



One Hundred Sixteenth Congress
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Foreign Affairs
2170 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
www.foreignaffairs.house.gov

February 26, 2019

The Honorable Mike Pompeo
Secretary
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

Acting Secretary Patrick Shanahan
U.S. Department of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301

Dear Secretary Pompeo and Acting Secretary Shanahan:

We write to express deep concern about credible reports that Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates have transferred U.S.- origin military equipment and weapons to al-Qaeda-linked terrorist groups in Yemen in direct violation of existing arms agreements with the U.S. We request an urgent briefing on all details surrounding this case.

According to a CNN investigation, which aired on February 4, 2019, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) have made unauthorized transfers of U.S. origin weapons and equipment to extremist groups in Yemen fighting as belligerents in the Yemeni civil war. The materiel reportedly was transferred in an attempt to buy loyalty of armed groups, bolster specific armed factions, and influence the political landscape in Yemen. It is particularly alarming that multiple media reports link some of these Yemeni proxy groups to Al-Qaeda.

Groups reportedly receiving U.S. origin weapons and equipment include the Abu Abbas Brigade, a terrorist group connected to Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and Alwiyat al-Aamlqa, or the "Giants Brigade."

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The leader of the Abu Abbas Brigade (Adil Abduh Fari) was designated as a foreign terrorist by the U.S. on October 25, 2017. He espouses a violent extremist ideology and fights alongside AQAP and other radical Islamist groups. The Abu Abbas Brigade reportedly now possesses Oshkosh Mobile All-Terrain Vehicles (M-ATVs). The Saudi and Emirati militaries have purchased M-ATVs from the United States, generating significant concerns that these M-ATVs were transferred to Abu Abbas by one of these two countries.

The "Giants Brigade" reportedly received Navistar Mine-Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicles from the UAE, originally transferred to the UAE as part of an arms-sales agreement.

In addition, the Saudi military reportedly airdropped American-made tube-launched anti-tank missiles in the same frontline areas where AQAP was known to be operating.

Taken together, these unauthorized transfers of U.S. equipment and weapons by the Saudi and UAE governments represent a clear national security risk to the U.S. and our interests and a serious violation of existing bilateral agreements pursuant to the Arms Export Control Act.

Published reports also indicate that U.S.-origin military equipment has fallen into the hands of Iran-backed Houthi rebels. Yemeni television footage from September 2017 showed images of Mohammed Ali al-Houthi, the de facto Houthi rebel leader, behind the wheel of a captured U.S. manufactured MRAP in Sana'a as a crowd chanted "death to America" in the background. Given the Houthi militia's links to Iranian intelligence, it is likely Iran has already analyzed and exploited U.S. MRAPs for vulnerabilities and shared such information with Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) personnel advising Syrian regime forces and Lebanese Hezbollah.

If these reports are accurate, the evident failure to protect sensitive U.S. military technology may enable our adversaries in Yemen and across the Middle East to advance and develop weapons capable of penetrating mine and IED resistant vehicles as well as jam or otherwise counter U.S. communications technologies aboard such vehicles.

We request an urgent briefing from you on the reported unauthorized transfer of U.S.-origin weapons and equipment, including an update on any investigation currently in process by the Department of Defense and/or the Department of State, any steps the U.S. is taking as a result, and how bilateral agreements and end-use monitoring will improve moving forward.

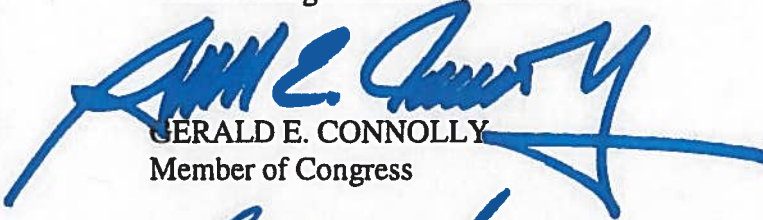
Sincerely,



ELIOT L. ENGEL
Chairman
House Foreign Affairs Committee



MICHAEL T. McCAUL
Ranking Member
House Foreign Affairs Committee



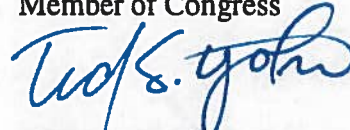
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Member of Congress



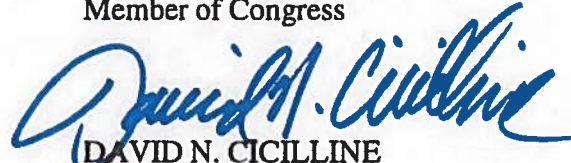
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Member of Congress



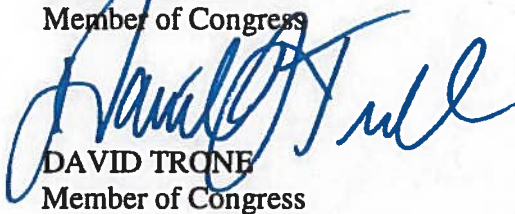
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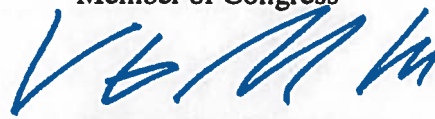
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Member of Congress



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Member of Congress



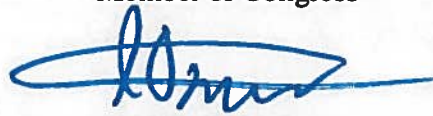
DAVID TRONE
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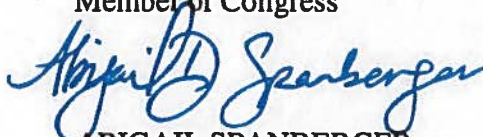
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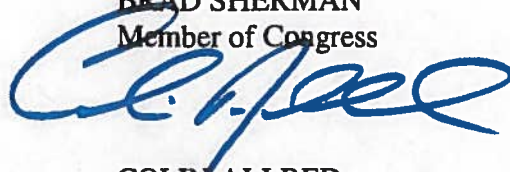
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