

**Congress of the United States**  
Washington, DC 20515

September 11, 2024

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden  
President  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20500

The Honorable Antony Blinken  
Secretary of State  
2201 C St. NW  
Washington, DC 20520

Dear President Biden and Secretary Blinken:

On Friday, September 6, American citizen Aysenur Ezgi Eygi, was killed in the West Bank by Israeli security forces. Ms. Eygi was a graduate of the University of Washington where she studied Psychology and Middle Eastern Languages and Cultures and served as a peer mentor for other Psychology students. Our hearts are with her family, friends, colleagues, and community, all of whom are devastated by her killing and deserve to know their government has done everything it can to fully understand what led to her killing, pursue accountability for those involved, and seek to ensure this does not happen again.

That is why we request an immediate, transparent, credible, and thorough independent U.S. investigation, led by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), into the killing of Ms. Eygi, which as Secretary Blinken said was “unprovoked and unjustified.” We also request that the evidence found and rationale for how findings were determined be provided to the family in a written report.

This week, the Israeli government acknowledged that it was “highly likely” Ms. Eygi was killed by Israel Defense Forces (IDF) fire. As an ally and recipient of billions of dollars in U.S. security assistance, we expect the Israeli government to cooperate with a U.S. investigation.

Likewise, we appreciate Secretary Blinken’s statement that he has “no higher priority than the safety and protection of American citizens around the world, wherever they are,” and such an investigation would demonstrate that commitment.

This is particularly important given the pattern we have witnessed of American citizens being killed without accountability. In February 2024, Tawfic Abdel Jabbar, a 17-year-old U.S. citizen born and raised in Louisiana to U.S. citizen parents, was killed in the West Bank while reportedly driving to a village. Just weeks later, Mohammed Khdour, a 17-year-old U.S. citizen born in Florida, was shot in the head in strikingly similar circumstances while driving in the West Bank. We are not aware of any actions the U.S. has taken to ensure accountability for these killings, despite calls for independent investigations by the U.S. citizen parents of these victims.

In January 2022, Omar Assad, a 78-year-old Palestinian American died in the custody of Israeli forces. Mr. Assad was taken into custody at a makeshift checkpoint in the West Bank. Israeli forces gagged him, bound his hands behind his back, and left him facedown on the ground. An

autopsy led investigators to deduce that his death “happened as a result of sudden cardiac arrest stemming from the stress of external violence.” Despite the circumstances that caused his death, the soldiers involved did not face criminal charges.

In May 2022, Palestinian American journalist Shireen Abu Akleh was shot in the head and killed by an Israeli soldier. The FBI launched an investigation in the fall of 2022 following a public pressure campaign after the Israeli government closed its case. The Israeli government refused to cooperate with the U.S. investigation. More than two years after her death, the FBI has not publicly released any information nor has the investigation led to any steps toward accountability.

Tragically, Washington state is no stranger to this issue. In 2003, Rachel Corrie, a 23-year-old U.S. citizen and college student from Olympia, Washington, was killed while peacefully protesting the demolition of homes in Gaza. Despite over 70 members of Congress calling for an independent investigation, no such investigation was undertaken.

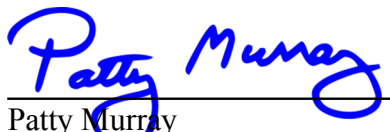
We fear that if this pattern of impunity does not end with Ms. Eygi, it will only continue to escalate. It is imperative that the United States take concrete and decisive action to better protect American citizens.


We request a written explanation by no later than September 24, 2024 as to:

1. whether the Administration will initiate an immediate, transparent, credible, and thorough independent investigation into the killing of Ms. Eygi conducted by the United States Government;
2. what the U.S. Government knows about the killing of Ms. Eygi at this time; and
3. what concrete steps your Administration and the State Department have taken and intend to take to achieve accountability for Ms. Eygi’s killing and protect American citizens.

We look forward to your prompt response to this urgent issue.

Sincerely,

  
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Patty Murray  
United States Senator

  
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Pramila Jayapal  
Member of Congress

CC:

The Honorable Merrick Garland  
Attorney General of the United States  
U.S. Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20530

The Honorable Sedat Önal  
Ambassador of the Republic of Türkiye to the United States  
2525 Massachusetts Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20008