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March 26, 2025

Mr. Steve Witkoff
U.S. Special Envoy
Executive Office of the President
Washington, DC 20500

The Honorable Tulsi Gabbard
Director of National Intelligence
Office of the Director of National
Intelligence
Washington, D.C. 20511

Dear Mr. Witkoff and Director Gabbard,

I write with grave concern about your participation in highly sensitive Principals Committee deliberations about a planned military operation using the commercial messaging service Signal while you were both on foreign travel. The national security breach caused by sharing sensitive military information over an unclassified messaging application is compounded by the fact that both of you, who are prime targets for foreign intelligence services, were traveling in high-threat environments that pose significant counterintelligence risks to U.S. personnel and devices.

The National Security Council has confirmed the authenticity of a Signal message chain established by National Security Advisor Michael Waltz as a “principles [sic] group for coordination on Houthis.”¹ The group thread listed 18 individuals, which included both of you, along with Vice President JD Vance, White House Chief of Staff Susie Wiles, White House Deputy Chief of Staff Stephen Miller, Secretary of State Marco Rubio, Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth, and Director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) John Ratcliffe, among other senior officials across the executive branch. All of these officials are top-tier targets of intelligence services around the world, including those of Russia and China, and of actors using commercial spyware designed to circumvent end-to-end encrypted communications shared via messaging applications by gaining remote access to a device itself.

National Security Advisor Waltz initiated this particular Signal thread on Thursday, March 13, 2025. The Trump Administration’s senior-most officials exchanged messages on the Signal thread during the lead-up and execution of U.S. airstrikes on Houthi targets in Yemen that occurred on Saturday, March 15, 2025. According to public records, Director Gabbard was on a multi-nation tour including visits to Japan, Thailand, and India during the time frame at issue, and Mr. Witkoff was in Russia when National Security Advisor Waltz established the messaging group.

¹ Jeffrey Goldberg, *The Trump Administration Accidentally Texted Me Its War Plans* (March 24, 2025), <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2025/03/trump-administration-accidentally-texted-me-its-war-plans/682151/>

Mr. Witkoff reportedly arrived in Russia on March 13 at noon local time and was added to the group chat around 12 hours later.² Reporting indicates that Mr. Witkoff met with Russian President Putin until 1:30 a.m. local time and left Moscow after the meeting.³ This means that Mr. Witkoff appeared to be receiving sensitive national intelligence information while in Moscow and, based on this timeline, may have been in direct meetings with the Kremlin when some of the messages were exchanged. The reporting, moreover, indicates that neither of you expressed any surprise or inquired as to why you were added to a thread on a commercial messaging application on unclassified electronic devices to discuss potential forthcoming military operations.

Given the extraordinary counterintelligence risk created by this breach, please respond to the following questions no later than Monday, March 31, 2025:

1. Since beginning work in the Federal Government in the Trump administration, have Mr. Witkoff and Director Gabbard used Signal on their personal device(s), government issued device(s), or both, for any work-related communications?
2. During the period between March 13 and at least March 15, 2025, did Mr. Witkoff and Director Gabbard participate in the Signal thread entitled “Houthi PC small group” on their personal or government-issued devices? Were they logged onto the Signal application using their personal cell phone numbers or their work-issued cell phone numbers?
3. Did Director Gabbard receive messages on Signal in the “Houthi PC small group” thread while traveling in the Indo-Pacific?
4. Did Mr. Witkoff receive messages on Signal in the “Houthi PC small group” thread while in Russia? Did he receive messages during a meeting with President Putin at the Kremlin in Moscow?
5. Where did Mr. Witkoff keep his electronic device with the Signal thread during the entirety of his stay in Russia, including during his meeting with Mr. Putin? Was Mr. Witkoff’s device ever located in a non-secure location, including a hotel room or at the Kremlin, or left even temporarily outside of his immediate possession, which could have allowed the Russian government to secure temporary access to the device or undertake technical collection activity, including to implant spyware on the device?
6. Since the public revelation of this national security breach, what steps, if any, have Mr. Witkoff and Director Gabbard taken to inspect their respective devices to ensure

² Joanne Stocker & Emmet Lyons, *As top Trump aides sent texts on Signal, flight data show a member of the group chat was in Russia* (March 25, 2025), <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/trump-envoy-steve-witkoff-signal-text-group-chat-russia-putin/>

³ *Id.*

spyware, including commercially available surveillance tools, are not present on their devices and that no data has been exfiltrated from their devices during the timeframe in question?

7. Were any measures taken prior to their travel to inspect Mr. Witkoff and Director Gabbard's electronic devices for indicators of foreign surveillance activity or malware, including commercial spyware, consistent with guidance and warnings from elements of the Intelligence Community?⁴
8. Are Mr. Witkoff or Director Gabbard part of any other Signal threads with government officials? If so, please provide information on the topics and participants of other threads that pertain to national security matters.
9. Do Mr. Witkoff or Director Gabbard use other commercial messaging applications while traveling on official matters?
10. When on official travel overseas, do Mr. Witkoff and Director Gabbard have access to classified communications capabilities, as is customary for other senior government officials?
11. What steps is Mr. Witkoff taking to ensure that he does not receive or send sensitive national security information through non-secure channels while he is participating in negotiations related to the Russia-Ukraine and Israel-Gaza conflicts?
12. What measures, if any, are in place to ensure that the communications on the "Houthi PC small group" Signal thread, and any other work-related communications that may have taken place on commercial messaging applications, have been preserved and recorded by Mr. Witkoff and Director Gabbard consistent with federal records requirements and agency-specific policies?

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Adam B. Schiff". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Adam B. Schiff
United States Senator

Cc Ms. Susie Wiles, White House Chief of Staff

⁴ James LaPorta, *NSA warned of vulnerabilities in Signal app a month before Houthi strike chat* (March 25, 2025), <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/nsa-signal-app-vulnerabilities-before-houthi-strike-chat/>.