

WASHINGTON

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Committee on Financial Services  
Ranking Democratic Member  
Subcommittee on Housing  
& Insurance

Committee on Transportation &  
Infrastructure

Committee on Ethics



## Congress of the United States House of Representatives

Michael E. Capuano

7th District, Massachusetts

MASSACHUSETTS

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May 13, 2014

President Barack H. Obama  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

I write to thank you for your decision to send advisors to Nigeria to assist in the recovery of the young women kidnapped by Boko Haram. It is terrible to think what they and all who love them must be suffering. I am sure their families were encouraged, as I was, by the moving support expressed by our First Lady. I write however to suggest more forceful action should it be found necessary.

I would support an authorization to use military force against Boko Haram should you seek Congressional approval for such an action. I am sure you know my record of opposition to the use of our military on many occasions, however, in this case, I believe that the leader of Boko Haram, Abubaker Shekau, has by his own public statements identified himself as *hostis humani generis*, an enemy of humankind against whom lethal force may lawfully be used. We have all heard his boast that he will sell the captive girls into slavery. Moreover, we must not forget that Boko Haram slaughters young men outright, most recently 59 boys who, like their sisters, sought an education.

Further, I would ask that you confer with the Department of State to identify countries with the political will to combat trafficking so that we can support capacity building in those countries. I am confident that many in Congress want to invest more in such efforts.

Lastly, I urge that you respond immediately to the proposal of President François Hollande to convene a security summit of African nations threatened by Boko Haram and Western allies united with them in opposition to slavery and devotion to liberty and equality. President Hollande's proposal is timely and recalls Félix Eboué, the great Free French Governor of Chad, a hero in that troubled region. I ask that you send the highest ranking American official you deem appropriate, if you yourself are unable to attend.

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May 13, 2014

It is time for every person and every nation committed to the abolition of slavery to take action in our day, as our forebears did in theirs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Michael E. Capuano".

Michael E. Capuano  
Member of Congress

Cc: Mrs. Michelle Obama  
His Excellency François Delattre, Ambassador of France  
The Hon. John Forbes Kerry, Secretary of State  
The Hon. Linda Thomas-Greenfield, Assistant Secretary for African Affairs  
His Excellency Luis Cdebaca, Ambassador-at-Large, Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons

