

Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515-0520

February 14, 2020

The Honorable Mike Pompeo  
Secretary of State  
United States Department of State  
2201 C Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Pompeo:

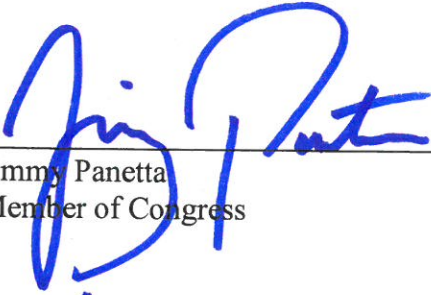
We write to express our deep concern regarding Salvadoran President Nayib Bukele's recent decision to lead armed soldiers and police into a meeting of the country's Legislative Assembly. Such blatant acts of political intimidation must be met with swift and broad rebuke.

On Thursday, February 6, 2020, President Bukele called El Salvador's Legislative Assembly into an emergency session to approve a \$109 million foreign loan to implement the third phase of his security proposal, Plan Control Territorial. The following Sunday, a quorum of lawmakers failed to appear at the emergency session. President Bukele, accompanied by numerous armed soldiers and police, then entered the chamber in a clear attempt to intimidate and harass the representatives. Moreover, President Bukele threatened to dissolve the Assembly when legislators questioned his constitutional authority to call them into an emergency session and denied immediate support for his plan.

Unfortunately, this incident is merely the latest example of an increasingly militaristic show of force by governmental leaders in Central and South America. The alarming tendency to utilize armed forces to assert power and legitimize policy decisions poses significant danger to Latin America's emerging, but often fragile, democracies. The trends leading to this confrontation, particularly a misplaced disillusionment with traditional democratic institutions and processes, are present in many countries in the region.

We strongly believe that bilateral relationships with our Latin American neighbors provide critical stability in the region. Nevertheless, we cannot ignore authoritarian tendencies and tactics in pursuit of policy outcomes. We call on the administration to denounce these actions and ensure that our relationship with El Salvador is based on substantive progress towards constitutional democracy and respect for the rule of law, including the independence of political branches of power.

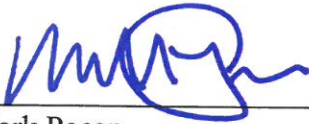
Sincerely,



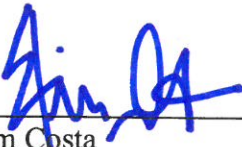
Jimmy Panetta  
Member of Congress



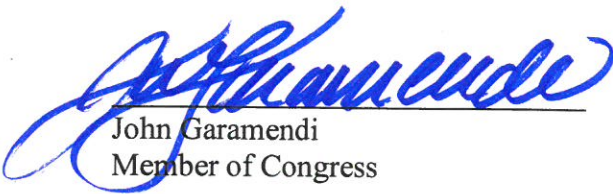
Ilhan Omar  
Member of Congress



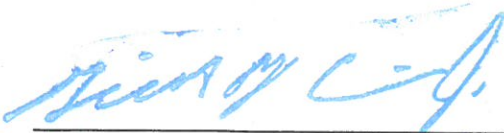
Mark Pocan  
Member of Congress



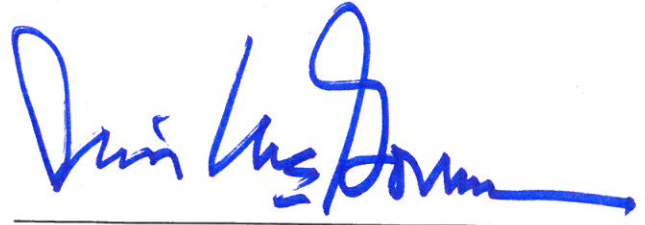
Jim Costa  
Member of Congress



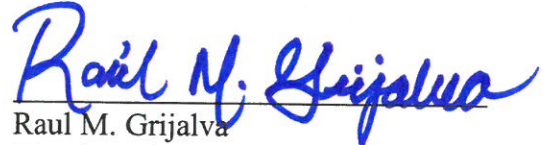
John Garamendi  
Member of Congress



Gilbert R. Cisneros, Jr.  
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern  
Member of Congress



Raul M. Grijalva  
Member of Congress



Ted W. Lieu  
Member of Congress



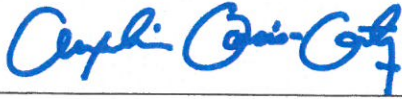
Debbie Mucarsel-Powell  
Member of Congress



Suzanne Bonamici  
Member of Congress

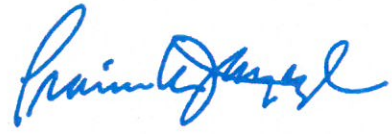


David E. Price  
Member of Congress



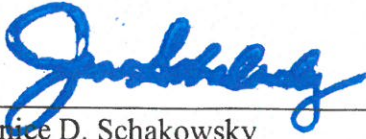
---

Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez  
Member of Congress



---

Pramila Jayapal  
Member of Congress



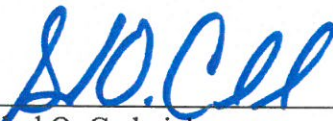
---

Janice D. Schakowsky  
Member of Congress



---

Jamie Raskin  
Member of Congress



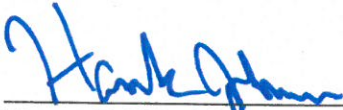
---

Safud O. Carbajal  
Member of Congress



---

Thomas R. Suozzi  
Member of Congress



---

Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.  
Member of Congress