

Sickening Beyond Words: Biden Approves Another \$20 Billion in Weapons for Israel

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By Jake Johnson / Common Dreams

The Biden administration on Tuesday approved roughly \$20 billion in additional U.S.-made weapons for Israel's military as the death toll from its catastrophic assault on Gaza neared 40,000, with dozens killed over just the past 24 hours in Israeli attacks across the besieged enclave.

The pending sale includes dozens of F15 fighter jets, tens of thousands of 120mm mortar shells, over 32,700 tank shells, and 30 Advanced Medium Range Air-to-Air Missiles. The Biden administration notified Congress of the sale on Tuesday, prompting calls for lawmakers to block the latest weapons transfer as U.S.-backed Israeli atrocities in Gaza mount.

Both chambers of Congress are currently on August recess.

"The Senate should introduce a Joint Resolution of Disapproval to block the sale of F-15 fighter jets, related munitions, and other arms to Israel, a package which, if executed, would be in violation of U.S. and international laws," Democracy for the Arab World Now (DAWN) said in a statement Tuesday.

Josh Paul, a senior adviser to DAWN who resigned from the U.S. State Department last year over the Biden administration's arming of Israel, said that "the people of Gaza are pleading for food and medicine as Israel continues to rebuff the Biden administration's pleas to ramp down its deliberate bombardment of civilians and allow aid to reach the starving population."

"Authorizing billions of dollars in new arms transfers," Paul warned, "effectively provides Israel a carte blanche to continue its atrocities in Gaza and to escalate the conflict to Lebanon—and doing so while Congress is in recess is especially craven."

The weapons approval came just days after Israeli forces used at least one U.S.-made bomb in a deadly attack on a school-turned-shelter in Gaza City. Save the Children said the bombing was "the deadliest attack on a school since last October."

Medea Benjamin, co-founder of the peace group CodePink, called the administration's pending arms sale "sickening beyond words" and said that "we in the U.S. must rise up and demand an end to this."

Jewish Voice for Peace Action echoed that message, writing on social media that "the U.S. is directly responsible for this genocide."

"It must end," the group added. "ARMS EMBARGO NOW."

The Biden administration announced the latest arms approval amid a cascade of fresh horrors in Gaza, much of which is in the grip of famine as Israel's right-wing leadership continues to obstruct the delivery of humanitarian aid and sabotage cease-fire negotiations.

Israeli attacks on Gaza have killed at least 36 people over the past 24 hours, according to the enclave's health ministry, including a pair of newborn twins.

"Asser, a boy, and Ayssel, a girl, were just four days old when their father Mohammed Abu al-Qumsan went to collect their birth certificates," the BBC reported Wednesday. "While he was away, his neighbors called to say their home in Deir al-Balah had been bombed. The strike also killed his wife and the twins' grandmother."

The region is also careening toward all-out war as the world awaits Iran's expected military response to Israel's most recent assassination campaign.

Edward Ahmed Mitchell, national deputy director of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), said Wednesday that "by approving another massive shipment of arms to the far-right Israeli government, the Biden administration is pouring gasoline on a fire that could engulf millions across the region."

"The increasingly unhinged Israeli government has demonstrated time and again that it not only intends to continue its brutal genocide of the Palestinian people in Gaza, but also to provoke a broader regional war," said Mitchell. "It's time for the Biden administration to wake up to reality: The Israeli government is not a rational actor, it is not an ally, and it is trying to drag our nation into an all-out war."

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