

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

December 2, 2024

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.  
President  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden,

We write concerning a joint resolution of disapproval (JRD) that we filed on November 21, 2024, on the U.S. sale of offensive weapons – including rockets and missiles worth \$1.2 billion – to the United Arab Emirates (UAE). We are deeply concerned about reports that the UAE has provided materiel support, including arms and ammunition, to the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) amid the civil war in Sudan and believe that the United States should pause offensive arms sales until such support has ceased. If your administration provides written confirmation that the UAE is not supplying the RSF with weapons and has committed to refrain from future such transfers, then we will have accomplished our goal and will not need to call for a vote on this legislation in Congress.

The current war in Sudan has led to a humanitarian and human rights catastrophe. Since the conflict erupted in April 2023, a staggering 11.8 million people have been displaced within Sudan and in neighboring countries. More than half the population, over 25 million people, reportedly face acute food insecurity, including 13 million children, and 1.5 million are at risk of or facing famine. In July 2024, the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) Famine Review Committee (FRC) confirmed that famine conditions are prevalent in Darfur.

Both the RSF and the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) have worsened the crisis. Both sides have been credibly accused of using starvation as a weapon of war by intentionally blocking humanitarian aid from reaching those most in need. The United States has determined that both the RSF and the SAF have committed war crimes, and has gone further to determine the RSF has also committed crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing. Reputable human rights organizations and news outlets have also reported widespread acts of sexual violence, including rape, by the RSF.

Since the start of the war, the UAE has enabled the RSF's atrocities in Sudan. There is ample evidence documenting the UAE's support for the RSF, including findings by the UN Panel of Experts, which documented "credible" allegations of the UAE violating Darfur's arms embargo by supplying the RSF with weapons and ammunition. These findings have been corroborated by credible human rights organizations, as well as reporting by the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*. Furthermore, your administration has acknowledged the UAE's support for the RSF.

According to U.S. Ambassador to the UN Linda Thomas-Greenfield, “We are aware that both sides are receiving weapons and other support to fuel their efforts to destroy Sudan, and yes, we have engaged with the parties on that, including with our colleagues from the UAE.”

We applaud the efforts your administration has made to bring the war to an end by convening multiple diplomatic dialogues to find a path forward. You underscored U.S. interests in ending the conflict, stating in September 2024, that “the United States will not abandon our commitment to the people of Sudan, who deserve freedom, peace, and justice. We call on all parties to this conflict to end the violence and refrain from fueling it, for the future of Sudan and for all Sudanese people.”

Your administration has rightly put pressure on the RSF by sanctioning several high-level commanders for their atrocities, but we believe you have yet to use the full leverage at your disposal to hold accountable their primary external backer. We support a mutually beneficial bilateral relationship with the UAE and are not seeking to permanently end arms sales. However, a partnership with the United States should not come with a blank check. We need assurances that U.S. interests, values, and priorities will be respected by foreign governments that benefit from a security relationship with the United States.

The U.S. should not be sending weapons to the UAE so long as it is aiding and abetting a group that is one of the primary drivers of the humanitarian disaster in Sudan and has committed atrocity crimes. The UAE is an important partner in the Middle East, but we must not turn a blind eye to its role in the humanitarian disaster in Sudan. That is why our legislation seeks to pause offensive arms sales to the UAE unless you can provide written assurances that the UAE is not providing, and will no longer provide, materiel support to the RSF.

Sincerely,



Chis Van Hollen  
United States Senator



Sara Jacobs  
Member of Congress