

MARCH 09, 2026

Reps. Sara Jacobs, Jason Crow Demand Pentagon Briefing on Christmas Day Airstrikes on Nigeria

Reps. Sara Jacobs (CA-51) and Jason Crow (CO-06), Founders and Co-Chairs of the Protection of Civilians in Conflict Caucus, called for a Pentagon briefing and additional information on the strategy and execution of U.S. airstrikes on Nigeria on Christmas Day. In a [letter](#) to Secretary Hegseth, the lawmakers requested specific information on the military targeting, legal rationale, steps to mitigate civilian harm, details on the missile failures, and more.

[Read the Letter Here](#)

The lawmakers wrote:

Dear Secretary Hegseth:

We write to request detailed information regarding U.S. military airstrikes conducted in Nigeria on December 25th, 2025, in the northwestern Sokoto State, and the Department's strategy to address armed violence in Nigeria. The Administration publicly described the December 25th operation as "multiple flawless strikes" against "ISIS terrorist scum" in northwest Nigeria targeting militants for "viciously killing, primarily, innocent Christians."

While the President and U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) publicly asserted that the strikes targeted ISIS militants in northwest Nigeria, Nigerian and international experts have [noted](#) that there is currently no credible public evidence of a sustained or operational ISIS presence in Sokoto State. Additionally, we have seen [reports](#) that at least four of the 16 missiles apparently failed to detonate as intended or missed their intended targets by hundreds of miles, with some striking a farmer's field and residential buildings. Images and local accounts describe unexploded or errant munitions discovered in communities with no ties to ISIS. Now, the United States is [reportedly](#) sending 200 troops to Nigeria to train the country's military to fight Islamist militants, supplementing a "handful" of U.S. military personnel already there to help Nigerian forces use intelligence to identify targets for military strikes.

Given these conflicting reports and our committee's oversight responsibilities with respect to U.S. military operations, we request that the Department of Defense

provide a briefing to the signed Members. Specifically, we request responses to the following questions with respect to the December 25th strikes and the Department's current posture and strategy with respect to Nigeria:

1. How many strikes total has the United States directed in Nigeria on and since December 25th?
2. Whom did the Department identify as the intended targets of each strike and what is the current assessment of who was killed or injured in each location? What specific terrorist group(s) were the targets associated with, and how did the Department reach that determination?
3. What form of coordination with the Nigerian government and armed forces took place before, during, and after the strikes, including but not limited to requests for assistance, intelligence sharing, target development, and any joint public messaging about the missile strikes?
4. Under what legal authority did the United States undertake these strikes? What factual evidence supported the Administration's reliance on the legal authority in question? Why were the strikes of December 25th not reported to Congress under Section 4(a)(1) of the 1973 War Powers Resolution?
5. What is the Department of Defense account of the [reported](#) failure of at least four Tomahawk missiles to hit their intended targets, including the apparent impact of munitions in or near Tambuwal and Ofa in Kwara State on December 25th? Provide the Department's assessment of whether these incidents

resulted from technical malfunction, targeting error, or other causes.

6. What is the Department's current assessment of civilian casualties or injuries resulting from U.S. strikes, including in communities near Jabo and Ofa where missiles or debris reportedly impacted close to civilian areas? How has AFRICOM engaged with civilians affected by these strikes? Provide information on reports of civilian harm the Department has received with respect to these strikes.
7. What is the Department's current estimate of the total financial cost of the December 25th airstrikes in Nigeria, and any other subsequent U.S. strikes in Nigeria since then, including the munitions expended, platform and personnel costs, intelligence and surveillance support, and post-strike assessments?
8. What is the Department's current assessment of how the airstrikes have affected levels and patterns of violence in the broader region and what indicators or metrics are being used for that assessment?
9. What is the United States' strategy to address armed violence in Nigeria?
10. What are the functions and objectives of the U.S. military deployment to Nigeria, reported on February 3rd? Why doesn't their deployment to Nigeria trigger the reporting requirements of Section 4(a)(2) of the 1973 War Powers Resolution?
11. What is the Department's current posture and plan for any future U.S. strikes, or U.S.-enabled strikes, in Nigeria?

We respectfully request this information and documentation no later than March 20, 2026. Thank you for your attention to this important matter and we look forward to your response.

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