DATE: December 4, 2019
TO: Concerned Parties
FROM: Hilary O. Shelton, Director, Washington Bureau

PRESIDENT TRUMP IMPEACHMENT INQUIRY:
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES’ INTELLIGENCE COMMITTEE
RELEASES NEW REPORT ENTITLED “THE TRUMP-UKRAINE
IMPEACHMENT INQUIRY REPORT”

NEWLY RELEASED HOUSE INTELLIGENCE COMMITTEE REPORT FINDS PRESIDENT TRUMP
EXTORTED A FOREIGN GOVERNMENT TO INTERFERE IN THE 2020 U.S. ELECTION

THE ISSUE:
On December 3, 2019, the U.S. House of Representatives’ Intelligence Committee released its report entitled “The Trump-Ukraine Impeachment Inquiry Report.” A link to the full report can be found here: https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/6566093-House-impeachment-report-PDF.html. The report states that through its hearings, the House Intelligence Committee, in coordination with the Committees on Oversight & Reform and Foreign Affairs uncovered “a months-long effort by President Trump to use the powers of his office to solicit foreign interference on his behalf in the 2020 election.”

The report was issued in accordance with H. Res. 660, which passed the U.S. House of Representatives on 10/31/19, was submitted to the U.S. House Judiciary Committee. It summarizes the committees’ findings after 12 witnesses and more than 30 hours of hearings which were televised and open to the public. In addition to finding that the President placed his “personal political interests above the national interests of the United States, sought to undermine the integrity of the U.S. election process, and endangered national security.” The report found President Trump guilty of “(u)sing the power of the Office of the President, and exercising his power over the Executive Branch” to order and implement “a campaign to conceal his conduct from the public and frustrate and obstruct the House of Representatives impeachment inquiry...”

With the issuance of this new report, the impeachment inquiry enters a new phase. The inquiry is now in the hands of the House Judiciary Committee. On December 4, 2019, the Judiciary Committee opened its public hearings by calling a panel of Constitutional scholars who explained the exact meaning of “high crimes and misdemeanors.” The Committee will now call other witnesses to gauge if President Trump did, in fact, commit “treason, bribery, and high crimes and misdemeanors” as cited in the U.S. Constitution as sufficient to warrant the President’s impeachment by the full House of Representatives.

While the exact timing of the Judiciary Committee’s hearings remain in flux and is subject to a number of variables, insiders say that House Leadership wants the hearings and final vote by the full U.S. House to be completed by the end of 2019. That means that the House Judiciary Committee has roughly a month to determine if it should draft a resolution of impeachment, which will then be forwarded to the full U.S. House of Representatives. If the full House ultimately votes in favor of impeachment, it does not mean that President Trump is removed from office. The evidence which led to the President’s impeachment is then sent to the full U.S. Senate, which is then Constitutionally obliged to hold a public trial. It is during this trial that key Members of the U.S. House serve as “managers,” presenting their case in which President Trump is allowed to defend himself. The Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, Justice John Roberts, oversees the trial, at the conclusion of which a final vote is taken by all U.S. Senators, who serve as the jury. If 2/3 of the Senators (or 66 out of 100) vote to impeach, then the President is removed from office. If fewer than 2/3 vote to impeach, President Trump remains in his current position.

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