

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****Statement of Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson*****Examining TSA's Global Efforts to Protect the Homeland from Aviation Threats and Enhance Security at Last Point of Departure Airports***

December 8, 2015 (Washington) – Today, Committee on Homeland Security Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS) delivered the following prepared remarks for the Transportation Security subcommittee hearing entitled “Examining TSA’s Global Efforts to Protect the Homeland from Aviation Threats and Enhance Security at Last Point of Departure Airports”:

“I would like to say that our thoughts and prayers remain with the individuals who perished aboard Metrojet Flight 9268 in Egypt. This terrible act, which multiple sources have now confirmed was indeed a bombing, renews concerns regarding international aviation cooperation, specifically at last point of departure airports.

These airports are those in which a flight originates from a foreign country, bound for the United States. Although Sharm al-Sheikh is not a last-point-of-departure, it is alarming that someone was able to board this plane with an explosive device- and successfully detonate it to destroy the aircraft- is alarming.

There have been other international aviation incidents that were also cause for concern. On Christmas day 2009, AbdulMuttalab successfully smuggled an explosive device onboard a Northwest Airlines flight from Amsterdam to Detroit but failed to detonate it properly before being detained by passengers.

In October 2010, packages mailed from Yemen containing explosives hidden inside of printer cartridges were successfully intercepted, but not before traveling in cargo holds, and in one instance, aboard two passenger planes.

This latest incident is a stern reminder of how important coordination with foreign governments, international aviation organizations, and air carriers is to securing aircraft bound for the United States from Foreign Airports.

With that being said, I thank Deputy Assistant Administrator Joseph Terrell from TSA's Office of Global Strategies for being here today to talk about the important role they plan in international aviation security. I am interested in learning how TSA shares threat information with all parties involved to ensure that responses are appropriate and thorough by all parties.

The Office of Global Strategies works to secure last point of departure airports and foreign repair stations by working with international entities such as the International Civil Aviation Organization, as well as through foreign airport assessments and foreign air carrier inspections.”

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