Action Sheet: January 2022

We seek a world free of war and the threat of war

The world’s worst humanitarian crisis is happening in Yemen. After seven years of war, roughly 16 million people are at risk of famine, and over two million children under the age of five are severely malnourished. This crisis is largely driven by the Saudi blockade, which limits the flow of food, medicine, and fuel from entering the country.

By supporting the Saudi-led war in Yemen, the United States is complicit. The U.S. military provides maintenance for warplanes and supports intelligence-sharing, which allow the blockade and airstrikes to continue. The Biden administration and Congress have taken important steps to end U.S. support for this war. But for people in Yemen, these actions have often been too little, too late.

Taxpayer dollars should be spent building our country, not destroying others. Congress must reclaim authority over when our country goes to war. As a first step, Congress should introduce and pass a War Powers Resolution to end U.S. support for the war in Yemen. After seven devastating years, Congress must act because Yemen can’t wait.

This is a time for us to amplify our message through a sustained grassroots push. To hit the ground running in 2022, submit meeting requests early, publish in local and statewide media, and plan other actions to start mobilizing more constituents to raise this issue to Congress.

Get the Facts: Ending U.S. Involvement in the War in Yemen

The Saudi-led war in Yemen has created the worst humanitarian crisis in the world. Roughly 16.2 million people in Yemen are at risk of famine, and 2.3 million children under age five are acutely malnourished. A report from the United Nations in November 2021 found that by the end of 2021, the conflict in Yemen will have contributed to the deaths of over 377,000 people, nearly 60% of which are related to indirect causes such as lack of food, water, and healthcare.

Nearly seven years of U.S. complicity in Saudi bombings and the blockade of Yemen has made peace more elusive and exacerbated the humanitarian crisis. The United States has supplied Saudi Arabia with logistical support, intelligence sharing, spare parts and maintenance that is fueling the war and blockade. Responding to growing public pressure, President Joe Biden announced in
February 2021 that the United States ended its support for the coalition’s offensive operations in Yemen—but important aspects of U.S. complicity remain. This includes maintenance and intelligence sharing for warplanes conducting airstrikes and enforcing the blockade.

The only way to end U.S. complicity in this war and blockade is for Congress to act. Congressional action to end U.S. support for the Saudi-led war will also be another step toward Congress reasserting its authority over when and where our country goes to war.

The War Powers Resolution
Congress passed the War Powers Act in 1973 after the Vietnam war. This was meant to restrict the president’s power to engage the United States in armed conflict without congressional consent, after years of unauthorized wars. This act stipulates that the president can only introduce U.S. armed forces into hostilities if Congress has passed a declaration of war, a statutory authorization such as an Authorization for the Use of Military Force, or during a national emergency as a result of an attack on the United States or its armed forces. The War Powers Resolution also includes an expedited mechanism to force votes to end U.S. participation in hostilities conducted without congressional authorization, and stipulates that the president must terminate them within 60 days.

Congressional Passage of the Yemen War Powers Resolution in 2019
Congress made history in 2019 by passing a War Powers Resolution through both chambers for the very first time since the War Powers Act was enacted in 1973. The resolution called for the withdrawal of U.S. armed forces from hostilities in Yemen that had not been authorized by Congress. Unfortunately, President Donald Trump vetoed the resolution and continued to support the Saudi-led war in Yemen.

Bipartisan Support Exists
In addition to Congress passing a War Powers Resolution in 2019, the House has also passed amendments to the 2020, 2021, and 2022 National Defense Authorization Acts to end support for the Saudi-led coalition. All of these votes have had bipartisan support. In December 2021, a bipartisan group of senators led by Sens. Rand Paul (KY), Mike Lee (UT) and Bernie Sanders (VT) supported a resolution to block the sale of $650 million in air-to-air missiles to Saudi Arabia. The Joint Resolution of Disapproval received the support of a majority of Senate Democrats, including Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (NY). These congressional provisions demonstrate that there is bipartisan will in Congress to terminate U.S. complicity in the war and humanitarian crisis.

» Take Action

Urge your members of Congress to support a resolution invoking the War Powers Act to end U.S. support for the Saudi-led war in Yemen.

In January:

- Research your representative’s and senators’ past votes on this issue.
- Request a meeting with your representatives and senators urging them to introduce and support a War Powers Resolution on Yemen.