

WIN WITHOUT WAR



Progressive Foreign Policy Debrief

Intel for Advocacy

DATE: December 3, 2021

SL: [3](#) Stories, [1](#) Choice: Diplomacy or War

The Takeaway:

- This week, three developments in U.S. foreign policy exemplify the struggle between the war-first status quo and the peaceful alternatives that we're fighting for.
- Iran nuclear deal negotiations restarted in Vienna — and the pressure is on for President Biden to return to the proven path of peace.
- After a week of near-deals and collapsed negotiations, the defense authorization bill remains in limbo. But one thing's for certain: it will pump unconscionable sums of money into warmaking at a time when the world needs resources for anything but that.
- Win Without War joined 50 organizations in calling on Congress to block Biden's latest arms sale to Saudi Arabia. The vote is likely to take place next week.

This Week in the Fight for a Peace-First Foreign Policy

We'll admit it: waking up from our leftover-induced naps and jumping back into the fray on Monday wasn't easy. But jump we did, because this action-packed week saw new developments on not one, not two, but three key battles in the struggle for the future of U.S. foreign policy. While the stories are ongoing, here's where things stand:

Do or Die Diplomacy

Negotiations for a return to the Iran nuclear deal between the United States and Iran restarted this Monday. It's a good time to remember that the JCPOA **worked**...until our unilateral withdrawal. Trump's disastrous "maximum pressure" policy, by contrast, is a proven failure: pushing the Iranian government toward nuclear expansion, collectively punishing the Iranian people under a rigid sanctions campaign (particularly brutal in light of the COVID crisis), and accelerating the worst-case-scenario possibility of military conflict.

We'll say it again: Diplomacy is the **only** feasible [path forward](#). While we don't expect this round to yield a final agreement, it may be one of the last opportunities for Biden to show he's serious about reentry. To be sure, both sides bear some responsibility for the failure to reach an understanding so far, but let's remember: it was the United States that withdrew, and President Biden who delayed talks for far too long, pushing them into the Iranian elections which predictably stalled progress for months. Again and again, the Biden administration has declared their intention to re-enter the JCPOA; now's the time to turn intention into action.

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The NDAA Rollercoaster

In the last edition of the Progressive Foreign Policy Debrief, we took a [deep dive](#) into this year's National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) currently being deliberated in the Senate. While we expected movement this week, the reality has been a [rollercoaster](#) of closed-door negotiations, surprise deals, and changes of plans that have so far led... nowhere. In the Senate, most paths forward require unanimous consent, so Republicans have had a powerful tool in their arsenal to demand consideration of their own amendments — and to obstruct the process for nothing more than attempting to score political points.

Despite all the ups and downs, our [analysis](#) has remained the same: while there's room for some important policy wins, like repealing the 2002 Authorization for Use of Military Force, the NDAA overall is *disastrous* — an annual, bipartisan authorization for hundreds of billions of dollars for warmaking, stuffed to the brim with important policy decisions that are considered, negotiated, and rushed through with little public deliberation, and rubber-stamped by a large majority of Congress that would never dare standing in between the Pentagon and its money. Simply put: as a new, deadly Covid variant spreads around the world, the Senate is set to vote to authorize \$778,000,000,000 for weapons and war. So much for national *security*.

To Arm or Not to Arm Human Rights Abusers?

On Tuesday, Win Without War joined over 50 organizations in a [letter](#) to Congress opposing President Biden's [egregious](#) plans to sell \$650 million in air-to-air munitions to Saudi Arabia. The letter urged members to support Senators Rand Paul, Bernie Sanders, and Mike Lee's [joint resolution](#) of disapproval (Representative Ilhan Omar has [a companion version](#) in the House). A congressional vote of disapproval is [one way](#) that Congress can review and rebuke an executive arms sale decision. While the timing of the resolutions is unclear, a vote in the Senate could happen as soon as next week.

This weapon's sale has been framed as 'defensive'; it's far from it. This move would reinforce impunity for Saudi human rights violations in Yemen and beyond, brushing aside accountability for the murder of Jamal Khashoggi, and strengthening the Saudi-led coalition's unlawful air and sea blockade in Yemen. Already, [nearly 80%](#) of the Yemeni population is in need of humanitarian aid; [16.2 million](#) people are acutely food insecure while [7 million](#) are on the brink of famine. Join us in [demanding](#) that Congress step in where the Biden administration has failed, *by voting to stop arming human rights abusers*.

Giving ~~Tuesday~~ Friday

As you can see, we've been pretty busy this week. And on top of it all, it was also **Giving Tuesday** — think Black Friday but instead of consumerism, it's generosity and solidarity for a better world. It may not be Tuesday any more, but you can still [give here to support our critical](#)

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[work pushing back on the warmongers and arms dealers and fighting for a foreign policy rooted in peace, equity, and justice.](#) Thank you for working for peace!

BURIED LEDES

The Department of Defense has a proven track record of civilian harm, 20 years of it. This week, in the aftermath of the [Kabul](#) strike and revelations about the [Baghuz](#) cover-up, Win Without War joined a [letter](#) demanding accountability for the lives taken.

The Secretary of Defense announced an **internal [investigation](#) into the cover-up of the 2019 Baghuz strike**, a probable war crime in which 80 civilians were killed. Naturally, the Pentagon will be investigating the Pentagon, which always works out well... for the Pentagon.

The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (**FARC**) will **[no longer](#) be designated as a “foreign terrorist organization”** by the United States — a welcome step toward peace and normalization over five years since the landmark peace agreement.

“If [brutal U.S.-backed dictator] Pinochet were alive, he would have voted for me.” For most, that would be enough to know that **Chilean presidential candidate José Antonio Kast is a grave threat. For Marco Rubio, it was apparently reason to hold a [friendly meeting](#) in DC** 😬

Afghanistan’s economy is on the brink of collapse — and U.S. sanctions may just [push it over the edge](#). Leaving millions of people to suffer to punish a government they have no control over after decades of military occupation? That’s U.S. foreign policy for ya!

Call us *radicals* but we just think the United States... shouldn’t start a nuclear war. And at least some traditional security allies agree — this week, **parliamentarians from NATO member countries [called on](#) the United States to adopt a no-first-use nuke policy.**

Omicron variant? More like the Pfizer variant. **Deadly new mutations in the Covid-19 virus are yet more evidence of the [dangers](#) of global vaccine inequity** and the decisions by many wealthy governments to put pharma profits before human lives.

And finally, apparently you can’t even listen to music without [supporting](#) the war machine. **Yikes.**