



**One Hundred Seventeenth Congress
Committee on Homeland Security
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515**

April 5, 2021

The Honorable Antony J. Blinken
Secretary
U.S. Department of State
2201 C St NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Blinken:

In April of 2020, the State Department designated the first-ever white supremacist extremist (WSE) group, the Russian Imperial Movement (RIM), and three of its leaders as Specially Designated Global Terrorists (SDGT). This was a welcome step to curb the global threat from white supremacist extremists, but it's time for more to be done. As such, I write to ask that you designate additional overseas violent WSE groups in the attached list that meet the necessary criteria as Foreign Terrorist Organizations (FTOs). If these groups do not meet the more stringent FTO criteria, I ask that you designate these groups as SDGTs, as your predecessor did with RIM. Such designations will help apply more stress to curtail these violent organizations' and their leaders' ability to operate their groups. It would also give the United States Government more tools to engage and flag the Americans who contact, support, train, and join these WSE groups, under applicable laws.

As a former CIA officer who has looked at foreign terrorist organizations in the Middle East most of my career, I was struck by the threat these white supremacist groups pose, the amount of contact they have with extremists in the U.S., the minimal intelligence and diplomatic reporting we have on these groups, and the relative lack of review taken by the U.S. Government. In the past several years there have been numerous incidents of WSE-inspired violence across the globe, in places

like Germany¹, New Zealand², Ukraine³, and France⁴, in furtherance of white supremacist political ideology. The Department of Homeland Security's most recent Threat Assessment recognizes this growing problem and its impact on the homeland, noting that "WSEs have engaged in outreach and networking opportunities abroad with like-minded individuals to expand their violent extremist networks. Such outreach might lead to a greater risk of mobilization to violence, including traveling to conflict zones."⁵

As you know, the Department of Justice regularly prosecutes American citizens for providing material support to groups like the Islamic State or Al Qaeda, who are designated as FTOs. However, if that same American citizen collaborates with a violent WSE group based overseas and supports their designs for terror, receives training, money or resources, or travels to fight alongside them, the Federal government does not currently have access to the same legal tools, since these WSE groups are not designated terrorist organizations or individuals.

By my read, there seem to be ample examples of foreign white supremacist groups that meet the criteria for the FTO list. For example, the 2018 U.S. Counterterrorism Strategy names the Nordic Resistance Movement and the National Action Group as *Terrorist Adversaries* in the same section as ISIS, Al Qaeda, Boko Haram, and Hizballah.⁶ The Azov Battalion, a well-known militia organization in Ukraine, uses the internet to recruit new members and then radicalizes them to use violence to pursue its white identity political agenda.⁷ A full list of the foreign groups I would ask you to review is attached.

In addition, I would ask your help with a related matter: Canada has taken the step of designating The Proud Boys and The Base as terrorist groups whose members may now see their financial assets seized.⁸ While there is less information on the foreign affiliates of these two groups, as a representative of a border state, I ask for your help in clarifying what their designation means for U.S. diplomatic reporting, intelligence sharing, and law enforcement cooperation between the U.S. and Canada, given the complicated legal issues at play -- particularly before the border re-opens after COVID.

¹ *German Halle Gunman Admits Far-Right Synagogue Attack*, BBC, Oct. 11, 2019, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-50011898>.

² *Christchurch Mosque Shootings: Gunman Livestreamed 17 Minutes of Shooting Terror*, NEW ZEALAND HERALD, Mar. 15, 2019, <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/christchurch-mosque-shootings-gunman-livestreamed-17-minutes-of-shooting-terror/BLRK6K4XBTOIST7EQCZW24GFAPM/>.

³ Tim Lister, *The Nexus Between Far-Right Extremists in the United States and Ukraine*, COMBATING TERRORISM CENTER AT WEST POINT, April 2020, <https://ctc.usma.edu/the-nexus-between-far-right-extremists-in-the-united-states-and-ukraine/>.

⁴ Angelique Chrisafis, *Police Arrest 84-Year-Old Man Over Gun and Arson Attack at French Mosque*, THE GUARDIAN, Oct. 28, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/oct/28/two-injured-in-arson-and-gun-attack-at-french-mosque>.

⁵ *Homeland Threat Assessment*, DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY, Oct. 2020, https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/2020_10_06_homeland-threat-assessment.pdf.

⁶ *National Strategy for Counterterrorism of the United States of America*, THE WHITE HOUSE, Oct 2018, https://www.dni.gov/files/NCTC/documents/news_documents/NSCT.pdf.

⁷ Simon Shuster and Billy Perrigo, *Like, Share, Recruit: How a White-Supremacist Militia Uses Facebook to Radicalize and Train New Members*, TIME MAGAZINE, Jan. 7, 2021, <https://time.com/5926750/azov-far-right-movement-facebook/>.

⁸ Ian Austen, *Canada Formally Declares Proud Boys a Terrorist Group*, NEW YORK TIMES, Feb. 3, 2021, <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/03/world/canada/canada-proud-boys-terror-group.html>

Thank you for your attention to these matters. I know you are concerned about foreign organizations that use violence to further their political goals, particularly when they pose a threat to U.S. citizens, interests, and allies abroad. I ask that you take a thorough look at these WSE groups as Foreign Terrorist Organizations as soon as possible. They continue to show in very public ways who they are and the lethal steps they will take to achieve their goals in countries across the globe.

Thanks for your attention. I would appreciate even an interim response by May 3, 2021.

Sincerely,



Elissa Slotkin
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Intelligence and Counterterrorism
Committee on Homeland Security

Attachments: Oct. 16, 2019 Letter from Rep. Max Rose and other Members of Congress to Secretary Pompeo
Mar. 28, 2019 Letter from Rep. Elliot Engel to Secretary Pompeo
Suggested List of WSE Groups to Consider for Designation

Cc: The Honorable Janet Yellen, Secretary of the Treasury
The Honorable Merrick Garland, Attorney General
The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas, Secretary of Homeland Security
The Honorable Elizabeth Sherwood-Randall, Assistant to the President and Homeland Security Advisor

Suggested List of WSE Groups to Consider for Designation

Atomwaffen Division Deutschland
Azov Battalion (foreign affiliates and members)
Blood & Honour
Combat 18
Feuerkrieg Division
Generation Identity
Hammerskins (foreign affiliates and members)
National Action Group, aka System Resistance Network
Nordic Resistance Movement
Northern Order
Order of Nine Angles
Rise Above Movement (foreign affiliates and members)
Sonnenkrieg Division