

Administration of Barack Obama, 2013

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on U.S. Military Support for a French Rescue Operation in Somalia

January 13, 2013

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

On January 11, 2013, French forces conducted an operation in Somalia in which they attempted to rescue a French citizen being held hostage by al-Shabaab. United States forces provided limited technical support to the French forces in that operation, but took no direct part in the assault on the compound where it was believed the French citizen was being held hostage. United States combat aircraft briefly entered Somali airspace to support the rescue operation, if needed. These aircraft did not employ weapons during the operation. The U.S. forces that supported this operation left Somalia by approximately 8:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time on January 11, 2013.

I directed U.S. forces to support this rescue operation in furtherance of U.S. national security interests, and pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct U.S. foreign relations and as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive.

I am providing this report as part of my efforts to keep the Congress fully informed, consistent with the War Powers Resolution (Public Law 93–148). I appreciate the support of the Congress in this action.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to John A. Boehner, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Patrick J. Leahy, President pro tempore of the Senate. The letter referred to Denis Alex, a French intelligence operative who was kidnaped in Mogadishu, Somalia, in 2009. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Categories: Communications to Congress : Somalia, U.S. military support for French hostage rescue operation, letter reporting.

Names: Alex, Denis.

Subjects: France : Security cooperation with U.S.; France : Somalia, French intelligence operative, rescue operation; Somalia : Al-Shabaab militant organization; Somalia : French hostage rescue operation, U.S. military support.

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