

October 27, 2017

Dear Congressmen Khanna, Massie, Pocan, and Jones,

We, the undersigned organizations, write to applaud your decision to introduce House Concurrent Resolution 81 to force a debate and vote on ending unauthorized U.S. military involvement in Yemen's civil war. By providing technical, logistical and other military support for the Saudi/UAE-led coalition in Yemen, the U.S. has facilitated numerous violations of international humanitarian law in Yemen and the creation of [the largest humanitarian crisis in the world](#).

Since March 2015, the U.S. has provided the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen with political and military support, including targeting intelligence, mid-air refueling, and other logistical support. U.S. personnel [reportedly work alongside](#) Saudi and other counterparts in the coalition's joint command center. CENTCOM has [publicly confirmed](#) that the U.S. continues to provide mid-air refueling to the coalition, despite having no information on the objectives, flight plans, or targets of the refueled missions and no way to verify whether such missions comport with the laws of armed conflict or US national security objectives. U.S. weapons sold to Saudi Arabia have been misused repeatedly in airstrikes on civilians and civilians objects that are [the leading cause of civilian casualties](#) in the conflict and [destroyed Yemen's vital infrastructure](#). This destruction of infrastructure has exacerbated the world's largest hunger crisis and created the conditions necessary for [the largest cholera outbreak ever documented](#).

Yet despite the fact that the U.S. is actively aiding and abetting coalition abuses, U.S. military involvement in this disastrous conflict in Yemen has never been debated publicly. This war of attrition has been waged using U.S. weaponry, military support, and personnel without congressional authorization for far too long. As the Trump Administration has consistently ignored human rights and civilian harm in its national security decisions, and looks to take a more aggressive posture in the region, Congress must send a clear signal that U.S. military involvement in Yemen's civil war requires congressional authorization. Without it, U.S. support for the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen violates the Constitution and the War Powers Resolution of 1973. Congress has a constitutional and ethical duty to ensure any and all U.S. military operations comply with domestic and international law, and U.S. participation in the war in Yemen raises numerous legal and moral questions that must be resolved by Congress. Congress has an additional responsibility to do all in its power to convey to the administration and US allies in the region that more must be done to address the urgent humanitarian crisis facing millions of Yemenis.

The war has also created a security vacuum in Yemen that poses a significant security threat to the region and the United States. Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) is [stronger](#) than it has ever been. The U.S. State Department [recently stated](#) that "AQAP, in particular, has benefitted from this conflict by significantly expanding its presence in the southern and eastern governorates. It has successfully inserted itself amongst multiple factions on the ground, making the group more difficult to counter." Iran has also taken advantage of Yemen's instability, and benefits the longer the conflict drags on; by smuggling limited amounts of arms into Yemen, Tehran has [further embroiled](#) its Gulf rivals in an unwinnable war. Only by ending the war in Yemen can these threats from AQAP and Iran be mitigated, for they have been [bolstered precisely because of the chaos wrought](#) by the stalemated battle between the U.S.-supported Saudi-led coalition and the Houthi-Saleh alliance.

The president is the Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces, and as such has authority to deploy and commit U.S. troops to foreign conflicts. However, this authority is extremely limited.

The Constitution grants Congress the exclusive power to declare war. The War Powers Resolution of 1973 has been held by all three branches of government to require specific statutory authorization for any extended military involvement in armed conflicts other than in cases of self-defense. As Houthi/Saleh forces in Yemen are not in any way associated with Al Qaeda and do not pose an imminent threat to the United States, there is simply no existing authority for the U.S. involvement in this conflict. We applaud your decision to exercise congressional oversight to end the U.S. role in the destruction of Yemen.

Sincerely,

Action on Armed Violence
American Muslims for Palestine - NJ/NY (AMP-NJ/NY)
Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain (ADHRB)
Arab Center for the Protection of Human Rights
Asian Law Caucus
Avaaz
Balhaji
Campaign for Liberty
Center for International Policy
CODEPINK
Conference of Superiors of Men (Catholic)
Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, US Provinces
Corruption Watch
CREDO Action
Daily Kos
Defending Rights & Dissent
Demand Progress
DownsizeDC.org, Inc.
Foreign Policy for America
Franciscan Action Network
Freedom Forward
FreedomWorks
Friends Committee on National Legislation
Global Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and United Church of Christ
Institute for Policy Studies, New Internationalism Project
Islamic Society of North America
Jewish Voice for Peace
Just Foreign Policy
Leadership Conference of Women Religious
Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns
Maryland Chapter of the National Lawyers Guild
Military Families Speak Out
Minnesota Peace Project

MoveOn.org
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
National Lawyers Guild International Committee
Nonviolence International-USA
Oakland Privacy
Pax Christi International
Pax Christi USA
Peace Action
Peace Action New York State
People Demanding Action
Pittsburg Mother to Mother Ministry
Presbyterian Church (USA)
Project on Middle East Democracy (POMED)
Project South
RootsAction.org
Saferworld
Security Research and Information Centre (SRIC)
SEIU Local 87
STAND: The Student-Led Movement to End Mass Atrocities
The Coalition to End the U.S.-Saudi Alliance
United for Peace and Justice (UFPJ)
United Methodist Church, General Board of Church and Society
Veterans For Peace
Win Without War
Women in Black - New Paltz, NY
Women in Black - Vienna
Women in Black - Baltimore
Women's International League for Peace and Freedom
Worcester Islamic Center (WIC)
World Beyond War
World Peace Foundation
Yemen Peace Project