

Chairman Bob Corker

ID: LFG-2018-0036

Senate Committee on Foreign Relations

423 Dirksen Senate Office Building

Washington, DC 20510

Sent via: Electronic mail

Ranking Member Bob Menendez

Senate Committee on Foreign Relations

423 Dirksen Senate Office Building

Washington, DC 20510

Sent via: Electronic mail

June 1st, 2018

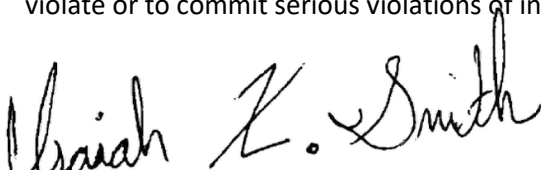
Re: Arms sales to the government of the Kingdom of Bahrain

Chairman Bob Corker and Ranking Member Bob Menendez,

I would like it to be clear to both of you that I am concerned about the two arms scheme agreements in which are from the United States to the government of the Kingdom of Bahrain. The government of the Kingdom of Bahrain has requested twelve (12) AH-1Z attack helicopters, twenty-six (26) T-700 GE 401C engines (twenty-four (24) installed and two (2) spares), fourteen (14) AGM-114 Hellfire Missiles, and fifty-six (56) Advance Precision Kill Weapon System II (APKWS-II) WGU-59Bs. This request also includes fifteen (15) Honeywell Embedded Global Positioning System (GPS) Inertial Navigation System (INS) (EGI) w/Standard Positioning Service (SPS) (including three (3) spares), twelve (12) Joint Mission Planning Systems, twelve (12) M197 20mm gun systems, thirty (30) Tech Refresh Mission Computers, fourteen (14) AN/AAQ-30 Target Sight Systems, twenty six (26) Helmet Mounted Display/Optimized Top Owl, communication equipment, electronic warfare systems, fifteen (15) APX-117 Identification Friend or Foe (IFF), fifteen (15) AN/AAR-47 Missile Warning Systems, fifteen (15) AN/ALE-47 Countermeasure Dispenser Sets, fifteen (15) APR-39C(V)2 Radar Warning Receivers, support equipment, spare engine containers, spare and repair parts, tools and test equipment, technical data and publications, personnel training and training equipment, U.S. government and contractor engineering, technical, and logistics support services, and other related elements of logistics and program support. Some people believe that this request from the government of the Kingdom of Bahrain is reasonable and serves a legitimate purpose, such as by helping contribute to the foreign policy and the national security of the United States, by helping to improve the security of a major non-NATO ally that is an important security partner in the region. I however somewhat do disagree with this view in which is due to the poor known human rights record that involves the government of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

For your information, the United States Department of State approved two arms sale schemes to the government of the Kingdom of Bahrain. On April 27th, 2018, the United States Department of State approved the sale of AH-1Z attack helicopters, missiles, and other military equipment to the kingdom, for an estimated cost of US\$911.4 million. Then on May 17th, 2017, the United States Department of State approved a second arms deal, in which included but was not limited to 3,200 bomb bodies to arm the government of Bahrain's F-16 fighters fleet. So, and because of this, pursuant to the Arms Export Control Act, the Senate of the United States was notified of the sales and has 30 days from the notification date to oppose the arms scheme deals.

I am not so sure that the government of the United States entering into an arms scheme agreement with the government of the Kingdom Bahrain, in which are the arms scheme agreements as identified above, or any arms scheme agreements that are similar to the arms scheme agreements as listed above, is the best decision for the current moment. I have this view due to the poor known human rights record that involves the government of the Kingdom Bahrain. While some individuals do believe that the current arms scheme agreements will benefit and will contribute to the foreign policy and to the national security of the United States, by helping to improve the security of a major non-NATO ally, I believe that the asserted human rights record that the government of the Kingdom Bahrain has been involved in, with respect as to their crackdown on political activists, political dissidents, journalists and against other groups, needs to be addressed with officials of the government of Bahrain. I do not believe that at this time it is appropriate to approve the arms scheme agreements between the government of the United States and the government of the Kingdom of Bahrain. I believe that if officials with the United States want to do so, I believe that officials with the United States need to first address the human rights situation in the Kingdom of Bahrain with officials that are with the government of the Kingdom Bahrain, prior to the arms scheme agreements being approved. I believe that officials with the United States also need to have assurance from officials with the government of the Kingdom of Bahrain, that the arms that will be sold to them will not be used against their own citizens, such as political activists, political dissidents, journalists, and against other groups. I also believe that officials with the United States need assurance from officials with the government of the Kingdom of Bahrain, that their government will or has set policies and procedures that will ensure that procedural safeguards are in place in which will help ensure that combatants are distinguished from innocent civilians and their families during an armed conflict and that their government operations only have the purpose as to targeting military objectives as defined under the laws of war, pursuant to international law, and that the laws of war as defined under international law is abided by. This I believe will help ensure that the arms that are being sold to the government of the Kingdom of Bahrain, as approved by the government of the United States, will be used for a good purpose and not for a purpose that will be used as a tool to violate or to commit serious violations of international law.


Respectfully,

Isaiah X. Smith¹

¹ www.isaiahxsmith.com