

War Crimes Complicity -- Raytheon Nabs \$1.6 Billion Arms Deal With UAE

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The United Arab Emirates (UAE) just inked billions in deals to secure new weapons from top Pentagon contractor Raytheon a week after an Amnesty International investigation further implicated the Gulf nation in war crimes for transferring Western weapons to unaccountable militia groups, thereby deepening the humanitarian crisis and fueling carnage in war-ravaged Yemen.

The ongoing carnage against civilians in Yemen—including at the hands of the Saudi Arabia and UAE-led coalition and the militias it backs—should give serious pause to all states supplying arms," said Patrick Wilcken, arms control and human rights researcher at Amnesty International. "Emirati forces receive billions of dollars' worth of arms from Western states and others, only to siphon them off to militias in Yemen that answer to no-one and are known to be committing war crimes."

The human rights group, which is calling for a stop to all [arms transfers](#) to the Saudi- and UAE-led coalition, also notes that the "the UAE has steered the ground offensive" in the conflict, which broke out in 2015 and has, by some estimates, [killed](#) over 60,000 Yemenis, uprooted millions, and left millions more on the brink of famine.

"American fingerprints are all over the air war in Yemen," as the New York Times recently reported, noting the nation's key arms sales and intelligence. But given the accusations of war crimes committed by all parties during the conflict, mounting civilian casualties, and devastated infrastructure, new legislation is hoping to halt U.S. support for the war. Raytheon International CEO John Harris, for his part, though, has brushed off criticism his industry is facing, [telling](#) CNBC this weekend, "we don't make policy."

Thus, the lucrative deals continue.

Agence France-Presse [reported](#) Monday:

The United Arab Emirates announced Monday it had signed deals worth more than \$1.6 billion for the purchase of Patriot missile launchers from U.S. arms giant Raytheon, state media said.

The deals, inked on the second day of an international military exhibition in Abu Dhabi, come a day after the UAE announced it would buy \$353 million worth of Patriot missiles from Raytheon.

Some \$3.2 billion in deals have been signed between the oil-rich state and western companies at the expo, set to run through Thursday, state-run WAM news agency said.

The new Amnesty report, "[When Arms Go Astray](#)," shed light on what happens to at least some of the weapons the UAE receives from its Western partners:

While China, the USA, the U.K., France, and other European states have rightly been

criticized for supplying arms to Coalition forces, and Iran has been implicated in sending arms to the Huthis, a new threat is emerging.

As the ground war evolves, weapons are not only being used by UAE forces in Yemen, but are also being passed on to completely unaccountable Coalition-allied militias, some of whom stand accused of war crimes.

The report also references a previous [publication](#) revealing that the UAE is training Yemeni militias who are running "black sites" where "a range of shocking abuses" takes place.

Given the scope of abuses and breadth of the catastrophe, some U.S. lawmakers have tried to rein in U.S. involvement. In a positive development, the House [voted](#) last week to end U.S. military support for the coalition's ongoing war in Yemen.

The [resolution](#) was introduced by Rep. Ro Khanna (D-Calif.), who declared following the vote that "we are closer than ever to ending our complicity in this humanitarian catastrophe."

Eyes are now [on the Senate](#), which could vote on its version within 30 days. Among the co-sponsors of that measure is Sen. Chris Murphy (D-Conn.), who seized upon a recent CNN investigation showing that Saudis have reportedly provided U.S. weapons to al-Qaeda forces in Yemen to add urgency to the vote.

"This investigation needs to be a wake-up call," he said. "Congress should immediately pass our bipartisan War Powers Resolution to get us out of the war in Yemen that has gone horribly wrong, and we must stop selling weapons to help Saudi Arabia and the UAE continue to perpetuate this disastrous war."

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