



**For Immediate Release**  
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## **Chairman Mike Rogers Says “Comprehensive Strategy” Needed to Confront Islamic Extremists**

*Chairman Rogers’ opening statement at the House Intelligence Committee’s open hearing examining the threats posed by ISIL, al-Qa’ida, and other Islamic extremists.*

### **Statement by House Intelligence Committee Chairman Mike Rogers**

Today, the House Committee on Intelligence will hear from some of our nation’s foremost experts on the threat posed by ISIL, al-Qa’ida and other Islamic extremists.

To preserve time for questions, Ranking Member Ruppertsberger and I will reduce our opening statements to three minutes and have asked our witnesses to do the same.

As we move further away from September 11, 2001, I am concerned that many are disconnected from the reality of the threat from al-Qa’ida and Islamic extremists. We’ve heard that al-Qa’ida was on the run; al-Qa’ida affiliate groups were a JV squad; victory in Afghanistan was too difficult and would take too long; Syria was too complicated to get involved; and the Iraqi Security Forces can keep their country secure without our help.

All of this of course was wrong. And when we see journalists and NGO workers, including two Americans, beheaded by terrorists in Syria, we are vividly reminded that it’s wrong. I know I speak for all Americans in giving our heartfelt condolences to the families of those two Americans.

The 9/11 Commission Report faulted the U.S. government for a “failure of imagination” to stop the attacks 13 years ago. Today you don’t need any imagination to understand the threat from ISIL, a brutal group with thousands of fighters holding Western passports, including hundreds of Americans. But we need a better plan to stop them.

Terrorists in Yemen, Syria, and Iraq take advantage of and expand safe havens that surpass the one al-Qa’ida had in Afghanistan in 2001. They also have weapons and transportation resources to penetrate America’s improved defenses. Al-Qa’ida affiliates and related groups coordinate with each other, and still follow the strategic vision established by Bin Laden’s al-Qa’ida. That radical vision, which is antithetical to America’s interests, is bigger than one terrorist leader or organization.

Terrorist groups have metastasized and made gains in Northern and Western Africa, the Middle East and South Asia. We need a comprehensive strategy to meet this enemy, and we need to renew our resolve and focus to confront and defeat them.

I will now turn it over to Ranking Member Ruppertsberger for his opening statement.

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