

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 17, 2009

Cabinet Secretary for Justice
Kenny MacAskill MSP
Scottish Government
St Andrew's House
Regent Road
Edinburgh, EH1 3DG
Scotland

Dear Mr. MacAskill:

We are writing to express our concern about press reports that Abdel Basset al-Megrahi, the former Libyan intelligence agent convicted of the 1988 Lockerbie bombing of Pan Am Flight 103, may soon be released from a Scottish prison. We believe he should remain in Scotland to complete his sentence in prison.

The bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie on December 21, 1988, was an attack on America and a horrific act of international terrorism resulting in the deaths of 270 people, including 189 Americans. Until the tragic events of September 11, 2001, no terrorist act had killed more American civilians.

Recognizing the gravity of this heinous crime, the international community demanded that the government of Libya turn the perpetrators over for prosecution and accept responsibility for the crime. In 1998, the governments of the United States and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland put forth a proposal to the government of Libya on the terms of a trial by a Scottish court in the Kingdom of the Netherlands. In that proposal, both governments agreed that if found guilty, the accused would serve their sentences in the United Kingdom.

In 2001, with the active participation of the U.S. Department of Justice, al-Megrahi was convicted of this terrorist crime in a Scottish trial held in the Netherlands. Our international agreement called for his sentence to be served in Scotland and we believe strongly there should be no deviation from this sentence. Officials of the United States government have repeatedly made it clear that al-Megrahi should serve the entirety of his sentence in a Scottish prison. On August 13th, Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs P.J. Crowley reiterated the view of our government. He said, "We have made our views clear to the UK government and other authorities that we believe al-Megrahi should spend the rest of his time in jail." We wholeheartedly agree.

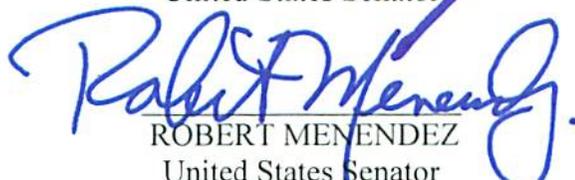
We know that the Scottish government shares our commitment - and the world's - to support justice and oppose acts of terrorism. That is why we urge you to ensure that Abdel Basset al-Megrahi serves the remainder of his sentence in prison in Scotland.

With our respect and appreciation,

Sincerely,


FRANK R. LAUTENBERG
United States Senator

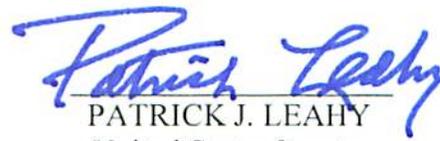

EDWARD M. KENNEDY
United States Senator


ROBERT MENENDEZ
United States Senator


KRISTEN GILLIBRAND
United States Senator


JOHN F. KERRY
United States Senator


CHARLES E. SCHUMER
United States Senator


PATRICK J. LEAHY
United States Senator