More than 110 Organizations Call for US Senate to Block Arms Sales to Israel

Letter · Lebanon · Palestine · 22 October 2024

HuMENA for Human Rights and Civic Engagement joined +110 organizations in writing to members of the U.S. Senate, urging them to vote for resolutions aimed at suspending several arms transfers to Israel. This action comes in response to concerns over Israel's repeated violations of international and U.S. law and policy.

The letter, led by the Center for Civilians in Conflict (CIVIC) and Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL), highlights that the resolutions would block the sale of joint direct attack munitions (JDAMs) and tank shells, which have been used by the Israeli military in densely populated areas, resulting in civilian casualties.

Dear Senators,

We, the undersigned organizations, urge you to cosponsor and vote in favor of the four joint resolutions of disapproval introduced by Senators Sanders, Welch, and Merkley regarding several specific major arms sales to the government of Israel.

The joint resolutions of disapproval would suspend particular transfers of types of weapons that the Israeli government has used in strikes that have killed thousands of civilians, including aid workers and journalists, in Gaza over the last year. Independent human rights and conflict monitors have thoroughly documented the Israeli military's use of weapons from the United States in attacks that have killed Palestinian civilians. President Biden has described Israeli government attacks as "indiscriminate." The joint resolutions of disapproval would block certain sales of joint direct attack munitions (JDAMs) and tank shells, which the Israeli military has repeatedly used in attacks that have killed civilians in densely populated areas. The resolutions do not implicate missile defense systems.

Israeli military attacks have killed more than 40,000 Palestinians and decimated Gaza's hospitals, schools, critical infrastructure, and residential housing. Human rights organizations have concluded that the Israeli military has repeatedly violated (PDF) international humanitarian law. Humanitarian groups have stressed that Israeli forces continue to restrict the delivery of humanitarian aid as hundreds of thousands of people in Gaza are on the precipice of starvation and suffering from the spread of deadly diseases, including polio.

As part of a larger escalation in Lebanon, the Israeli military has invaded South Lebanon and is carrying out airstrikes around the country, including in densely populated areas of central Beirut. These strikes have put civilians at grave risk and have killed over 2,000 people, destroyed critical infrastructure, and displaced 1.2 million people. According to human rights organizations, these operations have included apparent violations of international humanitarian law.

Continued arms transfers to the Israeli government are contrary to U.S. law and the Biden administration's own arms transfer policy, which include restrictions on arms transfers to any country based on human rights, international humanitarian law, and humanitarian assistance criteria. For example, U.S. law prohibits military aid to governments that restrict the delivery of U.S. humanitarian assistance. As demonstrated by the National Security Memorandum 20 process, the Biden administration has not complied with these standards.

The Senate will soon have the opportunity to demonstrate that it opposes further suffering and stands for the rule of law and the protection of civilians by supporting the joint resolutions of disapproval introduced on September 25. We endorse Senator Sanders, Welch, and Merkley's resolutions and urge all Senators to cosponsor and vote in favor of their passage.

Signed,

- About Face: Veterans Against the War
- ActionAid USA
- Action Corps
- Al-Haq, Law in the Service of Mankind
- Alliance of Baptists
- American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC)
- American Baptist Churches USA
- American Friends Service Committee
- Americans for Justice in Palestine Action (AJP Action)
- Amnesty International USA
- Arab American Institute (AAI)
- Arms Control Association
- Association of US Catholic Priests
- Australian Centre for International Justice
- Australia Palestine Advocacy Network
- Avaaz
- Bridges Faith Initiative
- Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies
- Center for Civilians in Conflict (CIVIC)

- Center for Constitutional Rights
- Center for Economic and Policy Research
- Center for International Policy
- Center for Jewish Nonviolence
- Center for Victims of Torture
- Charity & Security Network
- Children Not Numbers
- Church of the Brethren, Office of Peacebuilding and Policy
- CODEPINK.us
- Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes
- Control Arms
- DAWN
- Demand Progress
- Democratic Socialists of America
- Doctors Against Genocide
- Doctors of the World
- Emgage Action
- Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)
- Faith Strategies
- Franciscan Action Network
- Freedom Forward
- Friends Committee on National Legislation
- Friends of Sabeel North America (FOSNA)
- Global Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and United Church of Christ
- Hindus for Human Rights
- Human Rights Watch
- HuMENA for Human Rights and Civic Engagement
- IfNotNow Movement
- Indivisible
- Institute for Policy Studies, New Internationalism Project
- Israel/Palestine Mission Network of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
- Jewish Voice for Peace Action
- Just Foreign Policy

- Justice Democrats
- Law For Palestine
- Leadership Team of the Felician Sisters of North America
- Legacies of War
- MADRE
- Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns
- Medglobal
- Medical Mission Sisters, Justice Office
- MENA Rights Group
- Mennonite Action
- Mennonite Central Committee U.S.
- Middle East Children's Alliance
- Middle East Democracy Center (MEDC)
- Migrant Roots Media
- MPower Change Action Fund
- Muslim Peace Fellowship
- National Council of Churches
- National Iranian American Council Action
- Nonviolence International (USA)
- Nonviolent Peaceforce
- Oxfam America
- PAX
- Pax Christi USA
- Peace Action
- Peace Direct
- Presbyterian Church (USA), Office of Public Witness
- Progressive Democrats of America (PDA)
- Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft
- Quixote Center
- Refugees International
- ReThinking Foreign Policy.org
- Saferworld (US)
- September 11th Families for Peaceful Tomorrows

- Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary
- Sisters of Mercy of the Americas – Institute Justice Team
- Sisters of Mercy of the Holy Cross
- Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace
- Society of Helpers
- The Borgen Project
- The Episcopal Church
- The Human Dignity Project (THDP)
- The Religious Nationalisms Project
- The Tahrir Institute for Middle East Policy (TIMEP)
- The United Church of Christ
- The United Methodist Church, General Board of Church and Society
- Transnational Institute
- Uncommitted National Movement
- United Church of Christ Palestine Israel Network
- United Methodists for Kairos Response (UMKR)
- United We Dream
- US Campaign for Palestinian Rights Action (USCPR Action)
- Washington Report on Middle East Affairs
- Win Without War
- Women for Weapons Trade Transparency
- Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics, and Ritual (WATER)
- Working Families Party
- Yemen Relief and Reconstruction Foundation

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