

Top Biden official says Israel too close an ally for U.S. to halt arms shipments

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A US C-17 sits at the Nevatim Air Base in the desert in Israel, with crates of American munitions

for the regime. (Photo by AP)

Washington, October 24 (RHC)-- Israel is too close an ally for the United States to halt arms shipments to the regime over its blockade of food and medicine entering the besieged Gaza Strip, says a top official in the Biden administration.

The Virginia-based digital newspaper Politico cited Lise Grande, a top US official working on the aid situation in Gaza, as making the admission at a meeting in Washington on August 29.

Grande, who was addressing the leaders of more than a dozen aid organizations at the time, said Washington could potentially consider other tactics to persuade Tel Aviv to allow life-saving aid into the war-torn Palestinian territory, including exerting pressure on Israel through the United Nations.

However, she stressed that the Biden administration will maintain its support for Israel and will not postpone or halt weapons shipments.

Politico said her observation came after conversations with three attendees of the meeting, two others who were briefed and detailed notes from the encounter reviewed by the newspaper, noting that the said people were granted anonymity to speak more freely.

A humanitarian aid official present at the meeting told Politico that Grande remarked that Israel is one in a "tight circle of very few allies" that the US will not challenge, nor will it "hold anything back that they want."

"She was sort of saying, with certain allies, we can't play bad cop," the aid official further said. Although Grande, who joined the Biden administration in April as the special envoy for Middle East humanitarian issues, made her remarks over a month ago, her frank evaluation of the likelihood of U.S. action regarding weapons for Israel calls into question the seriousness of the recent threats made by the Biden administration to take such measures, Politico added.

The report came just three days after U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Pentagon chief Lloyd Austin sent a letter to Tel Aviv in which they threatened to suspend arms shipments to Israel if it did not significantly improve the humanitarian situation in Gaza within the next 30 days, giving the regime a grace period.

A report for Brown University's Costs of War project released earlier this week said that the U.S. has spent a record of at least \$17.9 billion on military aid to the occupying regime since it launched its ongoing genocidal war on Gaza on October 7th last year.

According to the report, the aid to Israel includes military financing, weapons sales, and transfers from US weapons stockpiles.

The unwavering support of the U.S. for Israel comes despite opposition from some American officials, lawmakers and many human rights groups concerned about the killing of civilians in Gaza, and now the West Bank and Lebanon.

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