

**Rep. Chip Roy (TX-21) Testimony for House Foreign Affairs Committee  
Member Day | December 12, 2019**

**FTO Precedents for Narco-terrorist Organizations:**

There is ample precedent for designating narco-terrorist organizations as FTOs. The Sendero Luminoso or “Shining Path” FTO of Peru is one example. There is even some evidence that as a part of its narco-terrorist activities, Shining Path has engaged in substantial cooperation with [Colombian traffickers](#), as well as Mexico's [Sinaloa Cartel](#).

Regarding Colombian traffickers, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or [FARC](#), despite pretensions at Marxist ideology, is the country's largest drug trafficking organization. It is [also an FTO](#). As with Shining Path, there are reports that FARC has links with, and has conducted military-style training for, Mexico's [Jalisco Cartel](#).

**H.R. 1700:**

Earlier this year, Rep. Mark Green and I introduced the “Drug Cartel Terrorist Designation Act” calling on the administration to designate certain cartels as foreign terrorist organizations. 10 other members joined you and Green in a letter to Secretary Pompeo that reiterated this request.

Specifically, H.R. 1700 requests FTO designation for the following cartels:

1. The Reynosa/Los Metros faction of the Gulf Cartel.
2. The Jalisco New Generation Cartel.
3. The Cartel Del Noreste faction of Los Zetas.

**Additional TPs:**

- We worked with federal and state experts in order to focus on cartels that fit the definition outlined above in section 219 of the INA.
- Many DEA agents and members of law enforcement have long requested narcoterrorism cartels be labeled as FTOs.
- These groups use terror to intimidate and to advance their agenda. They threaten the stability of governments across the globe. And even the UN’s

Security Council has recognized the clear link between drug trafficking and terrorism.

- Many drug cartels are based in Latin America, regions which have seen decades of ruthless violence.
  - According to a Congressional Research Service report, since 2006 there have been roughly 150,000 organized crime-related killings in Mexico alone.
  - A Council on Foreign Relations paper, updated on October 22, 2019, reports that murders are soaring in Mexico, often linked to drug cartels.
  - Homicides reached a new high of 36,000 in 2018 and in 2019 murders have averaged 90 a day.
- Police killings in Sonora have doubled this year according to a Mexico City consulting firm. (The border states of Sonora and Chihuahua are largely controlled by the cartels due to their access to the U.S.).
- In October, 35 Mexican police and national guard troops were surrounded and out-gunned by cartel forces, ultimately forced to release drug lord Ovidio Guzman, El Chapo's son.
- Mexico's Citizens' Council for Public Security lists that 42 of the 50 most violent cities in the world are in Latin America. Many of these cities are more dangerous than war zones.
- Drug cartels have committed heinous acts of terrorism, from carrying out bombings that have killed innocent people, conducting ISIS-style beheadings, assassinating government officials and members of law enforcement, and engaging in torture and indiscriminate murder.
- In 2016, Americans spent almost \$150 billion on cocaine, heroine, meth, marijuana, and synthetic opioids like fentanyl – the vast majority of which comes across our southern border. This is more than Americans spend on gambling, porn, or beer consumption.

- The staggering amount of money cartels make from selling drugs to Americans allows them to bribe government officials on both sides of the border.
- Cartels are also now in the business of human smuggling – charging a \$5,000 fee for illegal entry into the U.S. It is difficult to ascertain an exact amount made each year, but in fiscal year 2019, Border Patrol apprehended 851,508 people attempting to illegally cross our southern border. Officials believe at least a third are brought by cartels, though it’s likely much higher. Not counting those who entered the country without detection, that’s a profit of at least \$1.4 billion last year.
- The number of trafficking cases filed by DOJ increased by 79% between 2009 and 2016. About 80% of trafficked victims are women, half are children.
- Law enforcement should have every tool at their disposal to dismantle drug cartels. Labeling cartels that utilize terrorism as FTOs would make it unlawful for any person who knowingly provides “material support or resources” to the cartel to enter the U.S., prevent members of a designated cartel from legally entering the country, and allow the Secretary of the Treasury to block all assets possessed or controlled by the drug cartels.
- These dangerous groups terrorize through fear, intimidation, violence, and murder to control the government and bend society to their will. It is clear to the men and women of Border Patrol and those on the ground that cartels have operational control of our border, which endangers the U.S., Mexico, and the migrants who seek to come here.

### **Authorization for Use of Military Force**

Additionally, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member, I want to draw attention to one other issue very important to me and my constituents, the more than 18 year-old AUMF our men and women in uniform continue to operate under on missions overseas in more than a dozen countries.

It is time our nation’s leaders clarify our mission in the Middle East and define victory for a new generation of warriors.

The 107th Congress passed, and President Bush signed into law an AUMF in response to the terrorist attacks on 9/11. The American people demanded action and our leaders provided a strong response.

As we always have, Americans bled around the globe to protect liberty and the national security of the U.S. and our allies. The men and women who have deployed in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Syria have done a remarkable job combatting terror abroad. Osama bin Laden is dead. Saddam Hussein is dead. 9/11 mastermind Khalid Shaikh Mohammed is standing trial. Afghanistan is holding democratic elections later this month. We have pummeled Al Qaeda and kept attacks away from American soil. And in October, we killed the ruthless leader of ISIS, Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi.

While we have accomplished a great deal, we have also lost roughly 7,000 brave patriots, seen almost 70,000 physically wounded—not to mention countless invisible wounds--and currently have an estimated 20,000 or so boots on the ground in the Middle East. Now that we are a full generation into a war, Congress must answer: what is our objective?

On Sept. 18, 2001, Congress authorized the president to go after “those nations, organizations, or persons he determines planned, authorized, committed, or aided the terrorist attacks that occurred on September 11, 2001, or harbored such organizations or persons.” Today, the same authorization of force is being used to justify U.S. military activities in more than a dozen countries, including Yemen and Somalia.

Wars must eventually end. It is in our national interest to conclude them once our strategic objectives have been reached. If our objectives are not realistic and obtainable, our men and women in uniform deserve to know when the war ends. We did not have clarity of mission in Iraq, nor did we have a long-term stability plan. What was the result? ISIS filled the void. We must do better in Afghanistan to avoid a similar fate.

As we stand today, it remains necessary to decide the long-term plan for consolidating victory in Afghanistan and for stabilizing Iraq, Syria, and protecting our interests and allies in the region. Terrorism and violent extremism will never go away. Look no further than Iran, whose continued aggression toward Israel and efforts to de-stabilize the region requires serious resolve regarding our force posture and commitments to our allies there.

We must continue to fight terrorism while re-aligning our larger strategy to modernize our forces to manage Russia or China – the growing near-peer threats of our time. We can do so while securing our own sovereignty and addressing the evils of trafficking, smuggling, and terrorism in our own hemisphere which continue to plague us.

I am honored to represent Military City, USA, including Fort Sam Houston, the Army Futures Command, and tens of thousands of veterans in my district. We are blessed with a strong and proud military, and they deserve a clear mission, the tools to accomplish it, and robust care when they get home.

We will be held accountable for the votes we cast on fiscal matters, including spending taxpayer treasure on war and we should act like it by spending responsibly. But as we go forward, we should ensure the collective will of the American people is invested behind the costliest expenditure of our nation – the lives, the families, and the livelihoods of our men and women in uniform.

Congress did its job boldly declaring war after 9/11 but has since abdicated its solemn responsibility under Article 1. Even yesterday, we all voted on the NDAA Conference Report, to equip our men and women in uniform and give them a pay increase. But we have to do more, and I hope this committee will seriously entertain proposals and mark-up new AUMF's for the war on terror. We cannot just give our men and women the tools to fight, but withhold mission clarity they deserve when they are fighting to the death to protect and defend our liberties.

Congress needs to come to a consensus regarding which threats and entities necessitate military action, or other appropriate responses. If not for the man or woman who is on his or her 4th, 5th, or 6th deployment, then for the young man or woman who recently turned 18 and will deploy in the coming months to fight a war he or she wasn't even alive to see begin.