

From: SecureNigeria <info@securenigeria.com>
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2026 10:58 AM
To:
Subject: Frank Garcia, New Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Visits Nigeria on First Official Trip

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Frank Garcia, New Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Visits Nigeria on First Official Trip



Nigeria's National Security Advisor, Nuhu Ribadu, meets with U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Frank Garcia

This week, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Frank Garcia traveled to Nigeria on his first official visit to the African continent since assuming his new role. During the visit, Garcia met with National Security Advisor Nuhu Ribadu and senior Nigerian officials to discuss the expanding U.S.-Nigeria counterterrorism partnership, which continues to deliver significant gains against terrorist networks.

Garcia's visit comes just weeks after U.S. Special Operations Command Africa (SOCAFRICA) Commander Major General Claude Tudor visited Nigerian troops in Borno State, where he described the U.S.-Nigeria counterterrorism partnership as "[a model of effective military collaboration](#)." U.S.-Nigeria joint counterterrorism operations in May eliminated the second highest-ranking global ISIS leader and more than 200 ISIS fighters.

Garcia's visit builds on that momentum, reaffirming the United States' trust in Nigerian security counterparts, commitment to deepening security cooperation, and support for Nigeria's continued efforts to eliminate terrorist threats across West Africa.

U.S.-Nigeria Counterterrorism Partnership Supports Nigeria's Security Surge

By degrading ISIS and al-Qaeda networks in Northern Nigeria, the U.S.-Nigeria partnership has enabled Nigerian security forces to devote greater resources to President Tinubu's [security surge](#) in the North Central states, where militant Fulani have carried out persistent attacks against local communities.

On July 7, Nigerian forces [responded](#) to attacks on farming communities in Zamfara and Katsina states, neutralizing notorious terrorist leader Alhaji Tukur, seizing weapons caches, and disrupting a planned large-scale terrorist attack through coordinated air and ground operations.

Between July 7 and 8, troops operating under Operation HADIN KAI [intensified operations](#) in Borno and Adamawa states, rescuing two kidnapping victims, arresting five suspected terrorists, and seizing ₦1.2 million in cash along with weapons used to support terrorist logistics networks.

Nigeria is also strengthening its domestic defense industrial base. Abuja-based drone manufacturer Terra Industries is expanding production capacity with plans to manufacture up to [30,000 drones](#) annually for counterinsurgency operations. Meanwhile, the Sokoto State government recently distributed [62 armored security vehicles](#) and additional equipment to enhance security operations across the state.

Together, these developments reflect Nigeria's increasingly capable security posture, supported by a strengthened U.S.-Nigeria counterterrorism partnership that is delivering enhanced security for vulnerable Nigerians.

Republican Members of Congress Attempt to Handcuff President Trump's Foreign Policy

Rather than building on this momentum by supporting President Tinubu's security agenda with continued security assistance, some Republican members of Congress are seeking to [restrict aid](#) to one of America's most important counterterrorism partners.

Backed by Representatives Riley Moore, Chris Smith, Chip Roy, and Greg Steube, the [National Security, Department of State, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2027](#) (H.R. 8595) and the [Nigeria Religious Freedom and Accountability Act of 2026](#) (H.R. 7457) would undermine the growing U.S.-Nigeria counterterrorism partnership by suspending assistance at a time when joint operations are delivering meaningful results against terrorist organizations.

The logic here is fundamentally flawed. It's equivalent to telling a country struggling with starvation that it can receive food assistance only after it has solved its hunger crisis. Congress is demanding that Nigeria achieve security benchmarks before receiving the military and humanitarian assistance required to reach them.

And despite limited resources, Nigeria has made [meaningful progress](#) against terrorist groups. If Nigeria lacks the intelligence capabilities, training, equipment, and operational capacity to protect vulnerable communities—including Nigerian Christians—then withholding assistance until those capabilities exist is self-defeating. That is why President Trump continues to strengthen America's counterterrorism partnership with President Tinubu.

It's time for Congress to get back in its lane. As Commander in Chief, President Trump sets America's foreign policy agenda, and his record reflects a clear rejection of nation-building in favor of partnerships that advance U.S. security interests. It is disappointing to see members of his own party pursue legislation that cuts against that agenda while risking greater instability for the very people they claim to protect: Nigerian Christians.

Congressional Republicans' America First Blind Spot: The Nigerian Presidential Elections

Congressional Republicans are also spreading baseless allegations of election interference. In January 2027, Nigerians will head to the polls to elect their next president, and the stakes could not be higher as much of the Sahel region remains [plagued](#) by instability.

Despite Nigeria's long history of competitive elections and peaceful transfers of power, Representative Riley Moore of West Virginia [recently warned](#) that the United States would closely monitor Nigeria's 2027 general election, suggesting that future U.S. security and financial assistance could depend on unfounded concerns about religious freedom and election integrity.

Moore is not the only Republican member of Congress undermining President Trump's counterterrorism strategy in West Africa: Representative John James recently met with Biafran separatists who seek to break up the country, and Senator Ted Cruz has repeatedly amplified propaganda from paid activists distorting the security situation.

Now Representative Moore and his colleagues are once again amplifying [baseless allegations](#) from President Tinubu's political opponents while overlooking the [foreign policy directives](#) set by President Trump and Secretary of State Marco Rubio: that the United States should stop interfering in the electoral processes of sovereign nations.

America First Means Ending Foreign Meddling

Last year, in his landmark foreign policy speech in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, President Trump rejected decades of failed "nation-building," arguing that "[the so-called nation-builders wrecked far more nations than they built, and the interventionists were intervening in complex societies that they did not even understand themselves.](#)" President Trump [argued](#) that these efforts squandered American taxpayer dollars, put U.S. lives at risk, and often undermined stability rather than strengthening it.

Secretary Rubio subsequently translated that vision into State Department policy, directing U.S. diplomats to "[avoid opining on the fairness or integrity of an electoral process](#)" and instead focus on advancing U.S. national interests and strengthening partnerships that protect American security.

Some Congressional Republicans appear to have ignored that guidance, as well as President Trump's decision to dismantle the U.S. Agency for International Development, which often engaged in "election monitoring" as a vehicle to push political agendas abroad.

Nigeria's 2027 election presents an opportunity to put President Trump's new approach into practice, especially given the complete lack of evidence that the Nigerian government has interfered with the electoral process.

Nigeria's 2027 Election: Independent Oversight and Rule of Law

Allegations of interference center on the [deregistration](#) of five political parties seeking to contest the presidential election. However, that decision was not made by President Bola Tinubu or his administration. It followed a [ruling](#) by the Federal High Court in Abuja, which found that the parties had [failed to satisfy](#) constitutional requirements for continued registration, including securing at least 25 percent of the vote in a state during

a presidential election or winning at least one elected office at the federal, state, or local level.

The African Democratic Congress, Action Alliance, Action Peoples Party, Accord Party, and Zenith Labour Party [did not](#) meet those requirements. Following the court's ruling, Nigeria's Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) [deregistered](#) the parties in accordance with the law. The affected parties [retain the right](#) to appeal the decision through Nigeria's judicial system.

Are Moore & Co. Putting America First—or America Last?

Instead of accepting this decision, Republican members of Congress are raising questions about the integrity of Nigeria's electoral system, meeting with Biafran separatists, and attempting to restrict vital security assistance. This is interesting.

These same GOP leaders proudly stood by President Trump as he raised concerns that Democrats tried to change electoral rules months before the 2020 election to benefit their candidates. The five deregistered Nigerian parties are mirroring Democrats' tactics, so why aren't they calling it out now?

Assistant Secretary of State Garcia's trip to Abuja offers an opportunity to set the record on how the U.S. will approach Nigeria's 2027 elections.

Nigeria is a stable democracy in a volatile region and a strong U.S. counterterrorism partner. It's time U.S. officials start acting accordingly.

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