

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 6, 2017

The Honorable James Mattis
Secretary of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1000

The Honorable Rex W. Tillerson
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Mattis and Secretary Tillerson,

We write to request information related to the operational conduct of the Royal Saudi Air Force (RSAF) in Yemen.

As you know, the previous Administration made the decision in December 2016 to halt a planned sale of precision-guided munitions (PGM) to Saudi Arabia due to concerns over widespread civilian casualties and significant deficiencies in RSAF's targeting capabilities.¹ This decision was the result of an internal review launched after the United Nations and a number of human rights organizations documented a series of RSAF airstrikes on civilian targets, including hospitals, markets, schools, a wedding and a large funeral. According to recent reports, however, the State Department has now reversed course and removed the suspension on these PGM sales.²

In light of this reported policy change, and with the possibility of an arms sale that Congress will have the opportunity to review in the near future, we believe it is necessary to assess the RSAF's current operational conduct. The possession alone of PGMs does not indicate sophisticated targeting capabilities. It is in our national security interest – as well as that of our Saudi partners – to ensure that the RSAF has the ability to avoid civilian casualties before the U.S. sells them any additional air-to-ground munitions.

We therefore request that the Department of Defense report to Congress on the following within 15 days of receipt of this letter.

1. Is the Royal Saudi Air Force abiding by U.S.-provided “no-strike” lists? As part of this assessment, we request details of:
 - a. Any violations of the lists from the delivery of the lists until now.

¹Phil Stewart and Warren Strobel, “U.S. to halt some arms sales to Saudi, citing civilian deaths in Yemen Campaign,” *Reuters*, December 13, 2016 <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-saudi-arabia-yemen-exclusive-idUSKBN1421UK>

²Missy Ryan and Anne Gearan, “Trump administration looks to resume Saudi arms sale criticized as endangering civilians in Yemen,” *Washington Post*, March 8, 2017 https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/trump-administration-looks-to-resume-saudi-arms-sale-criticized-as-endangering-civilians-in-yemen/2017/03/08/a259090a-040e-11e7-b1e9-a05d3c21f7cf_story.html?utm_term=.f9a9d0d45b3c

- b. Any Department of Defense actions taken in response to Royal Saudi Air Force violations of the U.S. provided no-strike lists or other confirmed airstrikes on civilian targets.
 - c. Details on the no-strike lists, including the number and types of targets, the dates of delivery of each distinct list to the Saudi Arabia-led Coalition, and the frequency with which the overall list is updated.
2. Please assess the ability of the Royal Saudi Air Force to effectively employ precision-guided munitions in a way that takes full advantage of the weapon's capabilities to ensure the minimum collateral damage.
 3. What progress has the Royal Saudi Air Force made in improving its targeting capabilities from the beginning of the conflict until now? Please provide requisite data to justify the assessment.
 4. What U.S. military personnel are currently working with the Coalition Command, and what are their specific roles?

Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

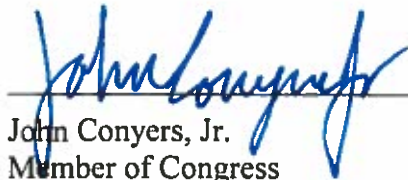
Sincerely,



Ted W. Lieu
Member of Congress



Walter Jones
Member of Congress



John Conyers, Jr.
Member of Congress



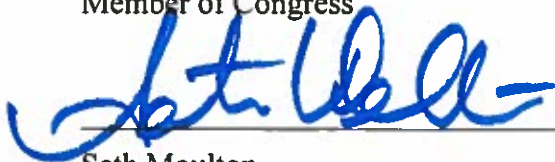
Ted S. Yoho, DVM
Member of Congress



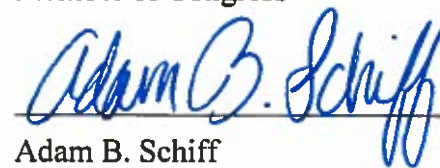
David N. Cicilline
Member of Congress



Ro Khanna
Member of Congress



Seth Moulton
Member of Congress



Adam B. Schiff
Member of Congress



Mark Pocan
Member of Congress



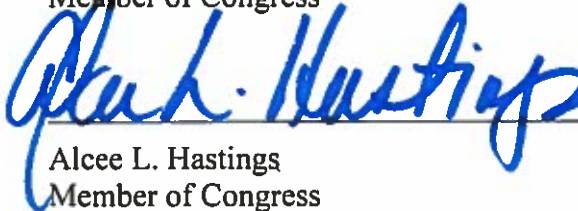
Ruben Gallego
Member of Congress



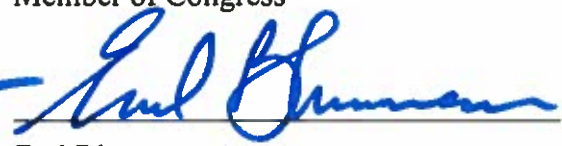
Judy Chu
Member of Congress



Barbara Lee
Member of Congress



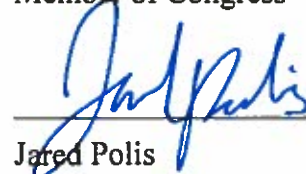
Alcee L. Hastings
Member of Congress



Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress



Raúl Grijalva
Member of Congress



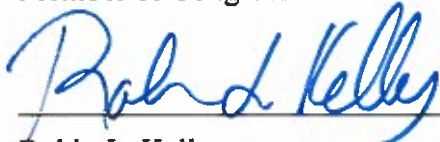
Jared Polis
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Bobby L. Rush
Member of Congress



Karen Bass
Member of Congress



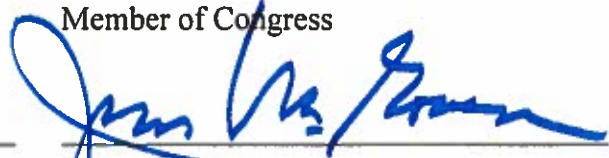
Robin L. Kelly
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Alan Lowenthal
Member of Congress



William R. Keating
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



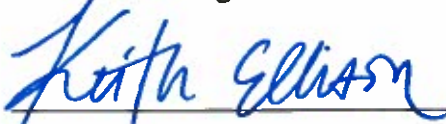
Pramila Jayapal
Member of Congress



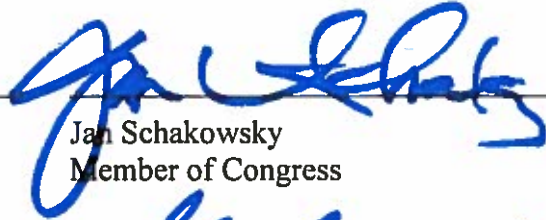
Peter Welch
Member of Congress



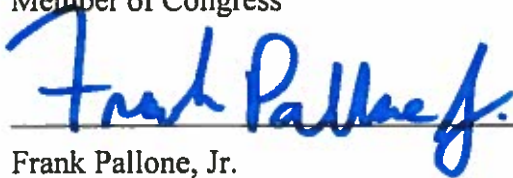
Rick Nolan
Member of Congress



Keith Ellison
Member of Congress



Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress



Frank Pallone, Jr.
Member of Congress



Peter DeFazio
Member of Congress



Norma J. Torres
Member of Congress

cc:

Amb. Tina Kaidanow, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, U.S. Department of State

Lt. Gen. H.R. McMaster, National Security Advisor to the President of the United States