

The result was announced—yeas 50, nays 49, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 291 Ex.]

YEAS—50

Baldwin	Heinrich	Reed
Bennet	Helmy	Rosen
Blumenthal	Hickenlooper	Sanders
Booker	Hirono	Schatz
Brown	Kaine	Schumer
Butler	Kelly	Shaheen
Cantwell	King	Smith
Cardin	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Carper	Lujan	Tester
Casey	Manchin	Van Hollen
Coons	Markey	Warner
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Warnock
Duckworth	Murphy	Warren
Durbin	Murray	Welch
Fetterman	Ossoff	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Padilla	Wyden
Hassan	Peters	

NAYS—49

Barrasso	Grassley	Risch
Blackburn	Hagerty	Romney
Boozman	Hawley	Rounds
Britt	Hoeben	Rubio
Budd	Hyde-Smith	Schmitt
Capito	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Cassidy	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Collins	Lankford	Sinema
Cornyn	Lee	Sullivan
Cotton	Lummis	Thune
Cramer	Marshall	Tillis
Crapo	McConnell	Tuberville
Cruz	Moran	Vance
Daines	Mullin	Vicker
Ernst	Murkowski	Young
Fischer	Paul	
Graham	Ricketts	

NOT VOTING—1

Braun

The nomination was confirmed. (Ms. BALDWIN assumed the Chair.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BUTLER). Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to legislative session.

The Senator from Vermont.

MOTION TO DISCHARGE—S.J. RES. 111

Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, pursuant to section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act, I move to discharge the Committee on Foreign Relations from further consideration of S.J. Res. 111, relating to the disapproval of the proposed foreign military sale to the Government of Israel of certain defense articles and services.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to discharge from the Committee on Foreign Relations, S.J. Res. 111, providing for congressional disapproval of the proposed foreign military sale to the Government of Israel of certain defense articles and services.

Mr. SANDERS. I would ask unanimous consent to dispense with further reading of the resolution.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 2

hours of debate equally divided between proponents and opponents.

Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, thank you very much, and let me thank the leadership for their cooperation in setting up this debate.

Today, we will be voting on three joint resolutions of disapproval, or JRDs, to block the sale of certain offensive weapons to Israel. These resolutions are S.J. Res. 111, to block the sale of 120-millimeter tank rounds; S.J. Res. 113, to block the sale of 120-millimeter high-explosive mortar rounds; and S.J. Res. 115, to block the sale of JDMS, the guidance kits attached to many of the bombs dropped in Gaza.

I would note to my colleagues that these resolutions are strongly supported by more than 100 civil society groups, including pro-Israel groups, like J Street; some of the largest labor unions in this country, including the SEIU, the United Auto Workers, and the United Electrical Workers; humanitarian groups, like Amnesty International and Doctors of the World; and religious groups, like the United Methodist Church and the Friends Committee; and many, many other organizations.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the list of these supporting organizations.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S.J. RES. 111, S.J. RES. 113, AND S.J. RES. 115 ARE SUPPORTED BY MORE THAN 118 CIVIL SOCIETY GROUPS.

That includes labor unions like the SEIU, the United Auto Workers and the United Electrical Workers; pro-Israel groups like J Street; humanitarian organizations like Amnesty International, ActionAid USA and Doctors of the World; and religious groups like the United Methodist Church, the Friends Committee on National Legislation, and Emgage Action.

FULL LIST OF ENDORSING ORGANIZATIONS

1. Service Employees International Union (SEIU)
2. United Auto Workers (UAW)
3. United Electrical Workers (UE)
4. J Street
5. About Face: Veterans Against the War
6. Action Corps
7. ActionAid USA
8. American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC)
9. Americans for Justice in Palestine Action (AJP Action)
10. Amnesty International USA
11. Arab American Institute
12. Association of US Catholic Priests
13. Center for Civilians in Conflict (CIVIC)
14. Center for Economic and Policy Research
15. Center for International Policy
16. Center for Jewish Nonviolence
17. CommonDefense.us
18. DAWN
19. Doctors of the World
20. Emgage Action
21. Friends Committee on National Legislation
22. Human Rights Watch
23. IfNotNow Movement
24. Indivisible
25. Just Foreign Policy
26. Justice Democrats

27. MADRE
28. Oxfam America
29. Oxfam America Action Fund
30. Peace Action
31. People's Action
32. Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft
33. Refugees International
34. ReThinking Foreign Policy
35. The Episcopal Church
36. The Tahrir Institute for Middle East Policy (TIMEP)
37. The United Church of Christ
38. The United Methodist Church—General Board of Church and Society
39. The United Methodist Church—General Board of Church and Society
40. Uncommitted National Movement
41. United We Dream
42. US Campaign for Palestinian Rights Action (USCPRA Action)
43. Win Without War
44. Working Families Party
45. Doctors Against Genocide
46. 18 Million Rising
47. Al-Haq, Law in the Service of Mankind
48. American Baptist Churches USA
49. American Friends Service Committee
50. Arab Resource & Organizing Center Action (AROC Action)
51. Arms Control Association
52. Avaaz
53. Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies
54. Center for Constitutional Rights
55. Center for Victims of Torture
56. Center National Council of Churches
57. Charity & Security Network
58. Children Not Numbers
59. Church of the Brethren, Office of Peacebuilding and Policy
60. Civic Shout, Community Peacemaker Teams (CPT)
61. CODEPINK
62. Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes
63. Control Arms
64. Defending Rights & Dissent
65. Demand Progress
66. Democracy for America Advocacy Fund
67. Democratic Socialists of America
68. Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)
69. Extend
70. Faith Strategies
71. Franciscan Action Network
72. Freedom Forward
73. Friends of Sabeel North America (FOSNA)
74. Global Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and United Church of Christ
75. Hindus for Human Rights
76. Institute for Policy Studies, New Internationalism Project
77. Israel/Palestine Mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
78. Jewish Voice for Peace Action
79. Law For Palestine
80. Leadership Team of the Felician Sisters of North America
81. Legacies of War
82. Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns
83. Medglobal
84. Medical Mission Sisters, Justice Office
85. MENA Rights Group
86. Mennonite Central Committee U.S.
87. Middle East Children's Alliance
88. Middle East Democracy Center (MEDC)
89. Migrant Roots Media
90. MPower Change Action Fund
91. Muslim Peace Fellowship
92. National Council of Churches
93. National Iranian American Council Action
94. Nonviolence International
95. Nonviolent Peaceforce
96. Our Revolution
97. Pax Christi USA

98. Peace Direct
99. Presbyterian Church (USA)
100. Progressive Democrats of America (PDA)
101. Quixote Center
102. RootsAction.org
103. Saferworld (US)
104. Sisters of Mercy of the Holy Cross
105. Society of Helpers
106. The Borgen Project
107. The Human Dignity Project (THDP)
108. The Religious Nationalisms Project
109. Transnational Institute
110. United Church of Christ Palestine Israel Network
111. United Methodists for Kairos Response (UMKR)
112. Washington Report on Middle East Affairs
113. Women for Weapons Trade Transparency
114. Women's March
115. Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics, and Ritual (WATER)
116. World BEYOND War
117. Yemen Relief and Reconstruction Foundation
118. Yemeni Alliance Committee

Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, I would also point out that poll after poll shows that a strong majority of the American people oppose sending more weapons and military aid to fund Netanyahu's war machine. I would also mention, interestingly enough, that according to a poll commissioned by J Street—this is a pro-Israel organization—62 percent of Jewish Americans support withholding weapon shipments to Israel until Netanyahu agrees to an immediate cease-fire.

These resolutions are aimed at offensive weapons that have been used to devastating effect against civilians in Gaza and Lebanon. They would not affect any of the systems Israel uses to defend itself from incoming attacks.

From a legal perspective, these resolutions are simple, straightforward, and not complicated. Bottom line: the U.S. Government must obey the law—not a very radical idea—but unfortunately that is not the case now.

Every Member of the Senate who believes in the rule of law, that our government should obey the law, should vote for these resolutions.

The Foreign Assistance Act and the Arms Export Control Act are very clear. The United States cannot provide weapons to countries that violate internationally recognized human rights or block U.S. humanitarian aid.

Let me repeat that because that is the essence of this entire debate. Not complicated. The U.S. Government cannot provide weapons to countries that violate internationally recognized human rights or block U.S. humanitarian aid. That is not my opinion; that is what the law says.

According to the United Nations, according to much of the international community, according to virtually every humanitarian organization on the ground in Gaza, Israel is clearly in violation of these laws.

Under these circumstances, it is illegal for the U.S. Government to provide Israel with more offensive weapons. These joint resolutions of disapproval

are Congress's tool to enforce the law, and that is exactly what we must do.

It has been more than 13 months since the October 7 Hamas terrorist attack on Israel, an attack which killed 1,200 innocent people and took 250 hostages, including Americans.

As I have said many, many times, Israel had the absolute right to respond to that horrific Hamas attack, as any other country would. I don't think anybody here in the U.S. Senate disagrees with that. But Prime Minister Netanyahu's extremist government has not simply waged war against Hamas; it has waged an all-out war against the Palestinian people.

Within Gaza's population of just 2.2 million people—and I want people to conceptualize that that is about the size of New Mexico, 2.2 million people—more than 43,000 Palestinians have been killed and more than 103,000 injured, a population of about the size of New Mexico. And 60 percent of those who have been killed and injured are women, children, or elderly people.

According to satellite imagery, two-thirds of all structures in Gaza have been damaged or destroyed—two-thirds of all structures. Think about that. Two-thirds of all structures have been damaged or destroyed. That includes 87 percent of the housing, 84 percent of health facilities—84 percent of health facilities—and 70 percent of sanitation plants. Right now, there is raw sewage running through the streets of Gaza, and it is very difficult for the people there to obtain clean drinking water.

Every one of Gaza's 12 universities has been bombed. They have got 12 universities; every single one of them has been bombed, as have many hundreds of schools. For 13 months, there has been no electricity in Gaza.

During the last year, millions of desperately poor people in Gaza have been repeatedly driven from their homes and forced to evacuate time and time again with nothing more than the clothes on their backs. So let's imagine millions of people driven from their homes, told to go here, told to go there, and going from one place to another. Families in Gaza have been herded into so-called safe zones, only to face continued bombardment. They are told to go to this area, and the bombs start falling, and the children start dying.

The children of Gaza have suffered a level of physical and emotional abuse that is almost beyond comprehension, abuse that will stay with them for the rest of their lives. These children today—as we speak, right now—are hungry, they are thirsty, they cannot access healthcare. And all around them, they have witnessed death and destruction. That is what the children of Gaza have experienced, and Gaza is a very young population.

And as horrific as that situation is, what has happened over the last year, what is taking place today, right now, this moment as we discuss this issue, it is even worse, if that is imaginable. As a result of Israel blocking desperately

needed humanitarian aid, the volume of aid getting into Gaza in recent weeks is lower than at any point since the war began. More aid is needed; less aid is getting through. The result? Many thousands of children are facing malnutrition and starvation. Let me repeat that: Many thousands of children today are facing malnutrition and starvation. This is not my observation; this is what the leaders of the 19 most important humanitarian organizations on the ground in Gaza, including the American head of UNICEF, Cathy Russell, and the American head of the World Food Programme, Cindy McCain, wife of our former colleague John McCain—that is what they say, according to their recent report:

The situation unfolding in North Gaza is apocalyptic . . . Basic, life-saving goods are not available. Humanitarians are not safe to do their work and are blocked by Israeli forces and by insecurity from reaching people in need.

And they continue:

[As a result,] the entire [Palestinian] population in North Gaza is at imminent risk of dying from disease, famine, and violence.

These are the 19 major humanitarian organizations operating in Gaza right now, including several of the major ones led by Americans. And Israel's recent decision to ban UNWRA, the backbone of the humanitarian response in Gaza, will only make a horrific situation even worse.

Madam President, I have met with doctors who have served in Gaza treating hundreds of patients a day without electricity, without anesthesia, without clean water, including dozens of children arriving with gunshot wounds in the head. I have seen the photographs and the videos. And we have some of them here. I have seen—I have heard from UNICEF who estimates that 10 children lose a leg in Gaza every single day. There are now more than 17,000 orphans in Gaza.

Let me quote from a New York Times opinion piece of October 9, 2024—a little more than a month ago—where American doctors and nurses in Gaza—these are Americans working in Gaza—describe what they saw on the ground.

Merril Tydings is a nurse from New Mexico, and she said, "These people were starving." She is talking about healthcare workers, her colleagues.

These people were starving. I learned very quickly to not drink my water or eat the food I had brought in front of the health care workers because they had gone so many days without.

Without food. Without water.

Dr. Ndal Farah from Ohio said:

Malnutrition was widespread. It was common to see patients reminiscent of Nazi concentration camps with skeletal features.

Abeerah Muhammad, a nurse from Dallas, TX, said:

Everyone we met showed us pictures of themselves before October. They had all lost 20 to 60 pounds of weight. Most patients and staff looked emaciated and dehydrated.

Dr. Nahreen Ahmed from Philadelphia said:

Every patient I treated had evidence of malnutrition. For example, poor wound healing and rapidly developing infections.

Dr. Aman Odeh from Texas said:

Mothers on the maternity ward delivered prematurely because of malnutrition, stress and infection. Milk production was poor due to lack of hydration and adequate food supply.

Dr. Mike Mallah from Charleston said:

All of my patients were suffering from malnutrition, 100 percent.

What is important to understand—and I am not sure that many of my colleagues do—is that the Israel of today that we are dealing with is not the Israel of Golda Meir or Yitzhak Rabin. This is a government now controlled not only by rightwing extremists but by religious zealots. National Security Minister Ben-Gvir, who oversees the police, has been convicted in Israeli courts on terrorism charges. He is the head of the police. Finance Minister Smotrich, in charge of the occupied West Bank, is also an extreme racist and has called for the expulsion of Palestinians from the land. That is the current Israeli Finance Minister.

In January, Prime Minister Netanyahu said of Gaza: We provide minimal humanitarian aid if we want to achieve our war goals.

At the start of the war, the Israeli Defense Minister said—and I hope people hear this. The Israeli defense minister—ex-minister:

We are fighting human animals and we act accordingly . . . there will be no electricity, no food . . . no fuel. Everything [is] closed.

Former Israeli Defense Minister. That is what he said and, in fact, by and large, that is exactly how this war has been waged.

What this extremist government has done in Gaza is unspeakable, but what makes it even more painful is that much of this has been done with U.S. weapons and American taxpayer dollars. In the last year alone, the United States has provided \$18 billion in military aid to Israel—\$18 billion dollars. And, by the way, a few blocks from here, people are sleeping out on the street. And we have also delivered more than 50,000 tons of military equipment to Israel—50,000 tons.

In other words, the United States of America is complicit in all of these atrocities. We are funding these atrocities. That complicity must end, and that is what these resolutions are about. It is time to tell the Netanyahu government that they cannot use U.S. taxpayer dollars and American weapons in violation of United States and international law and our moral values.

Despite receiving 18 billion from U.S. taxpayers in the last year and being the largest historical recipient of U.S. foreign aid, the Netanyahu government has completely ignored—completely ignored—the repeated requests of President Biden and the U.S. Government.

It is time to make clear to Netanyahu that he cannot take Amer-

ican money, take American arms, and continue to blind U.S. foreign policy goals.

The U.S. Government wants a ceasefire for a hostage deal. Netanyahu has prevented a deal to preserve his coalition.

The U.S. Government wants more humanitarian aid to reach the desperate people in Gaza. Netanyahu is blocking that aid.

The U.S. Government wants to contain regional escalation. Netanyahu has refused diplomatic off-ramps and launched several reckless attacks without consulting the United States.

The U.S. Government wants to stop settlement expansion and settle the violence in the West Bank. Netanyahu and his Ministers have driven record settlement expansion and armed extremist settlers.

The U.S. Government wants a plan for postwar governance in Gaza. Netanyahu will not engage.

And by the way, blocking these sales would also be in keeping with actions taken by some of our closest allies. The United Kingdom suspended 30 arms export licenses after concluding there was an acceptable risk they could be used in violation of international law. Germany, Italy, Spain, Canada, Belgium, and the Netherlands have taken similar steps. U.N. bodies have called for an end to the armed shipments fueling the conflict.

Time and time again, I have heard Members of the U.S. Senate come to this floor to denounce human rights violations taking place around the world. I have heard well-founded concerns about China's brutal reception of the Uighur ethnic minority. I have heard rightful outrage about Putin's brutal attacks against Ukraine and bombing of civilian installations. I have heard genuine concern about Iran's outrageous crackdown on peaceful protestors. I have heard repeated condemnations of Saudi Arabia's terrible treatment of women and political dissidents.

And on and on it goes. A lot of folks come to the floor to talk about human rights and what is going on throughout the world. But what I want to say to all those folks: Nobody is going to take anything you say with a grain of seriousness. You cannot condemn human rights around the world and then turn a blind eye to what the U.S. Government is now funding in Israel. People will laugh in your face. They will say to you: Are you concerned about China? Are you concerned about Russia? Are you concerned about Iran? Well, why are you funding the starvation of children in Gaza right now?

We must pass these resolutions from a legal perspective. The U.S. Government must obey the law. We must pass these resolutions from a moral perspective. The United States must not provide support to a government which has created one of the worst humanitarian disasters in modern history.

We must pass these resolutions for our own best foreign policy interests. If

we do not demand that the countries we provide military assistance to obey international law, we will lose our creditability on the world stage.

With that, I would like to yield to Senator MERKLEY of Oregon.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. MERKLEY. Madam President, in 1978, between my junior and senior years in college, I hitchhiked through Israel and the West Bank. I made Israeli friends. I was invited to stay at a kibbutz. I explored the old city of Jerusalem. I negotiated the ancient tunnel built by King Hezekiah in the face of advancing armies. I climbed a snake path to the top of Masada. I swam in the Sea of Galilee and the Red Sea and the Dead Sea and the Mediterranean Sea.

I was so impressed by the energy for building a new nation, for planting forests, for making the desert bloom with new irrigation systems, constructing cities and roads.

And, in addition, peace was on the horizon. Nine months before my visit in November 1977, Anwar Sadat had visited Jerusalem to address the Knesset and pursue a path to peace.

And then, just weeks after I left, he was shaking hands with Menachem Begin and Jimmy Carter at Camp David, and a peace treaty was signed the following year in March.

I was all in on America standing in partnership with this new nation perched on a little sliver of land surrounded by hostile neighbors. And I voted here in the Senate time and again for economic support for Israel, for military support for Israel.

I have believed in the vision that it was the right way to help Israel thrive, the best path to peace and security. As many of us reasoned, if Israel's economy was thriving and their military strength ensured their security, they could, with confidence, negotiate a secure and peaceful future with their neighbors. They could, with confidence, negotiate parameters for a Palestinian State so the Palestinians could thrive as well.

Not so long ago, just over a decade, I traveled to Israel with former Senator Mark Begich of Alaska and Kay Hagan of North Carolina, and we met around a little table with Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu. And at that time, now 12 years ago, he expounded eloquently on his thesis that the only path for Israel's peace and prosperity was two states for two people.

In the dozen years since, much has changed. Prime Minister Netanyahu has become a public and vocal opponent of a Palestinian State. Israel has engaged in a de facto annexation of the West Bank, land essential for a Palestinian State. They have done this through settlements. They have done this through legalizing outposts. They have created innumerable checkpoints. They have created settler-only roads.

In addition, Netanyahu has formed his government now with Bezael

Smotrich, as Minister of Finance, someone who has said the Palestinian people do not exist and called for a Palestinian town to be erased; Itamar Ben-Gvir, Minister of National Security, celebrated Baruch Goldstein's slaughter of 29 Palestinians at the Cave of Patriarchs massacre in 1994.

Today, the policies of the Netanyahu government are very different than the policies 12 years before. Under this government, attacks by Israel's West Bank settlers against Palestinian villages have become more frequent, violent, and often condoned by the Israeli Defense Forces.

Events on October 7, a year ago, took a terrible turn. Hamas terrorists attacked Israeli communities. They slaughtered 1,200 Israeli men, women, and children. They abducted 240 hostages, and the whole world was with Israel. We recalled 9/11. We grieved with Israel. We grieved with the Jewish communities in our home State. And we defended Israel's right to respond with a campaign targeted at destroying Hamas.

But I am here on the floor today because the way a war is conducted matters. And Israel's bombing campaign, described by President Biden as indiscriminate, has reduced Gaza to rubble and ruin. This destroyed most of the infrastructure needed for survival: schools, hospitals, homes, the power system, the communications phone system, the internet system, the water system, the transportation system.

Most significantly, the bombing campaign has killed tens of thousands of women, children, and seniors. It has seriously injured more than 100,000 Palestinians living in Gaza.

And Israel has chosen to restrict humanitarian aid. The consequences of that are that food and clean water are woefully short; medical supplies are minimal; and the specter of starvation haunts Gaza. The indiscriminate bombing and the obstruction of humanitarian aid violate the laws of war.

Now, President Biden and his team have consistently pressed the Netanyahu government to change tracks. They recognize that it is difficult in the setting in Gaza where Hamas imbeds itself but even so have argued to Israel that the campaign against Hamas could be much more targeted with far fewer civilian casualties. But the Netanyahu government has rejected this appeal. And Biden and his team have pushed to open the gates to Gaza, have Israel open the gates to Gaza, and to massively increase humanitarian aid. And, again, the Netanyahu government has rejected this appeal.

In mid-October, just last month, Secretary of State Blinken and Secretary of Defense Austin renewed their appeal. They warned the Netanyahu government that they must increase the amount of humanitarian aid within 30 days to comply with U.S. law. And they wrote in that letter that the amount of assistance entering Gaza in September

was the lowest of any month in the last year.

They laid out in this letter a whole series of horrific conditions that need to be addressed, just as they had argued for the same for the previous year. The result of that has simply been minimal to no action.

In November, a major evaluation was summarized in a letter by the principals of the Inner Agencies Standing Committee. These are groups like the High Commissioner for Human Rights and Oxfam and UNICEF and the World Food Programme, headed by Cindy McCain, and the World Health Organization.

These leaders who have folks on the ground, who have lots of experts evaluating the situation, they recognize this. They summarized that the situation unfolding in North Gaza is apocalyptic. And they go on to talk about the schools serving as shelters having been bombed, about rescue teams being deliberately attacked, and more.

As I described at the start of my remarks, I have, since my first trip to Israel in 1978, been all in on the special partnership between the United States and Israel, on economic support, on security support, in the belief that our partnership would maximize Israel's confidence in pursuing peace and security. But the actions of the last decade have shattered that analysis.

The Netanyahu government is systematically undermining the possibility of a Palestinian State through its settlement checkpoints, its outposts, its settler-only highways. It is conducting its war campaign in Gaza in a fashion that is producing massive civilian deaths and injuries, conditions that aid organizations consistently described as the worst they have seen anywhere in the world.

I believe that not only is this horrific for the Palestinians, but this is absolutely not in the best interest of Israel's future. The actions of the Netanyahu government are burning through a massive reservoir of good will that was overflowing after October 7. It is undoing the improved relationship with Arab neighbors won through the Abraham Accords.

It is damaging because of our connection to Israel through military arms, our advocacy and legitimacy campaigning for human rights around the world.

So I ask you, what do you do when a good friend, a partner, heads off on a disastrous course?

President Biden and his team responded by providing proposals and encouragement to get back on course, but those were rejected. So now we must weigh in here in this Chamber. And many in this Chamber may say: Let's just continue the past; let's not see the horrific circumstances in Gaza; let's not observe the systematic takeover of the West Bank; let's ignore all that and continue with this very different right-wing government without ever raising an eyebrow.

I disagree. I think that true partners do not stand idly by when their partners go way off track in destructive ways and, thus, that we should not continue to provide the munitions that we are voting on today.

We cannot remain silent in the face of Netanyahu's strategy. We must not continue to provide offensive weapons that make the United States complicit in the deaths of tens of thousands of Palestinians and the injury of 100,000 more innocents. Thus, I will choose to honor American law and respect international law and support Israel's best, long-term interests to thrive by voting to block these three weapons transfers up for consideration today.

I was fabulously impressed by Israel when I hitchhiked around the country in 1978—impressed by their can-do spirit, impressed by the future of peace with Egypt and the possibility of peace with every neighbor. I look forward to seeing that vision of peace and security realized, and my vote today supports that vision.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

Ms. ROSEN. Madam President, since Hamas launched the deadliest terrorist attack in Israel's history more than a year ago, Israel has consistently faced a barrage of threats from Iran and its terrorist proxies. Earlier this year, we all saw how Iran launched two separate missile and drone attacks directly at Israel, and, just this week, Israelis were wounded and killed after Hezbollah launched more rockets at northern Israel.

The resolutions we are debating today would not only hurt Israel's ability to defend itself against these attacks; they would embolden Iran—I will repeat—they will embolden Iran and its terrorist proxies to continue and even to increase their vicious and deadly attacks. In doing so, they could prolong this war even further at a time when we are close to securing a deal in Lebanon.

I know some on my side of the aisle are going to support these resolutions because they disagree with the current Israeli Government, but your decision whether or not to help Israel defend itself is not and cannot be a political one. Government leaders and politicians, well, come and go, but our commitment to Israel's security must be ironclad, and restricting much needed arms to Israel because you don't agree with everything the current government is doing will leave our ally vulnerable to future terror.

I will repeat. Governments and leaders come and go. Will our support for our ally remain?

Israel has an absolute right to defend itself, and the aid provided by America is critical. I know some of you who are planning to vote for these resolutions agree, but you may be worried about the need for these offensive weapons that the resolutions would block. So let me explain.

Israel cannot rely on missile defense alone to protect its citizens. It also

needs to have the ability to destroy enemy threats before they can be deployed and to respond to attacks that have already been launched. It is this strategy that Israel successfully executed in the last few months in Lebanon, where it preemptively destroyed Hezbollah rocket launchers minutes—just minutes, moments—before they were set to fire on Israel. And by providing Israel with these weapons, which are more precise and more accurate, we can actually help it defend itself while also minimizing civilian casualties.

I know many of you here are torn. You want to do the right thing, and I am here to tell you that voting against these resolutions is the right thing. Banning the sale of arms will hurt Israel. It will send the wrong message to Iran and its terrorist proxies that America is abandoning its ally and that the terrorists can now act with impunity.

Let me repeat. The message to terrorists will be, again, that they can continue to act with impunity. Terrorists like Hamas, Hezbollah, the Houthis, and others will continue to receive that message loud and clear, and I can promise you that they will plan accordingly.

So, if we are serious about preventing another atrocity like October 7, if we are serious about limiting civilian casualties, if we are serious about sending a message to terrorists around the globe, I urge all of you to vote no on all three resolutions.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. RISCH. Madam President, I rise in opposition to the resolutions that we have before us.

For 76 years—and, by the way, I agree and associate myself with the remarks of my friend and colleague from Nevada and not so much with my colleagues from Vermont and Oregon, but I respect them individually. I am in opposition to these resolutions before us, and I want to speak for a few minutes as to why.

For 76 years, the United States has stood with the State of Israel, our strongest ally in the Middle East, but, today, Members of this body are sending a message that the United States' support for Israel is in question. It is not. This comes after a difficult year during which this administration has egregiously undermined Israel's ability to defend itself as it fights a several-front war against Iran and our common enemies. The administration has withheld weapons and ammunition. It has issued National Security Memorandum 20, which has held Israel to arbitrary standards and interfered in Israel's domestic politics—all in an effort to placate the far left of the Democratic Party during our own domestic elections.

Today, instead of acknowledging that American support for Israel is still strong, these resolutions seek to say that support for Israel has changed. It

has not. I know these resolutions will fail, and I hope the world will hear me when I say that the people of America support Israel—full stop—but I think it is important to remember how we got here.

This administration foolishly thought we could get along with Iran and beg the Iranians to talk. When the Iranians refused, the administration released billions of dollars in frozen assets in an effort to buy the Iranians off. Meanwhile, the administration reversed U.S. sanctions policies that had cut off the flow of money to the Iranians. The Iranian ghost fleet, which Tehran uses to evade sanctions, grew from under 80 ghost ships moving oil to now over 300 ships. Awash with money and knowing the administration would not challenge Iranian bad behavior, Iran knew it could start this war in Gaza without consequences.

Rather than focusing on Iran's behavior, these resolutions before us today are the predictable evolution of the administration's horrible and failed policies that seek to both appease the critics of Israel and isolate the Jewish State in the international community at a time of its greatest need. The departure from the regular process for moving arms sales and the administration's repeated threats to halt assistance to Israel invited these resolutions that are now before us. Withholding arms sales signals to the terrorists that American support for Israel is conditional and encourages Iran's proxies to extend the war in Gaza, further risking civilians and incentivizing Hezbollah to continue its attacks on Israel from the north.

We must stand with Israel as it confronts these threats. Voting in favor of these resolutions would have significant foreign policy implications far beyond the Middle East. U.S. allies across the globe will lose confidence in the United States as a dependable security partner. Partners straddling the fence between the United States on the one hand and China and Russia on the other are watching this and watching closely. They will certainly draw the conclusion that the United States is a fickle friend that cannot be relied upon to follow through on its commitments in the hour of their greatest need.

To make it worse, these resolutions highlight that, instead of confronting our adversaries and their bad actions, the United States will, instead, call on our friends to simply take it and to threaten them if they do not just take it.

The support for Israel has traditionally enjoyed broad, bipartisan support. I know that is true today. As such, I ask my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to vote no on these resolutions and to deliver a strong voice of support for Israel.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Carolina.

Mr. GRAHAM. Madam President, I want to show my support for what my

colleague just said, Senator RISCH, who made perfect sense. This is a consequential vote, and we all know how it is going to end, but let me tell you why it is consequential.

A lot of people are watching what we are doing here today, and they are trying to get a signal to understand, like, where we are all coming from. Let me tell you where I am coming from. I am coming from the idea that, if you want to end the war between Israel and the Palestinians, we need to replace Hamas with somebody who doesn't want to kill all the Jews.

Hamas attacked Israel on October 7, killing more Jews than at any time since the Holocaust. What were they up to in their pledge to destroy the Jewish State? They are religious Nazis. If you don't believe me, listen to what they have said. It was barbaric. They slaughtered entire families. They decapitated children. They raped women in front of their own families. And they filmed it to create hard hearts throughout the world and the region. The Nazis hid their crimes. Hamas filmed it so you could see it. Why?

October 7, in large part—not completely—was designed to stop efforts to have Saudi Arabia and Israel recognize each other and virtually end the Arab-Israeli conflict.

I have been to the region seven or eight times since October 7. I went with a group of five Republicans and five Democrats right after October 7 to deliver two messages. I went to Saudi Arabia, the biggest power in the Islamic world, and I went to Israel.

To our friends in Israel, I said: We will give you—at least from my view—the ability to make sure there is no second Holocaust. And the weapons we have provided to Israel have resulted in the destruction of Hamas.

There is no way forward for the Palestinians until you reform the P.A., which is run by a bunch of corrupt old guys, and make sure Hamas never comes back.

The most radicalized population on the planet are the young people in Gaza. From the time they are born to the time they die, they are taught to hate and kill the Jews. Look at their education system. How do we change that? Somebody other than Israel has to come in and take over Gaza and reform the West Bank and give the Palestinians a better life. It will not be the United States. We can't do that. It certainly isn't going to be Israel. Well, who would it be? It would be the Arab world.

The Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia has a vision for his country and the region that I buy into. We have had our problems in the past, for sure, but women can drive, which is a big thing, even though it doesn't sound like it. Women can go out to dinner without a male escort. It doesn't sound like a big thing, but it really is, and 38 percent of the people working in Saudi Arabia are young women. So he has a vision to change his country and to build on the Abraham Accords.

President Trump and his team were able to get six Arab nations to recognize Israel—the United Arab Emirates and others—which was a huge deal, and we have a chance to build on it.

So, for the last 2½ years, I have been going over to Saudi Arabia and Israel, working with the Biden administration, to try to build out the Abraham Accords. The big prize would be to have Saudi Arabia make peace with Israel, take over Gaza and the West Bank with other people in the region, and give the Palestinians a better life: rebuild Gaza; create an honest government to replace a corrupt government; give them sovereignty, self-government, the ability to live dignified lives; and to give Israel security.

October 7 was designed by Hamas to stop what was imminent. I am here to tell you that, on October 6, by the way, there were discussions about how to roll out the normalization deal. Then, along comes October 7. Ever since that day, we have been dealing with this horrible situation—the rape and torture and destruction of 1,200 Jewish people, the response by Israel that has resulted in thousands of people being killed—a lot of terrorists but a lot of children, a lot of innocent people.

There are a lot of photos being presented.

I ask unanimous consent to display two photos, if I may.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GRAHAM. This is a photo of Hiroshima—two photos, actually. This is what happens when you drop a nuclear weapon on people. It is not good.

Now, why did we do that? After Pearl Harbor, we and the civilized world went to war against the Nazis and Imperial Japan. Millions of people lost their lives, but it was the goal of the United States to defeat Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan, and we were able to do that.

Out of the ashes of that terrible, horrible war, we now have two democracies. Japan and Germany are good allies of the United States. They are productive members of the international community. It took a generation-plus to change the radicalization of the German population to the Nazis and the same in Imperial Japan.

What will happen is, if we can find normalization between Saudi Arabia and Israel, there will be hope for the Palestinians like I have not seen before. Those who want a two-state solution, we have to sit down and talk about how you do that after October 7. But I do believe that without resolving the Palestinian issue where the Palestinian people have a hopeful life versus a glorious death, we will never move forward.

I really do believe, after October 7, Israel needs security more than ever. What is the key? The Arabs. The Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, I think, hold the key to this. If we could create a political horizon over the arc of time for the Pal-

estinians that you will have self-governance, that you will be independent, and convince the Israelis that this new entity will not threaten you, that there could never be another Oct 7, then we are well on our way to a new region. This resolution today, no matter how sincere, undercuts all of this.

Israel has had to respond to an attack that was the most vicious since World War II against the Jewish people. I blame Hamas more than any other group for the loss of life in Gaza because they use their own people as human shields.

This commitment of the United States to give Israel what they need to win a war they can't afford to lose has to be uncompromising, but what is not uncompromising is the day after.

We are getting to the point now that, with the destruction of Hamas, we have to think about, how can we prevent them from coming back? Israel cannot occupy Gaza. The West Bank needs to be reformed, but it has to be done with the Arab world leading the charge.

So what I would like to do with President Biden before he leaves office is work with President Trump, the incoming President, and President Biden, the outgoing President, to see if we can find a solution. Can we lock down a normalization agreement between Saudi Arabia and Israel that protects Saudi Arabia, a defense agreement with the United States so they will be in our column and they will have an anecdote to Iranian aggression? Can we, as a part of that, create a political horizon for the Palestinians to have hope where there is despair? Yes, we can.

But now is not the time to send this signal. This signal will be seen by the enemies of Israel and the enemies of peace that if they just stick with it, they will win.

If you want peace, you have to destroy those who hate peace. This is not a Bibi problem; this is a problem where the Islamic terrorists—Hamas, Hezbollah, and Iran—want to kill all of the Jews, not just Bibi. Now, why do they want to do that? They are religious Nazis. I don't know why Hitler wanted to kill all the Jews, but he did.

So the Ayatollah has a couple of things in mind: the purification of Islam, which means that Sunni Islam will bend to his will—if you don't believe me, ask the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia. The other goal is to destroy the Jewish State and to drive us out of the Mideast.

The religious doctrine of the Shiites in charge compel them to kill all of the Jews. It is a commandment from God. Here is what I know: That is not what Islam teaches most Muslims, but they believe it. And when we ignored Hitler, we did so not only at our own peril but the peril of millions of people.

What have I learned from Israel? When someone threatens to kill you because you are of a particular race or religion, you should take that seriously.

So how do we end this conflict? We end this conflict with the complete decimation of Hamas, a plan for the day after that will replace Hamas in Gaza, reform the PA, try to get a cease-fire in Lebanon, and reduce the impact that Hezbollah has on the Lebanese people.

All of the Shiite, Iranian-backed militia have as their goal disruption, upheaval, and tyranny. They want to control the region and remake it in their own image. Look at what they are doing in Syria. Look at what they are doing in Yemen. Look at what they are doing in Lebanon.

We have a historic opportunity here to give Israel what they need to finish a war they can't afford to lose, come up with a day-after plan that would replace Hamas with a better life, try to get Lebanon in a better space, and build on the Abraham Accords. This effort by my colleagues undercuts all of that.

You have every right to say anything you want to say in this body, but I have been there a lot, and none of you have gone with me. Making peace is hard. We have not done this together. I have been with Senator VAN HOLLEN to Israel. I have been with Senator VAN HOLLEN before in the region. I think he wants to help the Palestinians, and I don't think he is anti-Semitic. I just think there is an opportunity here.

It is not about Bibi, folks; it is about a strain of Islam that will kill every Jew, including Bibi, and come after us unless they are defeated.

So my goal is not only to reject this idea but to work with President Biden and President Trump and their teams before the next President takes office, to have a day-after plan that will allow Israel to withdraw, and there will be no more October 7ths, and allow Gaza and the West Bank to be rebuilt with dignity and hope. That is my goal. This resolution undercuts my goal.

I would urge you to vote no.

I will be going back next week to Saudi Arabia, and I am going to keep working with the Biden administration and the incoming Trump administration to the last hour, to the last minute of the last day to find a solution.

I would end with this: If we fail to find a day-after plan that allows Israel to withdraw and be secure, and fail to deliver a political horizon for the Palestinians, God help us all. This will repeat itself. Iran will come back. Hezbollah and Hamas will reemerge.

We have a moment in time to change the region and change the world. I would ask all of us to see that moment in this resolution, this counter to what I am trying to achieve. So I would urge a "no" vote because peace and a dignified life for the Palestinians rests with a viable day-after plan.

What is the proper response to people who want to kill you and your family and destroy your way of life? I can tell you what the United States did. We went to war. We dropped two atomic



bombs to end a war we couldn't afford to lose.

What is the right response to those who want to kill all the Jews? Make sure they don't have the capability to do it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO). The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam President, I rise in support of the joint resolutions of disapproval that the Senate is considering today on the sales of certain offensive weapons to the Netanyahu government.

To be clear, I do not support an arms embargo on Israel, but I do believe that the United States should pause the delivery of offensive weapons until the Netanyahu government meets the requirements of U.S. law and policy with respect to the delivery of humanitarian assistance to civilians in Gaza and the use of American weapons there.

This is not about abandoning support for Israel; this is about making sure Americans' support for Israel complies with American laws and policies and values. We would not be on this floor considering these resolutions if that was happening today, and these votes will be the one opportunity that Members of the Senate have to send that message. I urge my colleagues to support them.

Following the Hamas attacks of October 7, I have, as probably every Senator has, supported Israel's right to defend itself—in fact, argued that they have a duty to defend themselves—and end Hamas's control of Gaza, and I am steadfast in that support to this moment. There must be no more October 7ths.

At the same time, U.S. taxpayer-funded assistance should not come in the form of a blank check, even to our closest allies. We need to ensure that U.S. interests, values, and priorities will be respected by foreign governments that receive U.S. assistance. That is why our security assistance to many countries includes various conditions to encourage progress on human rights.

In some cases, as in the case of Ukraine, we have limited the use of certain systems to align with U.S. national security interests. In other cases, including even some NATO allies, we have prevented the transfer of certain advance weapons systems when our policies goals do not align.

The one minimum standard that we must apply to all recipients of American security assistance is compliance with American laws, and it is compliance with that minimum standard that we are talking about here today—nothing more, nothing less. The Netanyahu government should not be exempt from that universal requirement of American law.

The United States has provided billions and billions of dollars of American taxpayer-financed bombs and other offensive weapons systems, but

we have seen Prime Minister Netanyahu repeatedly violate the terms of American security assistance, disregard U.S. priorities, and ignore our requests, only to be rewarded by more bombs and more money. That pattern undermines the credibility of the United States around the world and creates an unacceptable double standard that our adversaries are exploiting.

Two of the conditions that every recipient of U.S. security assistance must meet are, one, they must facilitate and not arbitrarily restrict the delivery of humanitarian assistance into war zones where those U.S. weapons are being used—war zones like Ukraine and war zones like Gaza—and, two, they must use American-supplied weapons in accordance with international humanitarian law, which was well developed after World War II and what Senator GRAHAM spoke to.

The Netanyahu government is violating both of these requirements in Gaza, and by refusing to take action, the President and the United States are complicit in those violations of American laws and American values.

Let's look at the unacceptable restrictions being placed by the Netanyahu government on the delivery of humanitarian aid to desperately needy civilians in Gaza right now. It has been well documented that there was some improvement in the delivery of humanitarian supplies in Gaza last April, around the time that the Biden administration had to submit the NSM-20 report to Congress, but since then, aid levels have been on a downhill slide and then a precipitous drop. The cumulative impact of severe restrictions on the delivery of humanitarian aid has worsened an already catastrophic humanitarian situation in Gaza. Senator SANDERS spoke to the conditions there.

In fact, that is why President Biden directly called on Prime Minister Netanyahu to increase aid to Gaza on many occasions—most recently in an early October call—and that is why, on October 13, Secretaries Austin and Blinken expressly reminded Israeli Government officials, in a letter that I have here, of their obligations under U.S. and international law. They specifically cited section 620I of the Foreign Assistance Act and National Security Memorandum 20 to facilitate and not arbitrarily restrict the delivery of humanitarian assistance.

Here is what our two Secretaries wrote in that letter:

We are particularly concerned that recent actions by the Israeli Government—including halting commercial imports, denying or impeding nearly 90% of humanitarian movements between northern and southern Gaza in September—

And then they go on to list a number of other things—  
are contributing to an accelerated deterioration in Gaza's conditions.

Then Secretaries Austin and Blinken laid out a series of key measures against which they said the United

States was going to measure the Netanyahu government's compliance. They mentioned enabling a minimum of 350 trucks per day to enter Gaza. They mentioned instituting adequate humanitarian pauses across Gaza to enable humanitarian activities. They mentioned reinstating a minimum of 50 to 100 commercial trucks per day. They had a long list of items.

So what do eight very respected international NGOs that conduct humanitarian relief in Gaza and monitor it have to say about whether those conditions were met? Well, they have compiled a scorecard. I have got it right here. And what they say on the specific items I mentioned was that the Netanyahu government failed. In fact, the overall report card concludes "Israel Fails to Comply With U.S. Humanitarian Access Demands in Gaza."

In fact, they determined that not only did the Netanyahu government fail "to meet the U.S. criteria that would indicate support to the humanitarian response, but concurrently took actions that dramatically worsened the situation on the ground, particularly in Northern Gaza."

They said that the situation is even more dire today than a month ago. In other words, because of those actions that were taken, the situation was worse than when Secretaries Austin and Blinken sent their letter.

Indeed, an independent Washington Post analysis found that "Israel has largely failed to comply with the three main demands of the U.S. letter."

In that November 12 Washington Post article, they also pointed out the following:

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has refused to publicly disavow the plan, which calls for the military to take control of the north by starving out the civilian population and treating everyone who remains as combatants.

The story goes on to say:

The Israeli Defense Force says it has been given no such orders and is focused on dismantling Hamas, but the ongoing military operation in the north appears to have much in common with the strategy.

It is called the "General's Plan."

A leading Israeli newspaper, Haaretz, editorialized with the following headline:

Netanyahu's Ethnic Cleansing in Gaza Is on Display for All to See.

That is a view that has also been echoed by many Israeli human rights organizations, and I commend them on all the work that they do every day.

And I find it extraordinary that so many of our colleagues come to this floor to talk about human rights abuses across the world. They cite Human Rights Watch. They cite Amnesty International. But when it comes to those organizations writing reports about human rights violations conducted by the Netanyahu government—oh, no—they run away from that.

So let's look at what others have said in terms of monitoring the situation right now in Gaza.

On November 1, the principals of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, the leaders of 15 U.N. and humanitarian organizations—including World Food Programme Executive Director Cindy McCain and UNICEF Director Catherine Russell, two American leaders of those organizations—said:

The situation unfolding in North Gaza is apocalyptic.

And they say:

The entire Palestinian population in North Gaza is at imminent risk of dying from disease, famine and violence.

Humanitarians are not safe to do their work and are blocked by Israeli forces and by insecurity from reaching people in need.

They say:

Rescue teams have been deliberately attacked and thwarted in their attempts to pull people buried under the rubble of their homes.

Yet we keep sending more bombs.

In that statement, the U.N. and humanitarian leaders also issued this call:

Member States must use their leverage to ensure respect for international law. That includes withholding arms transfers where there is a clear risk that such arms will be used in violation of international law.

So let's look at the use of American weapons. In its May 10 NSM-20 report to Congress, the Biden administration concluded:

[I]t is reasonable to assess that defense articles covered under NSM-20 have been used by Israeli security forces since October 7 in instances inconsistent with its [International Humanitarian Law] obligations or with established best practices for mitigating civilian harm.

And in that report—and I urge my colleagues to look at it—the administration identified a sampling of cases of civilian harm incidents where U.S. weapons were used. And they said there are some ongoing investigations and we are still waiting for answers from the Netanyahu government.

Well, just a few weeks ago, there was a report that we now have 500 cases of civilian harm where U.S. weapons were used under review.

And if you look at the most recent letter from Secretaries Blinken and Austin, you will see that they reference, at the bottom of their report, the following—and I want to read this because their letter says:

Lastly, it is crucial that our governments establish a new channel to raise and discuss incidents of civilian harm. Our previous engagements have not achieved the necessary outcomes. We request the initial virtual meeting for this channel to be held by the end of October.

This is more than a year into the war, and here you have the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of State saying they are not getting enough information from the Netanyahu government to be able to make decisions about whether or not U.S. weapons have been used in violation of international humanitarian law. Yet, despite not getting that information, the administration has continued to send those taxpayer-financed offensive weapons.

And it is very clear that the Netanyahu government continues to conduct operations in Gaza in a way that results in large numbers of civilian casualties, and I think our colleagues know that the fact that Hamas violates international law and does despicable tactics by operating from amongst civilians does not absolve Israel or any other country involved in that kind of situation of the duty to avoid civilian harm and avoid the destruction of civilian infrastructure.

Since President Biden's recent call with Prime Minister Netanyahu last month, we have seen continued high rates of civilian deaths, and human rights organizations continue to document cases of weapons being used in violation of international humanitarian law.

Now, Madam President, that October 13 letter not only warned the Netanyahu government about unacceptable restrictions on humanitarian aid in Gaza and not only warned them about illegal use of American weapons; they also raised two other issues. One, they said that Israel is required by international law to allow the International Committee of the Red Cross access to Palestinian prisoners who were detained without any charges.

Yet, despite them sending the letter, no change there. And that means over 3,000 Palestinian prisoners who have been imprisoned without charge under administrative detention are not—the ICRC does not have access to them.

They also warned in their letter about pending legislation before the Knesset that would cripple UNRWA. And here is what Secretaries Austin and Blinken said. They warn that enactment “of such restrictions would devastate the Gaza humanitarian response at this critical moment and deny vital educational and social services to tens of thousands of Palestinians in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, which could have implications under relevant U.S. law and policy.”

Within days of the U.S. Government sending that letter, two bills were passed by the Knesset to ban UNRWA.

So what we see, Madam President, is a continuing pattern. President Biden makes certain demands that are routinely ignored without consequence. In fact, they are rewarded. And this is an ineffective use of American leverage to accomplish our policy goals and ensure that American law is abided by.

I want to just mention a couple others, and Senator SANDERS referenced them. But we know that Prime Minister Netanyahu has repeatedly obstructed President Biden's plan for a ceasefire and the return of hostages.

Both in Washington and Israel, I have met with families of hostages who are experiencing unthinkable pain. I just met with the father of a soldier who is being held right now in Gaza as a hostage. They have stressed that Prime Minister Netanyahu has repeatedly obstructed President Biden's plan to bring home their loved ones.

In fact, in his farewell address just 2 weeks ago, former Israeli Defense Minister Gallant noted that one of the key disagreements leading to his firing by Netanyahu was over “our moral obligation and responsibility to bring our kidnapped sons and daughters back home as quickly as possible, with as many alive as possible, to their families.”

He went on to say:

Based on my role, experience, and the military achievements of the past year, with a clear-eyed view of reality, I state that this is achievable but involves painful compromises that Israel can bear, and the IDF can deal with.

There is and will not be any atonement for abandoning the captives.

This is former Defense Minister Gallant, fired by Netanyahu.

I heard Senator GRAHAM speak a lot about the “day after” plan. Well, President Biden has proposed a “day after” plan. It is to have a reformed Palestinian Authority form the nucleus of governance in Gaza. And, indeed, the Netanyahu government, led by Smotrich, not only opposes President Biden's plan, but they have worked to systematically weaken the P.A. by withholding tax revenues that it collects on behalf of the Palestinian people.

What is more, Prime Minister Netanyahu publicly rebuked President Biden's call to create a path to a two-state solution, even bragging that he had long blocked that outcome—something I heard Senator GRAHAM refer to as something that was needed.

So the Netanyahu government has refused to comply with other requests, as well, trying to change the rules of engagement on the West Bank in order to prevent the killing of innocent civilians, including the deaths of some American citizens. And contrary to longstanding policy in American Government, from Republicans and Democrats alike, about not having expanded settlements in the West Bank, something Secretary Blinken agreed was inconsistent with international law, we have seen a record number of settlements expanded by the Netanyahu government—in fact, one when Secretary Blinken was there in Israel.

So, Madam President, the issue here is not whether or not the United States is supporting Israel. The issue is whether or not, as we provide that support, we have a two-way street. A partnership should be a two-way street, not a one-way blank check. And, at a minimum, the Netanyahu government should comply with American law, as we have talked about today. And when they are not, we have an obligation to the American people and American taxpayers to make sure that we withhold that support until Netanyahu comes into compliance.

That is what we are saying here: Just meet the requirements of American law.

And all of us have an obligation to American taxpayers to make sure that



we are not complicit in violating American law and American values.

So, Madam President, that is why I encourage my colleagues to support these joint resolutions to send that message. This is the one opportunity we have to do so.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. I ask unanimous consent for 10 additional minutes for either side.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. BUDD. Madam President, I rise today to voice my strong opinion to Senator SANDERS' attempt to cut off U.S. military support to our friend and ally Israel.

I don't dare denigrate my colleague's intent here or the motives, but I believe the effect is reckless and I believe it is dangerous and I believe it will lead to the loss of even more lives.

We need to remember some basic facts about the difference between the two sides of the conflict here. Israel is Middle East's only democracy. They have been a force for stability in the region that is historically beset by chaos. They have been America's strongest friend in good times and bad. Israel is an unmistakable force for good.

And then you have the terrorists of Hamas. I mean, even their founding charter calls for the destruction of the State of Israel. Hamas's largest benefactor, Iran, lends its materiel and financial support to this cause each and every day. They intentionally target civilians. They target civilians, and they fire rockets into crowded markets, and they preach not just death to Israel and to the Jewish people but death to America.

And then came October 7. On October 7, 2023, Hamas terrorists launched an unprovoked and deceitful series of terrorist attacks inside Israel. The level of barbarism that we witnessed was nothing short of evil incarnate—the mass slaughter of innocent civilians; unmistakable and unspeakable violence against women, children, and the elderly. It was the deadliest massacre of the Jewish people since the Holocaust.

These crimes against humanity were also visited upon American citizens as well. Hamas murdered 46 Americans. They kidnapped 12. Seven U.S. citizens remain hostage in Gaza. The State of Israel has every right to root out the genocidal terrorists who committed these acts and eliminate the threat once and for all.

Israel is carrying out this military action with precision, thanks, in part, to munitions from the United States. For example, one of the systems that we sell to the Israelis is tail kits with GPS receivers. These kits convert unguided free-fall bombs into precision-guided bombs. Put simply, these kits turn “dumb bombs” into “smart bombs.”

But Senator SANDERS proposes blocking the sale of these systems to the Israelis. And, apparently, Senator SANDERS would prefer that Israelis use less accurate weapons to eliminate terrorists.

Now, it doesn't take anything more than common sense to realize that this would make collateral damage even more likely. In Senator SANDERS' zeal to undermine our ally, he would make it more likely that Palestinian civilians—who Hamas intentionally uses as human shields—could be killed.

The bottom line is this: Cutting off U.S. support for an ally in their time of need is just unbecoming of our country. To hamstring the very nation trying to defeat the perpetrators of the October 7 carnage is insulting to the Americans who were murdered and those who are still held hostage. It is just wrong in every conceivable way.

All of these resolutions should be soundly rejected, and this body should stand shoulder to shoulder with Israel as they take the fight to Hamas.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I come to the floor to speak on the resolutions we will be voting on shortly to share why I strongly oppose them.

Israel is surrounded by enemies dedicated to its annihilation, from Hamas to Hezbollah, to the Houthis, to most threateningly of all, Iran.

These threats, sadly, have been around for a long time and will persist for many years into the future. Israel needs to protect itself, not just today but also tomorrow and next year and beyond. It has been a cornerstone of American policy to give Israel the resources it needs to defend against its enemies. We should not stray from that policy today.

Many of the arms sales in question today will not reach Israel until years from now. We have no idea what kind of threats Israel will face by then. It could be an even more emboldened Iran or a strengthened Hezbollah or some other threat.

There are few, if any, who imagined the barbaric assault perpetrated by Hamas on October 7. The twisted and hateful ideology that underpins that violence from places like Iran will sadly continue in the region for some time to come. Israel will need to be fully prepared to face those threats. So voting to block assistance today could well very embolden Hamas and Hezbollah and Iran and endanger Israel's security on into the future.

I know there are many in this Chamber who have been strongly critical of Prime Minister Netanyahu's policies. I am certainly one of them, as I have made clear right here on the Senate floor, where I clearly stated the urgent need to diligently pursue a two-state solution.

I have also made clear that Israel must do more to reduce the suffering of innocent civilians in Gaza and do much

more to get humanitarian aid to where it is urgently needed. However, our security assistance to Israel transcends any one Prime Minister or any one government.

This is about Israel's long-term security and honoring a cornerstone of the U.S. policy that we will give Israel—a democracy and a steadfast ally—the resources it needs to protect itself in a difficult world.

There are ways to express criticism and to work on addressing these criticisms without impacting Israel's security.

So this is why I will be voting no. Again, while it is perfectly legitimate to have objections with the Netanyahu government—and I know many of my colleagues wish to express their disapproval—I believe these resolutions are the wrong way and the wrong strategy to voice those objections.

I vote no and urge others to do the same.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. WELCH. First of all, I want to thank the majority leader not only for his leadership on this issue in his straightforward, direct embrace of the cause of Israel but also your openness for a debate in the Senate about what is the best pathway forward.

Madam President, I also want to acknowledge that I had to listen carefully to the words of Senator SCHUMER, Senator ROSEN, Senator BUDD. They have given eloquent arguments in favor of opposing this resolution. They raised the questions I ask myself: Can I, as a U.S. Senator who is a strong supporter of Israel as a Jewish and democratic state; can I, as a U.S. Senator who is absolutely appalled at what Hamas did on October 7; can I, as a U.S. Senator who attended a presentation by the Israeli Embassy that displayed the horror of the rapes and the assaults on women who were taken captive; and can I, as a U.S. Senator who believes in a two-state solution, vote in favor of stopping the delivery of offensive weapons for Israel to use in Gaza? And my answer is yes. It is for two reasons.

First, we are into our 14th month in Gaza. And what has happened is over 43,000 people have been killed. Many Hamas, including the Hamas leadership, have been killed. Good riddance.

But many, many thousands of innocent Palestinians, including women and children, have been killed. Over 100,000 have been maimed and injured, and 60 to 70 percent of the structures in Gaza have been destroyed. That includes the schools. Young Gazans have not been in school for 14 months. Hospitals have been destroyed. The humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza is unparalleled and is being inflicted on innocent Palestinians.

There is a second reason that I am going to support the joint resolutions. I believe the continuation of the military action in Gaza is not only jeopardizing what hostages still are alive, but it can only make Israel weaker, not stronger.

Their own recently fired Defense Minister said there is no further military purpose of offensive action in Gaza. If there is no further reason for offensive military action in Gaza, why is there a need for the United States to be providing more offensive weapons for the Netanyahu government to be used in Gaza?

That is the question we face.

We talk about the signals that will be sent to Hamas, to Iran, to Israel. There is another reality that can't be escaped, and it isn't answered by inquiring as to what "signals" are being sent. It is what is going to happen to these kids. What is going to happen to these families that are continuing to live under bombardment where they can't be safe anywhere, in part, because Hamas will go anywhere they can to try to use them as human shields.

But even without that—being told that they can be safe here but then are bombed and being told they can be safe there—many of these families have been dislocated six to seven times.

The humanitarian catastrophe is grinding on. It comes, of course, at a cost—enormous cost—to Palestinian families. It has come at a cost to the State of Israel—which we support—with their further isolation in the international community.

So the question before us is: What is the right thing to do, not just by way of limiting and helping humanitarian catastrophe, but what is the right thing for the United States to do with its ally Israel in pursuit of the two goals we have always had with Israel? And that is to advocate and defend and support Israel as a democratic, secure Jewish State. And because we believe this is important to make that happen, that we have an independent, secure Palestinian State, a two-state solution.

So the question that I have is, Will U.S. arms, to be used offensively in Gaza at this time and with this government, enhance American policy that has been the policy of the United States through Republican and Democratic administrations?

Madam President, the answer I have come to, the judgment I have come to as a U.S. Senator is that it would harm our goals for that Jewish democratic state, for the easing of humanitarian suffering, for compliance with international law and the Leahy Law, and for what is a goal that has to be the touchstone of our policy, and that is doing everything we can to achieve a two-state solution for a secure, democratic, independent Israel and a secure, disarmed—not armed—Palestinian State side by side.

I intend to support these resolutions. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. KENNEDY. Madam President, Senator WELCH is my friend, and he is very eloquent. I just listened to his eloquent remarks in support of Senator SANDERS' resolution.

And Senator SANDERS is my friend, but he is wrong. He is wrong. Senator WELCH talked, as he should have, about the right thing to do. The right thing to do and the smart thing to do is not to pass Senator SANDERS' resolution.

I don't know why this is—if I make it to heaven, I am going to ask—but there is some people in this world, they are not mixed up, they are not confused, they are not sick, it is not that their mama or daddy didn't love them enough—they are just bad people. And they hurt other people, and they take other people's stuff. Why? Because they can.

And some of them are running countries, and they hate America. They hate Americans. They want to kill us and drink our blood out of a boot. That is just a fact.

Now, you do not have to be Einstein's cousin to see what is going on in the world. President Xi in China is working with President Putin in Russia who is working with the Ayatollah in Iran. Sometimes they allow Kim Jong Un from North Korea to come along, but mostly as a mascot to get them coffee.

President Xi is running the show, but that doesn't mean that President Putin of Russia and especially the Ayatollah in Iran are not right there by his side.

And what is their objective? Their objective is to have Russia dominate Central and Eastern Europe. Their objective is to have China dominate the Indo-Pacific—about which I will speak in a moment—and to have China dominate Sub-Saharan Africa and to have China have the ability to roam free in South America.

And their objective is to have Iran—the Ayatollah—dominate the Middle East, which it has done until Israel decided to fight back, which it has done through Hamas and Hezbollah and the Houthis rebels. Now that is just a fact.

And one of our best friends in the world—maybe, on some days, our only friend in the world—Israel—patient people, principled people but realistic people—they have decided to stand up to Iran. And in standing up to Iran, we are finding out very quickly they are also standing up to China and Russia. But I will save that subject for another day.

They have decided to stand up to Iran. They have beaten Hamas in Gaza. They are beating Hezbollah in Lebanon. They had to do it despite the obstacles thrown up against them every step of the way by President Biden and Vice President HARRIS.

And if we support them, Israel will beat the Ayatollah in Iran. Israel will cause a regime change. Because I can tell you, the people of Iran—not its leadership—the people of Iran are fed up with their leadership.

We have a duty—not a legal duty, a moral duty—to support our friend Israel. We have agreed to do it. But besides that, we have a moral duty to do it. And my friend Senator SANDERS' resolution would turn our back on one of the few friends that I think Amer-

ica—real friends that America has in the world. And it would precipitate a foreign policy crisis.

I don't say these words very often, but we ought to listen to the words of my friend Senator SCHUMER. He is going to vote against Senator SANDERS' resolution. Senator SCHUMER is right. Even a blind hog finds an acorn now and then. Senator SCHUMER is right: We need to defeat this resolution. It will precipitate a foreign policy crisis.

And it is not the only one we would have in the world. I want to talk for just a few minutes about another crisis that is going on quietly as we speak.

This is the Indian Ocean, as the Presiding Officer well knows, one of the most important parts of the world. Here is China; here is India. China is trying to dominate all of these sea lands for military reasons and for commercial reasons.

Here in the middle of the Indian Ocean is a group of islands called the Chagos Islands. You may not have heard of them; I hadn't before I was alerted of this crisis. America has a military base in the Chagos Islands. There are about 40 to 60 islands. One of the islands is called Diego Garcia. And we built a military base there. And it is not just any military base. It is an extraordinarily important military base.

Our military base is one of the few in the world where our military can reload submarines—hugely important. Our military base on Diego Garcia in the Chagos Islands houses a number of Navy ships. Our military base there houses long-range bombers that we use to carry out missions around the world.

Now, we have to—we and the United Kingdom—I will explain why the UK is involved in a moment—we have to work hard every day to police our military base, not just the base itself, but the land—or, rather—the water surrounding it, because China—China knows how important this military base is to the security of the world. China is constantly sending craft trying to spy on our military base there.

And we and the United Kingdom—again, I will explain in a second the United Kingdom's relevance—are constantly having to patrol and fight off the espionage of China. In fact, China has breached the security of American military bases over 100 times in the last few years. They are very aggressive.

Now, why am I talking about this military base? Because President Biden and Vice President HARRIS, as we are all working here trying—like a bunch of ants on a sugar bowl, trying to wrap up our work for the year, President Biden and Vice President HARRIS are giving away this military base. They are giving it away.

The Chagos Islands is a territory of the United Kingdom. The United Kingdom gave America permission to build our military base here.

Now, the Chagos Islands has a rich history. It has a relationship with another island in the Indian Ocean, Mauritius. And I mention that because to understand what is going on, you have to understand the relationship.

Mauritius and the Chagos Islands used to be partners. The Chagos Islands were what is called a dependency of Mauritius. And Mauritius, many, many years ago, beginning in 1715, was a colony of France. And while Mauritius was a colony of France, Mauritius established a relationship with the Chagos Islands.

And then, beginning in 1814, France said: Look, we are going to cede Mauritius and now the Chagos Islands—where we have our military base—to the United Kingdom. And they did.

Mauritius and the Chagos Islands, 250 years ago, they might have been close, but they are not today. They don't share the same culture. They don't speak the same language. They don't visit each other. In fact, many of the people from Chagos lived in the United Kingdom.

But here is what President Biden is doing and Vice President HARRIS. They say we need to grant independence to the Chagos Islands but not let the people of the Chagos Islands run their country. We need to give the Chagos Islands back to Mauritius. Why? I mean, no offense, but that is cell-deep stupid.

Why? Mauritius and the Chagos Islands don't have a relationship anymore, and we have a military base there.

I will tell you why. The United Nations—the United Nations, and particularly the International Court of Justice, which has no jurisdiction over the United States of America and has no jurisdiction over the United Kingdom and which currently controls the Chagos Islands, they have scolded the United Kingdom.

They said the United Kingdom is a colonizer, and the United Kingdom, the people of the United Kingdom are bad people.

Now, remember, this is coming from the United Nations. This is the same United Nations that has the following countries on its human rights council: Somalia, Iraq, Venezuela, China. That is who thinks we ought to get rid of this military base. OK? I mean, this is not some act of justice here.

But in any event, the United Nations is saying: United Kingdom, you bad people, give the Chagos Islands back—but not let the Chagos Islands be free; they want to give the Chagos Islands back to Mauritius. And President Biden could stop it and so could Vice President HARRIS. But they are for it, all in an effort to curry favor with the people at the United Nations who walk around with their NPR tote bags and their organic broccoli and have great relationships with members of the media who they think write history. Why on God's green Earth would we do that? Why?

China, of course, is delighted. Why is China delighted? Now, the United Na-

tions says: OK, we don't want to be too mean-spirited here; America can keep its military base for 99 years, but you have to sign a lease. And we got to start paying Mauritius to stay there.

China says: Fine. That sounds good to us. Why? Because, No. 1, China has already started currying favor with Mauritius, and No. 2, Mauritius will now be in charge of the security of the Chagos Islands and our military base and the water surrounding it.

China, Xi Jinping, he is as happy as a gopher in soft dirt. He will be hacking the Mauritius security as soon as the trade is made.

Now, President Trump, I hope you are listening to this. My good friend Senator RUBIO, soon-to-be Secretary of State, I hope you are listening to what I am talking about.

What we are debating today is important. I don't mean to say that. And I am not kidding you. I am not going to bubble wrap it. If Senator SANDERS' resolution passes, it will precipitate a foreign policy crisis. But this foreign policy crisis is being perpetrated—or prosecuted right now, and it is another foreign policy crisis, and it is going on all because President Biden—all because President Biden and Vice President HARRIS want to appease the United Nations and China.

President Trump, please, pretty please with sugar on top, pick up the phone and call the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom and say: Don't sign that treaty. Don't give away the Chagos Islands. Don't give away America's military base. Don't do it.

If we object, they won't. If we don't say anything, they will.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, over the past year, we have used our voices and influence to press for the protection of civilians in Gaza, for access to vital humanitarian assistance, to bring home the hostages, and to end this conflict. We all know that it is our responsibility to do more, Israel's responsibility to do more, and the international communities' responsibility to do more to protect innocent victims.

But even as we work to address the humanitarian crisis in Gaza, we must be clear about our commitment—our longstanding, bipartisan commitment—to the State of Israel. It has been the bedrock of our foreign policy in the Middle East, a special relationship that was established in 1948 when President Truman, against the advice at that time of the State Department because there were more Arab States and just one Israel—against the advice of the State Department, President Truman recognized the State of Israel immediately after the United Nations vote.

That special relationship is based upon two countries—Israel and the United States—both democracies, shared values. We share intelligence information, military information, and

much, much more. That special relationship is important to Israel, and it is important to America's national security interest. We both benefit from it.

Part of that special relationship is the United States is committed to making available to Israel the military arms it needs in order to defend itself from the dangers in the region. We have mutual adversaries—Iran and its proxies, Hamas, Hezbollah, the Houthis, and many others. The threats are real. The adversaries are not just Israel's adversaries; they are our adversaries.

Now, to the three resolutions that we have before us and how that relates to this issue, S.J. Res 111 deals with tank munitions. These tank munitions have a delivery date 3 years from now. These are replenishments. This is so Israel has the capacity to defend itself against the future threats that we know are in the region, that are real. It is not engaged in the current conflict in Gaza or Lebanon; it is for Israel's ability to defend itself against the threats that are real in the region.

S.J. Res 113—mortar munitions. The delivery date is about a year and a half from now. Again, it is for the replenishment of their supplies. It is to make sure they are not caught in a situation where they can't defend themselves against future threats.

These are the wrong vehicles for expressing ourselves in regards to the conflict that exists today, but if we are going to talk about the conflict that exists today, then a spotlight should be on Hamas, not Israel.

The third resolution, S.J. Res 115—the JDAMs. This one, I really don't understand. These are precision kits that go on munitions; they are not the munitions themselves. Without the JDAMs, the precision of the munitions is not as great. What does that mean? It means it has a much higher likelihood of missing the target—collateral damage, civilians killed and injured. So it is counterproductive to the safety of the communities. I don't understand why we would want to prevent Israel from having the technology to have precision use of its munitions. To me, that makes no sense at all.

But, as I pointed out, the spotlight should be on Hamas. Why are we in this conflict? October 7—brutal attack by Hamas. We don't hear a lot of talk about that. The hostages. We talk about the release of the hostages; they never should have been taken. Where is the outrage in the international community and where is the outrage here about Hamas holding hostages, some of whom are Americans? That is where the outrage should be.

Hamas uses human shields. Yes, we bereave the loss of innocent life, but Hamas makes it much more likely that there are going to be the casualties of innocent life. They embedded themselves in hospitals and universities and make it so much more difficult for Israel to conduct a military campaign.

Why isn't the focus on the terrorists? Then there is the humanitarian assistance. We have heard from our own State Department people as recently as today that the challenges for humanitarian assistance are made so much more difficult because of Hamas using it as a weapon to deny its own people humanitarian help, making it extremely difficult for the deliveries to take place.

So I am somewhat confused. I don't understand these resolutions as furthering the cause for what the sponsor has indicated. The sponsor says that he disagrees that blocking these offensive arms sales will only embolden terrorist organizations such as Hamas and Hezbollah as well as their sponsors in Iran. But if the U.S. Senate fails to provide the support to Israel now, what else would our adversaries believe? This would be a sign of weakness in our resolve to fight the terrorism in the region. It would be a gift to Iran.

Let me talk about the cost. You hear a lot about taxpayer cost. Canceling these contracts—they have cancellation causes. This will cost the taxpayers money, not save the taxpayers money.

I want to talk lastly about the timing of this, and I want to talk about—let me quote from the message we received from the Biden administration:

These resolutions are particularly untimely and counterproductive as we are working to secure a cease-fire in Lebanon. U.S. officials are in Beirut now working to finalize this deal, a deal that is only possible because of the military pressure Hezbollah is under. Disapproving arms purchases for Israel at this moment would jeopardize those talks and put wind in the sails of Iran, Hezbollah, and Hamas at the worst possible moment.

These resolutions should be defeated. As the administration said, we urge you to oppose the JRDs, which will prolong the wars, not shorten them, put Israel at risk, and inject wind in the sails of Iran and its proxies just as they are facing a historic low point and looking for a deal.

I urge my colleagues to reject all three of these resolutions. Let us continue to work together for peace in the Middle East. Let us work and isolate the terrorists in the region, Iran and its proxies. Let's work with our allies and partners in the region to do exactly that. Let's not make the matter worse by calling into question our commitment to make sure Israel has what it needs to defend itself against the future threats that are in that region.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. OSSOFF). The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, let me begin by pointing out—although it may not be obvious here in the Senate—that poll after poll shows that a strong majority of the American people oppose sending more weapons and military aid to fuel Netanyahu's vicious and destructive war machine. I would also add, because some of this has come up, that according to a poll commissioned

by J Street, a pro-Israel Jewish organization, 62 percent of Jewish Americans support withholding weapons shipments to Israel until Netanyahu agrees to an immediate cease-fire.

Let me just mention a few of the organizations that think the time is now to stop giving money to Netanyahu, who ignores America's laws and our values—some of the major trade unions in America: the SEIU, the United Auto Workers, United Electrical Workers; Amnesty International; the Arab American Institute; the Association of U.S. Catholic Priests; the Friends Committee on National Legislation; Oxfam America; the Episcopal Church; the United Church of Christ; the United Methodist Church General Board of Church and Society; the American Baptist Churches USA; the Global Ministries of the Christian Church.

These resolutions have strong support all across this country by people who understand that we cannot continue to fund the horrific war machine and the atrocities Netanyahu is committing.

These resolutions come down to a few basic points. First of all, should the U.S. Government obey the law? And the law is very clear that we as a government cannot fund other countries that are in violation of international human rights or that are blocking humanitarian aid.

Now, somebody here wants to come down and say: I don't like that law. The U.S. Government should give money to any government it wants no matter what they do, no matter how atrocious their behavior is.

Come down and change the law, but that ain't the law now. The law is based on moral principles that say: When the United States provides military arms, those countries that receive those weapons cannot violate international human rights and cannot block humanitarian aid. And that is precisely what Israel is doing. That is not me who says that; that is what virtually every humanitarian organization working in Gaza right now says.

So if you believe we should obey the law, you have to vote for these resolutions.

No. 2, from a moral perspective, we cannot turn a blind eye to one of the worst humanitarian disasters in the modern history of this world—a humanitarian disaster we are significantly funding.

My colleagues, as we speak, thousands and thousands of children in Gaza are starving to death.

In an area of 2.2 million people, 43,000 are dead. Over 100,000 have been injured. We cannot turn a blind eye to that humanitarian disaster, caused in part by U.S. financial support to Netanyahu.

Thirdly, I heard about the U.S. role in the world. Well, I will tell you that our role is significantly diminished if we continue to support Netanyahu and this humanitarian disaster that is currently taking place.

What is the moral standard that we have to critique other countries? How do you critique Iran for their terrible human rights record? How do you critique China or Russia for their terrible human rights records? Because you get here on the floor of the Senate and you make that critique, and people around the world will laugh at you, and they will say: Don't give us advice. Don't criticize us when you have supported the mass starvation of children with your taxpayer dollars.

This is a very important vote. It is an important vote because it tells the world that we will not continue supporting a government which violates American law, which violates international law, and which violates the humanitarian standards that I would hope every Member of this Senate upholds.

With that, I yield the floor.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that all remaining time be yielded back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### VOTE ON MOTION

The question is on agreeing to the motion to discharge.

Mr. SANDERS. I would ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BRAUN) and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. VANCE).

The result was announced—yeas 18, nays 79, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 292 Leg.]

#### YEAS—18

Durbin	Markey	Shaheen
Heinrich	Merkley	Smith
Hirono	Murphy	Van Hollen
Kaine	Ossoff	Warnock
King	Sanders	Warren
Lujan	Schatz	Welch

#### NAYS—79

Barrasso	Fetterman	Paul
Bennet	Fischer	Peters
Blackburn	Gillibrand	Reed
Blumenthal	Graham	Ricketts
Booker	Grassley	Risch
Boozman	Hagerty	Romney
Britt	Hassan	Rosen
Brown	Hawley	Rounds
Budd	Helmy	Rubio
Butler	Hickenlooper	Schmitt
Cantwell	Hoeven	Schumer
Capito	Hyde-Smith	Scott (FL)
Cardin	Johnson	Scott (SC)
Carper	Kelly	Sinema
Casey	Kennedy	Stabenow
Cassidy	Klobuchar	Sullivan
Collins	Lankford	Tester
Coons	Lee	Thune
Cornyn	Lummis	Tillis
Cortez Masto	Manchin	Tuberville
Cotton	Marshall	Warner
Cramer	McConnell	Whitehouse
Crapo	Moran	Wicker
Cruz	Mullin	Wyden
Daines	Murkowski	Young
Duckworth	Murray	
Ernst	Padilla	

ANSWERED "PRESENT"—1

Baldwin

NOT VOTING—2

Braun

Vance

The motion was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HELMY). The Senator from Vermont.

MOTION TO DISCHARGE—S.J. RES. 113

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, pursuant to section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act, I move to discharge the Committee on Foreign Relations from further consideration of S.J. Res. 113, relating to the disapproval of the proposed foreign military sale to the Government of Israel of certain defense articles and services.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to discharge from the Committee on Foreign Relations S.J. Res. 113, providing for congressional disapproval of the proposed foreign military sale of the Government of Israel certain defense articles and services.

Mr. SANDERS. I ask unanimous consent to dispense with further reading of the resolution.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Under the previous order, there will now be 2 minutes of debate, equally divided.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, the law is very clear. This is not a complicated issue.

U.S. weapons cannot be provided to countries who violate internationally recognized human rights or block U.S. humanitarian aid. It goes without saying that Israel had a right to defend itself from the horrific Hamas terrorist attack of October 7. But Israel did not have the right to kill 43,000 Palestinians and injure over 100,000—60 percent of whom are women, children, and the elderly. It did not have the right to destroy Gaza's infrastructure, healthcare system, schools, and university. And it certainly does not have the right to starve thousands and thousands of children in Gaza.

The United States cannot be complicit in these atrocities. We cannot give billions of dollars to the Netanyahu government and have them defy U.S. law while they take U.S. money.

I urge a "yes" vote on this resolution.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. In opposition to the resolution, let me just cite the views that we received from the administration, which we urge you to oppose the resolutions which will prolong the wars, not shorten them, put Israel at risk and inject wind into the sails of Iran and its proxies just as they are facing a historic low point and looking for a deal.

This resolution will only prolong the war. It will put Israel at risk fighting our mutual enemies, and I would urge my colleagues to reject the resolution.

VOTE ON MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion to discharge.

Mr. SANDERS. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BRAUN) and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. VANCE).

The result was announced—yeas 19, nays 78, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 293 Leg.]

YEAS—19

Durbin	Markey	Smith
Heinrich	Merkley	Van Hollen
Helmy	Murphy	Warnock
Hirono	Ossoff	Warren
Kaine	Sanders	Welch
King	Schatz	
Lujan	Shaheen	

NAYS—78

Barrasso	Ernst	Padilla
Bennet	Fetterman	Paul
Blackburn	Fischer	Peters
Blumenthal	Gillibrand	Reed
Booker	Graham	Ricketts
Boozman	Grassley	Risch
Britt	Hagerty	Romney
Brown	Hassan	Rosen
Budd	Hawley	Rounds
Butler	Hickenlooper	Rubio
Cantwell	Hoeven	Schmitt
Capito	Hyde-Smith	Schumer
Cardin	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Carper	Kelly	Scott (SC)
Casey	Kennedy	Sinema
Cassidy	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Collins	Lankford	Sullivan
Coons	Lee	Tester
Cornyn	Lummis	Thune
Cortez Masto	Manchin	Tillis
Cotton	Marshall	Tuberville
Cramer	McConnell	Warner
Crapo	Moran	Whitehouse
Cruz	Mullin	Wicker
Daines	Murkowski	Wyden
Duckworth	Murray	Young

ANSWERED "PRESENT"—1

Baldwin

NOT VOTING—2

Braun

Vance

The motion was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HASSAN). On this vote, the yeas are 19, the nays are 78.

One Senator responded present. The motion was not agreed to.

The motion was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

MOTION TO DISCHARGE—S.J. RES. 115

Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, I move to discharge the Committee on Foreign Relations from further consideration of S.J. Res. 115, relating to the disapproval of the proposed license

amendment for the export of certain defense articles, defense services, and technical data to Israel.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion to discharge.

The bill clerk read as follows:

Motion to discharge from the Committee on Foreign Relations, S.J. Res. 115, providing for congressional disapproval of the proposed license amendment for the export of certain defense articles, defense services, and technical data to Israel.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 2 minutes for debate, equally divided.

Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, two basic points: The first one is the same point that has to be made over and over again. What we are doing is in violation of the law. U.S. weapons cannot be provided to countries that violate internationally recognized human rights or block U.S. humanitarian aid.

According to all of the international and humanitarian organizations on the ground in Gaza right now, that is exactly what Israel is doing. So a "no" vote is to allow us to continue breaking the law.

As to the second point, this one deals with JDAMs, which are systems that make bombs more precise. And, on the surface, it sounds like, well, that is a good thing. You would rather use "smart" bombs than "dumb" bombs, and when you do that, you save civilian lives. The problem is that what Israel has been doing is using JDAMs to target U.N. schools packed with displaced people and to target refugee centers and kill large numbers of innocent people. So a "smart" bomb does not save civilian lives when it is directly targeting civilians.

I would ask for a "yes" vote on this resolution.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Does anyone seek time in opposition?

The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, in opposition to the resolution, quite frankly, I am perplexed with this one because, as the sponsor indicated, we are talking about the guidance system on munitions, which makes it precise, and despite what the sponsor of the resolution says, Israel targets military targets of terrorists. Yes, Hamas makes it more challenging by where they locate the targets—in hospitals, in schools, et cetera—but without the guidance system, there are going to be greater civilian losses. So, if you are concerned about humanitarian issues, I don't know how you can possibly vote for this resolution.

In addition, of course, as the administration pointed out, they oppose this resolution because it would prolong the war, not shorten it. It would put Israel at risk and inject wind into the sails of Iran and its proxies just as they are facing a historic low point and looking for a deal.

I urge my colleagues to reject the resolution.