

U.S. Rep. Pocan: Pocan, Khanna say administration's comments on Yemen not enough, call for full end to U.S. participation in Saudi war

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WASHINGTON, DC - U.S. Representatives Mark Pocan (WI-02) and Ro Khanna (CA-17) issued the following response to announcements by Secretary of Defense James Mattis and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo regarding their intention to spur negotiations for a ceasefire to the conflict in Yemen within 30 days. The Saudi-led war and blockade on Yemen threatens to produce the worst famine in over a [century](#), pushing [14 million](#) into starvation; more than [100,000](#) Yemeni children have died from war-related causes over the past two years.

“Recent comments by Secretaries Mattis and Pompeo calling for a ceasefire in Yemen within thirty days are welcome, but are nowhere near sufficient. The Trump Administration has yet to condition U.S. military participation in the Saudi campaign on the successful outcome of negotiations. Rather than insist that the Saudi regime’s adversaries take the first step toward peace, the Trump Administration must work to secure concessions from the Saudis to stop their brutal bombing campaign, ease their blockade of food and medicine, and end fresh assaults and military sieges on heavily populated centers,” **noted Pocan and Khanna.**

“Nevertheless, the Secretaries’ remarks show the White House is sensitive to the increasing likelihood that majorities in both chambers of Congress will pass bipartisan measures to decisively end over three years of unauthorized U.S. participation in the Saudi-led war,” the **Pocan and Khanna continued.** “The War Powers Resolution of 1973 guarantees floor votes to both House Concurrent Resolution 138 and Senate Joint Resolution 54, which would terminate U.S.

logistical, intelligence, and midair refueling assistance to Saudi-led airstrikes within 30 days.”

“President Trump [asked](#) for a bipartisan legislative solution to Saudi misdeeds in the wake of the murder of American resident and [critic](#) of the war in Yemen, Jamal Khashoggi. This fall, then, President Trump should support the passage of H. Con. Res. 138 and S. J. Res. 54 to ensure accountability during these negotiations. If not, Congress will reassert its constitutional authority to stop U.S. participation in an unauthorized war that President Trump inherited, but which he shamefully expanded instead of ending,” **concluded Pocan and Khanna.**

The Representatives’ skepticism toward the announcements by Secretaries Mattis and Pompeo stems from a pattern of similar comments from administration officials despite repeated Saudi military escalations over the past two years, with continuous U.S. backing.

In April 2017, when [7 million](#) were already on the brink of starvation, Secretary Mattis [vowed](#) to bring the conflict “in front of a UN-brokered negotiating team” to “resolve this politically as soon as possible.” In March of this year, as Mattis lobbied against congressional action to end U.S. logistical, intelligence, and refueling services for Saudi airstrikes, the Defense Secretary again [committed](#) to “a negotiated settlement, and we believe our policy right now is correct for doing this.” In September, Secretaries Pompeo and Mattis falsely asserted to Congress—after the infamous Saudi [bombing](#) of 40 children—that the coalition was “[making every effort](#)” to reduce civilian casualties in order to continue U.S. refueling for the Saudi regime’s deadly aerial bombardment campaign.

Pocan and Khanna, along with U.S. Representative Adam Smith, the top Democrat on the House Armed Services Committee, are leading 75 members of Congress to end the [unconstitutional](#) U.S.-Saudi war in Yemen with H. Con. Res. 138, expected to be voted on sometime in November.