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September 13, 2019

Ms. Kawther Hashim  
24 S Meadow Dr  
Burlington, Vermont 05401

Dear Kawther:

Thank you for contacting me regarding your efforts to raise awareness about U.S. involvement in the Saudi-led war in Yemen. I applaud you for creating a local platform to bring awareness to the deep impact this military conflict has had on the people, specifically the children, of Yemen.

As you know, Yemen has fallen into chaos as the result of civil war, terrorist activity, and outside military intervention. Saudi Arabia and Iran view the conflict as a proxy war, while at the same time terrorist groups like al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) have taken control of large swathes of territory. To say that the conflict in Yemen is complicated would be an understatement, and the Yemeni people have faced enormous suffering as a result. The conflict in Yemen has led to the world's worst humanitarian crisis, leaving 24 million Yemenis—80 percent of the population—in need of humanitarian assistance.

To my mind, the assistance the U.S. has provided to Saudi Arabia, through aircraft refueling, intelligence gathering, and aerial targeting constitutes the introduction of U.S. forces as defined by the War Powers Resolution. Such an action requires Congressional authorization, and that is why I, along with my colleagues Senator Lee and Senator Murphy, introduced a resolution to remove U.S. forces from such hostilities. My resolution successfully passed the Senate on March 13, 2019 by a margin of 54-46, but was unfortunately vetoed by President Trump.

More recently, on September 3, 2019, I helped lead a bipartisan group of 44 lawmakers in urging Congress to defund unauthorized U.S. military involvement in the Saudi-led war in Yemen. We wrote to the chairmen and ranking members of the armed service committees in the House and Senate who oversee the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) of Fiscal Year 2020, calling for the inclusion of an amendment to end all "U.S. involvement in offensive strikes in the Saudi-led campaign against the Houthis in Yemen." This House amendment passed by a vote of 240-185, similarly to my aforementioned Senate NDAA amendment. Inclusion of this amendment would ensure that our men and women in uniform are not involved in a war which has never been authorized by Congress, and continues to undermine rather than advance U.S. national security interests.


U.S. logistical support, spare-parts transfers and intelligence sharing for the Saudi dictatorship's airstrikes make us complicit in this nightmare. By passing our bill earlier this year, the House and Senate have spoken: America's involvement in Saudi Arabia's war is unconstitutional and must end immediately. Now we must use Congress's power of the purse to block every nickel of taxpayer money from going to assist

the Saudi dictatorship as it bombs and starves civilians in Yemen. By standing firm and shutting off funding, we can put an end to this humanitarian catastrophe.

I want to reiterate that the importance of raising awareness in your community around this issue cannot be understated. Young people are quite literally the future of our country, and after seeing the video of you speaking to the Burlington City Council, I can see that our future is in good hands.

I join with your friends, family and community in recognizing the tremendous work you are doing, and encourage you to continue advocating for the important issues of humanitarian assistance to those suffering most in the world.

Sincerely,

  
BERNARD SANDERS  
UNITED STATES SENATOR