



[Coalition of Lawyers Urge Biden to Halt Military Aid to Israel](#)

A group of lawyers are calling on President Biden to halt military aid to Israel due to its unlawful use of American-supplied weapons, with the attorneys expressing that Israel's actions in Gaza do not comply with U.S. and international humanitarian law. An increasing number of senior U.S. officials, including ones within the State Department, have highlighted this to Secretary of State Antony Blinken as well. The coalition is planning to submit a letter to Attorney General Merrick Garland and others across the Biden administration in which they outline Israel's violations of pertinent U.S. statutes and international conventions. In it, they reference Israel's indiscriminate bombardment of hospitals and schools in Gaza, and their numerous strikes against humanitarian aid convoys. The letter also draws attention to how the majority of Americans believe that the United States should halt its arms shipments to Israel until it ends its destructive military operations in Gaza. The signatories to the letter consist of a diverse array of attorneys from various U.S. departments, the European Commission, and the private sector, and are just some of the latest to add themselves to the growing number of voices who are speaking out against Israel's actions in Gaza.

This recent development comes as the United States decided not to sanction the Israeli military despite findings that multiple units had committed gross human rights violations. The U.S. State Department determined and acknowledged that five units had done so, but that they would still continue to receive U.S. military assistance. Impartial analysts would be justified in failing to see the logic and accountability of this, especially considering that U.S. law declares this type of finding is precisely what should prohibit a foreign military unit from receiving American support. The United States appeared to be on the brink of blocking military aid over the human rights violations, but instead later announced that it would be delaying the potential decision while it claimed to be reviewing "newly-provided information from Israel regarding the suspected offending incidents." Before the change of course, the United States was expected to not only impose sanctions on at least one Israeli military unit, but was even considering taking measures against other military and police units credibly accused of engaging in human rights abuses.

On top of the coalition of lawyers, humanitarian watchdog organization Amnesty International has also urged President Biden to immediately suspend weapons transfers to Israel. In a new report, the group similarly contends that Israel has used the American-supplied arms against Palestinian civilians in clear violations of international law standards. They document a host of incidents in which civilians have been killed through unlawful attacks on non-combatant infrastructure. The report asserts that as a result of this, "The United States government must immediately suspend the transfer of all weapons and other articles to the Israeli government so long as compliance with international humanitarian and human rights law is not demonstrated." To date, the Biden administration has continued to provide weapons to Israel at an alarming rate, even with overwhelming and growing evidence that war crimes are being committed by Israeli forces against Palestinian civilians in Gaza using U.S. munitions. Rights activists have expressed that the alleged written assurances submitted by the Israeli government claiming they are not violating international humanitarian law are not credible or reliable, and it is regrettable that the United States is seemingly going along with this while experts detail ample evidence which points to the contrary.

The calls to suspend weapons transfers by both the group of lawyers and Amnesty International have surfaced at an apt time, as the Biden administration is facing a May 8th deadline to submit an assessment to Congress about whether or not Israel has abided by international law in its use of American-supplied weapons. Back in February, in response to increasing pressure and scrutiny regarding Israel's War on Gaza, the White House stated that it would require countries that are engaged in conflict and receive U.S. weapons support – such as Israel – to provide assurances that they will use them in accordance with international law. In the lead up to the looming Congressional deadline, a joint submission from at least four U.S. bureaus – Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor; Population, Refugees, and Migration; Global Criminal Justice; and International Organization Affairs – has raised serious concern regarding non-compliance with international humanitarian law during the course of Israel's War on Gaza.