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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6225

February 27, 2019

The Honorable Mike Pompeo
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20520

The Honorable Patrick M. Shanahan
Acting Secretary of Defense
U.S. Department of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20301

Dear Secretaries Pompeo and Shanahan:

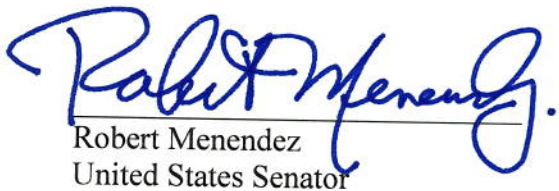
We write to express our deep concern over recent media reports that Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) may have transferred U.S. origin weapons, including small arms, anti-tank missiles and armored vehicles to armed Yemeni groups that include affiliates of al Qaeda fighters and hardline Salafi militias. UAE officials recently acknowledged to Congressional staff that at least some of the reported transfers did in fact occur, and claimed that U.S. officials were aware of these transfers. Such transfers are almost certainly in direct violation of sales agreements made between the U.S. and Saudi Arabia and the UAE, and a violation of Section 3 of the Arms Export Control Act. They may also contravene certifications made to Congress that such transfers would not take place. We are further concerned that, according to the reports, some of these weapons and vehicles may have been captured by Iran-backed Houthi forces, potentially giving Iran and its proxies like the Houthis and Hezbollah access to sensitive U.S. military technology.

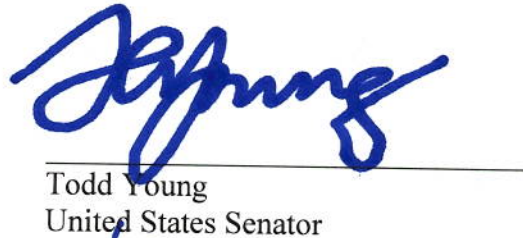
Negligent treatment of sensitive U.S. military technology, including the possible violation of important restrictions on third party use, could further destabilize the region, endanger U.S. personnel and worsen the suffering of ordinary Yemenis by intensifying the fighting and making a peaceful political solution for Yemen more difficult to reach. We expect vital security partners like Saudi Arabia and the UAE to show due care with respect to protecting transfers of sensitive U.S. military technology.

To maintain critical cooperation with these partners in pursuit of shared interests across the region, we must ensure compliance with U.S. laws and regulations. To that end, we request a briefing by senior officials who are fully knowledgeable on these matters and are prepared to address the following as soon as reasonably possible, but no later than March 4, on the following:

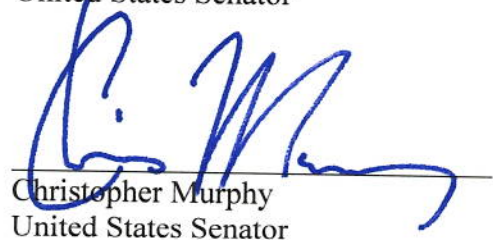
- The amount and types of U.S. military equipment that may have been transferred or lost by Saudi Arabia and the UAE to armed groups in Yemen and the identity of those armed groups;
- The amount and types of U.S. military equipment that may remain in the possession of armed groups in Yemen and the identity of those groups;
- The amount and types of U.S. military equipment that may have been captured by Houthi forces, along with the likelihood and implications of Iranian access to them;
- Which officials in the U.S. government were made aware of these transfers and when;
- The efforts, if any, being made by the U.S., Saudi Arabia and the UAE to recover such lost or transferred equipment and the amount of equipment recovered so far;
- If there are grounds to believe that such equipment may have been transferred in violation of agreements with the U.S., and the extent to which Saudi Arabia and the UAE were made aware that such transfers violate the terms of sale for this equipment; and
- Steps being taken to ensure that inappropriate transfers or losses do not happen in the future, including the results and status of any investigations undertaken by the Department of State and Department of Defense concerning these allegations.

Sincerely,

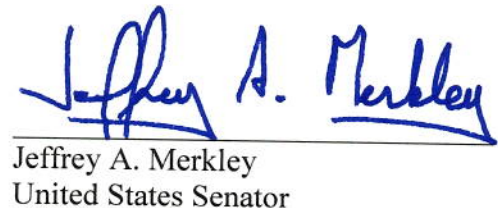

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United States Senator


Todd Young
United States Senator


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United States Senator


Christopher Murphy
United States Senator


Tim Kaine
United States Senator


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United States Senator