the disbursement of payment.

Success Stories

The RFJ program is credited with successes that have demonstrated global results. Sources have provided information that has prevented or favorably resolved acts of international terrorism against U.S. interests and brought to justice some of the world's most notorious terrorists. These efforts have saved countless innocent lives. Although the RFJ program's efforts are often classified for the safety of its participants, RFJ can share some of its landmark cases today.

RFJ paid a \$2 million reward to a source who provided information to Diplomatic Security special agents in Pakistan for the location of Ramzi Yousef, mastermind of the 1993 World Trade Center bombing. In 1995, Pakistani authorities, assisted by Diplomatic Security Agents, arrested Yousef in Pakistan and extradited him to the United States. He is currently in prison in Colorado. In 2003, RFJ paid multiple sources a combined reward of \$900,000 for information that led to the location of FARC commander Edgar Navarro in Colombia, who then died in a shootout with the Colombian Army.

RFJ also paid a \$30 million reward to one person for information on the location of Uday and Qusay Hussein, the sons of former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein. In that instance, an RFJ campaign was initiated on July 3, 2003, and on July 23, 2003, information provided by a source led to the location of Uday and Qusay Hussein. With the assistance from the 101st Airborne Division, Task Force 20 conducted an operation to capture these individuals. A four hour firefight ensued, which resulted in the deaths of Uday and Qusay Hussein. In this instance, an RFJ campaign was initiated and in 18 days, the source came forward – the fastest result in RFJ history.

In 2007, the program paid a \$10 million reward to courageous Filipino citizens who provided information on the locations of Abu Sayyaf Group leaders Khadaffy Janjalani and Abu Solaiman. These two notorious high-ranking leaders of the Abu Sayyaf Group were killed by the Armed Forces of the Philippines as a result of information provided by the Filipino sources.

Last year, RFJ generated four new reward offers. These offers were for the following individuals: Harakat-ul-Jihad al-Islami leader Ilyas Kashmiri; North Caucasus-based Caucasus Emirate senior leader and military commander Doku Umarov; al-Qaida-in-Iraq leader Abu Du'a; and Yasin al-Suri, a senior al-Qaida facilitator and financier based in Iran. RFJ's \$10 million reward offer for al-Suri was the first made for a terrorist financier.

RFJ is in the vanguard of the U.S. Government's counterterrorism efforts and continues to seek new and dynamic approaches to accomplish its mission. Highly focused advertising campaigns, as well as social media engagement, are hallmarks of this effort. RFJ also stands as a model for increased interagency cooperation, collaboration, and partnership in the post-9/11 era.

Conclusion

The Rewards for Justice program is and will remain a valuable asset to the U.S. government in its fight against international terrorism. RFJ's mission to prevent terrorist acts, disrupt terrorist financing, and bring terrorists to justice remains paramount. RFJ is engaging new media, new partners, and developing new practices in its effort to meet the challenging security situation we face in this ever-changing world. RFJ will continue to work tirelessly to bring terrorists to justice. Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you.