

For immediate release: Thursday, June 03, 2010

Contact: Oversight and Government Reform Press Office, (202) 225-5051

Chairman Towns Asks for Details on USNCB's Response to 2009 DOJ IG Report

Requests information from AG Holder and DHS Secretary Napolitano

WASHINGTON – Chairman Edolphus “Ed” Towns (D-NY) is requesting detailed information from the Justice Department and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) after the release of a Justice Department Inspector General report in 2009 that outlined major lapses at the United States National Central Bureau (USNCB), a critical national security agency. Chairman Towns is focused on whether either agency took corrective action to reform the USNCB according to the IG recommendations.

DOJ and DHS co-manage USNCB, which is responsible for coordinating and transmitting requests for criminal investigative assistance between federal, state and local law enforcement agencies and the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol). Interpol facilitates cross-border police cooperation and the exchange of information to assist law enforcement agencies in detecting and deterring international crime and terrorism.

“The failed Times Square bombing last month was a reminder of how important the transfer of critical information between federal, state and local agencies is to keeping the American people safe,” said Chairman Towns. “We cannot afford to let common sense reforms at critical government agencies restrict the flow of information that could prevent the next terror attack.”

The DOJ IG concluded that the USNCB had not made critical information available to the appropriate law enforcement agencies in the United States, nor had it implemented a process to ensure that information Interpol provided to domestic law enforcement agencies was accurate, complete and timely.

The Justice Department IG report also found that USNCB's internal case management system had several flaws and that USNCB was not able to consistently share information because it was not informed of actions taken by domestic law enforcement agencies on Interpol-related

cases. Additionally, the IG report found that USNCB's leadership structure had inherent weaknesses, DOJ and DHS's oversight of USNCB was lacking and that USNCB faced challenges maintaining reliable communications with state and local liaisons.

In letter to Attorney General Eric Holder and DHS Secretary Janet Napolitano, Chairman Towns wrote, "In today's interconnected world, it is imperative that the U.S. law enforcement community take full advantage of Interpol's important information and communications tools. The IG report indicates that much work needs to be done before the U.S. can fully benefit from its status as an Interpol member."

Chairman Towns requested that Attorney General Holder and DHS Secretary Napolitano respond to his inquiry by Friday, June 11, 2010.

The text of the letter to Attorney General Eric Holder and DHS Secretary Janet Napolitano is below.

###

Documents and Links

[Letter from Chairman Edolphus Towns to Attorney General Holder and DHS Secretary Napolitano](#)