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What is Biden's word worth? US resumes offensive arms sales to UAE.

In February, Arab Organisation for Human Rights in the UK ([AOHR UK](#)) [cautiously welcomed](#) United States President Joe Biden's [promise](#) that “we're ending all American support for offensive operations in the war in Yemen, including relevant arm sales.”

This was because the Saudi Arabia-United Arab Emirates's (UAE) war in Yemen has been a catastrophe for civilians there.

233,000 Yemenis have died due to the conflict, reported the UN in December 2020. Almost 200,000 were displaced due to war in 2020 alone; over 4 million people have been displaced since 2014.

The UN estimates that 16 million will face hunger this year. 50,000 people are “already [starving](#) in famine-like conditions”.

The deaths, displacement and hunger in the country is the direct result of the Saudi-UAE coalition's offensive war – a war that it would not be able to wage without weapons, training, intelligence, and other assistance from the US, [Britain](#), and France.

There was opposition to this support in the US itself. In 2019 both houses of the US Congress voted to end US military assistance for the two Gulf countries' roles in the war – however, then-President Trump vetoed the decision.

In February, Biden appeared to take a different course from his predecessor over Yemen, earning praise around the world for his “diplomatic turn” in foreign policy.

However, details of the US' “reset” with Saudi (in particular) remained sparse. A group of 41 US lawmakers asked the new administration, though heard no response by their 25 March deadline (the 6th anniversary of the war).



Now, it has been US government spokespeople that [\\$23 billion worth of weapons](#) to the UAE, including the advanced F-35 aircraft, armed drones, and other material, all described as “defensive”.

The new administration’s approach to arms sales to Saudi is less clear – though the UAE [deal](#) suggests that US arms manufacturers interests may come before those of Yemeni civilians.

AOHR UK condemns the UAE arms deal in the strongest possible terms, as a “green light” to further military offensives against Yemenis and calls for a total ban on the [export of weapons](#) at all likely to be used against civilians in the conflict.

Arab Organisation for Human Rights in the UK (AOHR UK)