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United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3603

April 9, 2018

The Honorable Mark Esper
Secretary of the Army
1600 Army Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301

Dear Mr. Secretary,

I am writing to request your views and the feasibility and suitability of assigning one of the future Security Forces Assistant Brigades (SFABs) to United States Africa Command (AFRICOM) to meet current and future security cooperation and partner capacity building requirements.

As you know, AFRICOM does not have any assigned forces, but must compete for allocated forces within the Department of Defense's global force management process. The Army has allocated a Brigade Combat Team to AFRICOM in the recent past as part of the Regionally Aligned Forces (RAF) program. These operations were a success for our African nation partners and built strategic partnerships for the United States. However, they also negatively affected the allocated BCT's readiness, especially for core missions such as full spectrum combat operations.

The new SFABs are designed specifically for this type of mission and are manned appropriately, without the need to leave most of the BCT at home station and deploying only the senior leadership of the BCT. Assigning an SFAB would also reduce the requirements of allocating a BCT and allowing it to focus on its training and maintaining the highest levels of readiness to meet other COCOM requirements or operational plans.

I look forward to receiving your views on this and discussing this matter in more detail. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to Tony Pankuch at tony_pankuch@inhofe.senate.gov or 202-224-4721.

Sincerely,



James M. Inhofe
United States Senator