

## Saudi Arabia condemns US Senate 'interference'

BBC News, 17 December 2018



EPA, Yemen has been devastated by a four-year conflict

**Saudi Arabia has reacted angrily after the US Senate voted to withdraw military aid for the war in Yemen, where the Saudis are leading a coalition fighting rebels.**

The Senate also blamed the Saudi crown prince for the murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi, a US resident.

Saudi Arabia described the vote as "interference" based on "untrue allegations".

Thursday's Senate resolution was mostly symbolic and is unlikely to become law.

However, it is seen as a rebuke to Donald Trump's Saudi policies.

It was the first time a chamber of the US Congress had agreed to pull US forces from a military conflict under the 1973 War Powers Act.

- [Senators rebuke Trump with Yemen vote](#)
- [Jamal Khashoggi: The story so far](#)

Saudi Arabia is leading a coalition fighting Houthi rebels in Yemen, and has received logistical and intelligence support from the US.

The kingdom has also come under pressure since Khashoggi, a US resident and columnist for the Washington Post, was killed while visiting the Saudi consulate in Istanbul in Turkey on 2 October.

### **Why is Saudi Arabia unhappy?**

In a statement carried by the official Saudi Press Agency, the foreign ministry said: "The kingdom condemns the latest position of the US Senate."

It said that such a position "was built on untrue allegations", and that Saudi Arabia rejected "any interference in its internal affairs".

Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman is Saudi Arabia's de facto leader, and the Saudi government has insisted that he knew nothing about Khashoggi's killing.

"The Kingdom has previously asserted that the murder of Saudi citizen Jamal Khashoggi is a deplorable crime that does not reflect the Kingdom's policy nor its institutions and reaffirms its rejection of any attempts to take the case out of the path of justice in the Kingdom," the foreign ministry said.

The US has so far not publicly responded to the Saudi statement.

### **What do the US Senate resolutions actually do?**

A non-binding resolution called upon Mr Trump to remove all US forces engaging in hostilities in Yemen, except for those combating Islamist extremists.

Some of President Trump's fellow Republicans defied him to pass the measure with Democrats by 56-41.

The US suspended refuelling Saudi war planes last month, and Thursday's resolution - if it were ultimately passed into law - would prohibit that practice from resuming.

Reuters



President Trump has consistently defended US business and military ties with Saudi Arabia

The Senate then unanimously passed a resolution blaming the Saudi crown prince for Khashoggi's murder, and insisting that the kingdom hold accountable those responsible.

### **What do we know about Khashoggi's murder?**

Saudi Arabia's public prosecutor has said Khashoggi was killed on the orders of a rogue intelligence officer.

Turkish officials however say they have evidence, including gruesome audio recordings, that the journalist was killed by a team of Saudi agents on orders that came from the highest levels.

His body has not yet been found.



US media have said the CIA believes the Saudi crown prince ordered his killing.

However, President Trump has dismissed the report, saying the CIA had not drawn firm conclusions.

### **Can the resolution become law?**

President Trump has vowed to veto the measures, and they are unlikely at present to pass the House of Representatives, which on Wednesday blocked a vote on the matter.

But independent Senator Bernie Sanders, who co-sponsored the measures, said he expected the resolutions to succeed once Democrats formally take over control of the House in January following their mid-term elections victory.

Senators have slammed Saudi crown prince as a 'crazy, dangerous wrecking ball'

The Trump administration had argued the bill on Yemen would undercut US support for the Saudi-led coalition against Iranian-backed Houthi rebels.

White House officials have emphasised US economic ties to the kingdom. Mr Trump's adviser and son-in-law, Jared Kushner, has continued to cultivate ties with the prince, according to the US media.

- [Yemen crisis: Hudaydah ceasefire delayed after clashes](#)
- [Why the battle for Hudaydah matters](#)
- [Why is there a war in Yemen?](#)

## **More on this story**

[Yemen war: Truce for lifeline port city of Hudaydah](#)

13 December 2018

[Yemen war: Vote in US Senate delivers rebuke to Trump](#)

29 November 2018

[Yemen war: Billions in aid, but where's it going?](#)

12 December 2018

[Yemen war: Why the battle for Hudaydah matters](#)

13 June 2018

[Yemen crisis: Why is there a war?](#)

18 December 2018