

**THE INTERNATIONAL CONDEMNATIONS OF SAUDI
AMERICAN ALLIANCE CRIMES ON YEMEN**



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Supervision:

Hamoud Ahmed Muthanna
Mohamed Shams Al Din Mohamed Abbas
Radwan Mohammed Jaramh

Legal review:

Dr. Najeb Alhamly
Yahya Mohammed salah Addeen
Mohammed Qasem Al-mutawakel

preparation

Radwan Mohammed Jaramh
Yahya Mohamed Salah
Ibrahim Mohamed Zayed
Mutahar Sharaf Aldeen
Fahd Mogawad Al-Saadi

Translation

Eman Ali Ashameri

Formatting and output

Abed Abdullah Azzan
Ibrahim Mohamed Saadan

Introduction

Praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds, and prayers and peace be upon the Messenger of Allah and his family and his parents...

This documentary book in both paper and electronic form, which contained the most important reports of international condemnations of the brutal crimes committed by the coalition of aggression led by the Saudi -American regime on the Yemen of faith and wisdom, is one of the activities and events carried out by the Ministry of Justice in the framework of the judicial front to confront the brutal aggression is crimes on our country, Yemen of pride and steadfastness.

The international reports of international humanitarian and human rights organizations and institutions were recorded in this book on crimes in which all of crimes that are most dangerous to international peace and security are brought together. Which are crimes of genocide, crimes of aggression, war crimes and crimes against humanity. This international reports should be documented to inform the public opinion and the conscience of the local and international humanitarian upon those crimes.

The coalition of aggression has killed tens of thousands of innocent civilians.

Tens of thousands of civilians were also seriously injured. The aggression destroyed the life and infrastructure of Yemeni people which include civil installations, government interests, cultural property and cultural and human heritage. The aggression also used internationally banned weapons in its air and missile raids on residential buildings and commercial and industrial facilities. The aggression enforced the unjust siege and starvation of the Yemeni people, killed children and women and targeted funeral halls, wedding halls, schools and hospitals. The aggression also committed more than a thousands war crimes. That have caused mass displacement of tens of thousands of people in most of the affected areas as a result of the devastating and massive aerial bombardment. The aggression has also killed thousands of children and women of Yemeni people. Epidemics and deadly diseases spreaded as a

result of the effects of the bombardment of internationally banned weapons.

These crimes committed by the alliance of the aggression countries against Yemen, land and human, are considered as international crimes that do not fall with time. According to the international humanitarian law and the Charter of the United Nations and relevant international conventions, It confirmed the international criminal responsibility of the perpetrators of such crimes, The United Nations, especially the UN Security council, is responsible for international and legal responsibility for all such crimes and serious violations of international law. That responsibility emanates from the charter of the United Nations and the international conventions and treaties specified to the tasks and obligations of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security; In view of its failure to carry out its international role and its complicity with the alliance of States of aggression which committed, and still so far, commits the most heinous international crimes against the people of Yemen without the United Nations fulfilling its international duty to stop the aggression or take any deterrent measures, or protect the lives of Yemeni people from the crimes of alliance of unjust aggression. Unfortunately, the United Nations were seduced by the Gulf oil and money, which made it abandon its humanitarian duty and go through thousands of bodies and thousands of crimes regardless of this . It shows a clear favorite of money, Even when it tried to bring the countries of aggression on the blacklist, Saudi Arabia threatened to stop the support so it withdrew its decision in exchange for that money publicly without fear for its reputation and not ashamed of all human beings. In the sense of whoever has money can kill and destroy what he wants and how he wants!!

Despite the international silence on those crimes by the United Nations, especially the Un security council, some international humanitarian and human rights organizations such as Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, the World Health Organization, the international committee of Red Cross and Oxfam have issued explicit reports included monitoring, documenting and condemning those crimes committed by the coalition of aggression against Yemeni people. these organization blamed the international community for these crimes and demanded the prosecution of the perpetrators, the rapid

cessation of the aggression war against Yemen lift the siege. Those international organizations declared that Yemen was considered a country affected by the crimes of aggression. The convictions of international organizations are also considered as international reports that have their validity in international criminal evidence and are based on while adopting the international resolutions by Security Council and other organs of the United Nations.

At the end, we ask God Almighty to be merciful to the martyrs, heal the wounded, save the prisoners, and hasten the victory and improve the way out, and to grant the Mujahedeen and the weak with the near victory. The victory is only from God. May Allah bless our master Muhammad and his family.

Judge Mr. Ahmed Abdullah Aqbat

Minister of Justice

► *Convictions by:*



HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH





Yemen: Saudi-Led Funeral Attack Apparent War Crime

Credible International Investigation Urgently Needed

(Beirut) — A Saudi Arabia-led coalition airstrike on a crowded funeral ceremony in Yemen’s capital, Sanaa, on October 8, 2016, is an apparent war crime. The attack killed at least 100 people and wounded more than 500, including children. While military personnel and civilian officials involved in the war effort were attending the ceremony, the clear presence of several hundred civilians strongly suggests that the attack was unlawfully disproportionate.

The funeral strike underscores the urgent need for credible international investigations into alleged laws-of-war violations in Yemen, Human Rights Watch said. The United States, United Kingdom, and other governments should immediately suspend arms sales to Saudi Arabia. The coalition should urgently allow commercial flights to Sanaa, suspended in August, to allow anyone who is sick or wounded to seek medical treatment abroad.



The remains of a community hall in Sanaa, the capital of Yemen, after Saudi-led coalition warplanes attacked a funeral ceremony there on October 8, 2016. © 2016 Khaled Abdullah/Reuters

“After unlawfully attacking schools, markets, hospitals, weddings, and homes over the last 19 months, the Saudi-led coalition has now added a funeral to its ever-increasing list of abuses,” said Sarah Leah Whitson, Middle East and North Africa director. “An independent international investigation of this atrocity is needed as the coalition has shown its unwillingness to uphold its legal obligations to credibly investigate.” Human Rights Watch interviewed 14 witnesses to the attack and two men who arrived at the scene immediately after the airstrike to help with rescue efforts, among other sources, by phone, and reviewed video and photos of the strike site and weapons remnants.

On October 8, several hundred people had gathered in the al-Sala al-Kubra community hall, which has a capacity of over 1,000, for the funeral ceremony of Ali al-Rawishan, the father of the Sanaa-based administration’s interior minister, Jalal al-Rawishan. All the witnesses who spoke to Human Rights Watch said that at about 3:30 p.m., at least two air-dropped munitions penetrated the roof of the hall and detonated a few minutes apart.

Photos and video footage taken after the attack show charred and mutilated bodies strewn in and outside the hall, the building destroyed, and rescuers carrying out bodies to ambulances. A spokesman for the Sanaa-based Health Ministry, Dr. Tamim al-Shami, told Human Rights Watch on October 9 that at least 110 people had been killed and 610 wounded, but that the death toll was likely to rise because a number of bodies had been burned or mutilated beyond recognition. Human Rights Watch was unable to independently verify the ministry’s figures, but soon after the attack, Doctors Without Borders reported that six of its hospitals had treated over 400 wounded.

One witness said, “When I got there, there were more than 50 burned bodies, many where you can still tell the features, but half of their body was gone, half of their head was gone, but the others, it was very, very hard to tell who they were.”



Smoke rises from the community hall in Sanaa where Saudi-led coalition warplanes attacked a funeral on October 8, 2016. © 2016 Khaled Abdullah/Reuters

Hundreds of those killed and wounded were civilians, according to the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). One witness said that he personally knew at least 45 civilians who had been killed in the attack. At least 20 high-ranking officials affiliated with former president Ali Abdullah Saleh's General People's Congress and the Houthis, also known as Ansar Allah, as well as military and security officials, were at the funeral, and several were among the casualties. The Saudi Arabia-led coalition began an aerial campaign against the Houthis and allied forces in March 2015.

Under the laws of war, an attack is unlawfully disproportionate if it may be expected to cause incidental loss of civilian life or damage to civilian structures that would be excessive in relation to the concrete and direct military advantage anticipated from the attack. Only military personnel and civilian officials involved in military operations against the coalition would be considered legitimate targets.

Serious violations of the laws of war committed willfully — that is, intentionally or recklessly — are war crimes. The date and place of the funeral ceremony was announced on Jalal al-Rawishan's Facebook page on October

7, and would have been publicly available. The afternoon hour of the attack would have been known to be the “peak time” when the funeral ceremony, open to the public, would have been very crowded. Coalition forces should have known that while a number of high-ranking commanders would be gathered, any attack on the hall would result in massive civilian casualties.

Human Rights Watch identified the munition used as a US-manufactured air-dropped GBU-12 Paveway II 500-pound laser-guided bomb. The identification was based on a review of photos and footage of an intact guidance fin assembly with legible manufacturer’s markings and other weapon remnants. The photos and video were taken at the scene of the attack by Mwatana, a leading Sanaa-based human rights organization, journalists from the British news channel ITV, and a local activist, who visited the site on October 9.



A team from Mwatana, a leading Sanaa-based human rights organization, found munitions remnants at the community hall where Saudi-led coalition wатыlanes attacked a hrneral on October 8, 2016. © 2016 Mwatana Organization for Human Rights

Coalition sources initially denied responsibility for the attack, but the following day the coalition announced it would investigate the incident with support from the US. The BBC reported the UK also requested to be involved in the investigation. However, the coalition has not conducted previous investigations impartially or transparently, nor publicly carried out prosecutions for alleged war crimes, or provided redress for victims.

On October 12, Saudi Arabia's King Salman directed the King Salman Center for Relief and Humanitarian Aid to coordinate with the coalition, the government of Yemen, and the UN to facilitate the transfer of victims of the October 8 airstrike out of Yemen to access medical treatment abroad. The royal decree did not lift the overall ban on commercial flights into Sanaa, suspended since August.

Since March 26, 2015, the Saudi-led coalition of nine Arab countries, with direct military support from the US and assistance from the UK, has conducted numerous unlawful attacks in Yemen. Human Rights Watch has documented 58 unlawful airstrikes causing civilian loss of life and property. Other human rights organizations, as well as the UN, have documented dozens more. Between March 2015 and October 2016, 4,125 civilians had been killed and 7,207 wounded in Yemen, according to OHCHR, the majority by coalition airstrikes. OHCHR reported in August that airstrikes had been the "single largest cause of casualties" over the past year.

Saudi Arabia, which is currently running unopposed for re-election to the Human Rights Council and has previously used its position to obstruct efforts to establish an international inquiry into ongoing violations in Yemen, has no place on the UN body, Human Rights Watch said.

The US, UK, and other governments should immediately suspend arms sales to Saudi Arabia until it curbs unlawful attacks and credibly investigates those that have already occurred, Human Rights Watch said.

"The US, UK, and other coalition allies should send an unequivocal message to Saudi Arabia that they want no part in these crimes," Whitson said. "Yemeni civilians should not be asked to tolerate such madness a moment longer."

Funeral Strike

The funeral ceremony at al-Sala al-Kubra for Ali al-Rawishan, a public figure and the father of the Sanaa- based administration’s interior minister, was attended by several hundred people, including colleagues, friends, and relatives of the deceased. Funeral ceremonies of public figures in Yemen are customarily well- attended and open to all male members of the public.



Journalists and police inspect the scene at the community hall in Sanaa that Saudi-led coalition warplanes attacked on October 8, 2016. © 2016 Khaled Abdullah/Reuters

Adel al-Harish, a 41-year-old who attended the funeral with a friend, told Human Rights Watch that the hall was “crowded with people from all layers of society — military, civilian, sheikhs, dignitaries, and journalists.”

Seeing how packed the hall was, al-Harish and a friend decided to leave, but they had trouble getting out of the hall because of the crowds trying to enter.

Al-Harish said that at about 3:30 p.m., as they were walking away outside, he heard a whizzing sound from the sky, followed by a “huge explosion.” A few minutes later, another munition hit. He heard a plane and fled the scene.

Luai al-Hayouti, 27, a local government employee, was sitting at the back of the hall paying his respects to the family when he heard a munition explode. It struck the front of the hall and caused the ceiling to collapse. He said he

stood up, ran out of the hall, and away from the building.

“Yusuf” (pseudonym), a civilian official in the pro-Saleh General People’s Congress, said he was looking for a place in the hall to pray when he heard the sound of a plane and the munition hit. “The hall exploded,” he said. “I fell down. ... The flames were rising up and up- I was covered in dirt and blood.”

Abed al-Baredah, a 31-year-old doctor, said he was with his father, nephew, and four brothers inside the hall waiting to offer his condolences to the deceased’s family when an explosion threw him off his feet:

I couldn’t see anyone. — There was a lot of dust and smoke and screaming. We started running away as many others did. The back gate was closed but we broke it. We were 20 meters away from the great hall when suddenly another strike happened. I heard the sound of a plane.

Al-Baredah said he heard two more munitions detonate in the hall a few minutes apart before fleeing the area.

Abdulla al-Shami, 35, a businessman whose leg was injured in the strike, said:

I was inside sitting at the funeral when the airstrike happened— I couldn’t see who was next to me, I was looking for an exit. There were dead bodies and body parts, some people under rubble— There were children inside before the strike, but I couldn’t see anyone after the strike. It was dark. I just saw the light and ran toward it to escape.

The second munition affected people trying to enter the building to help survivors after the first bomb detonated. “Ahmed” (pseudonym), a businessman in his thirties who asked not to be identified, went to the hall shortly before 4:00 p.m. to help with the rescue effort after several of his friends who had been at the funeral called him asking him for help. He said that his cousin, who was near the hall when the first munition detonated, tried to rush in to help survivors. His cousin was thrown backward off his feet when the second munition exploded.

The scene was catastrophic. Beyond what I can explain to you or describe...

There were burned bodies and dead bodies all over the hall... When I got there, there were more than 50 burned bodies, many where you can still tell the features, but half of their body was gone, half of their head was gone, but the others, it was very, very hard to tell who they were.

“Ahmed” said he helped carry bodies out from under the debris and place them in body bags, while others on the scene tried to put out the fire raging in the hall. He saw at least seven children who had been in the hall, some of whose family members had died. He said 15 of his friends or family members, all civilians, had been killed in the strike, and at least six wounded.

Accountability

The coalition announced in a statement carried by the official Saudi news agency that its Joint Incidents Assessment Team (JIAT) would investigate the funeral strike with US support. JIAT has not met international standards for transparency, credibility, and impartiality, and the Saudi-led coalition should not only investigate but cooperate with UN investigations into the incident.

The high commissioner for human rights, Zeid Ra’ad al-Husseini, denounced the funeral attack as “outrageous” and repeated his call for an independent international inquiry into alleged violations of international human rights and humanitarian law in Yemen. The OHCHR should undertake an immediate investigation into the incident and promptly brief the UN Human Rights Council on its findings.

Despite mounting violations of international human rights and humanitarian law by all sides in the conflict in Yemen, no participating government has conducted credible investigations into alleged war crimes, as international law requires.

In September 2016, the Human Rights Council passed a resolution laying out two complementary processes for investigations, through the OHCHR itself, strengthened by the allocation of additional human rights experts, or through the Coalition-backed Yemeni National Commission set up by Presidential Decree No.13 (2015).

In the course of its work, the Yemeni commission, which reports to President Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi and does not have access to many parts of the country, has not complied with international standards of impartiality, independence, and effectiveness, Human Rights Watch said. Its first report focused almost entirely on Houthi and allied forces violations. The funeral strike will be a test of the commission’s credibility, Human Rights Watch said, but the UN should conduct its own independent investigation and report

its findings to the Human Rights Council at the earliest opportunity to ensure that all those responsible are held to account.

US Role

The US became a party to the conflict during the first months of fighting by providing specific targeting information and refueling planes during bombing raids, Human Rights Watch said. Reuters recently reported that US officials debated internally whether US support to the Saudi-led coalition made the US a co-belligerent, and were concerned that US officials could be criminally liable for war crimes committed in Yemen.



Firefighters try to extinguish a fire at the community hall in Sanaa where Saudi-led coalition watyfianes attacked a funeral on October 8, 2016. © 2016 Khaled Abdullah/Reuters

Immediately following the funeral strike, US National Security Council spokesperson Ned Price said the US was “deeply disturbed” by the incident, “which, if confirmed, would continue the troubling series of attacks striking Yemeni civilians.” Price announced the US had “initiated an immediate review of our already significantly reduced support” to the coalition and was “prepared to adjust our support.”

A thorough review of US support to the coalition is a step forward, but

does not absolve the US of potential liability for any coalition military operations in which US forces participated that resulted in war crimes, Human Rights Watch said. The review of the funeral attack should be thorough and transparent, but the US should also examine the role of its forces in other alleged unlawful attacks in Yemen. The US Congress should exercise more effective oversight over US involvement in the Yemen conflict, for instance by holding investigatory hearings during the next Congress, Human Rights Watch said.

Human Rights Watch has repeatedly documented coalition use of US and UK-produced weapons, including cluster munitions, in unlawful attacks in Yemen. The US continues to sell arms to Saudi Arabia, approving more than US\$20 billion in military sales in 2015 alone, despite increasing recognition that the coalition may use these weapons unlawfully. Three US arms sales in 2015 and 2016, worth nearly \$3 billion, involved replenishing Saudi weaponry used in Yemen.

The UK government also continues to sell arms to Saudi Arabia, despite growing parliamentary pressure over its support for Saudi Arabia's military campaign in Yemen and evidence of the use of British-made weapons in Yemen. Since March 2015, the UK has approved £2.8 billion in military sales to Saudi Arabia, according to the London-based Campaign Against Arms Trade.



Yemen: Coalition Airstrikes Deadly for Children

UN Should Create International Inquiry, Return Coalition to ‘List of Shame’



People stand at the site of a Saudi-led air strike on an outskirts of the northwestern city of Saada, Yemen, August 4, 2017.
© 2017 Reuters

(Beirut) – The Saudi-led coalition carried out five apparently unlawful airstrikes in Yemen since June 2017 that killed 26 children among 39 civilian deaths, Human Rights Watch said today. The attacks, which struck four family homes and a grocery, in one case killing 14 members of the same family, caused indiscriminate loss of civilian life in violation of the laws of war. Such attacks, when carried out deliberately or recklessly, are war crimes.

These attacks show that coalition promises to improve compliance with the laws of war have not resulted in significantly better protection for children. This underscores the need for the United Nations to immediately return the coalition to its annual “list of shame” for violations against children in armed conflict. The UN Human Rights Council should respond to continuing violations by the Saudi-led coalition, Houthi-Saleh forces, and other parties

to the armed conflict by creating an independent, international investigation into abuses at its September session.

“The Saudi-led coalition’s repeated promises to conduct its airstrikes lawfully are not sparing Yemeni children from unlawful attacks,” said Sarah Leah Whitson, Middle East director at Human Rights Watch. “These latest airstrikes and their horrible toll on children should galvanize the Human Rights Council to denounce and act to investigate war crimes, and ensure that those responsible are held to account.”

Since March 2015, the Saudi-led coalition has carried out military operations against Houthi-Saleh forces including unlawful airstrikes against homes, markets, hospitals, schools, and mosques. The UN secretary-general’s 2016 annual report on violations against children in armed conflict found that at least 785 children were killed and 1,168 wounded in Yemen in 2015, with 60 percent of the casualties attributed to the coalition.



Saudi-led coalition aircraft struck three apartment buildings in Sanaa on August 25, 2017, killing at least 16 civilians, including seven children, and wounding another 17, including eight children. After an international outcry, the coalition admitted to carrying out the attack, but provided no details on the coalition members involved in the attack.

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Human Rights Watch interviewed nine family members and witnesses to five airstrikes that occurred between June 9 and August 4, 2017, interviewed staff at a hospital, and reviewed photo and video footage taken soon after the

attacks by local residents or media outlets. The blast and fragmentation wounds of the victims and the damage patterns observed at the airstrike sites are consistent with the impact of large air-dropped bombs. Human Rights Watch did not identify military objectives in the immediate vicinity of any of the areas attacked, except for one low-ranking Houthi-Saleh fighter in his home.

On August 4, coalition aircraft struck a home in Saada, killing nine members of the al-Dhurafi family, including six children, ages 3 through 12. The coalition denied targeting the house, but said it was looking into the “unfortunate incident.” An airstrike on July 18 in a contested area of Taizz killed 14 family members, including nine children, and the Yemeni government called for an investigation. On July 3, coalition aircraft struck another home in Taizz, killing eight of Mohammed Hulbi’s relatives, including his wife and 8-year-old daughter.

The laws of war applicable to the armed conflict in Yemen prohibit deliberate or indiscriminate attacks on civilians. Attacks that are not directed at a specific military objective or cannot distinguish between civilians and military objectives are considered indiscriminate. An attack is unlawfully disproportionate if the anticipated loss of civilian life and property is greater than the expected military gain from the attack. Warring parties must do everything feasible to verify that targets are military objectives.

Individuals who commit serious violations of the laws of war with criminal intent – that is, intentionally or recklessly – may be prosecuted for war crimes. Individuals may also be held criminally liable for assisting in, facilitating, aiding, or abetting a war crime. All governments that are parties to an armed conflict are obligated to investigate alleged war crimes by members of their armed forces.

In response to international outrage over the large numbers of civilian casualties in the Yemen conflict, Saudi Arabia has claimed that the coalition has changed its targeting procedures and tightened its rules of engagement to minimize civilian casualties. However, the coalition has presented no evidence to substantiate such claims, Human Rights Watch said.

The Saudi-led coalition’s Joint Investigation Assessment Team (JIAT) has not announced investigations into any of the five airstrikes Human Rights Watch documented.

The coalition has repeatedly failed to impartially investigate alleged laws-of-war violations in Yemen. It blocks access to parts of Yemen under Houthi-control for international media and human rights organizations, continues to undercut and undermine UN and other fact-finding efforts, and routinely issues blanket denials of any responsibility for well-documented violations. These actions highlight the need for concerned governments to support a resolution at the UN Human Rights Council in September for an international inquiry into abuses by all sides, Human Rights Watch said.

“Saudi Arabia pledged to minimize civilian harm, yet coalition airstrikes are still wiping out entire families,” Whitson said. “Yemeni civilians should not be asked to wait any longer for Human Rights Council members, including Saudi allies the US and UK, to support a credible international inquiry.”

Pledges to Reduce Civilian Casualties

In response to growing global criticism of its air campaign in Yemen, the Saudi government announced it had changed its targeting procedures and tightened its rules of engagement. In June, after US President Donald Trump announced US\$110 billion in arms sales to Saudi Arabia, the New York Times reported that, ahead of the deal, Saudi Arabia provided the United States assurances, including:

- 1) adhering to stricter rules of engagement;
- 2) considering estimates of potential harm to civilians in targeting – a practice US officials told the Times the coalition had not fully integrated into its operations;
- 3) allowing US military advisers to sit in the air operations control room in Riyadh instead of in a nearby office;
- 4) bringing the total number of locations identified as presumptively non-targetable on the “no strike list” to 33,000; and
- 5) starting a \$750 million, multiyear training program with the US for the Royal Saudi Air Force and other Saudi forces on topics including human rights and avoiding civilian casualties.

In the three months since the New York Times reported the changes, there

has been no discernable reduction in unlawful coalition airstrikes. In addition to the five attacks reviewed, Human Rights Watch documented an additional apparently unlawful strike in August in which coalition aircraft destroyed three apartment buildings in Sanaa, killing 16 people, including seven children, and wounding 17, including eight children. After an international outcry, the coalition admitted carrying out the attack, but asserted that the civilian casualties were the result of a technical error. The Yemen Data Project, which uses a range of open-source data to document the number of Saudi-led coalition airstrikes in Yemen and the targets struck, said it had recorded 427 attacks on military targets in June, July, and August, and 186 coalition airstrikes that hit civilian objects.

Members of the US Congress have proposed Yemen-related amendments to the annual National Defense Authorization Act, including new US government reporting requirements on the Saudi-led coalition's adherence to the "no strike list and restricted target list" and restrictions on US arms transfers to Saudi Arabia, including prohibiting the transfer of cluster munitions. A final decision on these amendments is expected in September, and US lawmakers should support them, Human Rights Watch said.

Five Unlawful Airstrikes Harming Children

Mahda area, al-Safra district, Saada, August 4, 2017

Casualties: At least 9 civilians killed, including 7 children, and 3 wounded

At about 5 a.m. on August 4, coalition aircraft struck a house in al-Safra district, Saada, killing nine members of the same family, including six children, and wounding three, according to two witnesses, the director of a local hospital, and the International Committee of the Red Cross, whose staff members visited the village soon after the attack.

Abdulrahman al-Dhurafi, the 40-year-old general director of the Education Ministry's office in Saada, told Human Rights Watch he had just finished his morning prayers when he heard "a loud blast that shook the house." A few minutes later, a friend called to tell him his nephew's home had been attacked.

Abdulla A'dayah, 33, who sells qat and lived near the home, said he was the first person to arrive after the attack: "Immediately... I heard the voice of Taha [al-Dhurafi's nephew] calling for help from under the rubble." A'dayah took the wounded man to the hospital after he and two other men had

extricated him from the ruins of the house. “When I returned, I saw the [other men] took out others, but all of them were dead.”

Al-Dhurafi, who arrived soon afterward, said the house was “completely flattened:”

The first thing I saw when I arrived was a neighbor running out from... what remained from the destroyed house. ... He was carrying a baby girl in his arms. I didn’t recognize who she was with the dust and the blood covering her face but she looked 2-years-old maybe. ... Later I knew that this baby girl was Batool, who is two-and-a-half years old, Taha’s youngest child.

The two witnesses said that Taha al-Dhurafi, a 35-year-old farmer, lived in the house with his 27-year-old wife and their six children, ages 2 to 12, as well as his wife’s parents and their 17-year-old daughter. The attack killed his wife, all six of his children, his mother-in-law, and her daughter. Rescuers, after recovering the bodies of five children, searched “desperately” for hours for Fatima, his 3-year-old daughter, al-Dhurafi said. She was dead when they found her. He and his brother Ahmed, 28, were both burned and had fractured limbs.

Dr. Muhmmad Hajjar, the general director of Saada’s Jumhuri Hospital, said hospital ambulances went to the house immediately after the attack and that rescuers found six or seven bodies, “mostly very young children.” The hospital treated three men wounded in the attack, he said.



On July 3, the ninth day of the Eid holiday, coalition aircraft struck a home in Nobat 'Amer village, Taizz, killing eight civilians, including five children under age 10. Mohammed Hulbi, who was about 100 meters from his house during the attack, said he ran home, but “nothing was left, everything was destroyed.” © 2017 Private

The witnesses said they did not know of any military targets in the area, which included primarily family homes and agricultural land. A military camp for special forces was about a kilometer east, and a passport administration building – a civilian object – was about a kilometer south.

In a Saudi Press Agency statement, Col. Turki al-Maliki, who replaced Brig. Gen. Ahmed Assiri as the coalition spokesman on July 27, denied reports the coalition targeted the house, saying the coalition had completed an after-action review for operations conducted that day in Saada. He said the coalition was continuing to investigate in coordination with the government of Yemen and other international partners “on this unfortunate incident,” noting Houthi-Saleh forces store “weapons and explosives inside houses and civilian objects.”

Al-Ua’shira village, Mokha district, Taizz, July 18, 2017

Casualties: At least 14 civilians killed, including 9 children

At about 7:30 a.m. on July 18, coalition aircraft struck a cluster of homes in Mokha district, Taizz, said Hashem al-Buraiq, 32, who lived in the area with his wife and their five children. The attacks killed at least 14 civilians, including 9 children.

Al-Buraiq and his family had been living near the Khalid bin Waleed military camp in Taizz governorate. In April, Houthi-Saleh forces declared areas around the camp a military zone. So al-Buraiq and his family moved to a small area near al-Ua’shira village, about seven kilometers from the military camp, where about a dozen families had built homes. The UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) had recorded the three families as displaced, and the UN refugee agency released a statement noting that a number of the civilians killed in the July 18 attack were internally displaced people.

Al-Buraiq’s parents and two siblings lived next to him, as did his cousin’s widow, her eight children, and her father. The family chose the village “because we were sure that this area is safe... until they struck us,” al-Buraiq said.

Al-Buraiq’s daughter Manal, 3, and son Jawad, 9, had gone to their cousin’s house to get some yogurt for breakfast: “The airstrike hit the part of the house

where my cousin's family lives directly," he said. "The strike killed a whole family while they were eating breakfast."

Everyone in the house, including his daughter and son, were killed, as were three people in the neighboring house. In total, the attack killed 14 of al-Buraiq's relatives, including al-Buraiq's sister Aziza, 18, his brother Ahmad, 14, and his mother, his cousin's wife, six of her children, and her brother and father.

Al-Buraiq said he had understood why his cousin had been killed four months earlier while on a motorbike: the airstrike hit a military truck and he happened to be in the way. But, he did not understand this attack:

All people here are civilians, and if we thought that this place would be targeted we wouldn't have come here in the first place, but it was safe ... completely safe.

Where is the target? There is no target. Just us, no Houthis, no trucks, nothing.

OHCHR, which also investigated the attack, said that, "There do not appear to have been any military objectives anywhere in the immediate vicinity of the destroyed house." OHCHR called on the relevant authorities to investigate the incident. The Yemeni human rights minister, Mohammed Asker, called for a government investigation and described the attack as an "unfortunate incident," Reuters reported. The coalition has not announced if it will investigate the attack.

Al-Hamli village, Mawza district, Taizz, July 18, 2017

Casualties: At least 4 civilians killed, including 2 children, and 3 wounded

At about 8:30 a.m. on July 18, Saudi-led coalition aircraft struck a local grocery store in al-Hamli village, Mawza district, Taizz governorate, killing four civilians, including two children, and wounding three, two men who were at the shop said in separate phone interviews.

Ahmed Farid, 47, who owned the store, was outside the building with about six other people, including his 14-year-old son, Saleh, waiting for a late employee to come with a key.



Remnants of the weapons used in a coalition attack on Nobat 'Amer village on July 3, 2017 that killed eight of Mohammed Hulbi's relatives, including five children under age 10. Human Rights Watch identified the remnants as being from a large air-dropped bomb that was equipped with a Paveway-series guidance kit. © 2017 Private

Farid and Rashad Moqbel, a 25-year-old farmer, said the attack killed four people, including Saleh, a 16-year-old boy, and two other men, and wounded two others, including Moqbel. Two weeks after the attack, Moqbel remained in the hospital, suffering from fractured limbs and bomb fragments that had entered his body, his brother said. The shop was completely destroyed.

Both men left al-Hamli after the strike. They said they do not intend to return. "I don't think it is safe for anyone to go there," Farid said. "They may strike any moving thing."

Coalition aircraft had carried out other attacks in the area during the weeks before the attack, but the nearest military camp was about 15 kilometers away, the two men said. Another airstrike hit a gasoline station about 2.5 kilometers from the grocery store about an hour earlier. A witness said he saw a couple of Houthi fighters hiding in the area after the attack on the station.

The coalition has not announced if it will investigate the attack.

Nobat ‘Amer village, Mokha district, Taizz, July 3, 2017

Casualties: At least 8 civilians killed, including 5 children

At about 10 a.m. on July 3, the ninth day of the Eid holiday, coalition aircraft struck a home in Mokha district, Taizz, killing eight of Mohammed Hulbi’s relatives, including five children under age 10.

That morning, Hulbi, 45, a farmer, walked to a well about 100 meters from his house. His uncle was sleeping next to the well when he heard planes overhead, followed by the powerful explosion from the attack: “My uncle fell from the chair where he was sleeping. I ran to the house, but nothing was left, everything was destroyed. My uncle and I carried the remains of our family [out of the house].”

The attack killed Hulbi’s wife, Saeeda, 35, and his daughter, Amani, 8. His uncle’s two wives and four children, two girls and two boys, all under 10, were also killed. One of his uncle’s wives was eight months pregnant. After the attack, a few men affiliated with Houthi-Saleh forces drove to the house on motorbikes, ordering people not to approach the house because coalition aircraft might attack again.

A witness photographed remnants of the weapon used in the attack. Human Rights Watch identified the remnants as being from a large air-dropped bomb that was equipped with a Paveway-series guidance kit.

Hulbi said he and his uncle “didn’t leave [the area] yet, because we don’t have a place to go, but we live alone now, just me and him.” The coalition has not announced if it will investigate the attack.

Al-Qoubari neighborhood, 50th Street, Sanaa, June 9, 2017

Casualties: At least 4 civilians killed, including 3 children, and 8 wounded, including 3 children

At about 12:30 a.m. on June 9, coalition aircraft struck the home of Tawfeeq al-Sa’adi in Sanaa’s al-Qoubari neighborhood, killing four civilians, including three children and wounding eight, including three children.

Al-Sa’adi, 36, who was not home at the time, said a neighbor called him to tell him the coalition had hit his house:

I replied to him, ‘Why would they bomb my house? What do we have to bomb?’... I was shocked and in denial... I walked slowly to the house saying ‘Ya Allah Ya Allah.’ I arrived and saw the gathering of ambulances and police. At that moment, I lost my mind completely.

The attack destroyed al-Sa’adi’s home. His wife, Ghaniya, 32, and 18-month-old daughter, Khadija, and were pulled from under the rubble.

Al-Sa’adi took his wife and daughter to five different hospitals, all of which said they could not treat them, either because the hospitals were full and did not have the capacity or because they only provided care to wounded fighters. One hospital finally admitted them. The attack had fractured Khadija’s skull. Ghaniya, who was eight months pregnant, had a fractured leg, a burned back, and a bruised skull. She said: “I lost the baby, he was a boy. We wanted to name him Hassan.” Her husband said they were trying to save money for an operation for Khadija, but “we don’t have enough money to feed ourselves.”



A man sits on the rubble of a house of his relatives, destroyed by a Saudi-led coalition airstrike in Sanaa, Yemen, June 9, 2017.
© 2017 Reuters

The attack destroyed five other homes, and damaged five more, al-Sa’adi said. Al-Sa’adi’s neighbor lost four of his relatives, including three of his children, ages 8 to 13, and his wife’s 70-year-old grandmother. Six other

people in the neighborhood were wounded, including two children, he said. He provided Human Rights Watch their names and ages.

Al-Sa'adi said the area attacked was a poor neighborhood. There were no evident military targets in the vicinity, he said, although his neighbor was a low-ranking Houthi-Saleh soldier. The coalition has not announced whether it will investigate the attack.

Undermining Accountability Efforts

JIAT, the Saudi-led coalition's investigative team, has largely absolved the coalition of any wrongdoing in about two dozen strikes it has investigated. Despite the coalition's promises to pay compensation in a small number of the attacks it has investigated, it has not made any payments or concrete progress toward creating a compensation system, numerous Yemeni sources said.

Even in strikes where JIAT has found fault, it has not identified the coalition forces responsible. Human Rights Watch was unable to determine which coalition members participated in the strikes most recently investigated. Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, and Sudan are current members of the coalition; Qatar withdrew in June. In July, the UN Panel of Experts expressed concern that coalition members "are deliberately hiding behind 'the entity' of the 'Coalition' to divert and shield themselves from state responsibility for violations committed by their own forces during airstrikes." Human Rights Watch has not been able to identify any steps JIAT or coalition states have taken to hold members of their own forces accountable for laws-of-war violations.

Saudi Arabia and its allies have actively worked to avoid accountability. In 2016, then-UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon listed the coalition, along with Houthi-Saleh forces and other groups fighting in Yemen, on his annual "list of shame" for violations against children in armed conflict. The UN had documented the coalition killing and maiming children and attacking schools and hospitals, but the secretary-general removed the coalition from the list after Saudi Arabia and its allies reportedly threatened to withdraw millions of dollars of funding from critical UN relief programs, such as those serving Palestinian refugees. Coalition attacks harming children continued in Yemen throughout 2016 and into 2017. The UN should relist it in its forthcoming

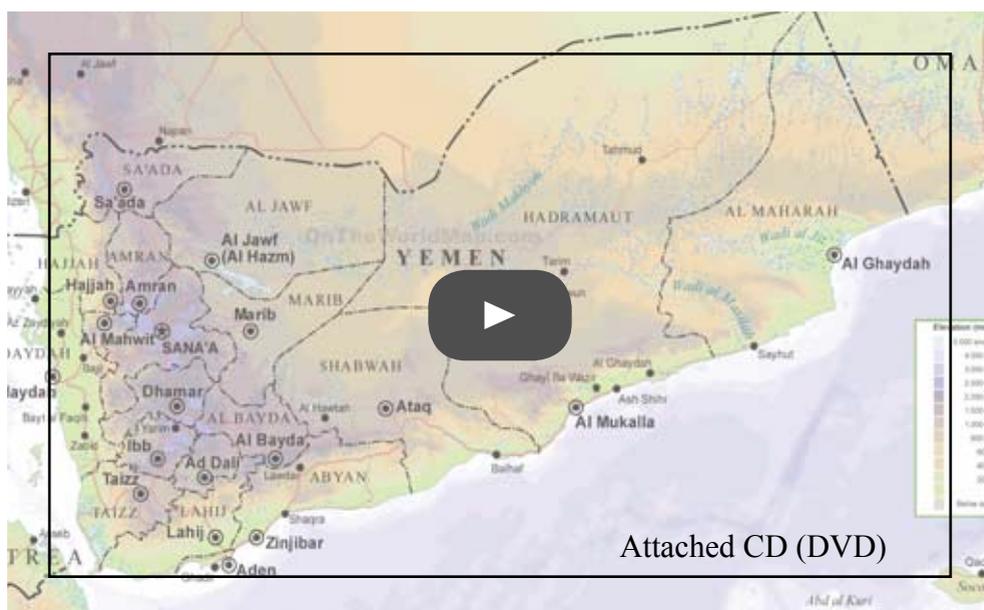
report that covers attacks on children during 2016, Human Rights Watch said.

The Human Rights Council in 2015 and 2016 failed to create an international inquiry into Yemen abuses, instead endorsing processes that over the past two years have not provided the impartial, independent, and transparent investigations needed to address the gravity of violations in Yemen. On August 29, 62 Yemeni and international nongovernmental organizations wrote to members of the Human Rights Council to urge it to create an independent.



Yemen: US Bombs Used in Deadliest Market Strike

Coalition Allies Should Stop Selling Weapons to Saudi Arabia



(Sanaa) – Saudi Arabia-led coalition airstrikes using United States-supplied bombs killed at least 97 civilians, including 25 children, in northwestern Yemen on March 15, 2016, Human Rights Watch said today. The two strikes, on a crowded market in the village of Mastaba that may have also killed about 10 Houthi fighters, caused indiscriminate or foreseeably.

Human Rights Watch conducted on-site investigations on March 28, and found remnants at the market of a GBU-31 satellite-guided bomb, which consists of a US-supplied MK-84 2,000-pound bomb mated with a JDAM satellite guidance kit, also US-supplied. A team of journalists from ITV, a British news channel, visited the site on March 26, and found remnants of an MK-84 bomb paired with a Paveway laser guidance kit. Human Rights Watch reviewed the journalists' photographs and footage of these fragments.

“One of the deadliest strikes against civilians in Yemen’s year-long war involved US-supplied weapons, illustrating tragically why countries should stop selling arms to Saudi Arabia,” said Priyanka Motaparthi, emergencies researcher at Human Rights Watch. “The US and other coalition allies should send a clear message to Saudi Arabia that they want no part in unlawful killings of civilians.



” its unlawful airstrikes in Yemen, credibly investigates alleged violations, and holds those responsible to account. Selling weapons to Saudi Arabia may make these countries complicit in violations, Human Rights Watch said.

On March 15 at about noon, two aerial bombs hit the market in Mastaba, in the northern Hajja governorate, approximately 45 kilometers from the Saudi border. The first bomb landed directly in front of a complex of shops and a restaurant. The second struck beside a covered area near the entrance to the market, killing and wounding people escaping, as well as others trying to help the wounded. Human Rights Watch interviewed 23 witnesses to the airstrikes, as well as medical workers at two area hospitals that received the wounded.

Mastaba Market and Approximate Locations of Two March 2016 Airstrikes



A United Nations human rights team visited the site the day after the attack and compiled the names of 97 civilians killed in the strike, including 25 children. The UN team said that another 10 bodies were burned beyond recognition, bringing the total number of victims to 107. Two Mastaba residents said that many members.

civilians from the market, three of whom died and were counted in the total death toll.

A witness who helped retrieve bodies said that he saw the bodies of about 10 Houthi fighters, whom he knew previously, among those killed. He said that some armed Houthi fighters regularly ate and slept in a restaurant about 60 meters from where one bomb detonated. The restaurant was not damaged. He said some residents objected to the Houthis' presence but were powerless to remove them. Human Rights Watch was not able to confirm these claims with other witnesses. The only Houthi military presence identified by Human Rights Watch during its visit was a checkpoint manned by two or three fighters about 250 meters north of the market.

On March 16, the day after the attack, the Saudi military spokesman for the coalition, Gen.Ahmad al-Assiri, said that the strike targeted “a militia gathering.

” He also noted that the area was a place for buying and selling qat, a plant widely chewed in Yemen as a mild stimulant, indicating that the coalition knew the strike hit a civilian commercial area.On March 18, al-Assiri told Reuters that the coalition used information from Yemeni military forces loyal to President Abdu Rabbu Mansour Hadi when targeting the Mastaba site.He said the Houthis “deceived people by saying it was a market.

” A graphic forwarded to Reuters prepared by Hadi’s government indicated that the target was a military area where Houthi forces had gathered but provided no further detail.

The laws of war prohibit deliberate attacks on civilians and indiscriminate attacks, which are attacks that strike military objectives and civilians or civilian objects without distinction.Attacks that are not directed at a specific military objective are considered indiscriminate.

building in the market as a barracks would have amounted to failure to take all feasible precautions to protect civilians under their control from the effects of attacks.However, this in itself would not have justified the coalition airstrikes as carried out.

Individuals who commit serious violations of the laws of war with criminal intent may be prosecuted for war crimes.Individuals may also be held criminally liable for assisting in, facilitating, aiding, or abetting a war crime.

All governments that are parties to an armed conflict are obligated to investigate alleged war crimes by members of their armed forces.

Hadi’s government announced on March 18 that it had formed a committee to look into the bombing.Human Rights Watch contacted the Yemeni human rights minister, who said that a Yemeni national investigative body created in September 2015 and based in Aden was charged with the investigation. Findings have not yet been reported.

Since March 26, 2015, a coalition of nine Arab countries has conducted military operations against the Houthi armed group and carried out numerous indiscriminate and disproportionate airstrikes.The airstrikes have continued

since the announcement of a ceasefire, to begin on April 10. The coalition, whose targeting decisions are made in the Saudi Defense Ministry in Riyadh, has consistently failed to investigate alleged unlawful attacks or to hold anyone accountable.

Human Rights Watch and other international and Yemeni groups have called for foreign governments to halt sales and transfers of all weapons and military-related equipment to parties to the conflict in Yemen if “there is a substantial risk of these arms being used...to commit or facilitate serious violations of international humanitarian law or international human rights law.

” On February 25, 2016, the European parliament passed a resolution calling on the European Union’s high representative for foreign affairs and security policy, Federica Mogherini, “to launch an initiative aimed at imposing an EU arms embargo against Saudi Arabia.

” On The US military has deployed dedicated personnel to the Saudi joint planning and operations cell to help “coordinate activities.

” US participation in specific military operations, such as providing advice on targeting decisions and aerial refueling during bombing raids, may make US forces jointly responsible for laws-of-war violations by coalition forces. As a party to the conflict, the US is obligated to investigate allegedly unlawful attacks in which it took part.

“Even after dozens of airstrikes on markets, schools, hospitals, and residential neighborhoods have killed hundreds of Yemeni civilians, the coalition refuses to provide redress or change its practices,” Motaparthy said. “The US and others should pull the plug on arms to the Saudis or further share responsibility for civilian lives lost.

Market Airstrike

At about noon on March 15, 2016, an airstrike hit the crowded market in Mastaba, in northern Yemen. It detonated in front of a line of shops selling groceries and household items, and a restaurant on the floor above the shops. Ali Ahmad Nahan, a secretary working at his home nearby, said he heard the sound of planes and ran outside. He saw two planes circling the market area,

then saw an explosion. Approximately five minutes later, he said, he saw a second explosion.

tomato seller,” he said. “It threw people everywhere. The planes went west, circled around to the south, then came back toward us. Then the second [bomb] struck, and people were just finished off.

” The second strike hit near the entrance to the market, approximately 12 meters north of a covered area containing several market stalls. Ali Abdullah Bakily, a 19-year-old high school student, was sitting in the covered market. “People ran out of the market to the north after the first strike,” he said. “But those who ran north were killed in the second strike.

” Bakily himself ran east behind the line of stores, into the village.

Mohammed Yehia Muzayid, a cleaner at the market injured in the attack, said:

When the first strike came, the world was full of blood.

People were all in pieces, their limbs were everywhere.

People went flying. Most of the people, we collected in pieces, we had to put them in plastic bags. A leg, an arm, a head. There wasn't more than five minutes between the first and second strike. The second strike was there, at the entrance to the market. People were taking the injured out, and it hit the wounded and killed them. A plane was circling overhead.

I was helping to remove the dead, trying to pick a man up to see who he was. Then the second strike hit.

Shrapnel hit me in the face. After the second strike, I just ran away. The shrapnel cut my lip and inside my mouth, I lost these teeth.

Rights Watch.

Abbas Mastabani, 35, said he had parked his car across the street from the market and was approaching it to buy some goods when the first bomb struck. He was thrown to the ground, but was able to crawl back to his car to check on his four-year-old son, Majid. He said he crawled past bodies, limbs, and livestock until he reached his car, and saw a leg was wedged under the front tire. He pulled himself up and looked through the shattered front window but

his son was no longer in the car. He then fled the site, terrified that there might be another strike and panicking about the fate of his child.

When he got home he found that a friend who had been standing by his car had grabbed his son when the first bomb hit and taken him home.

Hamid Muhammad Yahya, 25, pointed to a red scarf hanging on the remains of the roof covering the patio of the shops and restaurant: “That is Muhammad Hussein al-Aslami’s scarf. He was a qat seller at the market. We found his body on the other side of the street, about 60 meters away.

” Three witnesses gave Human Rights Watch the names of relatives whose bodies they had not been able to find even weeks after the strike. Ahmed Bakeel Abdullah, 50, a local sheikh, said that local residents found 48 body parts that they could not identify, and buried them in a pit just outside the village.

Several witnesses said that the wounded could not receive medical treatment for at least an hour because bystanders and emergency medical services could not enter the site, fearing additional strikes.

Othman Saleh, a Health Ministry official at the MSF the next five days. He and other medical staff estimated that about a quarter of the wounded had been women, a quarter children, and a quarter elderly. Saleh said his team sent medical kits to Mastaba’s healthcare center and that residents there had treated a number of the wounded.

Previous Airstrikes in the Area

Coalition airstrikes have struck the area in and around the village of Mastaba at least six times over the last eight months. Between July 16 and 19, 2015, airstrikes hit an Agriculture Ministry office, a newly constructed municipal administration building that had yet to open, and a storage hangar in the building’s backyard. Three more strikes hit the road next to the buildings as well as the local courthouse, damaging its outer wall. These government building compounds are about 800 meters from the Mastaba marketplace. One witness said that Houthi fighters had been sleeping in all three buildings leading up to the airstrikes, but he did not know how many.



small shop across from a hut being used by the Houthis as a checkpoint along the road into Mastaba village. It did not detonate or cause any casualties.

Across northern Yemen, Human Rights Watch has documented airstrikes on 11 other marketplaces. On May 12, 2015, a strike on the marketplace in the town of Zabid, along the western coast, killed at least 60 civilians. A July 4 strike on the marketplace in the town of Muthalith Ahim in the northwest, 20 kilometers from Mastaba, killed at least 65 civilians. In the northern Houthi stronghold city of Saada, the coalition has bombed at least five of the city's main marketplaces.

Coalition Airstrikes Generally

Since March 26, 2015, the UN and nongovernmental organizations have documented numerous airstrikes by coalition forces that violate the laws of war. The UN Panel of Experts on Yemen, established under UN Security Council Resolution 2140 (2013), in a report made public on January 26, "documented 119 coalition sorties relating to violations" of the laws of war.

Human Rights Watch has documented 36 unlawful airstrikes – some of

which may amount to war crimes – which have killed at least 550 civilians. Human Rights Watch has also documented 15 attacks in which internationally banned cluster munitions were used in or near cities and villages, wounding or killing civilians. Cluster munitions have been used in multiple locations in at least five of Yemen’s 21 governorates: Amran, Hajja,

Hodaida, Saada, and Sanaa. The coalition has used at least six types of cluster munitions, three delivered by air-dropped bombs and three by ground-launched rockets.



Yemen: Embargo Arms to Saudi Arabia

US, UK, France Risk Complicity in Unlawful Airstrikes



(Sanaa) – The United States, United Kingdom, France, and others should suspend all weapon sales to Saudi Arabia until it not only curtails its unlawful airstrikes in Yemen but also credibly investigates alleged violations.

Since March 26, 2015, a coalition of nine Arab countries has conducted military operations against the Houthi armed group and carried out numerous indiscriminate and disproportionate airstrikes. The airstrikes have continued despite a March 20 announcement of a new ceasefire. The coalition has consistently failed to investigate alleged unlawful attacks as the laws of war require. Saudi Arabia has been the leader of the coalition, with targeting decisions made in the Saudi Defense Ministry in Riyadh.

For the past year, governments that arm Saudi Arabia have rejected or downplayed compelling evidence that the coalition’s airstrikes have killed

hundreds of civilians in Yemen,” said Philippe Boloignon, deputy global advocacy director. “By continuing to sell weapons to a known violator that has done little to curtail its abuses, the US, UK, and France risk being complicit in unlawful civilian deaths.”

Nongovernmental organizations and the United Nations have investigated and reported on numerous unlawful coalition airstrikes. Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, and other international and Yemeni groups have issued a joint statement calling for the cessation of sales and transfers of all weapons and military-related equipment to parties to the conflict in Yemen where “there is a substantial risk of these arms being used... to commit or facilitate serious violations of international humanitarian law or international human rights law.” Human Rights Watch has documented 36 unlawful airstrikes – some of which may amount to war crimes – that have killed at least 550 civilians, as well as 15 attacks involving internationally banned cluster munitions. The UN Panel of Experts on Yemen, established under UN Security Council Resolution 2140 (2013), in a report made public on January 26, 2016, “documented 119 coalition sorties relating to violations” of the laws of war.

Saudi Arabia has not responded to Human Rights Watch letters detailing apparent violations by the coalition and seeking clarification on the intended target of attack. Saudi Arabia has successfully lobbied the UN Human Rights Council to prevent it from creating an independent, international investigative mechanism.

In September 2014, the Houthis, a Zaidi Shia group from northern Yemen also known as Ansar Allah, took control of Yemen’s capital, Sanaa. In January 2015, they effectively ousted President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi and his cabinet. The Houthis, along with forces loyal to former president Ali Abdullah Saleh, then swept south, threatening to take the port city of Aden. On March 26, the Saudi-led coalition, consisting of Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, and Sudan, began an aerial bombing campaign against Houthi and allied forces.

The UN Panel of Experts found that, “the coalition’s targeting of civilians through air strikes, either by bombing residential neighborhoods or by treating the entire cities of Sa‘dah and Maran in northern Yemen as military targets, is a grave violation of the principles of distinction, proportionality

and precaution. In certain cases, the Panel found such violations to have been conducted in a widespread and systematic manner.” Deliberate, indiscriminate, and disproportionate attacks against civilians are serious violations of the laws of war, to which all warring parties are bound. The UN panel said that the attacks it documented included attacks on “camps for internally displaced persons and refugees; civilian gatherings, including weddings; civilian vehicles, including buses; civilian residential areas; medical facilities; schools; mosques; markets, factories and food storage warehouses; and other essential civilian infrastructure, such as the airport in Sana’a, the port in Hudaydah and domestic transit routes.”



Residents sifting through the rubble of homes destroyed in an airstrike three days prior in Yareem town. The strike killed at least 16 civilians. © 2015 Ole Solvang/Human Rights Watch

The 36 unlawful airstrikes Human Rights Watch documented include attacks on schools, hospitals, and homes, with no evidence they were being used for military purposes. Human Rights Watch has collected the names of over 550 civilians killed in these 36 attacks. Amnesty International has documented an additional 26 strikes that appear to have violated the laws of war. Mwatana, one of Yemen’s leading human rights organizations, issued a report in December that documented an additional 29 unlawful airstrikes across Yemen, from March to October 2015.

Sanaa. The coalition has used at least six types of cluster munitions, three delivered by air-dropped bombs and three by ground-launched rockets. Human Rights Watch has said there should be an immediate halt to all use of

cluster munitions and that coalition members should join the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

Despite the numerous credible reports of serious laws-of-war violations, the Saudi-led coalition has taken no evident actions either to minimize harm to civilians in its air operations or to investigate past incidents and hold those responsible to account. So long as no such steps are taken, governments should not supply weapons to the leading coalition member.

The UK foreign affairs minister, Phillip Hammond, and other senior UK officials have repeatedly said that coalition forces have not committed any violations of the laws of war. On February 2, 2016, an important cross-party committee of UK members of parliament sent a letter to the international development secretary, Justine Greening, calling for immediate suspension of UK arms sales to Saudi Arabia and an international independent inquiry into the coalition's military campaign in Yemen.

On February 25, the European parliament passed a resolution calling on the European Union's High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini "to launch an initiative aimed at imposing an EU arms embargo against Saudi Arabia." On February 17, the Dutch parliament voted to impose the embargo and ban all arms exports to Saudi Arabia.

On January 31, the coalition announced the creation of a committee to promote the coalition's compliance with the laws of war. However, the military spokesman for the coalition specified that the objective of the committee was not to carry out investigations into alleged violations.

"How many more airstrikes need to wreak havoc on civilians before countries supplying aircraft and bombs to the coalition pull the plug?" Bolopion said.



UK,US Arms Support for Saudi-led Coalition

Under international law, the US is a party to the armed conflict in Yemen. Lt. Gen. Charles Brown, commander of the US Air Force Central Command, said that the US military has deployed dedicated personnel to the Saudi joint planning and operations cell to help “coordinate activities.” US participation in specific military operations, such as providing advice on targeting decisions and aerial refueling during bombing raids, may make US forces jointly responsible for laws-of-war violations by coalition forces. As a party to the conflict, the US is itself obligated to investigate allegedly unlawful attacks in which it took part. The UK government has said that though it has personnel in Saudi Arabia, they are not involved in carrying out strikes, or directing or conducting operations in Yemen, or selecting targets. UK Prime Minister David Cameron has stated that UK personnel are deployed to “provide advice, help and training” to the Saudi military on the laws of war.

For the past year, governments that arm Saudi Arabia have rejected or downplayed compelling evidence that the coalition’s airstrikes have killed hundreds of civilians in Yemen. By continuing to sell weapons to a known violator that has done little to curtail its abuses, the US, UK, and France risk being complicit in unlawful civilian deaths. ”

Philippe Boloïon

deputy global advocacy director

Largest Foreign Military Sales to Saudi Arabia

In July 2015, the US Defense Department approved a number of weapons sales to Saudi Arabia, including a US\$5.4 billion deal for 600 Patriot Missiles and a \$500 million deal for more than a million rounds of . In October, the US government approved the sale to Saudi Arabia of up to four Lockheed Littoral Combat Ships for \$11.25 billion. In November, the US signed an arms deal with Saudi Arabia worth \$1.29 billion for more than 10,000 advanced air-to-surface munitions including laser-guided bombs, “bunker buster” bombs, and MK84 general purpose bombs; the Saudis have used all three in Yemen.

According to the London-based Campaign Against Arms Trade, the UK government approved GB£2.8 billion in military sales to Saudi Arabia between January and September 2015. The weapons include 500- pound Paveway IV bombs. The UK is negotiating a £1 billion weapons deal with the UAE.

A June 2015 Spanish government report stated that Spain had authorized eight licenses for arms exports to Saudi Arabia worth \$28.9 million in the first half of the year. In February 2016, Spanish media reported that the government-owned shipbuilding company Navantia was about to sign a contract worth \$3.3 billion with Saudi Arabia for the construction of five Avante 2200 type frigates for the Saudi navy.

In July 2015, Saudi Arabia reportedly signed agreements worth \$12 billion with France, which included \$500 million for 23 Airbus H145 helicopters. The kingdom is also expected to order 30 military patrol boats by 2016 under the agreement. Reuters reported that Saudi Arabia has also recently entered into exclusive negotiations with the French company Thales Group to buy spy satellite and telecommunications equipment worth “billions of euros.”



Coalition Violations

Human Rights Watch has documented 36 airstrikes between March 2015 and January 2016, that appear to have been unlawfully indiscriminate or disproportionate, which include a March 30, 2015 airstrike on a camp for internally displaced people that killed at least 29 civilians and a March 31, 2015 airstrike on a dairy factory outside the port city of Hodaida that killed at least 31 civilians. In Saada, a Houthi stronghold in the including at least 35 children.

On May 12, the coalition struck a civilian prison in the western town of Abs, killing 25 people. On July 24, the coalition dropped nine bombs on and around two residential compounds of the Mokha Steam Power Plant, which housed plant workers and their family members, killing at least 65 civilians. On August 30, an airstrike hit Al-Sham Water Bottling Factory in the outskirts of Abs, killing 14 workers, including three boys, who were nearing the end of their night shift.

The coalition has carried out strikes on marketplaces, leading to high civilian death tolls. On May 12, a strike on the marketplace of the eastern village of Zabid killed at least 60 civilians. On July 4, an airstrike on the marketplace of the northern village of Muthalith Ahim killed at least 65. On July 6, bombs hit two markets in the governorate of Amran, north of Sanaa, killing at least 29 civilians.

On October 26, the coalition bombed a Doctors Without Borders (MSF)

hospital in the northern town of Haydan in Saada governorate six times, wounding two patients. Since then, coalition airstrikes have hit MSF facilities twice. An airstrike hit a mobile clinic on December 2, in Taizz, wounding eight, including two staff members, and killing another civilian nearby. On January 21, an airstrike hit an MSF ambulance, killing its driver and six others, and wounded dozens in Saada.

On January 10, a projectile hit an MSF-supported hospital in Saada, killing six people and wounding at least seven, most of them medical staff and patients. MSF said it could not confirm the origin of the attack, but its staff had seen planes flying over the facility at the time of the attack. MSF said on January 25, that it had yet to receive any official explanation for any of these incidents.

On May 8, 2015, Brig. Gen. Ahmad al-Assiri, the military spokesman for the coalition, declared the entire cities of Saada and Marran, another Houthi stronghold, to be military targets. In an interview with Reuters on February 1, al-Assiri spoke about Saudi civilian casualties from Houthi and pro-Saleh forces' firing across the border. He said, "Now our rules of engagement are: you are close to the border, you are killed." Treating an entire area as the object of military attack violates the laws-of-war prohibition on attacks that treat distinct military objectives in a city, town or area as a single military objective. Doing so unlawfully denies civilians protection from attack.

Human Rights Watch also documented the coalition's use of at least six types of cluster munitions in at least 15 attacks in five of Yemen's 21 governorates between March 2015 and January 2016. Cluster munitions are indiscriminate weapons and pose long-term dangers to civilians. They are prohibited by the 2008 Convention on Cluster Munitions, adopted by 118 countries, though not Saudi Arabia or Yemen.

Failure to Investigate Alleged Violations

Countries that are party to a conflict have an obligation under international law to investigate credible

On August 19, 2015, Human Rights Watch and 22 other human rights and humanitarian organizations allied on the UN Human Rights Council to create

an independent international commission of inquiry at its September session to investigate alleged laws-of-war violations by all parties to the conflict. The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights similarly called on UN member states to encourage the establishment of an “international independent and impartial” investigative mechanism.

Instead, on September 7, President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi of Yemen established a national commission to investigate violations of human rights and the laws of war. During the ensuing UN Human Rights Council session in Geneva, Saudi Arabia and other Arab countries effectively blocked an effort led by the Netherlands to create an international investigative mechanism. The national commission has taken no tangible steps to conduct investigations, nor has it revealed any working methods or plans, three people close to the commission told Human Rights Watch.

Five days after the release of UN Panel of Experts report on Yemen, on January 31, 2016, the coalition announced a new committee to assess the coalition’s rules of engagement in the war and produce recommendations for the coalition to better respect the laws of war. “The goal of the committee is not to investigate allegations,” Al-Assiri said. “Its primary goal is to confirm the precision of the procedures followed on the level of the coalition command.” As such, this proposed body does not meet the requirements for an impartial investigative mechanism that can address accountability for unlawful attacks or compensate victims of coalition violations, Human Rights Watch said.

Al-Assiri said that the Saudi military has been conducting internal investigations into attacks in which a violation might have ensued, and pointed to a single airstrike that had led to a violation: the October 26, 2015 bombing of an MSF hospital in northern Yemen. He said the strike had been the result of “human error,” but did not outline any steps taken to hold the responsible military personnel to account, or compensate the two civilians wounded in the strike.



February 14, 2016

Technical Briefing Note: Cluster Munition Use in Yemen

This Technical Briefing Note reviews the use of cluster munitions in the conflict in Yemen since a Saudi Arabia-led coalition of nations began military operations against Ansar Allah (Houthi forces) on March 26, 2015. This is not the first time cluster munitions have been used in Yemen. Previously, Saudi Arabia and the United States, and likely the Yemeni government in different parts of the country in 2009.

Since March 2015, Human Rights Watch has recorded incidents involving six types of airdropped and ground-launched cluster munitions in multiple locations in at least five of Yemen's 21 governorates: Amran, Hajja, Hodaida, Saada, and Sanaa. Human Rights Watch believes the Saudi Arabia-led coalition of states operating in Yemen is responsible for of cluster munitions. However, in one case involving one type of ground launched cluster munition (the ZP-39), both Coalition and Houthi forces possess weapon systems capable of delivering it so it is not possible at this time to attribute responsibility for its use.

Human Rights Watch and others documented numerous civilian casualties from the use of cluster munitions, both at the time of attack and afterwards as unexploded submunitions were encountered. For example, a series of cluster munition rocket attacks in Yemen's northwestern Hajja governorate between late April and mid-July 2015 killed at least 13 people, including three children, and injured 22 people at the time of attack and three more after the attack from unexploded submunitions.

Neither Yemen nor Saudi Arabia and the other countries participating in the coalition are party to the 2008 Convention on Cluster Munitions, the international treaty banning cluster munitions. A total of 118 countries have signed and 98 have ratified the treaty. Human Rights Watch is a co-founder of the Cluster Munition Coalition and serves as its chair.

Methodology

This Technical Briefing Note draws on evidence collected, including witness accounts, in the course of field investigations by Human Rights Watch researchers in Yemen. It also reviews evidence from a number of

other sources, including:

- Photos and testimony collected and by Amnesty International;
- Video and still photographs provided to Human Rights Watch by individual Yemeni citizens;
- Threat information shared with Human Rights Watch by international demining experts and armament research specialists;
- Cluster Munition Monitor 2015 Yemen profile.

Types of Cluster Munitions

At least six types of cluster munitions have been used in Yemen since March 2015: four types of air-dropped bombs and two types of ground-launched rockets. This includes an unknown system used to deliver “ZP 39” submunitions.

Cluster munitions used in Yemen since March 2015

Type of cluster munition	Governorate and date first used	Stocks possessed by
Air-dropped		
CBU-105 Sensor Fuzed Weapon that deploy 10 BLU-108 canisters, each releasing four submunitions called “skeet” by the manufacturer.	Saada (Apr 2015) Sanaa (May 2015) Amran (Jun 2015) Hodaida (Dec 2015)	Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates
CBU-87 bomb, each containing 202 BLU-97 submunitions Ground-launched	Saada (May 2015)	Saudi Arabia
ASTROS II rocket, each containing up to 65 submunitions	Saada (Oct 2015)	Bahrain, Saudi Arabia
M26 rocket, each containing 644 M77 Dual Purpose Improved Conventional Munition (DPICM) submunitions	Hajja (Apr 2015) Saada (Jul 2015)	Bahrain, Egypt, United Arab Emirates
“ZP 39” DPICM submunition (delivery system not known)	Saada (Apr 2015)	Not known

Four types of the cluster munitions used in Yemen were manufactured in and exported by the United States, while the ASTROS II rocket was produced in Brazil. The country of origin for the ZP 39 submunition and its delivery system is not known. Photographs circulated on social media in January 2016 showed the remnants of UK-manufactured BL755 cluster bombs and their

submunitions, reportedly situated in Yemen, but Human Rights Watch has not been able to verify the photographs or attain additional evidence to confirm use.

Cluster Munition Attacks in Yemen since March 2015 Documented by Human Rights Watch

Location	Date of Attack	Cluster Munition Type	Submunition Type
Al-Shaaf, Saada	April 17, 2015	CBU-105	BLU-108 skeet
Al-Amar, Saada	April 27	CBU-105	BLU-108 skeet
Baqim, Saada	April 29	Unknown	ZP-39 DPICM
Sanhan, Sanaa	May 29	CBU-105	BLU-108 skeet
Al-Nushoor, Saada	May 23	CBU-87	BLU-97
Al-Maqash, Saada	May 23	CBU-87	BLU-97
Al-Hazzan, Hajja	Late May/Early June	M 26	M 77 DPICM
Malus, Hajja	June 7	M 26	M 77 DPICM
Harf So_an, Amran	June 29	CBU-105	BLU-108 skeet
Dughayj, Hajja	Late June/Early July	M 26	M 77 DPICM
Al-Qufi, Hajja	July 14/15	M 26	M 77 DPICM
Haradh, Hajja	July 25	M 26	M 77 DPICM
Al-Fajj, Hajja	July 25	M 26	M 77 DPICM
Ahma, Saada	October 27	ASTROS II	ASTROS II
Al-Hayma Port, Hodaida	December 12	CBU-105	BLU-108 skeet
Sanaa	January 6, 2016	CBU-58	BLU-63

Responses to the Use of Cluster Munitions

While the government of Saudi Arabia has not issued a formal statement or response to confirm or deny the reports that the Saudi-led coalition used cluster munitions in Yemen, the coalition's principle military spokesperson Brig. Gen. Ahmed Asiri has commented on the matter in several interviews. In January 2016, Asiri told CNN that the Saudi Arabia-led coalition has used cluster munitions once and described the use of airdropped CBU-105 Sensor Fuzed Weapons to attack a camp in Hajja governorate in April 2015. Asiri has denied other instances of use by the coalition, most notably a January 6, 2016 cluster bomb attack on Yemen's capital Sanaa.

Saudi Arabia has used cluster munitions in Yemen.”

The use of cluster munitions in Yemen has received worldwide media coverage, public outcry, and been condemned by more than a dozen states, including Costa Rica as president of the Fifth Meeting of States Parties of the Convention on Cluster Munitions. At the convention's First Review Conference in Dubrovnik, Croatia, in September 2015, states also condemned the use of cluster munitions in Yemen and a declaration condemning any use of cluster munitions by any actor. The United Nations, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and the Cluster Muniton Coalition have also condemned the use of cluster munitions in Yemen. A resolution adopted by the European Parliament (EP) on July 9, 2015 condemned the Saudi-led coalition airstrikes in Yemen, including the use of cluster bombs. This Briefing Note provides summary information on cluster munition attacks in Yemen.

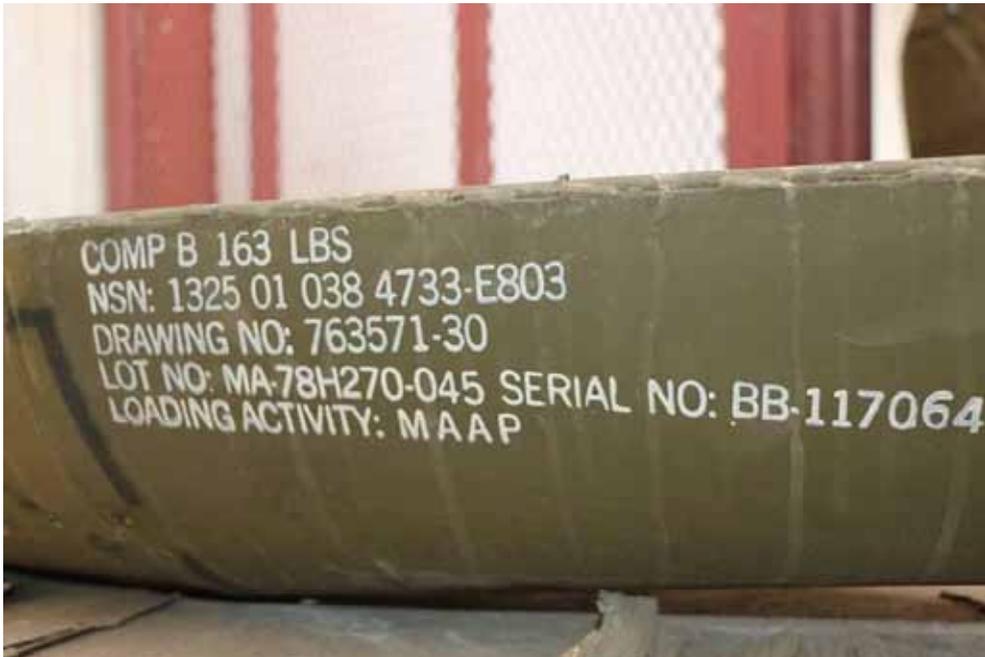


January 7 2016

Yemen: Coalition Drops Cluster Bombs in Capital

Indiscriminate Weapon Used in Residential Areas

(Beirut) – -led coalition forces airdropped cluster bombs on residential neighborhoods in capital, Sanaa, early on January 6, 2016. It is not yet clear whether the attacks caused civilian casualties, but the inherently indiscriminate nature of cluster munitions makes such attacks serious violations of the laws of war. The deliberate or reckless use of cluster munitions in populated areas amounts to a war crime.



Markings on a remnant of a CBU-58 cluster bomb found near al-Zira`a Street in Sanaa on January 6, 2016 indicating that it was manufactured in

“The coalition’s repeated use of cluster bombs in the middle of a crowded city suggests an intent to harm civilians, which is a war crime,” said , arms director at Human Rights Watch. “These outrageous attacks show that the coalition seems less concerned than ever about sparing civilians from war’s horrors.” Residents of two Sanaa neighborhoods described aerial attacks consistent with cluster bomb use. A resident of al-Zira`a Street told Human Rights Watch that his family was awakened at 5:30 a.m. on January 6 by dozens of small explosions. He said that he had been at work, but that his wife told him that when the family fled they saw many homes and a local kindergarten with newly pockmarked walls and broken windows.

The coalition’s repeated use of cluster bombs in the middle of a crowded city suggests an intent to harm civilians, which is a war crime.

These outrageous attacks show that the coalition seems less concerned than ever about sparing civilians from war’s horrors.

” Steve Goose, arms director.

A resident of Hayal Sayeed, another residential neighborhood, described hearing small explosions at around 6 a.m. He went out on the street, he said, and saw more than 20 vehicles covered in pockmarks, including his own, as well as dozens of pockmarks in the road. He said that at least three houses in the area had pockmarked walls and broken windows. He found a fragment in his car, he said. garage used by military guards, were about 600 to 800 meters from the al-Zira`a Street neighborhood. Even if the attacks were directed at the military targets, the use of cluster munitions meant they were still unlawful, Human Rights Watch said.

The al-Zira`a Street resident said that at the time of the attack he had been at his office, about 2 or 3 kilometers from Hayal Sayeed and 5 kilometers from al-Zira`a Street. Every 10 to 15 minutes he heard small explosions, until about 1:30 p.m. “These did not sound like regular gunfire,” he said. “I asked my colleagues if they could hear them too - they said yes.”

A third cluster bomb attack on January 6 was on social media by residents of Sanaa’s al-Thiaba neighborhood, although Human Rights Watch could not confirm this.

Human Rights Watch viewed photographs taken on January 6 in Sanaa that showed unmistakable remnants of cluster munitions, including unexploded submunitions, spherical fragmentation liners from submunitions that broke

apart on impact, and parts of the bomb that carried the payload.

Human Rights Watch identified the munitions as from US-made BLU-63 antipersonnel/anti-materiel submunitions and components of a CBU-58 cluster bomb. Markings on the bomb remnants indicate that it was manufactured in 1978 at the Milan Army Ammunition Plant in the state of Tennessee in the and 1995, according to US export records obtained by Human Rights Watch. The US is a party to the armed conflict in Yemen, playing a direct role in coordinating military operations, and as such, is obligated to investigate alleged violations of the laws of war in which its forces took part.

The CBU-58 cluster bomb and BLU-63 submunition were developed by the US during the Vietnam War and are designed to attack personnel and lightly protected materiel. The submunitions also contain 5-gram titanium pellets that produce an incendiary effect on flammable targets.

In 2015, Human Rights Watch the use by coalition forces of three types of cluster munitions in Yemen. Amnesty International the coalition's use of a fourth type. A fifth type of cluster munition has been used, but the user's identity is unclear. A US Defense Department official, speaking on the condition of anonymity, U.S. News and World Report in August that "the U.S. is aware that Saudi Arabia has used cluster munitions in Yemen."



BLU-63 submunitions that broke apart on impact after being dispersed by CBU-58 cluster bombs in the Hayal Sayeed neighborhood of Sanaa on January 6, 2016. © 2016 Private



December 8, 2016

Saudi Coalition Airstrikes Target Civilian Factories in Yemen

Unlawful Attacks Harm Economy, Show Need for Victim Compensation



Attached CD (DVD)

(Beirut) – Saudi Arabia-led coalition airstrikes have unlawfully hit numerous factories, warehouses, and other civilian economic structures in Yemen, Human Rights Watch said in a report released today. In the absence of credible and impartial investigations in Yemen, Saudi Arabia and other coalition members should agree to an independent international inquiry into these and other allegedly unlawful attacks.



The 59-page report, “Bombing Businesses: Saudi Coalition Airstrikes on Yemen’s Civilian Economic Structures,” examines in detail 17 apparently unlawful airstrikes on 13 civilian economic sites, including factories, commercial warehouses, a farm, and two power facilities. These strikes killed 130 civilians and injured 171 more. Collectively, the facilities employed over 2,500 people; following the attacks, many of the factories ended their production and hundreds of workers lost their livelihoods. Further, with more than 20 million people in desperate need of humanitarian aid, the strikes on factories are contributing to the shortages of food, medicine, and other critical needs of Yemen’s civilians. Taken together, the attacks on factories and other civilian economic structures raise serious concerns that the Saudi-led coalition has deliberately sought to inflict widespread damage to Yemen’s production capacity, Human Rights Watch said. emergencies researcher and author of the report. “Saudi Arabia and other coalition members have shown no interest in investigating unlawful attacks, or even compensating the victims for lives and property lost.”

Human Rights Watch interviewed victims and witnesses at the sites in the Sanaa and Hodaida governorates in March 2016, searched for possible military targets in the vicinity, and examined remnants of munitions found.

Until Saudi Arabia ceases unlawful strikes and either conducts investigations that meet international standards or agrees to an independent international inquiry, Saudi Arabia should be suspended from membership on the United Nations Human Rights Council. Human Rights Watch is not aware of any credible investigations by Saudi Arabia or other coalition members into these or other allegedly unlawful strikes, nor of any compensation for victims.

Raouf Mohammed al-Sayideh, a 25-year-old worker at a sewing and embroidery workshop hit in one attack, described rescuing fellow workers: “I heard the bang and came ...to look for the other [injured] workers.... One wreckage] was the [16-year-old] boy.... his legs got stuck between these two large blocks... his body was charred.”

Each of the attacks appeared to violate international humanitarian law, or the laws of war. Some may amount to war crimes.

The laws of war prohibit deliberate attacks on civilian objects, attacks that do not discriminate between military targets and civilian objects, and attacks that disproportionately harm civilian objects compared with the expected military gain. Civilian objects include factories, warehouses, and other commercial enterprises so long as they are not being used for military purposes or become a military objective. Attacks on civilian objects committed willfully – deliberately or recklessly – are war crimes.

On March 26, 2015, the Saudi Arabia-led coalition – consisting of Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, and Sudan – with United States participation, began an aerial campaign against Houthi and allied forces. The report documents strikes on civilian economic structures from the beginning of the aerial campaign to February 2016.

Parties to the Yemen conflict declared a cessation of hostilities on April 10, and began peace talks in Kuwait later that month. Though the level of violence in the country diminished after the ceasefire formally went into effect, both airstrikes and fighting on the ground have continued. On May 25, a coalition airstrike hit a water bottling factory in Lahj, injuring two workers.

precarious condition,” pointing to “an alarming scarcity of basic food items” in Yemen. The airstrikes have compounded an already bleak situation in which more than 80 percent of Yemen’s population requires some form of assistance, Human Rights Watch said.

On May 27, the Saudi government issued a statement asserting that coalition forces “have fully complied with international humanitarian law and international human rights law in their military operations.” The statement noted that, “where claims about targeting of civilians [or] civilian facilities... are made, investigations are conducted by a separate and distinct investigation team established at Coalition Air Force [headquarters].” However, the government provided no public information to verify these claims, and Human Rights Watch has found no evidence to support them. Saudi officials did not respond to repeated requests for information regarding the intended target of airstrikes documented in this or prior reports, or the progress of any investigations.

The repeated coalition airstrikes on civilian factories appear intended to damage Yemen’s shattered economy long into the future. Saudi Arabia and other coalition members have shown no interest in investigating unlawful attacks, or even compensating the victims for lives and property lost. ”

Priyanka Motaparthi

Senior Emergencies Researcher

June 2015, a US military spokesperson stated that the US was helping the coalition with “intelligence support and intelligence sharing, targeting assistance, advisory support, and logistical support, to include aerial refueling with up to two tanker sorties a day.”

In March 2016, a US official stated, “The things we are doing, providing intelligence and precision guided munitions, those are things that prevent civilian casualties.” Human Rights Watch found remnants of US laser-guided or satellite-guided munitions used at three strike sites, two of which involved civilian casualties.



The United Kingdom also assisted the Saudi-led coalition by “providing technical support, precision guided weapons and exchanging information with the Saudi Arabian armed forces,” the Defence Ministry said. Human Rights Watch found remnants of UKmanufactured guided munitions at two strike sites – including one munition produced in May 2015 after the start of the aerial campaign – and the remnants of a UKmanufactured cruise missile that killed or injured civilians at a third site.

Human Rights Watch and other international and Yemeni groups have called for foreign governments to halt sales and transfers of all weapons and military related equipment to parties to the conflict in Yemen if “there is a substantial risk of these arms being used...to commit or facilitate serious violations of international humanitarian law or international human rights law.”

“The US and UK have largely deferred to the Saudis to investigate unlawful strikes despite little reason for confidence these investigations will be diligently carried out or the results made public,” Motaparthly said.



This attack took place on May 25, 2016, and is included as a supplement to the report. On May 25, starting at about 4 a.m., coalition aircraft dropped between eight and 10 bombs on the Radfan mineral water bottling factory. The factory was closed for the night, but some workers sleep onsite. The bombs hit the factory over a period of about 20 minutes, wounding two employees. The strike damaged generators, a production line, and multiple buildings in the factory compound, including the workers' sleeping quarters.

One factory employee told Human Rights Watch:

Three company employees interviewed said that the factory contained no weapons or military supplies. The airstrike caused extensive damage to the factory, which stopped operating after the attack. The factory employed about 300 workers, who are left without income.

Airstrikes also hit three houses in a nearby village, killing at least six civilians – including four children and a woman – and wounding four others – three more children and another woman – according to one of their relatives. The relative thought the airstrikes targeted homes of al-Qaeda members in the area, and said that his cousin, who died in the strikes, lived next door to an al-Qaeda member.

Human Rights Watch reviewed photographs of the site and of munition

remnants taken by factory employees, and identified the remains from a Paveway laser-guided Mk-82 (500-pound) bomb. The attack on the water bottling factory was unlawful so long as it was not being used for military purposes, such as to produce or store goods intended for military use.

Coalition-allied forces control the area where it is located, so employees and factory management considered the area safe, two employees said. One of the employees also said the area had not previously been targeted by airstrikes. Military officers affiliated with the employees that they found any military goods or had concerns regarding the factory.

Case Study: Coca-Cola Factory, Sanaa City

This case study is excerpted from the report.

On December 12, 2015, starting at 8:25 p.m., coalition aircraft dropped three bombs on a Coca-Cola factory off the Airport Road in northern Sanaa. The bombs hit the factory over several minutes, wounding five employees. They destroyed raw materials used to produce soft drinks, a generator, and both the glass and plastic bottling lines. The attack appeared to violate the laws of war.



December 8, 2016

Yemen: Hiding Behind Coalition's Unlawful Attacks

Lack of Transparency Underscores Need for International Inquiry



Saudi-led coalition aircraft struck three apartment buildings in Sanaa on August 25, 2017, killing at least 16 civilians, including seven children, and wounding another 17, including eight children. After an international outcry, the coalition admitted to carrying out the attack, but provided no details on the coalition members involved in the attack. © 2017 Mohammed al- Mekhlafi

Members of the Saudi-led coalition have sought to avoid international legal liability by refusing to provide information on their role in alleged unlawful airstrikes in Yemen, Human Rights Watch said today. In 2017, Human Rights Watch wrote to the coalition and its current and former members urging them to release information on their investigations and findings of laws-of-war violations as required by international law. None have replied.

The coalition's unwillingness to conduct serious investigations into alleged

violations of the laws of war was evident in its response to airstrikes on apartment buildings in Sanaa, the capital, on August 25 that killed or wounded more than two dozen civilians.

“No coalition member can claim clean hands in Yemen until all its members explain their role in scores of documented unlawful attacks,” said Sarah Leah Whitson, Middle East director at Human Rights Watch. “It borders on the absurd for the coalition to claim its own investigations are credible when it refuses to release even basic information like which countries participated in an attack and whether anyone has been held accountable.”

Two family members of victims of the August 25 attack reported that coalition aircraft struck three apartment buildings in Faj Attan, a densely populated neighborhood of the capital, killing at least 16 civilians and wounding 17. After an international outcry, the coalition admitted carrying out the attack, but, as in previous apparently unlawful airstrikes, did not provide details on the coalition members joining the attack or the countries undertaking any investigation.

At about 2 a.m. on August 25, Muhammad Mea’sar, in his thirties, went up to the roof of his home in Sanaa after hearing an airstrike. He said there were four airstrikes, each about two to three minutes apart. The first three hit the Faj Attan mountains on the outskirts of Sanaa, where there are stockpiles of Yemeni army weapons under the control of the opposing Houthi-Saleh forces, who control the area. The coalition has hit the mountains repeatedly during the two-and-a-half-year conflict.

The fourth strike hit the neighborhood below, Mea’sar said: “People live there, people from Sanaa, and a lot of displaced people from different governorates. I saw the smoke coming from the middle of the houses.” Mea’sar later learned that the coalition had hit a three-story building he owned, and two four-story buildings his aunts owned. He said his aunt’s buildings “were gone.” The buildings “became only rubble, dust, and casualties.”

Ali al-Raymi, a 32-year-old Ministry of Oil and Minerals employee, was messaging his younger brother as the August 25 attacks began. Six months earlier, his brother, with his wife and six children, had moved to a cheaper apartment in the neighborhood below the mountains. His brother texted him that the sounds of the first attacks terrified his children.

Ali al-Raymi said that when his brother stopped messaging him: “I took my mom’s phone and started calling my brother. He was not answering. I called him many times, brother’s. Another brother guided him over the phone to the spot where the house should be. “It was rubble,” al- Raymi said. “I told him not to call our mother.” very nervous. I felt something bad may have happened.” Al-Raymi called a friend in the area and “heard the noise of ambulances and people saying take him out! ... Take him out! ... Help this one ... Help that one.” Al-Raymi immediately walked to the area and “found destruction.” He said the area was so chaotic and the devastation so complete that he could not tell which home was his brother’s. Another brother guided him over the phone to the spot where the house should be. “It was rubble,” al- Raymi said. “I told him not to call our mother.”

The airstrike killed al-Raymi’s brother, his sister-in-law, five of their six children, ages 2 through 10, and his sister-in-law’s brother. Only the family’s 6-year-old daughter survived. Al-Raymi stayed to help with the rescue effort. The rescuers found his brother last, at about 5 p.m., after more than 14 or 15 hours of continuous searching.

Mea’sar compiled for Human Rights Watch a list of the names, ages, genders, and hospitals where people were taken: 16 people were killed in the attack, including 7 children ranging in age from 2 to 13, and 17 wounded, including 8 children. Two of Mea’sar’s cousins, ages 3 and 12, were among those killed.

The coalition said that it carried out the attack, but asserted that the civilian casualties were the result of a technical error and that it had targeted a “legitimate military objective” – a command-and-control center that Houthis-Saleh forces built “with the sole purpose of using the surrounding areas as well as its civilians as shields to protect it.” The coalition spokesperson said it had referred the case to the Joint Incidents Assessment Team (JIAT), the coalition’s investigative mechanism, which has, to date, largely absolved the coalition of wrongdoing. The coalition spokesperson did not provide any details regarding which countries’ forces may have participated in the attack. The International Committee of the Red Cross called the attack “outrageous,” and said there was no apparent military target in the area.

Related Content

Letters from HRW on Investigating Alleged Laws-of-War Violations in Yemen

The coalition currently consists of Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates (UAE), Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, and Sudan; Qatar withdrew in June. The coalition has conducted thousands of airstrikes in Yemen since March 2015, including scores that appear to violate the laws of war, some of which may be war crimes, yet JIAT and coalition members have provided no or insufficient information about the role that particular countries' forces are playing in alleged unlawful attacks.

While Saudi Arabia leads the coalition, available information shows that other countries have participated in the military campaign to varying degrees. In March 2015, the Emirati State news agency reported that Saudi Arabia had deployed 100 aircraft to take part in coalition operations, the UAE had deployed 30, Kuwait 15, Bahrain 15, and Qatar 10. Media and policy reports have provided some detail on specific incidents in which coalition members have played a role in the air campaign: In May 2015, a Moroccan F-16 aircraft crashed while on a mission in Yemen. In December 2015, both a Bahraini F-1 jet and a Jordanian pilot flying an F-16 carrying out coalition operations crashed. In 2015, Egypt conducted airstrikes on Yemen's western coast. In March 2017, after a helicopter attacked a boat carrying Somali migrants and refugees off the coast of Hodeida, killing and wounding dozens, a member of the UAE armed forces said the UAE was operating in the area but denied the UAE carried out the attack.



Bombing Businesses

Saudi Coalition Airstrikes on Yemen's Civilian Economic Structures



Summary

Since March 26, 2015, Saudi Arabia has led a coalition of nine Arab countries in a military campaign against Houthi forces in Yemen. These operations have had the military support of the United States, the United Kingdom, and other countries. The fighting has resulted in more than 3,200 civilian deaths, over 60 percent of them from coalition airstrikes, according to the United Nations. Another 5,700 civilians have been wounded in the conflict. Airstrikes have damaged or destroyed numerous civilian objects including homes, markets, hospitals, and schools, as well as commercial enterprises, the subject of this report.

This report documents coalition airstrikes between March 2015 and February 2016 on 13 civilian economic structures including factories,

commercial warehouses, a farm, and two power stations. These strikes killed 130 civilians and injured 171 more. The facilities hit by airstrikes produced, stored, or distributed goods for the civilian population including food, medicine, and electricity—items that even before the war were in short supply in Yemen, which is among the poorest countries in the Middle East. Collectively, the facilities employed over 2,500 people; following the attacks, many of the factories ended their production and hundreds of workers lost their livelihoods.

Each of these attacks appeared to be in violation of international humanitarian law, or the laws of war. The laws of war prohibit deliberate attacks on civilian objects, attacks that do not discriminate between military targets and civilian objects, and attacks that disproportionately harm civilian objects compared to the expected military gain of the attack. Civilian objects include factories, warehouses and other commercial enterprises so long as they are not being used for military purposes or become a military objective. Those attacks on civilian objects that were committed willfully – deliberately or recklessly -- are war crimes.

Taken together, the attacks on factories and other civilian economic structures raise serious concerns that the Saudi led coalition has deliberately sought to inflict widespread damage to Yemen's production capacity.

Human Rights Watch identified munitions used at six of the sites visited: the United States produced or supplied four types of munitions identified, and the United Kingdom produced or supplied two types, including a Paveway IV guided bomb produced in May 2015, after the start of the coalition's aerial campaign.

This report is based on Human Rights Watch field research in the Yemeni capital, Sanaa, and the governorate of Hodaida in March 2016. Human Rights Watch interviewed 37 witnesses at the sites, searched for possible military targets in the vicinity, and examined remnants of munitions found. The report also includes details of previously documented airstrikes on civilian economic structures.

According to the Sanaa Chamber of Commerce and Industry, coalition airstrikes damaged or destroyed at least 196 business establishments between March 26, 2015, and February 17, 2016. The Chamber of Commerce provided

Human Rights Watch with a list of 59 specific factories, warehouses, and other civilian economic structures hit by coalition airstrikes, along with the dates they were struck, and their locations. Other than the sites discussed in this report, Human Rights Watch was not able to corroborate this information or determine which of these sites were being used for military purposes and thus were legitimate military targets. The Chamber did not report on Houthi or allied forces' alleged use of economic sites for military purposes.

Even before the Saudi-led air campaign, Yemen was a country in which many people survived on the slimmest of margins. Since the campaign started Yemeni civilians have suffered both as a direct result of the armed conflict, and from the coalition blockade and obstacles to the delivery of humanitarian assistance. According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), one year after the armed conflict escalated across Yemen, an estimated 21.2 million people -- some 82 percent of the total population -- required some form of humanitarian assistance. the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), one year after the armed conflict escalated across Yemen, an estimated 21.2 million people -- some 82 percent of the total population -- required some form of humanitarian assistance.

The added impact of attacks against civilian economic structures on the population is not clear. However, since the Saudi-led aerial campaign began, food, medicines, and other consumer staples have grown scarcer and dramatically increased in price. Families regularly told Human Rights Watch that the increased price of food, transport, and medicine made it difficult or impossible for them to afford basic needs. Workers whose workplaces came under attack lost their incomes, and told Human Rights Watch they struggled to make ends after their workplaces laid off employees or shut down, and as commodity prices climbed.

Parties to the Yemen conflict declared a cessation of hostilities on April 10 and began peace talks in Kuwait later that month. Though the level of violence in the country diminished after the ceasefire formally went into effect on April 11, both airstrikes and fighting on the ground have continued. Negotiations to end the conflict continue; arriving in Kuwait on June 26, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon warned that “the economy is in precarious condition,” pointing to “an alarming scarcity of basic food items.”

Any peace agreement should address accountability for violations of the laws of war by all parties to the conflict. This includes the members of the coalition, consisting of five members of the Gulf Cooperation Council—Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates—as well as Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, and Sudan. Houthi forces and their allies are also parties to the conflict, notably military forces loyal to former president Ali Abdullah Saleh, who was compelled to leave office in February 2012. Other forces involved in the conflict include pro-coalition militias in southern Yemen and Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP).

The United States has been a party to the conflict since the first months of the fighting. In June 2015, a US military spokesperson stated that the United States was helping the coalition with «intelligence support and intelligence sharing, targeting assistance, advisory support, and logistical support, to include aerial refueling with up to two tanker sorties a day.» In May 2016, the US acknowledged that it had deployed troops in Yemen in a combat role against AQAP.

The United Kingdom is “providing technical support, precision-guided weapons and exchanging information with the Saudi Arabian armed forces,” according to the UK Ministry of Defence.

Saudi Arabia has successfully lobbied the UN Human Rights Council to prevent it from creating an independent, international investigative mechanism. Human Rights Watch is not aware of any credible investigations by Saudi Arabia or other coalition members into these or other allegedly unlawful strikes, nor of any compensation provided to victims. In May 2016 the US Ambassador to the UN, Samantha Power, informed Human Rights Watch that the Saudis launched an investigation into an attack on the Mastaba produce market in northern Yemen that killed at least 97 civilians. However, the Saudi government has not announced any findings to date.

On May 27, the Saudi government issued a statement asserting that coalition forces “have fully complied with international humanitarian law and international human rights law in their military operations.” The statement noted that legal advisors sat on planning and targeting teams, and that forces deployed “front line observers to ensure there are no civilians in the vicinity of targets.” It further noted that “where claims about targeting of civilians,

civilian facilities or NGO [nongovernmental organization] operations are made, investigations are conducted by a separate and distinct investigation team established at Coalition Air Force [headquarters].”

Human Rights Watch has encountered no evidence that would support these Saudi claims and the Saudi government has provided no public information that would verify them.

Neither the United States nor the United Kingdom are known to have conducted investigations into any alleged unlawful strikes. Public statements suggest that both the United States and the United Kingdom have largely deferred to the Saudis, saying that the Saudis are investigating. The UK government has said that in some cases it provided information to assist Saudi investigations, although it has been unwilling to say how this process of information sharing works and what has resulted from it.

Saudi Arabia and other parties to the conflict in Yemen, including the United States, should ensure compliance with the laws of war, including prohibitions on attacks against civilian objects. States should meet their obligations to investigate alleged war crimes, prosecute those responsible, and provide prompt and adequate compensation to the civilians harmed or their families. The failure of any party thus far to credibly investigate alleged violations demonstrates the need for an independent international investigation.

Foreign governments have continued to sell weapons to Saudi Arabia after the start of the aerial campaign, despite growing evidence that the coalition has used these weapons in unlawful airstrikes. All countries selling arms to Saudi Arabia including the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, and Canada, should suspend weapons sales until it not only curtails its unlawful airstrikes in Yemen but also credibly investigates alleged violations.

Saudi Arabia has committed gross and systematic violations of human rights during its time as a Council member, and has failed to conduct credible, impartial and transparent investigations into possible war crimes. It has used its position on the Council to shield itself from accountability for its violations in Yemen. The UN General Assembly should suspend the membership rights of Saudi Arabia in the UN Human Rights Council.



The United Nations should reintroduce the Saudi-led coalition into the list of shame

Brazil Should Stop Producing Banned Weapon, Join Ban Treaty

Recommendations

To Saudi Arabia and other coalition members

- Abide by the laws of war, including the prohibitions on attacks that target civilians and civilian objects, that do not discriminate between civilians and military objectives, and that cause civilian loss disproportionate to the expected military benefit.
- Take all feasible precautions to minimize harm to civilian objects, including making advance effective warnings of attacks when possible.
- Consistent with the prohibition on indiscriminate attacks, end the use of heavy explosive weapons with wide area effect in populated areas.
- Conduct transparent and impartial investigations into credible allegations of laws-of-war violations, including the incidents detailed in this report.
- Institute a policy of conducting investigations into airstrikes in which there were high numbers of civilian casualties even where no evidence suggests violations of the laws of war.
- Make public information on the intended military targets of airstrikes that resulted in civilian casualties and make public all military actors involved in such strikes.
- Make public the findings of investigations and include recommendations for disciplinary measures or criminal prosecutions where violations are found.
- Provide prompt and appropriate compensation to civilians and their

families for deaths, injuries, and property damage resulting from wrongful strikes. Consider providing “condolence” payments to civilians suffering harm from airstrikes without regard to wrongdoing.

To President Hadi’s Government

- Urge that the coalition provides detailed information about intended military targets of airstrikes in which civilians died or civilian property was destroyed. Make that information publicly available and press for compensation where there is a finding of wrongdoing.

To Houthi and allied forces

- Abide by the laws of war, including by taking all feasible steps to minimize the risks to populations under their control.
- Avoid placing military objectives in densely populated areas and take steps to remove civilians from areas under attack.

To the United States, United Kingdom, and other coalition supporters

- All coalition supporters should urge Saudi Arabia and other coalition members to implement the recommendations listed above.
- Urge Saudi Arabia and other coalition members to agree to an independent, international investigation into alleged violations by all parties to the conflict in Yemen.
- Countries whose participation in the fighting makes them a party to the conflict, should abide by the laws of war, including by conducting investigations into any airstrikes for which there is credible evidence of laws-of-war violations and the country was a direct participant.

To the United States, United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, Canada, and other countries selling weapons to Saudi Arabia

- Suspend all weapon sales to Saudi Arabia until it curtails its unlawful airstrikes in Yemen, credibly investigates alleged violations, and holds those responsible to account.
- Urge Saudi Arabia and other coalition members to implement the above recommendations.
- In the absence of immediate coalition action to conduct meaningful investigations, support the establishment by the UN Human Rights Council (see below) of an independent international investigation into alleged unlawful strikes.

To UN Security Council member states

- Request a public briefing from the UN high commissioner for human rights on the current human rights situation in Yemen.
- Remind all parties to the conflict in Yemen that anyone responsible for “planning, directing, or committing acts that violate applicable international human rights law or international humanitarian law, or acts that constitute human rights abuses,” as well as those responsible for obstructing the delivery of humanitarian assistance to Yemen, are potentially subject to travel bans and asset freezes under Resolution 2140.
- Encourage the UN Panel of Experts established under Resolution 2140 to gather evidence on individuals responsible for violations of applicable international human rights and humanitarian law or obstructing humanitarian aid, including chains of command and control within the Saudi-led coalition and to share the information with the 2140 Sanctions Committee.

To Member States of the UN General Assembly

- Immediately suspend the membership rights of Saudi Arabia in the UN Human Rights Council for its commission of “gross and systematic” violations of international law in Yemen.

To the UN Human Rights Council

Hold a special session to discuss the human rights situation in Yemen if the Saudi Arabia-led coalition does not address alleged violations and the failure to investigate abuses, or if the humanitarian situation in Yemen fails to improve.

Supplement the national investigative mechanism by creating an independent, international investigative mechanism to investigate alleged violations of the laws of war by all parties to the conflict.

Methodology

This report is based on Human Rights Watch field research in the Yemeni capital, Sanaa, and the governorate of Hodaida, in March 2016. Human Rights Watch researchers interviewed 37 people who had witnessed airstrikes on civilian economic structures or its immediate aftermath, carried out by the Saudi Arabia-led coalition. In addition, the report includes details of incidents of airstrikes on economic structures previously investigated by Human Rights Watch and included in earlier publications.

The report describes 17 coalition airstrikes on 13 economic structures in which coalition forces destroyed or extensively damaged civilian objects in apparent violation of international humanitarian law, or the laws of war. Researchers visited two sites of airstrikes which have been excluded from this report – one because it was in close proximity to a military target, the other because the owner of the facility that was struck, a factory, did not wish it to be named.

Interviews took place at the sites of the airstrikes, or in a few cases, by telephone. Human Rights Watch researchers conducted most of the interviews in Arabic, but several were in English. All participants gave oral consent to be

interviewed; participants were informed of the purpose of the interview and the way in which their information would be documented and reported, and that they could stop the interview at any time or decline to answer specific questions posed. No one received any remuneration for giving an interview.

Human Rights Watch selected airstrike sites for investigation by considering sites the coalition had attacked most recently, the extent of the damage reportedly caused, and a security assessment of whether the location could be safely reached and visited. Human Rights Watch did not share the locations with the Houthi authorities, nor did any Houthi representative accompany researchers on their investigations.

On May 16, Human Rights Watch wrote to the Saudi government to share its findings and to seek information on intended targets of 10 of the airstrikes that we had investigated. At the time of writing, Human Rights Watch had not received a response. Future responses to this report from the Saudi government or other coalition members will be posted on the Yemen page of the Human Rights Watch website: www.hrw.org.

I. Background

Economic and humanitarian impacts of armed conflict

With the beginning of the bombing campaign, the Saudi-led coalition imposed an aerial and naval blockade, which limited commercial shipments and humanitarian aid to Yemen. About 90 percent of Yemen's basic food intake before the war came from imports. By June 2016, more than one year after the armed conflict escalated across Yemen, the UN Office of for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs estimated that 21.2 million people -- some 82 percent of the total population -- required some form of humanitarian assistance. This figure included 14.4 million people unable to meet their food needs (of whom 7.6 million are severely food insecure), 19.4 million who lack clean water and sanitation (of whom 9.8 million lost access to water due to conflict), and 14.1 million without adequate health care. In particular, the blockade and accompanying inspection of all shipments to Yemen depleted the stocks of fuel, food, and drugs available in the local markets. As of May 2016, the World Health Organization (WHO) estimated that the medicine coming into Yemen only met 30 percent of needs. In June, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-

moon warned of an “alarming scarcity of basic food items,” and that Yemen’s “economy [was] in a precarious condition.

On February 12, 2016, the UN secretary-general instituted the UN Verification and Inspection Mechanism, a process intended to expedite commercial imports of essential goods including food, medicine, and fuel. In March 2016 Stephen O’Brian, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, at the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), reported to the UN Security Council that “in recent months there has been a significant increase in delivery of fuel and other life-saving imports through Yemeni ports,” and called on all parties to “ensure the protection of civilian infrastructure.

Though the naval blockade contributed most dramatically to Yemen’s economic crisis, attacks on factories, warehouses, power plants, and other economic sites also contributed to scarcity of goods. The Sanaa Chamber of Commerce and Industry reported that coalition airstrikes damaged or destroyed at least 196 business establishments between March 26, 2015, when aerial attacks commenced, and February 17, 2016. The Chamber of Commerce provided Human Rights Watch with a list of 59 specific factories, warehouses, and other economic structures hit by coalition airstrikes between the beginning of the war and February 1, 2016, along with the dates they were struck and their locations. It is not possible to determine conclusively from the list alone whether specific structures hit were civilian or military, were being used for military purposes at the time, or were otherwise military objectives subject to attack. The Chamber of Commerce has not reported on alleged violations of the laws of war by Houthi-affiliated forces.

Attacks on economic sites particularly impacted civilians, as food, medicines, and other consumer staples grew scarcer and dramatically increased in price. Most of the facilities attacked stopped production, and others reduced their capacity significantly. Other attacks destroyed stores of food or medicine. Families regularly told Human Rights Watch that the increased price of food, transport, medicine, and fuel made it difficult or impossible for them to afford basic necessities. After attacks on economic sites, companies suspended workers’ wages indefinitely or terminated their employment, cutting off their source of income and leaving them unable to afford inflated wartime prices.

Background to the conflict

In September 2014, Ansar Allah, commonly known as the Houthis, a Zaidi Shia group from northern Yemen, seized control of Yemen's capital, Sanaa. They were backed by units of Yemen's army that remained loyal to former president Ali Abdullah Saleh, who had stepped down in 2011. In January 2015, Yemeni President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi and his cabinet departed Sanaa and subsequently relocated to Saudi Arabia.

In March, Houthi forces and their allies advanced southward, threatening to take the port city of Aden and other areas. On March 26, 2015, a Saudi Arabia-led coalition of Arab states began aerial attacks against Houthi forces in Sanaa and other locations. During the past year's fighting, coalition forces, Houthi forces, and other armed groups aligned with either the coalition or the Houthis, have all been implicated in serious violations of the laws of war.

The United Nations and nongovernmental organizations have investigated and reported on numerous unlawful coalition airstrikes that killed and injured civilians, and destroyed or damaged civilian buildings and other structures where there was no evident military objective. According to the UN, 60 percent of the more than 3,200 civilian deaths since the coalition began its military campaign have been from coalition airstrikes. Human Rights Watch has documented 43 airstrikes, some of which may amount to war crimes, that have killed more than 670 civilians, as well as 16 attacks involving internationally banned cluster munitions. In a report made public on January 26, 2016, the UN Panel of Experts on Yemen established under UN Security Council Resolution 2140 (2013) "documented 119 coalition sorties relating to violations" of the laws of war.

Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International also documented the coalition's use of seven types of cluster munitions in Yemen in 2015 and 2016. This includes the use of CBU-105 Sensor Fuzed Weapons against a cement factory in the Amran governorate in February 2016. Cluster munitions are indiscriminate and pose long-term dangers to civilians. They are prohibited by a 2008 treaty adopted by 119 countries, though not Saudi Arabia or Yemen.

Parties to the Conflict

The Saudi Arabia-led coalition comprises five members of the Gulf Cooperation Council—Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates—as well as Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, and Sudan.

According to the Saudi foreign minister, Adel al-Jubeir, as well as a statement issued by the coalition on May 27, 2016, the coalition launched its military operations at the request of President Hadi, whom the coalition forces continue to recognize as Yemen's head of state. At least one member of Hadi's cabinet who is in exile in Riyadh is a member of the committee that selects strike sites, according to several diplomats who spoke with him about his position.

The United States, though not a member of the coalition, is also a party to the conflict. In June 2015, a US Defense Department spokesman stated that the United States was helping the coalition with "intelligence support and intelligence sharing, targeting assistance, advisory support, and logistical support, to include aerial refueling with up to two tanker sorties a day." In November 2015, Lt. Gen. Charles Brown, commander of the US Air Force Central Command, stated that the military had a small detachment of personnel located in the Saudi Arabian center planning airstrikes to help coordinate activities. US participation in specific military operations, such as bombing raids, means that the United States has been a party to the conflict since early on in the fighting and that US forces may be jointly responsible for laws-of-war violations by coalition forces.

In April 2016 a spokesman for the US Central Command, Col. Patrick Ryder, said that "the decisions on the conduct of operations to include the selections and final vettings of targets" were made by the Saudis. He expressed confidence that the information and support the United States provided was "the best option for military success consistent with international norms and mitigating civilian casualties." In May 2016 the United States acknowledged having ground troops in Yemen engaged in combat operations led by the Yemeni military and United Arab Emirates in and around the port city of Mukalla. Under international law, as a party to the conflict the United States is obligated to carry out or assist in investigations where there are credible allegations that its forces may have participated in war crimes and hold those responsible to account.

The United States also approved the sales of more than \$20 billion worth of military equipment to Saudi Arabia in 2015 alone. In July 2015, the US Defense Department approved a number of weapons sales to Saudi Arabia, including a US\$5.4 billion deal for 600 Patriot Missiles and a \$500 million deal for more than a million rounds of ammunition, hand grenades, and other items, for the Saudi army. According to the US Congressional review, between May and September, the United States sold \$7.8 billion worth of weapons to the Saudis. In October, the US government approved the sale to Saudi Arabia of up to four Lockheed Littoral Combat Ships for \$11.25 billion. And in November,

the United States signed an arms deal with Saudi Arabia worth \$1.29 billion for more than 10,000 advanced air-to-surface munitions including laser-guided bombs, “bunker buster” bombs, and MK84 general purpose bombs. The coalition used both laser-guided bombs and MK84 bombs in attacks described in this report.

In late May 2016, the United States suspended cluster munition transfers to Saudi Arabia.

The United Kingdom has supported the coalition. According to the UK Ministry of Defence, in response to a House of Lords question on July 14, 2015, the United Kingdom is “providing technical support, precision-guided weapons and exchanging information with the Saudi Arabian armed forces through pre-existing arrangements.” The weapons include 500-pound Paveway IV bombs, used by coalition Tornado and Typhoon aircraft. The ministry confirmed on June 6, 2016 that Saudi Arabia has used Tornado and Typhoon aircraft purchased from the United Kingdom in combat operations in Yemen. Since the war began, senior British military officers have provided targeting training for Saudi forces.

According to the London-based Campaign Against Arms Trade, the UK government has also approved £2.8 billion in military sales to Saudi Arabia since they entered the conflict in Yemen. Weapons approved include 500-pound Paveway IV bombs. The coalition used it in an attack described in this report.

France is also providing jets, military transport aircraft, aerial refueling tanker aircraft, helicopters, amphibious assault ships, military patrol boats,

light armored vehicles, and logistical support to some member states of the coalition.

Investigations and Accountability for Indiscriminate Airstrikes

In apparent response to increasing reports of alleged laws-of-war violations by coalition forces and an upcoming UN Human Rights Council session, Yemen's President Hadi on September 7, 2015 established a national commission to investigate violations of human rights and the laws of war. During the ensuing UN Human Rights Council session in Geneva, Saudi Arabia and other Arab countries effectively blocked an effort led by the Netherlands to create an international investigative mechanism. The national commission has yet to take any tangible steps to conduct investigations, nor has it revealed any working methods or plans, several people close to the commission told Human Rights Watch.

On January 31, 2016, the coalition announced the creation of a committee to promote the coalition's compliance with the laws of war. However, the military spokesman for the coalition specified that the objective of the committee was not to carry out investigations into alleged violations. A statement from the Saudi embassy in Washington, DC, specified that the committee would assess the coalition's rules of engagement involving civilians and would offer «conclusions and recommendations to better respect international and humanitarian law.»

On July 9, 2015, the European Parliament adopted a resolution condemning Saudi Arabia-led coalition airstrikes in Yemen, including the use of cluster bombs. In light of the coalition's conduct of hostilities, on February 25, 2016, the European parliament passed a resolution calling on the European Union's high representative for foreign affairs and security policy, Federica Mogherini, "to launch an initiative aimed at imposing an EU arms embargo against Saudi Arabia." On March 15, the Dutch parliament voted to impose the embargo and ban all arms exports to Saudi Arabia.

On April 13 two US senators introduced legislation to temporarily block US air-to-surface munition sales to Saudi Arabia until the State Department certifies that the Saudi military is taking all available steps to protect civilians.

On April 20 the Swiss government blocked military exports worth US\$19.5 million to several Middle Eastern countries that it suspected could eventually be used in Yemen.

Although the level of the conflict has de-escalated following the ceasefire announced on April 10, both ground fighting and airstrikes continue in parts of Yemen. UN-backed peace talks began in Kuwait on April 21. Participants at the peace talks include representatives from President Hadi's Yemeni government, the Houthis, and the pro-Houthi party of former president Ali Abdullah Saleh.

On May 27 the Saudi government issued a statement asserting that coalition forces "have fully complied with international humanitarian law and international human rights law in their military operations." The statement noted that legal advisors sat on planning and targeting teams and that forces deployed "front line observers to ensure there are no civilians in the vicinity of targets." The statement noted that "wherever possible, coalition forces issue advance warnings before attacking military targets to ensure civilians are not in their vicinity."

On the issue of investigating alleged violations, the coalition stated that "where claims about targeting of civilians, civilian facilities or NGO operations are made, investigations are conducted by a separate and distinct investigation team established at Coalition Air Force [headquarters]." Once investigations are complete, the results are declared and compensation for victims is pledged, the coalition noted. (The full statement is published as an appendix to this report.) To date Human Rights Watch has not seen published results of any coalition investigations nor any evidence of compensation for victims.

On June 2, 2016 the Office of the UN Secretary-General published its annual report identifying armed forces and groups responsible for grave violations against children. For the first time, the Secretary-General's report included the Saudi coalition in its "list of shame," noting that coalition forces were responsible for most of the nearly 2,000 children were killed or maimed during the war. However on June 6, following protests by the Saudi government, the UN Secretary-General's office announced it was removing from its "list of shame" the Saudi-led coalition, "pending the conclusions of [a] joint review" of the cases included in the report's text.

II. Applicable International Humanitarian Law

International humanitarian law, also known as the laws of war, applies to the armed conflict between the Saudi Arabia-led coalition and the Houthis. It also applies to the various non-state armed groups allied to the coalition or to the Houthis, as well as to other states that are parties to the conflict, including the United States. Because the conflict involves states against non-state armed groups, it is considered a non-international armed conflict. Applicable law involves article 3 common to the four Geneva Conventions of 1949, the Second Additional Protocol to the Geneva Conventions (Protocol II), and customary laws of war.

This report examines attacks on civilian objects, specifically economic structures, by coalition airstrikes. A fundamental principle of the laws of war is the distinction between civilians and combatants, and between civilian objects and military objectives. Attacks may only be directed at combatants and military objectives.

The laws of war prohibit deliberate, indiscriminate, or disproportionate attacks against civilians and civilian objects. Civilians have immunity from attack, except for such time that they are directly participating in the hostilities. Directly participating in hostilities would include, for instance, a civilian carrying ammunition to a fighter during a battle. However, civilians working in an ammunition factory would not be considered directly participating in hostilities, even though the factory itself would be subject to attack.

Civilian objects include homes, markets, factories, farms, warehouses, and businesses, unless they are a military objective. A military objective is anything that provides enemy forces a definite military advantage in the circumstances prevailing at the time. Combatants, weapons and ammunition are military objectives. Even though a residential home is presumed to be a civilian object, its use by enemy fighters for deployment or to store weaponry, will render it a military objective and subject to attack. Factories that produce weapons or materiel for enemy forces are military objectives and subject to attack, even if the workers employed are civilians.

Attacks are indiscriminate when they are not directed at a specific military objective or when they employ a method or means of warfare (such as cluster

munitions) that cannot be directed at a military objective or whose effects cannot be limited.

A disproportionate attack is one in which the expected incidental loss of civilian life and damage to civilian objects exceeds the concrete and direct military advantage anticipated.

In the conduct of military operations, parties to a conflict must take constant care to spare the civilian population and civilian objects from the effects of hostilities. Parties are required to take precautionary measures with a view to minimizing harm to civilians and civilian objects.

Before conducting an attack, a party must do everything feasible to verify that the persons or objects to be attacked are military objectives and not civilians or civilian objects. According to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) the requirement to take all “feasible” precautions means, among other things, that those conducting an attack are required to take the steps needed to identify the target as a legitimate military objective “in good time to spare the population as far as possible.

Attacking forces also must take all feasible precautions in the choice of means and methods of warfare to minimize loss of civilian life and property. The laws of war do not prohibit fighting in urban areas, although the presence of civilians places greater obligations on warring parties to take steps to minimize harm to civilians. All forces must avoid locating military objectives within or near densely populated areas and endeavor to remove civilians from the vicinity of military objectives.

Human Rights Watch opposes the use of explosive weapons with wide area effect in populated areas due to the inevitable civilian harm caused.

With respect to individual responsibility, serious violations of the laws of war committed with criminal intent are war crimes. Criminal intent has been defined as violations committed deliberately or recklessly. Individuals may also be held criminally liable for attempting to commit a war crime, as well as assisting in, facilitating, aiding, or abetting a war crime.

Responsibility may also fall on persons planning or instigating the commission of a war crime. Commanders and civilian leaders may be prosecuted for war crimes as a matter of command responsibility when they knew or should have known about the commission of war crimes and took

insufficient measures to prevent them or punish those responsible.

Under the laws of war, governments have a duty to investigate war crimes allegedly committed by members of their armed forces and other persons within their jurisdiction. Those found to be responsible should be prosecuted before courts that meet international fair trial standards or transferred to another jurisdiction to be fairly prosecuted.

The laws of war also provide for a state to make full reparations, including directly to individuals, for the loss caused by violations of the laws of war.

III. Cases of Unlawful Airstrikes on Civilian Economic Structures

Since the beginning of the military operations of the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen, Human Rights Watch has documented apparently unlawful airstrikes on 13 economic structures used for civilian purposes. These include six factories, three compounds that produced and stored commercial goods, an electrical station storage facility, a power plant, and the Sanaa Chamber of Commerce headquarters. These attacks killed 130 workers, security guards, or nearby residents of the facilities and injured 171 more. Altogether these 13 facilities employed over 2,500 people, many of whom lost their incomes or jobs due to the attacks. A few of the factories reopened following attacks, despite fears for workers' safety, as managers say they need the revenue to continue paying salaries.

At least 10 of the attacks appeared to be unlawful, with no military target in the immediate vicinity, and may constitute war crimes. Four of them killed large numbers of civilians.

The strikes took place between March 31, 2015 and February 15, 2016. The coalition attacked some of the facilities more than once. Seven of the thirteen sites were struck in January or February 2016. Human Rights Watch identified weapons used at six of the sites, based on remnants of munitions found at the sites or, in one case, photographs provided by employees. The United States produced or supplied four types of munitions identified as having been used in the strikes. The United Kingdom produced or supplied two types, including a Paveway IV guided bomb produced in May 2015, after the start of the coalition's aerial campaign.

Electricity Company Administration for Hodaida



[Hodaida city, Hodaida governorate](#)

[Date of strike: October 10, 2015](#)

[Casualties: none](#)

[Munitions Identified: None](#)

At about 10:30 p.m. on October 10, 2015 coalition aircraft bombed two storage hangars belonging to the Electricity Company Administration for Hodaida, the local government electric utility company, located in the north of Hodaida. Three bombs hit one hangar, which stored spare parts used to repair the electricity network in the city, and one hit an empty hangar in the compound, employees told Human Rights Watch. The airstrikes did not injure any workers. They caused extensive damage to the spare parts stored in the first hangar and destroyed part of its roof.

Khalil Muhammad Ali, 35, who works as an administrative employee for the facility, was outside the main gate of the hangar when the strikes hit. He said: I didn't hear any planes, just a bang. We waited for an hour before we went inside because we were scared. The second strike hit two minutes after the first on an empty hangar right next to the first one, then the third hit two

minutes later on the first hanger, but left no crater because it hit the metal roof beam. We didn't find any remnants. A fourth hit two minutes later in the same place on the roof.

Human Rights Watch examined the site on March 29, 2016. Researchers found one crater in the concrete floor about three meters wide. A large broken metal roof beam hung down to the floor where employees said the third bomb hit. Researchers could not access the second locked, but reportedly empty, storage hanger where they said the second bomb hit, as employees said it belonged to a different government authority. Employees told Human Rights Watch that no military supplies were stored in the hangar targeted, and that no military targets or Houthi installations were located nearby. One employee told Human Rights Watch that a house where about 10 Houthi fighters slept at night was located on the residential street behind the Electricity Administration compound, about 100 meters from the site.

Under the laws of war electricity distribution facilities, like airports, are considered “dual-use objects” – civilian objects that also benefit an armed force. As such they can be military objectives, subject to attack. However, any attack on a dual-use object must be proportionate –the anticipated military gain of the attack must exceed expected loss of civilian life and property. Attacks on power plants that serve the civilian population are likely to cause disproportionate harm.

The house where Houthi fighters slept 100 meters away was a legitimate military target. The coalition should investigate the hangar bombing to determine if they unlawfully targeted the facility and whether forces took all feasible precautions to minimize civilian loss of life and property.

Coca-Cola Factory, Sanaa



[Sanaa city, Sanaa governorate](#)

[Date of strike: December 12, 2015](#)

[Casualties: 5 injured](#)

[Munitions identified: US-supplied 1,000-lb MK-83 Paveway-series laser guided bomb](#)

On December 12, 2015, starting at 8:25 p.m., coalition aircraft dropped three bombs on a Coca-Cola factory located off the Airport Road in northern Sanaa. The bombs hit the factory over several minutes, wounding five employees. They destroyed raw materials used to produce soft drinks, a generator, and both the glass and plastic bottling lines.

Issam Mohammad Abdu, the plant manager, told Human Rights Watch that about 20 workers from the sales and maintenance departments left the factory that evening to catch buses by the gate, departing only 10 minutes before the first bomb hit. “At the time of the strikes, there were at least 10 people in the back at the loading docks, working in logistics and loading,” he said. “When the first strike hit, they all went running out of the compound.”

Ahmed Tahir Mabkhout, 43, a salesman for the company, was standing next to the factory's generator when the airstrike hit. He told Human Rights Watch:

I didn't hear the first bomb, because the generator was very loud. But I saw the fire. When the second hit, I was by the [factory] exit, and when the third hit, I was already in the street. The second and third bombs landed inside the factory hanger.

Mabkhout was wounded by the first bomb:

I got metal fragments in both of my lower legs. I spent two months in the hospital, and have had to have three operations so far. I still need one more. One of the wounds to my right leg is still open, where they had to do a skin graft from my upper thigh.

Abdu, the plant manager, told Human Rights Watch that the factory employed 600 workers before the war, but had to lay off 270 of them after the bombing. He added that they planned to terminate the employment of 100 additional workers, since the factory remained closed and they had no revenue.

Human Rights Watch visited the factory on March 31, 2016. Factory employees showed Human Rights Watch munition remnants including bomb fragments. The fragments indicate that coalition aircraft attacked the factory using at least one 1,000-lb MK-83 Paveway-series laser guided bomb. Researchers observed two craters at the site, each about three meters wide and two meters deep. Employees explained that the third bomb hit a large pile of finished beverage products and left no crater. Broken bricks, fallen metal roof beams, and other building debris covered the site.

Researchers found broken bottles and large amounts of spilled sugar in the area where workers said they previously stored raw materials.

All of the witnesses interviewed said that they did not know why the coalition had bombed the factory, and that it contained no military supplies, only materials for manufacturing soft drinks. The al-Dailami Air Force Base is located about 700 meters from the factory. According to factory employees, coalition forces have repeatedly struck the base since the coalition began

their aerial bombardment in Yemen, including during the nine months before the factory was struck. Abdu, the plant manager, said, “[the coalition] have bombed it [the air force base] almost daily since the beginning of the war. So why would they suddenly make this mistake [hitting the factory], nine months into the war? And one bomb maybe, but three?”

The attack on the Coca-Cola factory was unlawful so long it was not being used for military purposes, such as to produce or store goods intended for military use. Human Rights Watch found no evidence that the factory produced anything other than beverages. The coalition should investigate the airstrike and, if found unlawful, compensate factory owners for their losses and workers for injuries they suffered.



Yemen: Cluster Munitions Wound Children

Brazil Should Stop Producing Banned Weapon, Join Ban Treaty

(São Paulo) – The Saudi-led coalition launched Brazilian-made cluster munition rockets that struck a farm in northern Yemen in late February 2017, wounding two boys, Human Rights Watch said today.

“The Saudi-led coalition’s continued use of widely banned cluster munitions in Yemen shows callous disregard for civilian lives,” said Steve Goose, arms director at Human Rights Watch and chair of the Cluster Munition Coalition, the international coalition of groups working to eradicate cluster munitions. “Saudi Arabia, its coalition partners, and Brazil, as a producer, should immediately join the widely endorsed international treaty that bans cluster munitions.”

Cluster munitions are delivered from the ground by artillery and rockets, or dropped from aircraft and contain multiple smaller explosive submunitions that spread out indiscriminately over a wide area. Many fail to detonate and leave unexploded submunitions that become de facto landmines, posing a threat long after a conflict ends.



Part of the bursting mechanism from an ASTROS cluster munition rocket lies where it was reported to land in Qahza, Saada governorate on February 22, 2017.

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On February 22, at about 3 p.m., Muhammad Dhayf-Allah, 10, and Ahmad Abdul-Khaleq, 12, were working at their relatives' farm at Qahza, in the al-O'albi area of northern Saada governorate, when it was attacked. Human Rights Watch interviewed by telephone two men who witnessed the strike. One witness provided photographs taken at the attack site shortly afterward that show remnants of part of a cluster munition rocket. Both witnesses said they heard a loud explosion followed by several smaller explosions, consistent with a cluster munition attack.

Muhammad Hunish Hawza, 60, an uncle of the boys, was in Qahza that day. "We heard blasts in the air, dozens of multiple small blasts together," he said. "The small bombs fell over us."

One of the farm owners, Tareq Ahmad Saleh al-O'airi, 25, said he had been in a greenhouse with the boys pruning cucumber and tomato plants. They heard a blast, went outside, and saw a bomb explode about 50 meters away. He said he told the frightened children to lie down.

"One of the bombs fell five meters away and exploded over us, wounding the two children," he said. "Two or three bombs exploded inside the greenhouses [and] around 60 bombs exploded in the area. It was like Judgment Day."

Dhayf-Allah was wounded in his left forearm, and Abdul-Khaleq in his right thigh and back. Relatives took the boys to al-Jumhuri Hospital for treatment.



Part of the bursting mechanism from an ASTROS cluster munition rocket lies where it reportedly landed at Qahza, Saada governorate on February 22, 2017.

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Photographs that al-O'airi provided show part of the bursting mechanism from an ASTROS II cluster munition rocket lying where witnesses said it landed, near a greenhouse at the farm. Other photographs show solar panels damaged by fragmentation consistent with submunitions from a cluster munition attack. Hawza, the boys' uncle, said that the attack destroyed more than 30 solar panels.

Al-O'airi said that the farm is three to five kilometers north of al-Saifi military camp, which is controlled by the Houthi-Saleh forces fighting the coalition. Both witnesses said this was the second time coalition attacks have hit the farm since the coalition began its aerial campaign in Yemen in support of the government of President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi against the Houthi-Saleh forces in March 2015.

ASTROS cluster munition rockets have been used on at least three previous occasions since the Saudi-led coalition began its intervention in Yemen, killing two civilians and wounding at least 10.

ASTROS II surface-to-surface rockets are delivered by a truck-mounted, multibarrel rocket launcher. Each rocket contains up to 65 submunitions. Bahrain and Saudi Arabia have purchased ASTROS cluster munition rockets from Brazil, where they are manufactured by Avibrás Indústria Aeroespacial SA.



Solar panels damaged by the February 22 attack on Qahza, Saada governorate. The fragmentation damage is consistent with impact caused by submunitions from cluster munitions.

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On March 9, 2017, the Brazilian arms manufacturer Avibras stated that it could not confirm its cluster munitions had been used in Yemen, but claimed that since 2001, its ASTROS cluster munition rockets have been equipped with a “reliable self-destruct device that complies with humanitarian principles and legislation” of the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

Cluster munitions are prohibited by a 2008 treaty ratified by 100 countries and signed by another 19, though not by Yemen, Brazil, and Saudi Arabia, and its coalition partners Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, Qatar, Sudan, and the United Arab Emirates.



The back of solar panels after the February 22 attack on Qahza Saada governorate. The fragmentation damage is consistent with impact caused by submunitions from cluster munitions. © 2017 Private

The treaty prohibits all cluster munitions and does not exempt “self-destruct” variants, which leave explosive remnants that must be considered hazardous and not be handled or approached by anyone other than a trained technician. At least 14 countries that have ratified the Convention on Cluster Munitions have destroyed cluster munitions equipped with “self-destruct” features, including Chile, France, Germany, Japan, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom.

Members of the Saudi-led coalition and other parties to the conflict, including the United States, should promptly join the Convention on Cluster Munitions and abide by its provisions, Human Rights Watch said. Brazil should end its production and transfer of cluster munitions. In February 2017, Yemen’s Ministry of Human Rights told Human Rights Watch during a visit

to Aden that Yemen was ready to sign the treaty when parliament reconvened.

“The Brazilian government’s silence is a wholly inadequate response to mounting concerns over civilian casualties from the Saudi-led coalition’s use of Brazilian cluster munition rockets in Yemen,” Goose said. “Brazil should recognize that cluster munitions are prohibited weapons that should never be manufactured, transferred, or used because of the harm inflicted on civilians.”

Coalition Use of Cluster Munitions

Since March 26, 2015, a Saudi-led coalition of nine Arab states has conducted military operations in Yemen against the Houthis, also known as Ansar Allah, and forces loyal to former President Ali Abdullah Saleh. Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International have documented the use of seven types of air-delivered and ground-launched cluster munitions made in the US, the UK, and Brazil.

Human Rights Watch has documented the coalition’s use of cluster munitions in 18 unlawful attacks in Yemen that killed at least 21 civilians, wounded 74 more, and in some cases, struck civilian areas.

The coalition has acknowledged using US- and UK-made cluster munitions in Yemen, but claims to have done so in compliance with the laws of war. In a January 11, 2016 interview with CNN, the coalition military spokesman said the coalition used CBU-105 Sensor Fuzed Weapons in Hajjah in April 2015 “against a concentration of a camp in this area, but not indiscriminately.” He said that the US-made cluster munitions were used “against vehicles.”

In May 2016, the US suspended transfers of cluster munitions to Saudi Arabia. In December, the coalition announced it would stop using a UK-made cluster munition, the BL-755, but left open the possibility it would continue using other types of cluster munitions in Yemen.

Human Rights Watch previously documented Saudi Arabia’s use of ASTROS cluster munition rockets in Khafji, Saudi Arabia, in 1991, during the First Gulf War. The munitions left behind a significant number of unexploded submunitions.

The three earlier attacks in Yemen where the Saudi-led coalition used Brazilian-made cluster munition rockets during the current conflict include:

- Amnesty International reported an ASTROS cluster munition rocket attack on February 15, that hit the residential areas of Gohza, al-Dhubat, and al-Rawdha, wounding two civilians.
- Human Rights Watch documented an ASTROS cluster munition rocket attack by the Saudi-led coalition near two schools in the al-Dhubat neighborhood of Saada's Old City on December 6, killing two civilians and wounding at least six, including a child.
- Amnesty International found remnants of ASTROS cluster munition rockets remaining after an attack on Ahma in Saada on October 27, 2015, that wounded at least four people.



A crater from the February 22 attack on Qahza, Saada governorate is consistent with damage caused by a submunition from a cluster munition attack. © 2017 Private

Civilian harm from the coalition's use of cluster munitions in Yemen since 2015 has received worldwide media coverage, provoked a public outcry, and been condemned by dozens of countries as well as by a European parliament resolution. In September 2015, more than 60 nations at the First Review Conference of the Convention on Cluster Munitions expressed deep concern at the use of cluster munitions in Yemen and issued a declaration condemning "any use of cluster munitions by any actor."



February 14, 2016

Yemen: Cluster Munitions Wounding Civilians

US Supplied Weapon Banned by 2008 Treaty



Two BLU-108 canisters, one with two skeet (submunitions) still attached, found in the al-Amar area of al-Safraa in Saada governorate, northern Yemen after an attack on April 27. © 2015 Ole Solvang/Human Rights Watch

(Beirut) – The Saudi Arabia-led coalition is using internationally banned cluster munitions supplied by the United States in Yemen despite evidence of civilian casualties, Human Rights Watch said today. Recently transferred US-manufactured cluster munitions are being used in civilian areas contrary to US export requirements and also appear to be failing to meet the reliability standard required for US export of the weapons.

“Saudi Arabia and its coalition partners, as well as their US supplier, are blatantly disregarding the global standard that says cluster munitions should never be used under any circumstances,” said Steve Goose, arms director at Human Rights Watch and chair of the international Cluster Munition

Coalition. “The Saudi-led coalition should investigate evidence that civilians are being harmed in these attacks and immediately stop using them.”

Since March 26, 2015, a Saudi-led coalition of nations has been conducting a military operation in Yemen against Houthi forces, also known as Ansar Allah. Field research by Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, and the United Nations; interviews with witnesses and victims; and photographs and video evidence confirm that the Saudi-led coalition is using cluster munitions in Yemen.

Cluster munitions are delivered from the ground by artillery and rockets, or dropped from aircraft and contain multiple smaller submunitions that spread out over a wide area. A total of 118 countries have banned cluster munitions due to the threat they pose to nearby civilians at the time of attack and afterward. The submunitions often fail to explode and pose a threat until cleared and destroyed. Yemen, the US, and Saudi Arabia and its coalition members should join the 2008 Convention on Cluster Munitions, Human Rights Watch said.



A BLU-108 canister with four skeet (submunitions) still attached found in the al-Amar areas of al-Safraa, Saada governorate, in northern Yemen after an attack on April 27. © 2015 Private

Human Rights Watch believes the Saudi Arabia-led coalition of states operating in Yemen is responsible for all or nearly all of these cluster munition attacks because it is the only entity operating aircraft or multibarrel rocket

launchers capable of delivering five of the six types of cluster munitions that have been used in the conflict.

One type of air-dropped cluster munition used by the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen is the CBU-105 Sensor Fuzed Weapon, manufactured by Textron Systems Corporation of Wilmington, Massachusetts. Human Rights Watch has investigated at least five attacks involving the use of CBU-105 Sensor Fuzed Weapons in four governorates since March 2015.

Most recently, CBU-105 Sensor Fuzed Weapons were used in a December 12, 2015 attack on the Yemeni port town of Hodaida, injuring a woman and two children in their homes. At least two civilians were wounded when CBU-105 Sensor Fuzed Weapons were used near al-Amar village in Saada governorate on April 27, 2015, according to local residents and medical staff. More information on these and other cluster munition attacks is provided below.

While any use of any type of cluster munition should be condemned, there are two additional disturbing aspects to the use of CBU-105 Sensor Fuzed Weapons in Yemen. First, US export law prohibits recipients of cluster munitions from using them in populated areas, as the Saudi coalition has clearly been doing. Second, US export law only allows the transfer of cluster munitions with a failure rate of less than 1 percent. But it appears that Sensor Fuzed Weapons used in Yemen are not functioning in ways that meet that reliability standard.

In recent years, the US has supplied these weapons to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), both of which possess attack aircraft of US and Western/NATO origin capable of delivering them. CBU-105 Sensor Fuzed Weapons are the only cluster munitions currently exported by the US, and the recipient must agree not to use them in civilian areas. According to the US government, CBU-105 Sensor Fuzed Weapons are the only cluster munition in its active inventory “that meet[s] our stringent requirements for unexploded ordnance rates,” with a claimed failure rate of less than 1 percent.



Distinctive fragmentation pattern on the road outside al-Amar in Saada governorate, northern Yemen, where BLU-108 canisters from a CBU-105 Sensor Fuzed Weapon attack on April 27 were found

Human Rights Watch chairs the Cluster Munition Coalition U.S., which in a March 30, 2015 letter urged President Barack Obama to review the 2008 cluster munitions policy, and to remove the exception allowing cluster munitions that result in less than 1 percent unexploded ordnance rate.

According to a Textron Systems Corporation datasheet, the CBU-105 disperses 10 BLU-108 canisters that each release four submunitions the manufacturer calls “skeet” that are designed to sense, classify, and engage a target such as an armored vehicle. The submunitions explode above the ground and project an explosively formed jet of metal and fragmentation downward. The skeet are equipped with electronic self-destruct and selfdeactivation features.

However, photographs taken by Human Rights Watch field investigators at one location and photographs received from another location show BLU-108 from separate attacks with their “skeets” or submunitions still attached.

This shows a failure to function as intended as the submunitions failed to

disperse from the canister, or were dispersed but did not explode.

“Sensor Fuzed Weapons are touted by some as the most high tech, reliable cluster munitions in the world, but we have evidence that they are not working the way they are supposed to in Yemen, and have harmed civilians in at least two attacks,” Goose said. “The evidence raises serious questions about compliance with US cluster munition policy and export rules.”

Evidence of CBU-105 Sensor Fuzed Weapons Attacks in Yemen since March 2015 Al-Hayma Port, Hodaida governorate, December 12, 2015 The coalition has carried out intermittent air attacks on the military port of al-Hayma, 100 kilometers south of the western coastal city of Hodaida, beginning in September, four residents of the fishing village of al-Hayma, 1.5 kilometers from the port, told Human Rights Watch in late January 2016. Ammar Ismail, 22, said that the Yemeni coast guard and Houthi forces both occupy parts of the port, but local fisherman and gasoline smugglers are still using it as well.

Air strikes began at about 9 a.m. on December 12, said Muhammad Ahmad, 33, but about an hour later, he saw a different kind of weapon than used previously:

I was with six friends from the village ... sitting on a small hill watching the strikes. We suddenly saw about 20 white parachutes in the air, falling toward the port. Less than a minute later, each one released a cloud of black smoke as it neared the ground and exploded. It looked like a series of multiple bombs all next to each other. Less than 5 minutes later, it happened again, another bomb let out a group of about 20 parachutes and the same thing happened. But because of the direction the wind was blowing, the parachutes suddenly started falling toward our village.

Hussein Saed, 42, said he watched four parachutes fall toward the village and “as each parachute came close to the ground, it would explode like fireworks, and release bombs.”



A FZU-39/B proximity sensor from CBU-105 Sensor Fuzed Weapon used in the attack on al-Hayma Port in Hodaida governorate on December 12, 2015 © 2015 Private

He said that one munition hit the wall of his brother Ali Saed's home, breaking a window just below. Metal fragments flew into the room, wounding Ali Saed's wife, Aziza Ahmad Ahdab, 42, and their daughter Salama, 4. Doctors had to amputate Ahdab's lower right leg. Saed said that another munition landed in the yard of his other brother, Hassan Saed, and exploded next to the bathroom, but that no one was wounded.

A doctor at a local health clinic said that he treated Homadi Hassan Muliked, 15, who was wounded in his abdomen by another munition in the same attack. Muliked said that he quickly lay down on the floor in his house when he heard the explosions, but "suddenly I felt a pain in the lower right side of

my abdomen. I looked down and saw blood. I didn't know what happened or how, but later I saw the damage to our house. One of the bombs had hit our wall and exploded.”

One munition hit the home of Muhammad Zeid Ahmad, 50:

Something hit the wall and broke through it. I immediately hit the floor. This strange object landed about five meters from me. It looked like a small silver model of a rocket. I was very afraid, I tried to crawl away and escape because I knew it could explode at any moment. It looked very scary. But as I moved, it moved with me, not toward me, but in the same direction, in slow motion it seemed. ... This went on for about a minute and then it exploded. Luckily I was not seriously wounded.

Another witness also said it seemed that a weapon followed him. While it is not possible for these weapons to detect human targets, the skeet, or submunitions, are released in all directions.



Remnants of a CBU-105 Sensor Fuzed Weapon (right) and a BLU-108 canister used in the attack on al-Hayma Port in Hodaida governorate on December 12, 2015. © 2015 Private

Amran governorate, June 29, 2015

According to a report by Amnesty International, CBU-105 Sensor Fuzed Weapons were used in an attack on Harf Sofian in Amran governorate, south of Saada, that locals said occurred on June 29. Amnesty International researchers visiting the area on July 6 found and photographed the remnants of an empty BLU-108 canister.

Sanhan, Sanaa governorate, May 21, 2015

Human Rights Watch received photographs and collected witness accounts that indicate CBU-105 Sensor Fuzed Weapons were used in an attack on the Affash Historic Fort in Sanhan, Sanaa governorate, about 20 kilometers south of Sanaa City, on May 21.

The fort is in the village of Bait al-Ahmar, which has approximately 460 inhabitants, where former Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh, a key supporter of the Houthis in the current conflict, owns a house. A guard at the fort, Nagi Abdullah al-Gahshi, said that the closest military base is 20 to 25 kilometers away, at Raymet Humaid military camp.

Ali Mohsen Maqula, a guard for the past four years at the Affash Historic Fort's housing compound and member of the Republican Guard, told Human Rights Watch that he witnessed a cluster munition attack. Yemen's Republican Guard is a military unit that was commanded by former President Saleh's son, Ahmed Ali Saleh.

Maqula said he was on a hill a kilometer from the fort at about 7 p.m. on May 21, when he saw a series of about 12 explosions. "I remember the explosions in the sky, they looked like big bright red fireworks, the color of lava," he said. It was too dark to see anything else, he said. He said that 10 guards at the compound were wounded in the attack, but that Saleh was not there at the time.



A BLU-108 canister with all four skeet (submunitions) still attached, reportedly used in an attack on the Affash Historic Fort in Sanhan, Sanaa governorate, on May 21. © 2015 Private

Maqula left but returned to the village a week later and saw the remnants in the compound of BLU-108 canisters with their parachutes still attached, as well as at least 20 unexploded skeet, or submunitions. Two weeks later, a team of military engineers arrived and destroyed the submunitions near the gate of the compound by detonating them, but did not touch the rest, he said.

In September 2015, Abdullah Abu Hurriya, a politician from former President Saleh's General People's Congress Party, hired Muhammad Ahmad al-Nahmi, a freelance photographer, to photograph the submunitions. Al-Nahmi told Human Rights Watch that he traveled to the village and saw at least eight BLU-108 canisters in the fort, and another three next to the compound's mosque. Abu Hurriya provided copies of the photos to Human Rights Watch that show the remnants of a CBU-105 Sensor Fuzed Weapon, including a BLU-108 canister with all four skeets or submunitions still attached, indicated it failed to function.

Maqula said that the local sheikh of the village, Muhammad Mohsen, warned residents to leave on May 19 after three bombs – not cluster munitions – hit the compound at around 11:30 a.m., wounding al-Gahshi and three other

guards. Maqula said that those who lived closest to the compound walls left, but about 200 residents living 500 meters or further from the compound stayed. He said that after the May 21 attack, the remaining civilians fled. Since then, there have been four more attacks on the compound – one in September and three in October – but none with cluster munitions.

Al-Amar, Saada governorate, April 27, 2015 A Sanaa-based activist provided Human Rights Watch with photographs that he said were taken by a resident of Saada governorate at the site of an April 27 airstrike by the Saudi-led coalition in the al-Amar area of al-Safraa, 35 kilometers south of the northern Houthi stronghold of Saada city. The photographs show a BLU-108 canister with four skeet, or submunitions, still attached, indicating it failed to function, and another empty BLU-108.



An FZU-39/B proximity sensor, which opens CBU-105 Sensor Fuzed Weapon in mid-air, reportedly used in an attack on the Affash Historic Fort in Sanhan, Sanaa governorate, on May 21.

Local residents and medical staff said the CBU-105 Sensor Fuzed Weapons used outside al-Amar village on April 27, wounded two or three people. One witness said that one of the wounded was a fighter while others, including medical staff in two hospitals, said that at least two were civilians.

In May, locals showed Human Rights Watch the remnants of two BLU-108 canisters and the place where they were found by near the main road between Sanaa and Saada, about 100 meters south of al-Amar. One canister still contained a submunition, while the other was empty. Human Rights

Watch found a third empty canister in bushes nearby. Researchers identified six small craters in the asphalt at the attack site that are consistent with craters created by the explosive submunitions released from BLU-108 canisters.

Ayid Muhammad Haydar, 37, a resident, said that he heard an airplane overhead around 11 a.m. on a Monday, the weekly village market day, in late April. He said that the sky filled with about 40 parachutes. He did not hear any explosions in the air, but said that he heard about 15 small explosions that sounded like hand grenades over the next two hours.

Local residents said that Saudi-led coalition aircraft had carried out dozens of aerial attacks on April 27, apparently targeting the al-Safra military complex, housing the 72nd Military Brigade, two to three kilometers away, which Al- Amar residents described as the closest military installation to their village.



An expended BLU-108 canister from a CBU-105 Sensor Fuzed Weapon found in the al-Amar area of al-Safraa, Saada governorate, in northern Yemen on April 27. © 2015 Ole Solvang/Human Rights Watch

Al-Shaaf, Saada governorate, April 17, 2015

A video uploaded to YouTube on April 17 by the pro-Houthi September 21 YouTube channel shows numerous objects with parachutes slowly descending from the sky. The video zooms out to show a mid-air detonation and several black smoke clouds from other detonations.

Human Rights Watch established the location, using satellite imagery analysis, as al-Shaaf in Saqeen, in the western part of Saada governorate. The munitions appeared to land on a cultivated plateau, within 600 meters of several dozen buildings in four to six village clusters.

US Transfer of the Weapons

The US Department of Defense concluded a contract with Textron Defense Systems for the manufacture of 1,300 CBU-105 Sensor Fuzed Weapons for Saudi Arabia in August 2013. The contract stipulated that the weapons were to be delivered by December 2015, but Human Rights Watch has not been able to determine if all cluster

munitions have been delivered. The UAE received an unknown number of CBU-105 from Textron Defense Systems in June 2010, fulfilling a contract announced in November 2007. At the time that these two nations procured these weapons, each CBU-105 cost approximately \$360,000.

Under a June 2008 policy directive issued by then-Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, the US can only export cluster munitions that “after arming do not result in more than 1 percent unexploded ordnance across the range of intended operational environments,” and the receiving country must agree that cluster munitions “will only be used against clearly defined military targets and will not be used where civilians are known to be present or in areas normally inhabited by civilians.”

This policy is most recently codified in Section 7054 (b) of the Consolidated and Continuing Appropriations Act (H.R. 83) of 2015. According to guidance issued by the US Defense Security Cooperation Agency in 2011, “the only cluster munition with a compliant submunition compliant with the reliability standard established by the Gates Policy is the CBU-97B/CBU-105 Sensor Fuzed Weapon.”

There is no evidence to indicate that CBU-105 Sensor Fuzed Weapons have been transferred to or stockpiled by the other countries participating in the Saudi-led coalition—Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, Qatar, and Sudan.



Parachute from a BLU-108 canister used in the CBU-105 Sensor Fuzed Weapon attack on al-Hayma Port in Hodaida governorate on December 12, 2015.

Saudi Arabia has denied using other types of cluster munitions in Yemen, but it has admitted to using CBU-105 Sensor Fuzed Weapons. In a January 11, 2016 interview with CNN, the Saudi military spokesperson said the coalition used CBU-105 Sensor Fuzed Weapons once, in Hajjah in April 2015, “but not indiscriminately.” He said that the CBU-105 has been used “against vehicles.”

The Saudi-led coalition may have used CBU-105 Sensor Fuzed Weapons in Hajjah in an attack on a vehicle on a mountain road between Amran and Hajjah city. In August 2015, several locals in the area told Human Rights Watch researchers that they had heard about a military truck with a family inside being hit by cluster munitions sometime between May and July. A local news outlet reported an incident meeting the same description on May 21.

While the CBU-105 is banned under the Convention on Cluster Munitions,

its use is permitted under existing US policy and its export is permitted under the existing US export restrictions on cluster munitions.

The US has made few public statements in response to the use of cluster munitions in Yemen. According to State Department officials, the US is aware of “reports” of the “alleged” use of cluster munitions by the Saudi-led coalition. In an August 19 article, however, an unnamed Pentagon official was quoted as acknowledging that “the U.S. is aware that Saudi Arabia has used cluster munitions in Yemen.”

In July, US Representative Jim McGovern raised concern about the use of CBU-105 Sensor Fuzed Weapons in Yemen, stating: “If we have evidence that countries are not complying with US law that ought to be enough to say we sell these weapons to them no more. Period. End of story.” McGovern said the US should join the Convention on Cluster Munitions.



Fishing boats burn in al-Hayma Port in Hodaida governorate after the December 12 attack in which CBU-105 Sensor Fuzed Weapons were used.

Before the Yemen conflict, the only known use of the Sensor Fuzed Weapon was by the US in Iraq in 2003, apparently on a very limited scale, but multiple failures called into question the claimed reliability rate of better than 99 percent.

In addition to the recent transfer of CBU-105, the US provided Saudi Arabia with significant exports of cluster bombs between 1970 and 1999. There is credible evidence that in November 2009, Saudi Arabia dropped cluster bombs in Yemen's northern Saada governorate during fighting between the Houthis and the Yemeni and Saudi militaries.



December 23, 2016

Yemen: Brazil-Made Cluster Munitions Harm Civilians

Saudi-Led Coalition Rockets Nearly Hit Schools in Saada

(São Paulo) – The Saudi Arabia-led coalition fired Brazilian-made rockets containing banned cluster munitions that struck near two schools in the northern Yemeni city of Saada on December 6, 2016, Human Rights Watch said today. The attack on al-Dhubat neighborhood in Saada’s Old City at about 8 p.m. killed two civilians and wounded at least six, including a child.



Impact crater created by a submunition used in the cluster munition attack on Saada City, December 6, 2016. © 2016 Private

The attack came a day after Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Brazil, and the United States abstained from a vote in the United Nations General Assembly that overwhelmingly endorsed an already widely accepted international ban on cluster munition use. Brazil should join the Convention on Cluster Munitions and cease the production and transfer of cluster munitions, while Saudi Arabia and other coalition members should cease all use of cluster munitions, Human Rights Watch said.

Cluster Munition Coalition, the international coalition of groups working to eradicate cluster munitions. “Cluster munitions are prohibited weapons that should never be used under any circumstances due to the harm inflicted on civilians. Brazil should make an immediate commitment to ending production and export of cluster munitions.”

Since March 26, 2015, a Saudi Arabia-led coalition of nine Arab states has conducted military operations in Yemen against the Houthis, also known as Ansar Allah, and forces loyal to former president Ali Abdullah Saleh. Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International have documented the use of seven types of air-delivered and ground-launched cluster munitions made in the US, the United Kingdom, and Brazil. The coalition has admitted using UK and US-made cluster munitions in attacks in Yemen.

On December 19, the Saudi-led coalition announced it would stop using a UK-made cluster munition, the BL-755, but left open the possibility it would continue using other types of cluster munitions in Yemen.

Human Rights Watch interviewed by telephone four witnesses to the attack and several other local sources.

One witness visited the attack site shortly afterward and photographed the damage, while another photographed an unexploded submunition lying where it had landed.

Witnesses described hearing a loud explosion followed by several smaller explosions, which is consistent with a cluster munition attack. Ayman Lutf, a 20-year-old Cluster munitions are prohibited weapons that should never be used under any circumstances due to the harm inflicted on civilians. Brazil should make an immediate commitment to ending production and export of cluster munitions.

” Steve Goose Arms Division Director at Human Rights Watch Bassam Ali, a 20-year-old neighborhood resident, said, “We thought it’s like the regular missiles that always hit Saada... Which only create single explosions. This one was different, a series of explosions together... All of the bombs landed over our neighborhood, over houses, and on the streets.”

Khaled Rashed, a 38-year-old member of the local council, said, “We heard... two sounds of explosions... One louder than the other, and... after that we heard more explosions, smaller, and falling from the sky like embers... It landed everywhere, water tanks over houses, one... exploded and destroyed a taxi.”

Rashed said that the rocket strike occurred near a girls’ school and a boys’ school, both between the old city and al-Dhubat neighborhood. People wounded in the attack were taken to a nearby hospital. Students were told not to. Dr. Mohammed Hajjar, general director of the largest hospital in Saada, said that the hospital treated seven people for wounds, of whom one later died, and that another had died before arriving. Fathy Al-Batl, a local activist, said that those wounded included a teacher, a 20- year-old student, and a 14-year-old boy.

Human Rights Watch identified the remnants of ASTROS II surface-to-surface rockets, each containing up to 65 submunitions, delivered by a truck-mounted multi-barrel rocket launcher. Bahrain and Saudi Arabia have purchased ASTROS cluster munition rockets from Brazil, where they are manufactured by Avibrás Indústria Aeroespacial SA.

Previously, Amnesty International researchers found remnants of ASTROS cluster munition rockets remaining after an attack on Ahma in Saada on October 27, 2015, that wounded at least four people.



Submunition of an ASTROS II cluster munition rocket found in Saada City on December 7, 2016. Bahrain and Saudi Arabia have purchased ASTROS rockets from Brazil, where they are manufactured by Avibrás Indústria Aeroespacial SA. Each cluster munition rocket contains up to 65 submunitions. Unexploded submunitions are extremely volatile and can explode on contact: they should never be touched or handled. © 2016 Private

Saudi Arabia’s use of ASTROS cluster munition rockets in Khafji, Saudi Arabia in 1991, during the First Gulf War, was previously documented by Human Rights Watch. These munitions left behind “significant numbers of unexploded submunitions.” previous occasions suggests that Saudi forces fired the cluster munitions used on December 6, 2016. However, further investigation is required to conclusively determine responsibility, Human Rights Watch said.

The coalition has attacked the Houthi-stronghold of Saada City frequently since the start of the war. A Houthi-Saleh military camp is located less than 50 meters from al-Dhubat neighborhood. Human Rights Watch has documented the coalition’s use of cluster munitions in 17 unlawful attacks in Yemen that killed at least 21 civilians, wounded 72 more, and in some cases struck civilian areas.

The use of cluster munitions in Yemen since April 2015 has received worldwide media coverage, provoked a public outcry, and been condemned by dozens of countries as well as by a European Parliament resolution. In September 2015, more than 60 nations at the First Review Conference of the

Convention on Cluster Munitions expressed deep concern at the use of cluster munitions in Yemen and issued a declaration condemning “any use of cluster munitions by any actor.”

The coalition has acknowledged using US and UK-made cluster munitions in Yemen, but claims to have done so in compliance with the laws of war. In a January 11, 2016 interview with CNN, the coalition military spokesman said the coalition used CBU-105 Sensor Fuzed Weapons in Hajjah in April 2015 “against a concentration of a camp in this area, but not indiscriminately.” He said that the USmade CBU-105 has been used “against vehicles.”munition ban permanent and extend it to all other countries before he leaves office, Human Rights Watch said.



Fragmentation damage to a car parked at the site of the cluster munition attack on Saada City, December 6, 2016. © 2016 Private

Cluster munitions are delivered from the ground by artillery and rockets, or dropped from aircraft and contain multiple smaller explosive submunitions that spread out over a wide area. Many fail to detonate and leave unexploded submunitions that become de facto landmines that continue to pose a threat long after a conflict ends.

Cluster munitions are prohibited by a 2008 treaty signed by 119 countries,

though not by Brazil, the US, Yemen, or Saudi Arabia, and its coalition partners Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, Qatar, Sudan, and the United Arab Emirates. These countries should promptly join the Convention on Cluster Munitions and abide by its provisions, Human Rights Watch said.

Human Rights Watch is a co-founder of the international

Cluster Munition Coalition. Germany's Ambassador Michael Biontino will preside over the next annual meeting of the Convention on Cluster Munitions in Geneva on September 4, 2017. 6- voted in favor of the non-binding resolution on the convention while Russia and Zimbabwe voted against it, and 39 states abstained. Those abstaining included Yemen.

Saudi Arabia, the US, and Brazil.

On December 19, the Saudi Press Agency, Saudi Arabia's state-run news agency, reported that the government of Saudi Arabia had "decided to cease usage of the UK-manufactured BL-755 cluster munitions" and had informed the UK of its decision. The statement acknowledged the Convention on Cluster Munitions, argued that, "international law does not ban the use of cluster munitions," and claimed that Saudi Arabia used UK-made cluster munitions in Yemen "against legitimate military targets to defend Saudi towns and villages against continuous attacks by Houthi militia, which resulted in Saudi civilian casualties. In deploying these munitions [sic], the Coalition fully observed the international humanitarian law principles of distinction and proportionality. Furthermore, the munitions were [sic] not deployed in civilian population centers."

The same day, the UK government admitted it had evidence indicating the coalition had used UK-made cluster munitions in attacks in Yemen.

"At last Saudi Arabia is beginning to feel global pressure for its continued use of cluster munitions," Goose said.

"Both Saudi Arabia and Brazil should join the international ban on these weapons without delay."



July 11, 2017

Yemen is suffering at the hands of Saudi Arabia - and the UK is profiting

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Journalists and police inspect the scene at the community hall in Sanaa that Saudi-led coalition warplanes attacked on October 8, 2016. © 2016 Khaled Abdullah/Reuters Reuters

The landmark legal case, brought by Campaign Against Arms Trade, tried to establish that the UK government is breaking its own arms export licensing criteria by selling weapons to Riyadh, given the repeated international humanitarian law (IHL) violations the Saud-led coalition has committed during its military campaign in Yemen.

Had the High Court ruled in favour of Campaign Against Arms Trade, it was hoped that UK arms sales to Saudi Arabia would have been suspended –

at least temporarily – and thereby help to pressure Riyadh to end its unlawful attacks in Yemen, where the two-year-old conflict has left more than 4,900 civilians dead, another 8,500 wounded, and brought millions in the country to the brink of starvation.

So Monday's ruling is terrible news for Yemen's civilians.

But the Court's approach also involved some significant omissions.

For example, in reaching a judgment on whether there is a «serious risk» that UK arms and equipment sold to Saudi Arabia will be used to commit «a serious violation of international humanitarian law» - at the heart of this legal case - it is crucial to look closely at Saudi Arabia's record during the Yemen conflict, and to scrutinise the contrasting evidence put forward by the different parties. The Court's judgement commends the UK government's processes for considering allegations of violations of IHL. This includes the fact that cases are placed on a central government database, known as «the Tracker», as well as government's claim, backed by the Court, that the UK is compliant with its legal obligations. But is this really good enough? Human Rights Watch has identified at least 81 apparently unlawful attacks by the Saudi-led coalition, which have hit schools, markets, hospitals and homes. Amnesty International and the UN have also identified scores of additional Saudi-led coalition strikes which they judge to be unlawful. While it does not say so explicitly, the logic of the UK's position is that Human Rights Watch, Amnesty and the UN rights agencies - whose work is often commended by the UK government in other contexts for its objectivity and rigour - have repeatedly gotten it wrong in the case of Yemen. The government is entitled to challenge our organisations' research, legal analysis and conclusions, of course, but it has failed to make public any convincing counter evidence to dispute ours and substantiate theirs. And, more importantly, the Court is seemingly happy with the government's assurances from Saudi Arabia that it remains «genuinely committed to compliance with international humanitarian law». For example, the Court makes much of the fact that the government quickly raised concerns when the Saudi-led coalition bombed a funeral hall in Sanaa in October 2016 – an appalling attack that killed or wounded hundreds of civilians. But even in this case – which the UN human rights office called «outrageous» and which prompted the United States to review its support to the Saudi-led coalition and hold up some weapons sales – the UK has not said

whether it believes the airstrike was lawful or not.

Researchers visited the site, documented weapons remnants from the attack, and interviewed civilians who were grievously wounded, many with horrible burns. They told Human Rights Watch of the horror they felt when the first bomb struck, when they realised the guards would not let them out, and when the next two weapons struck. Here again, the government refuses to state whether it judges the strike illegal or not. The Court also makes some statements about the work of human rights groups, including that they have often «not visited and conducted investigations in Yemen and are necessarily reliant on second-hand information.» This is not correct. Human Rights Watch has visited Yemen repeatedly since the start of the war in March 2015, and conducted numerous on-site inspections. Nor does Human Rights Watch rely on second-hand information. Instead, we conduct thorough investigations that draw on multiple sources of information, including interviews, video and photographic evidence, and satellite imagery. The Court also notes approvingly the frequency of UK government contact with the Saudi authorities, and a number of high-profile recent public statements by the Saudis. But where is the evidence that this has translated into changes in Saudi conduct? There is no let-up in the Yemen war. The Saudi-led coalition, supported and armed by the UK, continues to carry out attacks that we and others deem to be unlawful. There are simply too many unanswered questions for this ruling to be the last word on UK arms sales to Saudi.



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Trump to Reward Saudi War Crimes with Weapons

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Kristine Beckerle

Yemen and UAE Researcher, Middle East and North Africa Division@K_Beckerle



Firefighters try to extinguish a fire at the community hall in Sanaa where Saudi-led coalition warplanes attacked a funeral on October 8, 2016. © 2016 Khaled Abdullah/Reuters

Last October the Saudi Arabia-led coalition bombed a funeral hall in Yemen's capital, Sanaa, killing and wounding hundreds of people. "The scene was catastrophic," one survivor told me. "Beyond what I can explain to you or describe... There were burned bodies and dead bodies all over the hall."

Soon after that unlawful bombing, the Obama administration suspended the sale of nearly \$400 million in weapons to Saudi Arabia. It was a recognition, a long time in coming, that the coalition's military campaign in Yemen had devastated the country, killed thousands of civilians, and brought it to the brink of famine.

After the funeral bombing, unlawful airstrikes continued, but the decision to suspend arms sales sent an important message to the Saudis. President Donald Trump, in his first trip abroad as president, is going to send an alternative, deeply troublesome message.

The Saudi Arabia-led coalition killed several dozen civilians in three apparently unlawful airstrikes in September and October 2016. The coalition's use of United States-supplied weapons in two of the strikes, including a bomb delivered to Saudi Arabia well into the conflict, puts the US at risk of complicity in unlawful attacks.

While in Riyadh this weekend, Trump reportedly plans to announce more than \$100 billion in arms deals to Saudi Arabia – nearly as much as Barack Obama authorized during his eight years in office. The deals include Raytheon bombs, Lockheed Martin missile defense systems and BAE combat vehicles, and some of the weapons whose sales had been suspended.

The scars of unlawful airstrikes can be found across Yemen, where the Saudi-led coalition has carried out scores of attacks that hit homes, schools, markets, and hospitals since March 2015, when it began its military campaign against the Houthi armed group and forces loyal to the former longtime president Ali Abdullah Saleh. Human Rights Watch has documented 81 apparently unlawful coalition attacks over the last two years, many possible war crimes. In almost two dozen of these cases, including the attack on the funeral hall, we were able to identify the US weapons that were used.

According to the United Nations, at least 4,773 civilians have been killed and 8,272 wounded since this conflict began, the majority by coalition airstrikes. The war has driven Yemen, already the poorest nation in the Middle East, toward humanitarian catastrophe. Both the coalition and Houthi-Saleh forces

have blocked or restricted critical relief supplies from reaching civilians. Seven million people face starvation, and cholera ravages parts of the country.

Trump should be urging the Saudis to shift course by abiding by the laws of war and holding those responsible for past abuses to account. Instead he will effectively be telling them to continue as before and not to worry – the flow of US weapons will not stop.

Trump will also be putting Americans at risk. Continued US arms sales to a country that has repeatedly violated the laws of war exposes US officials to legal liability for aiding and abetting coalition war crimes.

Some lawmakers in the US are pushing back, introducing a bill intended to limit US arms transfers to Saudi Arabia. It would require the White House to certify that Saudi Arabia is taking all feasible precautions to minimize civilian casualties in Yemen, and stipulate that the White House must brief Congress on whether Saudi Arabia has used US weapons in previous unlawful attacks in Yemen. Other lawmakers have pledged to try to prevent future US arms sales to Saudi Arabia.

Earlier this month, US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said: “If we condition too heavily that others must adopt [our] value[s]... it really creates obstacles to our ability to advance, our national security interests, our economic interests.” The Trump administration needs to recognize instead that protecting civilians in armed conflict is part and parcel of enhancing US national security.

The US cannot quietly hope that the coalition will take the blame for past and future atrocities like the funeral hall bombing. Yemeni civilians suffering from unlawful airstrikes know the US supports the coalition and that US weapons have been used against them. This is the national security problem the administration should be paying more attention to.

If the Trump administration won't try to curtail war crimes by Saudi Arabia and the rest of the coalition, Congress should step in and make clear – by using its own power to stop weapons sales – that the lives of Yemeni civilian can no longer be disregarded.



Yemen: Attack on Refugee Boat Likely War Crime

Failed Investigations into Abuses as War Turns 2



Body of a Somali refugee, killed in an attack by a helicopter while travelling in a vessel off the coast of Yemen, is carried at the Red Sea port of Hodeidah, Yemen, March 17, 2017.

© 2017 Reuters

(Beirut) – An apparent Saudi-led coalition attack on a boat carrying Somali civilians off the coast of Yemen highlights the need for accountability on the second anniversary of the Yemeni armed conflict, Human Rights Watch said today. Several witnesses reported that on March 16, 2017, a helicopter fired on the boat, killing at least 32 of the 145 Somali migrants and refugees on board and one Yemeni civilian. Another 29, including six children, were wounded, and 10 more remain missing. Photos of the boat taken the next day show damage consistent with gunfire from an aerial attack.

All the parties to the conflict denied responsibility for the attack. Only the Saudi-led coalition has military aircraft. The Houthi-Saleh forces do not. Somalia, which supports the coalition, called on the coalition to investigate.

But the coalition has repeatedly shown itself unable or unwilling to credibly investigate its own abuses.

“The coalition’s apparent firing on a boat filled with fleeing refugees is only the latest likely war crime in Yemen’s two-year-long war,” said Sarah Leah Whitson, Middle East director at Human Rights Watch. “Reckless disregard for the lives of civilians has reached a new level of depravity.”

One of the boat’s four Yemeni crew members told Human Rights Watch that the boat was about 50 kilometers off the coast of the Yemeni port city of Hodeida, traveling away from Yemen, when it was attacked. That evening the captain had told the passengers to be quiet as they were transiting through “a very dangerous place,” two people onboard told Human Rights Watch. Earlier in the journey a vessel had approached and told the crew to stop the boat, but the boat continued.

Four people aboard the boat said that at about 9 p.m. they saw a helicopter repeatedly shoot at the boat. A Somali woman refugee, 25, who was wounded in the attack, said, “All of a sudden, I saw a helicopter above us. ... They attacked abruptly. ... When they kept firing at us, those of us who spoke Arabic kept saying, ‘We are Somalis!’” Another woman said that she was hit by a fragment from an explosive weapon. A crew member and others said a large naval ship also fired on the boat.



The remains of a community hall in Sanaa, the capital of Yemen, after Saudi-led coalition warplanes attacked a funeral ceremony there on October 8, 2016.
© 2016 Khaled Abdullah/Reuters

After the attack, the boat docked at Hodeida port at about 4:30 a.m. The head of the fishing port, Daoud Fadel, said, “We couldn’t find a place to put the bodies,

so we had to put them in the place where we store the fish.” Another witness said that, in addition to those who had been taken to nearby hospitals for treatment, about 15 men were wounded from bullets or fragments during the attack.

Both the Saudi-led coalition and the Houthi-Saleh forces denied carrying out the attack. The official state news agency of the United Arab Emirates reported that a UAE military source denied that its forces had been involved and welcomed an international investigation into the incident. Coalition members have naval vessels patrolling access to the Hodeida coast, while Houthi-Saleh forces maintain control over the port. The US, which has been carrying out airstrikes in Yemen against Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), also denied carrying out the attack.

Under the laws of war, attacks against civilians that are deliberate or reckless are war crimes.

Since March 26, 2015, the Saudi Arabia-led coalition has carried out military operations, supported by the United States, against Houthi forces and forces loyal to former President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The coalition has conducted numerous airstrikes that have unlawfully struck homes, markets, hospitals, and schools.



Remnant of a wing assembly that is mounted on a US-made GBU-12 Paveway II laser-guided 500-pound bomb found at the Arhab water drilling site, Sanaa governorate, where at least 31 civilians were killed in an airstrike on September 10, 2016. According to the manufacturing date as well as the national stock number, this wing assembly was produced by Raytheon Company, a US defense contractor, in October 2015.

© 2016 Priyanka Motaparthi / Human Rights Watch

recruited child soldiers, and arbitrarily detained and forcibly disappeared scores of civilians. Since the start of the current conflict, at least 4,773 civilians had been killed and 8,272 wounded, the majority by coalition airstrikes, according to the United Nations human rights office.

Human Rights Watch has documented 62 apparently unlawful coalition airstrikes, some of which may amount to war crimes, that have killed nearly 900 civilians, and documented seven indiscriminate attacks by Houthi-Saleh forces in Aden and Taizz that killed 139 people, including at least eight children. Human Rights Watch has also documented the Houthi-Saleh forces use of banned antipersonnel landmines and the coalition's use of widely banned cluster munitions. Both parties have blocked or restricted critical relief supplies from reaching civilians.

On March 23, 2017, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights called for an international, independent commission of inquiry into allegations of violations of international human rights and humanitarian law by all sides in Yemen, a call repeatedly made by national, regional, and international organizations over the past two years.

The UN Human Rights Council fell short of establishing a full stand-alone inquiry in September 2016, but passed a resolution mandating the UN human rights office to deploy additional human rights experts to investigate abuses by all sides. Governments should fully support the office's expanded investigative mandate in the absence of a standalone international inquiry, Human Rights Watch said.

The Saudi-led coalition-appointed Joint Incidents Assessment Team (JIAT) has failed to meet international standards. It has absolved the coalition of responsibility in nearly all of the 17 incidents it has so far investigated and released findings that differed drastically from those of the UN and others.

Although the coalition has conducted widespread unlawful attacks, the United States, United Kingdom, and France continue to sell billions of dollars of weapons to Saudi Arabia. Human Rights Watch was not able to determine which coalition member carried out the attack on the refugee boat, but the US State Department has approved licenses for the sale or servicing of military helicopters to Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, and Jordan. Governments should suspend all weapon sales to Saudi Arabia or risk

complicity in future unlawful coalition attacks, Human Rights Watch said.

“Despite the growing mountain of evidence of coalition abuses, the US, UK, and France seem more focused on selling arms to the Saudis than on their possible complicity in coalition war crimes,” Whitson said. “After two years of unlawful attacks on civilians and civilian structures, Saudi Arabia’s allies should reconsider their support and use their leverage with Riyadh to end the violations.”



Australia: Suspend Military Sales to Saudi Arabia

Release Details on Weapons, Material Sold to Coalition Members

(Sydney) – The Australian government should immediately halt military sales to Saudi Arabia following numerous unlawful Saudi-led coalition airstrikes in Yemen, Human Rights Watch said today in a letter to Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull. Australia should also release details about military weapons and material it has sold to other members of the Saudi-led coalition carrying out the Yemen campaign and whether any Australian-made arms have been used in unlawful coalition attacks.



The remains of a community hall in Sanaa, the capital of Yemen, after Saudi-led coalition warplanes attacked a funeral ceremony there on October 8, 2016.

© 2016 Khaled Abdullah/Reuters

In the past year, based on media reports, the Defense Department has approved four military export licenses to Saudi Arabia, but it has not released information on the types or quantities of arms and equipment sold. Since the

Saudi-led coalition began its military campaign in Yemen in March 2015, the United Nations and nongovernmental organizations, including Human Rights Watch, have documented numerous unlawful coalition airstrikes, some of them apparent war crimes, on homes, markets, schools, and hospitals.

“Prime Minister Turnbull has approved military sales to Saudi Arabia when he should be using Australia’s leverage to press Riyadh to end unlawful airstrikes in Yemen,” said Elaine Pearson, Australia director at Human Rights Watch. “Until the Saudi-led coalition credibly investigates and curtails its unlawful attacks, Australia should stop selling them arms and equipment.”

After two years of fighting, at least 4,773 civilians have been killed and 8,272 wounded, the majority by Saudi-led coalition airstrikes, according to the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. The coalition has not seriously investigated alleged laws-of-war violations, and has provided almost no information on which country’s forces participated in such attacks.

The coalition has also imposed a naval blockade on Yemen that has exacerbated the country’s grave humanitarian crisis, which the UN recently declared one of the world’s worst. The blockade has diverted ships carrying life-saving medical supplies and delayed shipments of civilian goods for up to three months. Nearly 19 million Yemenis – over two thirds of the population – need humanitarian assistance, and seven million are facing starvation.

Several countries are showing increasing reluctance to supply Saudi Arabia with weapons, Human Rights Watch said. In March 2016, the Dutch parliament voted to ban arms exports to Saudi Arabia. United Kingdom arms sales to Saudi Arabia are currently under judicial review.

Several United States senators recently introduced a bill to limit the sale of US weapons unless Saudi Arabia acts to minimize civilian casualties in Yemen.

“Halting defense sales to Saudi Arabia would send a strong signal to Riyadh that the Australian government is committed to ensuring respect for the laws of war, and to the Australian people that the lives of Yemeni civilians are of genuine concern,” Pearson said.



June 13, 2017

Dozens of US Senators Say No Weapons to Saudi Arabia

Cite Concern Over Saudi-Led Coalition's Possible War Crimes in Yemen

Dozens of US Senators just sent a powerful message to Saudi Arabia: they – unlike President Donald Trump – want to stop selling arms to Saudi Arabia, a country that has repeatedly used US weapons in attacks that likely constitute war crimes. Forty-seven senators voted to block a US\$510 million weapons deal, meaning it was only three votes short of passing.



Journalists and police inspect the scene at the community hall in Sanaa that Saudi-led coalition warplanes attacked on October 8, 2016. © 2016 Khaled Abdullah/Reuters

Numbers like these in the Senate, historically reluctant to the bipartisan resolution of disapproval, introduced by Senators Rand Paul, a Republican from Kentucky, and Chris Murphy and Al Franken, Democrats from Connecticut

and Minnesota, highlights the sales of aircraft components and weapons used by the Saudi-led coalition in the war in Yemen. A similar bipartisan version was introduced in the House. If the resolution passed, it would have blocked the sale of precision-guided munitions – the first of potentially dozens of arms sales authorized by Trump.

Last December, the Obama administration halted the sale of US\$400 million in arms to Saudi Arabia, including precision-guided munitions, citing concerns about civilian casualties from airstrikes in Yemen. But one of Trump's defense systems, and BAE combat vehicles. The Trump Administration also green lighted the weapons deal Obama froze.

Human Rights Watch has documented scores of serious violations of humanitarian law by the Saudi-led coalition since it began its military campaign in Yemen against the Houthis and their allies in March 2015. Coalition airstrikes have hit homes, schools, factories, markets, and hospitals, many apparently unlawful attacks under international law and some likely war crimes. Some egregious attacks have used US-supplied bombs – including an airstrike on a market in northern Yemen in March 2016, that killed 97 civilians, including 25 children. The conflict has led to a humanitarian catastrophe, with famine and cholera outbreaks hitting poor children and families the hardest, and both sides blocking aid access.

Senators Murphy and Paul have led the charge against US arms sales to Saudi Arabia. This level of bipartisan support for this resolution could be a game-changer and is hopefully the beginning of the end for US cooperation in Saudi-led coalition abuses in Yemen. The Senate should keep up pressure on the Trump administration until the Saudis end their unlawful attacks and credibly investigate the scores they have already conducted.



June 30, 2015

Yemen: Unlawful Airstrikes Kill Dozens of Civilians

Coalition Forces Bomb Houses, Markets in Saada City



Burned-out cars lined up by the Jarman petrol station, which was struck in an aerial attack on April 15, 2015

(New York) – Saudi Arabia-led coalition forces have carried out airstrikes killing dozens of civilians in Saada City, in northern Yemen, since April 2015 in apparent violation of the laws of war, Human Rights Watch said.

The 47-page report, “Targeting Saada: Unlawful Coalition Airstrikes on Saada in Yemen,” documents a dozen airstrikes on the Houthi stronghold that destroyed or damaged civilian homes, five markets, a school, and a petrol station, though there was no evidence these sites were being used for military purposes. These strikes killed 59 people, reported to have been civilians between April 6 and May 11. At least 35 children were among those killed.

Sarah Leah Whitson

Middle East and North Africa director

“The coalition’s aerial bombing of Saada killed dozens of civilians, devastating entire families,” said Sarah Leah Whitson, Middle East and North Africa director. “These attacks appear to be serious laws-of-war violations that need to be properly investigated.”

The report draws on on-site investigations and interviews with 28 victims and witnesses that Human Rights Watch conducted in Saada City in May, as well as a review of photographs and video, and analysis of satellite imagery.

The Saudi Arabia-led coalition of nine Arab countries began its aerial campaign in Yemen on March 26 after forces of Ansar Allah – commonly known as Houthis – took control of large swathes of the country, ousted the government of President Abdu Rabbu Mansour Hadi, and moved south to threaten the port city of Aden. On May 8, coalition authorities declared all of Saada City a military target, warning its residents to leave. This declaration violated the laws of war because it fails to distinguish between civilians and legitimate military targets, Human Rights Watch said: Aircraft dropped several bombs on a cultural center and an adjacent house, killing 27 members of the al-Ibbi family, including 17 children.



Rubble from a residential house in Saada City. An airstrike almost completely destroyed the house on May 5, 2015, killing 27 members of one family.

Walid al-Ibbi, 35, the only al-Ibbi family member present to survive the attack unscathed, told Human Rights Watch: “Just earlier that evening, a family had come to our house to ask for my daughter’s hand in marriage for their son.

Now I have lost my wife and all four of my daughters. I cannot believe that everyone I love is gone.”

Coalition aircraft also bombed five markets and a petrol station crowded with motorists lined up to fill their vehicles. Not only were these attacks unlawful because of the apparent absence of any military target, but they contributed to civilian hardship in the city, where people Under international humanitarian law, or the laws of war, civilians and civilian structures may never be deliberate targets of attack. Attacks that fail to discriminate between civilians and combatants or that cause civilian harm disproportionate to the expected military gain are prohibited. Warring parties are also required to take all feasible measures to minimize civilian harm.

Human Rights Watch wrote to the Saudi Arabian government seeking information on intended targets of 13 in Saada, but has received no response. Satellite imagery shows over 210 distinct impact locations in built-up areas of the city consistent with aerial bombardment. These attacks damaged or destroyed hundreds of buildings. Investigation of the impact sites and remnants from the weapons used shows that coalition aircraft have dropped munitions with blast and fragmentation effects that can cause injuries and damage over a wide area.



Images of the Saada Cultural Center and the al-Ibbi house after at least five aerial bombs hit both compounds on May 5, 2015, killing 27 members of the al-Ibbi family, including 17 children. Taken May 19, 2015. Before: © 2015

CNES / Distribution Airbus DS After: © 2015 CNES / Distribution Airbus DS

Coalition forces should abide by the laws of war in its military operations, Human Rights Watch said. The coalition should not use explosive weapons with wide-area effect in populated areas because of the inevitable harm they cause to civilians.

Human Rights Watch observed Houthi vehicle-mounted anti-aircraft weapons in Saada City. Houthi forces should avoid placing these and other military objectives in densely populated areas.

The United States is not a member of the Saudi Arabia-led coalition but it provides “logistical and intelligence support” for its campaign and may assist with direct targeting support. The United States and other coalition supporters should press the coalition to abide by its international legal obligations and investigate alleged violations in any attack in which they played a direct role.

“Saada City’s streets are littered with bomb craters, destroyed buildings, and other evidence of coalition airstrikes,” Whitson said.



Targeting Saada: The illegal coalition air strike upon Saada city in Yemen

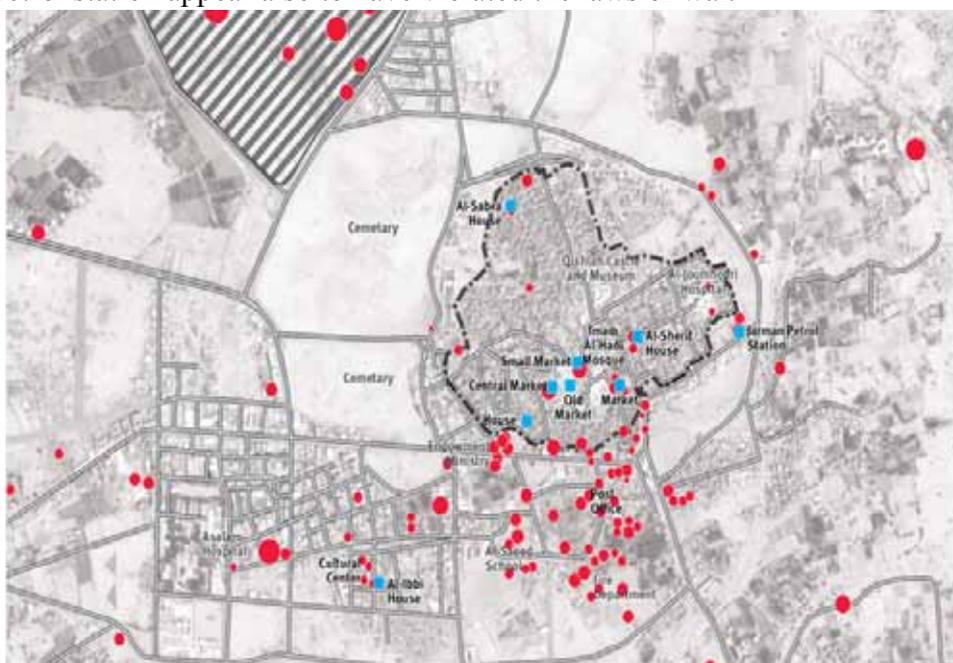


On March 26, 2015, a nine-member coalition of states led by Saudi Arabia began an air campaign in Yemen against the forces of Ansar Allah – commonly known as the Houthis. In the preceding months, the Houthis, a Zaidi Shia armed group from northern Yemen, had taken control of the capital, Sanaa, and swept south threatening to take the port city of Aden.

Coalition airstrikes have targeted a number of cities and towns under the control of the Houthis. One of the places hardest hit has been Saada City, a Houthi stronghold in northern Yemen that is normally home to about 50,000 people. The Saudi Arabia-led coalition has extensively bombed Saada City: satellite imagery shows over 210 distinct impact locations in built-up areas of the city consistent with aerial bombardment. These attacks damaged or destroyed hundreds of buildings.

Human Rights Watch conducted field investigations in Saada on May 15 and 16 during a five-day ceasefire, interviewing 28 local residents and examining impact craters and dozens of buildings damaged or destroyed by airstrikes. While many coalition airstrikes were directed at legitimate military targets in the city, Human Rights Watch identified several attacks that appeared to violate international humanitarian law, also known as the laws of war, and resulted in numerous civilian deaths and injuries.

Coalition attacks struck at least six residential houses not being used for military purposes. One attack killed 27 members of a single family, including 17 children. The airstrikes also hit at least five markets for which there was no evidence of military activity. Aerial attacks on an empty school and a crowded petrol station appear also to have violated the laws of war.



Map indicating the locations of the cases described in the report and damages damage overview map

Human Rights Watch investigated each of these incidents by interviewing victims and witnesses to the attack, searching for possible military targets in the vicinity, and obtaining information about victims from medical sources and local authorities.

Human Rights Watch compiled the names and ages of 59 people killed

in aerial attacks in Saada City between April 6 and May 11 on the basis of information from relatives, witnesses, medical staff, and local Houthis authorities. These include 14 women and at least 35 children. Human Rights Watch was not able to determine how many of those killed were civilians, but multiple members of the same families were among those killed, including women and children, indicating that many were civilians.

Under the laws of war applicable to the armed conflict in Yemen, civilians and civilian objects may never be deliberate targets of attack. Attacks that fail to discriminate between civilians and combatants or that cause civilian harm disproportionate to the expected military gain of an attack are prohibited. Warring parties are required to take precautionary measures to minimize incidental loss of civilian life, injury to civilians, and damage to civilian objects. This includes avoiding the deployment of forces in densely populated areas.

On May 8, a coalition spokesman announced that the entire city of Saada was a military target. This not only violated the laws-of-war prohibition against placing civilians at particular risk by treating a number of separate and distinct military objectives as a single military target, but possibly also the prohibition against making threats of violence whose purpose is to instill terror in the civilian population.

Human Rights Watch called on all parties to the conflict to abide by international humanitarian law. The coalition should promptly investigate all alleged laws-of-war violations carried out by coalition forces, including those detailed in this report, and provide compensation and other redress to civilian victims as appropriate. Human Rights Watch urged the coalition not to use explosive weapons with wide area effect in populated areas because of the inevitable civilian harm caused. The United States and other coalition supporters should press the coalition to abide by its international legal obligations, and should also investigate alleged violations in any attack where they played a direct role.

Recommendations

To Saudi Arabia and other Coalition Members

- Abide by the laws of war, including the prohibitions on attacks that target civilians, that do not discriminate between civilians and combatants, and that cause civilian loss disproportionate to the expected military benefit.
- Take all feasible precautions to minimize harm to civilians, including making advance effective warnings of attacks when possible.
- Revoke any declaration that particular cities or towns are entirely military targets, and take appropriate disciplinary action against individuals making such declarations.
- Consistent with the prohibition on indiscriminate attacks, end the use of explosive weapons with wide area effect in populated areas.
- Provide prompt and appropriate compensation to civilians and their families for deaths, injuries, and property damage resulting from wrongful strikes. Consider providing “condolence” payments to civilians suffering harm from airstrikes without regard to wrongdoing.
- Conduct transparent and impartial investigations into credible allegations of laws-of-war violations, including the incidents included in this report.
- Institute a policy of conducting investigations into airstrikes in which there were high numbers of civilian casualties even where no evidence suggests violations of the laws of war.
- Make public information on intended military targets in airstrikes that resulted in civilian casualties, and all military actors involved in such strikes.
- Make public the findings of investigations and include recommendations for disciplinary measures or criminal prosecutions where violations are found.

To Houthi Forces

- Abide by the laws of war, including taking all feasible steps to minimize the risks to populations under their control.
- Avoid placing military objectives in densely populated areas and take steps to remove civilians from areas under attack.

To the United States and other Coalition Supporters

- Urge coalition members to implement the recommendations listed above, especially pressing for impartial investigations into airstrikes that allegedly violate the laws of war.
- Conduct investigations into any airstrike alleged to have violated the laws of war and that the US may have directly participated in, either by refueling fighter jets on bombing missions or providing targeting information and other direct support.

To the UN Security Council

- Remind all parties to the conflict in Yemen that anyone responsible for “planning, directing, or committing acts that violate applicable international human rights law or international humanitarian law, or acts that constitute human rights abuses” are potentially subject to travel bans and asset freezes under Resolution 2140.

To President Hadi’s Government

- Urge that the coalition provide detailed information about intended military targets of airstrikes in which civilians died. Make that information publicly available and press for compensation where there is a finding of wrongdoing.

Methodology

This report is based on Human Rights Watch field research in the Yemeni cities of Saada and the capital, Sanaa, in May 2015. Two Human Rights Watch researchers interviewed 28 individuals who had witnessed airstrikes carried out by the Saudi Arabia-led coalition in Saada, including four who lost members of their families in the strikes. Human Rights Watch also interviewed three Ansar Allah officials who were based in Saada throughout the aerial bombardment of the city.

Most interviews took place at the sites of individual airstrikes that witnesses

were describing, or in Saada's two functioning hospitals, al-Salam Hospital and al-Jumhuri Hospital. Human Rights Watch conducted all interviews in Arabic or in English with Arabic translation.

All interviews were voluntary; participants were informed of the purpose of the interview and the way in which their information would be documented and reported, and that they could stop the interview at any time or decline to answer specific questions posed. All participants gave oral consent to be interviewed, and no one received any remuneration for giving an interview.

Human Rights Watch also reviewed official reports on the numbers of those killed and wounded due to airstrikes. These included statistics for the governorate of Saada issued by Yemen's Houthi controlled Ministry of Health, and a list containing names and other details of 150 killed and 344 wounded in Saada governorate that the Ansar Allah Human Rights Implementation office had compiled. Human Rights Watch also reviewed the medical records of patients admitted to al-Salam Hospital and al-Jumhuri Hospital for injuries caused by alleged coalition airstrikes.

In addition to field research, Human Rights Watch conducted a detailed damage assessment for the town of Saada and surrounding villages using a time series of 11 very high-resolution commercial satellite images recorded between January 6 and May 19, 2015. Satellite imagery was used to identify additional areas of destruction, verify witness statements, and assess the scale, distribution, and timing of airstrikes during a two-month period.

On May 20, 2015, Human Rights Watch wrote to the Saudi Arabian government to seek information on intended targets of 13 of the airstrikes in Saada City that we had investigated. At the time of publication, Human Rights Watch had not received a response to the letter. Any future responses to this report from the Saudi Arabian government will be posted on the Yemen page of the Human Rights Watch website: www.hrw.org.

I. Background

In March, after Houthi forces advanced southward, threatening to take the port city of Aden and other areas, a Saudi Arabia-led coalition began aerial military operations against them. On March 26, coalition warplanes began attacks against Houthi forces in several locations, including in Sanaa.

The air operations have continued. Between March 26 and June 11, the coalition carried out at least 2,724 airstrikes, according to local human rights organizations who are keeping a tally.

The Saudi Arabia-led coalition comprises five members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) – Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates – as well as Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Sudan. According to the GCC states, the coalition launched its military operations at the request of President Hadi, whom they continue to recognize as Yemen’s head of state. The US is not a member of the coalition, but according to the White House, provides “logistical and intelligence support.” On April 12, the Wall Street Journal reported that unnamed US officials had said the US was providing Saudi Arabia with direct targeting support for airstrikes.

Airstrikes have struck alleged Houthi military targets in densely populated areas in the capital, Sanaa, and other cities, including Hodaida, Taiz, Ibb, Lahj, al-Dale`a, Shabwa, Marib, and Aden. Airstrikes were suspended except in Yemen’s border regions during a declared five-day ceasefire on May 12/17-, but then resumed on May 18. At the time of publication, airstrikes were continuing.

Human Rights Watch has documented several airstrikes that appear to have been unlawfully indiscriminate, resulting in civilian casualties. These include an airstrike on a camp for internally displaced persons located 16 kilometers south of Yemen’s border with Saudi Arabia that killed at least 29 civilians, and an airstrike on a dairy factory outside the port city of Hodaida, that killed at least 31 civilians.

Human Rights Watch has also documented coalition use of banned cluster munitions in attacks in at least five areas of Saada governorate where civilians reside. We have not seen any evidence to indicate that cluster munitions have been used in Saada City.

The Houthis in Saada

The current leader of the Houthi movement, Abd al-Malik al-Houthi, and his leadership have historically been based in Yemen’s northern Saada governorate. Since 2004, the Houthis engaged in six separate armed conflicts with the Yemeni government, in which both sides were responsible for serious violations of the laws of war.

The 2011 uprising that led to President Ali Abdullah Saleh, who had held office for 33 years, stepping down resulted in weakened government control of parts of the country including the north. The Houthis became the de facto governing authority in Saada. They appointed a governor, collect taxes, oversee local government, and administer justice.

Saada City, with an estimated pre-war population of 50,000, is a military as well as political Houthi stronghold.

II. Houthi Deployment and the Coalition Declaration of Towns as Military Targets

On May 8, 2015, coalition authorities declared the entire Houthi stronghold cities of Saada and Marran to be military targets. This followed Houthi incursions into and rocket attacks on Saudi Arabia from Saada governorate that killed at least 12 civilians in the Saudi Arabian city of Najran and areas of Jizan province, according to Saudi Arabian government sources. Brig. Gen. al-Assiri, the military spokesman for the coalition, told the media:

Starting today and as you all remember we have declared through media platforms and through the leaflets that were dropped on [Marran and Saada], and prior warnings to Yemeni civilians in those two cities, to get away from those cities where operations will take place. This warning will end at 7 p.m. today and coalitions forces will immediately respond to the actions of these militias that targeted the security and safety of the Saudi citizens from now and until the objectives of this operation are reached.

We have also declared Saada and Marran as military targets loyal to the Houthi militias and as a result the operations will cover the whole area of those two cities and thus we repeat our call to the civilians to stay away from these groups, and leave the areas under Houthi control or where the Houthis are taking shelter.

Several attacks on apparently civilian objects that Human Rights Watch investigated in Saada, including an attack that struck a residential house, two attacks that struck markets, and an attack on a school, took place after the May 8 announcement.

Issuing warning of impending attacks to the civilian population is in line

with the obligation under the laws of war to take all feasible precautions to minimize civilian harm, and in particular to provide “effective advance warning” of attacks that may affect the civilian population, so long as circumstances permit. However, the general and vague nature of these warnings would be of little help to civilians in need of greater security.

Even more problematic, and a clear violation of the laws of war, is the coalition assertion that the entire cities of Saada and Marran are military targets. The laws of war prohibit attacks that treat as a single military objective a number of clearly separated and distinct military objectives located in a city, town, village or other area containing a similar concentration of civilians or civilian objects.

Even if individual attacks carried out were in accordance with the laws of war, the coalition statement may be in violation of the prohibition against acts or threats of violence in which the primary purpose was to spread terror among the civilian population.

In Saada City, Human Rights Watch observed Houthi vehicle-mounted anti-aircraft weapons deployed in areas still populated by many civilians. Parties to a conflict are obligated to take all feasible measures to avoid placing military objectives in densely populated areas. They should also move civilians from areas where their forces are deployed to minimize civilian harm. However, the extensive Houthi military deployment in Saada, and reportedly in Marran, did not allow the coalition to treat civilians or civilian objects as military objectives, nor did providing warnings to the population relieve the coalition forces of ensuring that all attacks were on military targets.

III. Use of Explosive Weapons with Wide Area Effect in Populated Areas

Human Rights Watch investigations on the ground and analysis of satellite imagery show that coalition forces dropped or launched aerial munitions extensively on Saada City. The munitions used were explosive weapons with wide area impact.

Human Rights Watch identified from a time series of satellite imagery 210 distinct impact locations in built-up areas of the city consistent with aerial

bombardment as of May 19, 2015. The satellite imagery shows that these attacks damaged or destroyed hundreds of buildings.

Human Rights Watch's on-the-ground investigations confirmed that airstrikes have caused significant damage to buildings, streets and markets around the city. Impact craters and damage to buildings at some sites indicate that coalition forces on several occasions used aerial bombs of at least 1,000 pounds in attacks on the city. Bombs of this size can destroy structures and injure and kill people hundreds of meters from the impact point.

The May 9 attack on the market in front of the Imam al-Hadi mosque, for example, wounded one man who was in his home near the window when a munition struck, completely destroyed about a dozen small shops, and caused significant structural damage to residential houses on both sides of the market. The strike created a six-meter wide crater. Human Rights Watch researchers did not find any weapon remnants at the scene of the attack that would have allowed them to determine the specific weapon used.



Impact crater after a May 9, 2015 attack on the market in front of the Imam al-Hadi mosque. © 2015 Ole Solvang/Human Rights Watch

At a government building in Saada City, Human Rights Watch photographed the remnants of an MK-83 air-dropped 1,000-pound bomb made in the US.

At the site of other attacks Human Rights Watch saw several explosive

remnants of war, but was unable to determine the specific type of weapons used or draw further conclusions based on the remnants alone. Saudi Arabia and other members of the coalition have not disclosed information on the types or quantities of weapons used in the airstrikes.

Human Rights Watch investigated specific attacks that appeared to violate the laws of war because they were indiscriminate or disproportionate. Indiscriminate attacks are those that do not differentiate between civilians and combatants; disproportionate attacks are those that cause civilian loss excessive in relation to the anticipated military gain from the attack. Moreover, as a matter of policy, warring parties should not use explosive weapons with wide area effect in populated areas because of the clear risk to civilians.

IV. Unlawful Airstrikes

Human Rights Watch investigated several coalition aerial attacks in Saada City that appeared to be in violation of the laws of war. On the basis of information from relatives, witnesses, medical staff, and local Houthi authorities Human Rights Watch compiled the names and ages of 59 people killed in aerial attacks in Saada City between April 6 and May 11, including 14 women and at least 35 children.

Coalition airstrikes hit at least six residential houses in Saada City. Human Rights Watch found no evidence that the houses were being used for military purposes. In at least two of these attacks, munitions dropped from coalition aircraft struck the houses more than once, suggesting that they were the intended targets. The evidence from other coalition airstrikes, such as those on Houthi security and government buildings in the city, indicates that coalition warplanes were capable of hitting their intended targets with a certain degree of accuracy. VICE News has documented the use of one type of laser-guided air-dropped bomb in an airstrike on Sanaa on May 1 that killed at least 20 people.

Human Rights Watch cannot exclude the possibility that coalition forces intended to hit other targets when they struck the residential houses. For example, in the deadliest of the attacks on residential houses, which destroyed the al-Ibbi house and killed 27 members of the al-Ibbi family, the warplanes possibly targeted an adjacent cultural center, which was also struck.

The attacks on residential houses altogether killed at least 51 people, including 14 women and 32 children. Human Rights Watch conducted separate interviews with nine victims and witnesses of these attacks, all of whom reported that all of those killed and injured in the attacks on residential houses were civilians. Although Human Rights Watch has not been able to independently verify this, the high proportion of women and children from the same families among the victims indicates that the houses' residents were primarily civilians. The presence of Houthi combatants or other military objectives would not make the attacks lawful if they were carried out indiscriminately or were disproportionate.

Human Rights Watch also found that coalition aircraft attacked and seriously damaged at least five main markets in Saada City. As with the residential houses, multiple strikes on some of the markets suggest that they were the intended targets. Markets are normally civilian objects and should not be attacked. Human Rights Watch saw no evidence indicating that the markets had been used for military purposes, such as for the storage of significant munitions. The presence of small numbers of fighters or weapons in the market would still likely make any bombing of the market a disproportionate attack.

Human Rights Watch also investigated an attack on a school. During a visit to the school, researchers found no evidence to indicate that the school had been used for military purposes, although they were not able to confirm this definitively.

Local Houthi authorities told Human Rights Watch that coalition aircraft had also struck key civilian infrastructure, including the electricity station, a public company that bottles cooking gas, the main public water works, a private wheat storage facility, a company that bottles mineral water, and a petrol station.

Many and perhaps all of these normally civilian objects may have been contributing to the Houthi military effort, making them legitimate military targets. However, the laws of war prohibit attacks that destroy or render useless "objects indispensable to the survival of the civilian population" or would otherwise have a disproportionate impact on civilians compared to the expected military gain from the attack. Not only are food, water, and medicine crucial to the population, but also electricity and petrol.

Even attacks that have a clear military objective and are otherwise lawful should be carried out in a manner that, as much as possible, minimizes civilian harm. The attack on the petrol station, a legitimate target, did not appear to have been carried out in this manner: it occurred in the middle of the day when a long line of people were present, waiting to fill their vehicles. Those killed included at least five civilians, witnesses said.

Human Rights Watch submitted a list of 13 attacks under investigation to Saudi Arabian authorities on May 20, asking what the intended target was for each attack, what weapon or weapons were used, and what precautions the coalition had taken to minimize civilian harm. At the time of writing, Human Rights Watch had not received any response to its letter.

Human Rights Watch also documented coalition airstrikes on security buildings and installations and government buildings, which were likely legitimate military targets.

Residential Homes

Al-Sherif House

On the morning of May 10, two bombs struck a residential house and the adjacent street in central Saada City, killing at least five people, including the owner of the house and four neighbors from the Qabas family, the mother and three children. The attack also injured two children from the al-Sherif home.

Ahmed al-Sherif, 38, a watch repairman and the owner of one of the houses that were hit, was still receiving treatment at nearby al-Jumhuri hospital when Human Rights Watch interviewed him five days after the attack. Al-Sherif said that he lost consciousness when the attack happened and that he woke up in the hospital the next day. A metal fragment had cut through his intestines, requiring surgery. The attack also wounded his 7-year-old son Mohammed in the left shoulder and his 12-year-old son Abed in the arm and leg, he said. All three had wounds or bandages consistent with al-Sherif's description.

Sherif Ahmed, 20, one of al-Sherif's sons, told Human Rights Watch he was outside the house when the attack struck:

Thankfully my father and two brothers were outside when the first strike hit our house. Luckily my mother and sisters were downstairs, near the back of the house. Five minutes later, a second strike hit the other side of the road. That is how my dad, little sister and brother were wounded.

Human Rights Watch examined the site. Two-thirds of the façade of al-Sherif's house had been destroyed, leaving the inner rooms exposed. Researchers did not find any munition remnants at the site to indicate the weapon used. A crater about one meter in diameter in the asphalt in front of the house was partially filled with bricks and other debris from the house. There was also significant blast damage to stores on the other side of the street.

Ahmed Al-Sherif died from his injuries on June 3, according to a local Ansar Allah official.

Human Rights Watch did not identify any obvious military targets in the vicinity. Sherif Ahmed said that none of his family members were in the Houthi forces and he was not aware of any members in the Qabas family.





Images of the Saada Cultural Center and the al-Ibbi house before and after at least five aerial bombs hit both compounds on May 5, 2015, killing 27 members of the al-Ibbi family, including 17 children.
Before: © 2015 CNES/Distribution Airbus DS After: © 2015 CNES/Distribution Airbus DS

At about 10:50 p.m. on May 6, at least three aerial bombs struck a cultural center and a residential house in southwest Saada City, killing 28 people (27 from one family), including seven women and at least 17 children, and wounding three men.

Local residents told Human Rights Watch that the first bomb struck the Saada Cultural Center and a few minutes later, a second bomb struck the southwest corner of the al-Ibbi family house, which is located next to the center.

Walid al-Ibbi, 35, the only al-Ibbi family member present to survive the attack without injuries, told Human Rights Watch that when the bomb fell on the southwest corner of the house, the family ran outside and towards the eastern entrance at the back of the house, thinking they would be safer in the back apartment. Minutes later, a third strike, possibly with two bombs, hit the part of the house where the family had taken shelter, al-Ibbi said. He told Human Rights Watch:

Just earlier that evening, a family had come to our house to ask for my

daughter's hand in marriage for their son. Now I have lost my wife and all four of my daughters. I cannot believe that everyone I love is gone.

Al-Ibbi said that only three other members of his family survived the attack. His father, Abdullah, a barber, suffered a dislocated jaw and possible brain damage, his doctors in Sanaa told him. A metal fragment struck his brother Younes above one eye, damaging his optical nerve. Doctors told al-Ibbi that Younes may lose his sight if they operate and remove the fragment. Another brother, Ayman, suffered minor injuries. Al-Ibbi said that he was uninjured because he was standing outside the house when the third strike occurred.

Two neighbors gave Human Rights Watch similar accounts of what happened. Saleh Hussein Daglan, 54, who lives next to the al-Ibbi house, said: "I heard the family as they screamed, I ran outside and saw bodies under the rubble. One son, Murad, was screaming 'Save me! Save me!' A big stone was crushing his legs. He died."

Ayed Ayed Kamil, 55, another neighbor three houses down the street from the al-Ibbi house, told Human Rights Watch:

As the last strikes hit, I ran outside and saw four members of the [al-Ibbi] family lying out on the road, under rubble. Three of Abdullah's sons were dead but one, Younes, was alive. I saw that his forehead was sliced open. The rest of the bodies were in the house including a one-month-old baby and a pregnant woman.



Ayed Ayed Kamil, a neighbor, sits on the ruins of al-Ibbi house, which was struck in an aerial attack on May 6, 2015. © 2015 Ole Solvang/Human Rights Watch

Kamil told Human Rights Watch that the attack also wounded a man from Yemen's marginalized muhamasheen community, who later died in the hospital from a fragmentation wound to the back of his neck.

Local residents provided Human Rights Watch with photos of at least 10 children who appeared to be under 10 years of age lying side by side on the floor, apparently lifeless. The residents said the photos were taken right after the strike.

At about 2 a.m. on May 7, another airstrike hit the cultural center next to the al-Ibbi home while local people were still pulling bodies out of the rubble from the earlier strikes, the two neighbors said. This caused the crowd of helpers to immediately disperse. Both men said that they knew of no military targets in the area; they said that the nearest security installation was about two kilometers away.

Human Rights Watch examined satellite images of the airstrikes. Researchers inspected three impact craters on the compound of the cultural center. A crater about one meter in diameter was located at the northern side of the cultural center, right inside the entrance gates. Two bombs appeared to have hit the building itself. The al-Ibbi house had been almost completely reduced to rubble with only part of the back wall and rooms still standing. There was also significant damage to neighboring houses. Human Rights Watch researchers did not find any remnants that could help identify the weapons used in the attacks, but aerial bombs appear to have been used.

The fact that at least three bombs struck the cultural center and that a warplane returned several hours after the main strikes to drop another bomb on the cultural center suggest that the center was the intended target of the attack. Al-Ibbi said that neither his father nor any of his brothers held any role with the Houthis. All of the men in the family, he said, were barbers, working at their family's two salons in Saada City.

Nabil Ali Jameel, the head of the cultural center, told Human Rights Watch that the center is used for local festivals, theatre pieces, as a library, and to host the local Saada-based Ansar Allah radio station, Massira FM. A radio station used to direct military forces – and not merely report news or make propaganda statements – would be a valid military target, subject to a proportionality analysis. Having listened to some of the radio's broadcasts,

Human Rights Watch did not find evidence that the radio station was being used in that way.

One Saada resident said there were rumors that Houthi forces had used the cultural center as a meeting point, but all others with whom Human Rights Watch spoke did not believe this to be true.

Al-Sabra House

In the early hours of April 15, an airstrike hit a residential house in northwest Saada City, killing four people, a woman and her three children, and wounding three to five people, including two children.

Abd al-Razak Qamis, 34, told Human Rights Watch that he heard many airstrikes during the night of April 14/15. One of the strikes hit the home of his neighbor, Ahsen Mohsen al-Sabra, a shopkeeper, and his family of eight. Qamis told Human Rights Watch:

I heard a plane overhead, and then this loud explosion. I looked out of the window, which had shattered with the explosion, and saw Ahsen jumping out of the window of the second floor of the house, clutching his 10-year-old son. I wanted to run outside but was scared that the aircraft might strike us again if we gathered outside.

After 20 minutes, Qamis felt that it was safe enough to run outside to help the family.

Qamis said that the attack killed al-Sabra's wife and three of his children. A local resident gave Human Rights Watch photos that included one of the destroyed al-Sabra house and several showing three children who appear under the age of 10 lying, apparently lifeless, on the floor. One photo shows what appears to be a covered, larger body lying next to the children.

Al-Jumhuri hospital records show that three people from the al-Sabra family, including two boys, ages 10 and 12, received treatment at the hospital on April 18. Qamis said that the attack also wounded al-Sabra's pregnant daughter and a woman in a neighboring house. The Ansar Allah list does not contain information about any Houthi casualties from this attack.

Human Rights Watch visited the impact site on May 15. The strike appeared

to have destroyed a significant part of the al-Sabra house and caused damage to two adjacent houses. Bricks and other debris from the house partially filled a large crater in front of the house, about three meters in diameter. Human Rights Watch was not able to identify any potential military targets in the vicinity and did not see any remnants to help identify the type of weapon used.



Remnants of al-Sabra's house, which was struck by an aerial attack on April 15, 2015, which killed a woman and her three children. © 2015 Ole Solvang/Human Rights Watch

Other Residential Houses

Human Rights Watch investigated aerial attacks on two additional residential houses, but were not able to interview witnesses to these attacks.

On May 5, an aerial attack struck the house of Muhammed al-Hibbi, killing his wife and all seven children when the roof collapsed on top of them, according to his cousin, Nuh Ahmed al-Hibbi. Human Rights Watch did not visit the impact site, but medical staff corroborated the number of casualties.

Around 12:30 a.m. on April 6, an aerial attack struck the home of Muhammad Daghfal, killing seven members of the family, including four women and two children, according to Muhammad Gahsha, a grave worker who buried the dead. Human Rights Watch visited the ruins of the house, which was located in a rural area about five kilometers from the center of Saada City. An investigator at the Salam hospital confirmed the deaths.

Satellite imagery recorded on April 7 shows the complete destruction of the Daghfal house. Satellite imagery shows no other damage in the vicinity.



Satellite images of the Daghfal house before and after a coalition airstrike hit it on April 6, killing seven members of the family, including four women and two children.

Before: © 2015 CNES/Distribution Airbus DS After: © 2015 CNES/Distribution Airbus DS

Ruins of the Daghfal house, which was struck by an aerial attack on April 6, 2015, which killed seven members of the family. © 2015 Ole Solvang/Human Rights Watch

Human Rights Watch also investigated the ruins of a residential house near the old market. An Ansar Allah official told Human Rights Watch that warplanes had struck the house on May 7, killing one civilian and wounding two others, but Human Rights Watch was not able to corroborate the number of casualties. Satellite imagery shows that the house was destroyed in the period between May 4 and 10.

Markets

Coalition warplanes attacked and destroyed at least five markets in Saada City, two of them after the coalition announcement that the entire city was a target. Attacks on multiple markets and the absence of evident military objectives in close vicinity to the markets suggest that the markets were the intended targets of the strikes.



Othman Market in Saada, Yemen before (taken on March 29, 2015) and after (taken on May 18, 2015) it was destroyed in airstrikes by the Saudi-led coalition.

Before: © 2015 CNES/Distribution Airbus DS After: © 2015 CNES/Distribution Airbus DS

Market Opposite the Imam al-Hadi Mosque

Coalition airstrikes hit the fountain and market outside the Imam al-Hadi mosque's eastern gate in Saada City. The strike likely took place in the morning on May 9. Local people told Human Rights Watch that the mosque had been closed and unavailable for prayer since March 26, the beginning of the coalition air campaign.

Ali Mahmoud al-Hamoud, 22, a laborer, told Human Rights Watch that he was at the gate of the mosque in the morning when he heard an airplane overhead. Then a bomb hit the fountain in the square in front of the mosque, which is surrounded by a small market with about a dozen shops. He fled but heard several more strikes hit the same area about 15 minutes later.

Talal al-Aizug, 28, a security officer living next door to the mosque, said he was at home with his family when the first strike hit. He told Human Rights Watch that he had heard an airplane flying overhead since 7 a.m. He heard strikes in the far distance earlier, and then a massive explosion as a bomb hit the market in front of his house. Fragments and debris flew through the window of the second floor of his home, into the room he was sitting in, lacerating his head and the side of his chest, and broke through the walls at the corner of the house. He showed Human Rights Watch the injuries he had sustained.

The attack destroyed the fountain and all of the shops, and left a crater about three meters deep and six meters in diameter.

When Human Rights Watch visited the site researchers observed that the Houthis had posted armed guards at the entrance to the mosque. However, the presence of armed guards would not render the mosque a military target. Dropping multiple bombs on guards near a market appears unlawfully indiscriminate or disproportionate.

Human Rights Watch reviewed satellite imagery recorded on the morning of May 10 and identified four probable impact locations from separate air-dropped munitions on this market and immediately adjacent buildings on either side of the market. Human Rights Watch found no evidence of any military objective in the immediate area.



Old Market

Ali al-Hashhoush, a shopkeeper in the Old Market located in the center of Saada City, told Human Rights Watch that he was at home, a short walk from his shop, when he heard two loud explosions around midnight. About 10 minutes later he heard a third explosion, and about 10 minutes after that, a fourth. After the fourth, he heard a plane overhead. He said:

I ran towards the noise, and saw the market in ruins. I saw one man with a piece of metal in his neck, his leg was almost cut off from the explosion and half of his left hand had been sliced off. I ran past him to the second man. He was an older man that I knew well, very poor, who used to sleep in the market. I picked him up so he could be driven to the hospital – blood was pouring out of his head, down his chest. He died hours later. I saw a third man, but I am not sure what happened to him. Others carried him out of the rubble and he was also wounded.

The strike likely occurred on May 10.

Human Rights Watch reviewed satellite imagery recorded in the morning of May 19 and identified a large zone of complete destruction, approximately 30 by 40 meters in size, within the Old Market resulting from impact of one and possibly more air-dropped munitions. Human Rights Watch found no evidence of any military objective in the immediate area.

Human Rights Watch also visited the ruins of a small outdoor market outside Jarman Commercial Market that coalition aircraft attacked on the night of April 15, according to local people, but was unable to interview witnesses to the strike. Satellite imagery shows that the strike took place between the mornings of April 14 and 15.

Human Rights Watch also visited the ruins of the central market located next to the Religious Endowments Ministry. Satellite imagery shows that two attacks struck the market in the period April 714-, one attack struck on April 1415-, and at least one attack struck in the period May 410-. According to two men who had shops there, one of the strikes, probably the one on April 1415-, killed a shopkeeper.

The two shopkeepers said another strike hit the building of the Religious Endowments Ministry, which also housed a restaurant, juice shop, and small grocery store, on the night between May 9 and 10. No one was wounded in the strike because it happened at night, they said.



Two owners dig through the rubble of their shops near the Religious Endowments Ministry that were destroyed by an aerial attack on May 9 or 10, 2015. © 2015 Ole Solvang/Human Rights Watch

Satellite imagery also shows the destruction of the Othman Mujali Market in the southern part of Saada City. The main market building was destroyed between April 15 and May 2. At least eight aerial bombs were dropped on the remaining market buildings and the adjacent financial building. According to Al-Jumhuri hospital records, the strikes killed two civilians and wounded nine.

Ansar Allah officials told Human Rights Watch that airstrikes had damaged three other markets on the outskirts of the city, the agricultural products market, al-Khafji Market, and Talh market.

Al-Munadil Hussein Fayed School

A coalition airstrike hit al-Munadil Hussein Fayed School, a girls' secondary school in Saada City at 8:30 a.m. on May 11. Abdulhaliq al-Mutamayiz, 32, who lives 100 meters away, told Human Rights Watch that he was walking past the school when one corner of it sustained an aerial strike, leading him and another man to run for cover behind a nearby wall. From there, al-Mutamayiz said he heard another strike three minutes later that hit an open area about 200 meters away, followed by a third strike further away three minutes after

that. He said he did not know whether there were any military installations or Houthi fighters at the school. Human Rights Watch's investigations did not find any evidence that fighters had been using the school.

All education in Yemen has been suspended since March 26, when the coalition air campaign began, and no one was present at the school at the time of the strike, local residents told Human Rights Watch.

A neighboring landowner, Muhammad Ali Saleh, showed Human Rights Watch a deep crater around one meter in diameter in the middle of his field, which he said was made by an aerial munition that burrowed deep into the ground when the school was hit in the strike. Saleh said that the munition was still buried in the ground.

Jarman Petrol Station

On April 15, at least one aerial bomb struck the Jarman petrol station in western Saada City, killing at least five people and injuring 23 – though likely many more -- who were waiting in line to fill their cars with gasoline.

Abed Abd al-Rahman Ali, 23, a car mechanic, told Human Rights Watch that about 50 cars were lined up outside the petrol station, known as the Jarman Station, next to his workshop. The combined effect of the war and the coalition blockade had created long lines at petrol stations all over Yemen.

Ali said he heard an airplane overhead at about 1 p.m. and then a loud explosion. A bomb had hit the gas station's roof, causing it to collapse in a fireball that incinerated some of the vehicles. Ali, who said he ran out to help the wounded, described a chaotic scene at the station: "I saw four sets of limbs completely severed so we don't know who they belonged to."

Ansar Allah's civil affairs office provided Human Rights Watch the names of five people who died in the attack and 23 wounded. Medical personnel told Human Rights Watch that they were not able to identify eight people after the attack because they were too badly burned, indicating a higher casualty figure.

Witnesses described seeing many victims after the attack. Ali said that he saw about 15 to 20 bodies on the ground and about 20 to 25 people with burns and fragmentation wounds. His brother, Osamah Abd al-Rahman Ali, told Human

Rights Watch he arrived at the scene minutes after the strike and saw at least eight bodies, including some with severed limbs, and 16 wounded.

Human Rights Watch was also not able to establish how many of those killed were civilians. The Ansar Allah civil affairs office told Human Rights Watch that the people whose deaths they had documented were all civilians. Ali told Human Rights Watch that he did not see anybody at the station carrying weapons. Another Saada resident, however, told Human Rights Watch that the Houthis used the Jarman petrol station as the main one at which to refuel their vehicles.



Burned-out cars lined up by the Jarman petrol station, which was struck in an aerial attack on April 15, 2015. © 2015 Ole Solvang/Human Rights Watch

Because of the importance of fuel for military operations, depriving belligerent forces of fuel supplies is a legitimate military objective. Even so, for the coalition to attack a petrol station in the middle of the day when it could reasonably be determined that many civilians were present, instead of at night and after providing a specific warning, is contrary to the obligations to take all feasible precautions to minimize civilian harm and may amount to an unlawfully indiscriminate or disproportionate attack.

V. Applicable International Humanitarian Law

International humanitarian law, also known as the laws of war, applies to the armed conflict between the Saudi Arabia-led coalition and Houthi forces.

The fundamental tenets of the laws of war are civilian immunity from attack and distinction. While humanitarian law recognizes that some civilian casualties are inevitable, it imposes a duty on warring parties at all times to distinguish between combatants and civilians, and to target only combatants and other military objectives.

Civilian objects are those that are not considered military objectives. Military objectives are combatants, including civilians directly participating in the hostilities, and those objects that “by their nature, location, purpose or use, make an effective contribution to military action and whose total or partial destruction, capture or neutralization, in the circumstances ruling at the time, offers a definite military advantage.”

In general, the law prohibits direct attacks against what are by their nature civilian objects, such as homes and apartments, places of worship, hospitals, schools, or cultural monuments, unless they are being used for military purposes.

Deliberate, indiscriminate, or disproportionate attacks against civilians and civilian objects are prohibited. Attacks are indiscriminate when they are not directed at a specific military objective, or employ a method or means of warfare that cannot be directed at a military objective or whose effects cannot be limited. It is also prohibited as an indiscriminate attack to treat as a single military objective a number of clearly separated and distinct military objectives located in a city, town, village or other area containing a similar concentration of civilians or civilian objects. Threatening such attacks may amount to acts in which the primary purpose is to spread terror among the civilian population.

A disproportionate attack is one in which the expected incidental loss of civilian life and damage to civilian objects would be excessive in relation to the concrete and direct military advantage anticipated. The expected danger to the civilian population and civilian objects depends on various factors, including their location (possibly within or near a military objective), the accuracy of the weapons used (depending on the trajectory, the range,

environmental factors, the ammunition used, etc.), and the technical skill of the combatants (which can entail random launching of weapons when combatants lack the ability to aim effectively at the intended target).

In the conduct of military operations, parties to a conflict must take constant care to spare the civilian population and civilian objects from the effects of hostilities. Parties are required to take precautionary measures with a view to avoiding, and in any event minimizing, incidental loss of civilian life, injury to civilians, and damage to civilian objects.

Before conducting an attack, a party to the conflict must do everything feasible to verify that the persons or objects to be attacked are military objectives and not civilians or civilian objects. According to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) the requirement to take all “feasible” precautions means, among other things, that those conducting an attack are required to take the steps needed to identify the target as a legitimate military objective “in good time to spare the population as far as possible.” They also must take all feasible precautions in the choice of means and methods of warfare to minimize loss of civilian life and property.

The laws of war do not prohibit fighting in urban areas, although the presence of civilians places greater obligations on warring parties to take steps to minimize harm to civilians. Forces must avoid locating military objectives within or near densely populated areas, and endeavor to remove civilians from the vicinity of military objectives. Belligerents are also prohibited from using civilians to shield military objectives or operations from attack. «Shielding» refers to purposefully using the presence of civilians to render military forces or areas immune from attack. The unlawful deployment of forces within or near densely populated civilian areas does not relieve opposing forces from taking into account the risk to civilians when conducting attacks. The obligation to respect the laws of war does not depend on reciprocity by belligerent forces.

Human Rights Watch opposes the use of aerial bombs and other explosive weapons with wide area effect in populated areas due to the inevitable civilian harm caused.

Individuals who commit serious violations of international humanitarian law with criminal intent are responsible for war crimes. Criminal intent has been

defined as violations committed intentionally or recklessly. Individuals may also be held criminally liable for attempting to commit a war crime, as well as assisting in, facilitating, aiding, or abetting a war crime. Responsibility may also fall on persons planning or instigating the commission of a war crime. Military commanders and civilian leaders may also bear personal responsibility as a matter of command responsibility if they knew or should have known about the commission of war crimes and failed to prevent them or punish those responsible.

Those acts considered to be war crimes can be found in customary law as reflected in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) and other sources. They include a wide array of offenses, including deliberate, indiscriminate, and disproportionate attacks harming civilians, and mistreatment of persons in custody.



Yemen: UAE Backs Abusive Local Forces

102017/20/ Yemen: UAE Backs Abusive Local Forces | Human Rights Watch

(Beirut) – The UAE supports Yemeni forces that have arbitrarily detained, forcibly disappeared, tortured, and abused dozens of people during security operations, Human Rights Watch said today. The UAE finances, arms, and trains these forces, which ostensibly are going after Yemeni branches of Al-Qaeda or the Islamic State (also known as ISIS). The UAE also runs at least two informal detention facilities, and its officials appear to have ordered the continued detention of people despite release orders, and forcibly disappeared people, including reportedly moving high-profile detainees outside the country.

Human Rights Watch has documented the cases of 49 people, including four children, who have been arbitrarily detained or forcibly disappeared in the Aden and Hadramawt governorates of Yemen over the last year. At least 38 appear to have been arrested or detained by UAE backed security forces. Multiple sources, including Yemeni government officials, have reported the existence of numerous informal detention facilities and secret prisons in Aden and Hadramawt, including at least two run by the UAE and others run by UAE-backed Yemeni security forces. Human Rights Watch documented people held at 11 such sites in the two governorates. “You don’t effectively fight extremist groups like Al-Qaeda or ISIS by disappearing dozens of young men and constantly adding to the number of families with ‘missing’ loved ones in Yemen,” said Sarah Leah Whitson, Middle East director at Human Rights Watch. “The UAE and its partners should place protecting detainee rights at the center of their security campaigns if they care about Yemen’s long-term stability.”



Hadrami elite forces guard Mukalla from Al-Qaeda by creating check-points.
© 2016 Getty Images

Since March 2015, a Saudi-led coalition of states, including the UAE, has conducted an aerial and ground campaign in support of President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi against Houthi forces and forces loyal to former President Ali Abdullah Saleh, who took over the capital, Sanaa, in September 2014. The US has provided military support to the coalition. Human Rights Watch researchers interviewed family members and friends of detainees, former detainees, lawyers, activists, and government officials. Human Rights Watch also reviewed documents, videos, and pictures provided by lawyers and activists, as well as letters sent by lawyers or family members to various Yemeni and coalition authorities.

During the conflict, Al-Qaeda in the Arabia Peninsula (AQAP) seized weapons, territory, and revenue by looting the central bank in Mukalla, the capital of the Hadramawt governate, and running the city's port for about a year, Reuters reported. AQAP has carried out numerous attacks, primarily on military and security targets in Yemen's southern and eastern governorates, killing dozens of people. The local ISIS affiliate in Yemen (IS-Y) has also claimed responsibility for similar attacks over the last two years.

The UAE has led counterterror efforts against AQAP and ISIS's local affiliate (IS-Y), including by supporting Yemeni forces carrying out security campaigns in southern and eastern parts of the country. Human Rights Watch

has documented abuses by some of these forces – including forces known as the “Security Belt” that operate in Aden, Lahj, Abyan, and other southern governorates and the “Hadrami Elite Forces” that operate in Hadramawt.

The Security Belt and Hadrami Elite forces have used excessive force during arrests and raids, detained family members of wanted suspects to pressure them to “voluntarily” turn themselves in, arbitrarily arrested and detained men and boys, detained children with adults, and forcibly disappeared dozens. As one former detainee said he was told by another detainee in one of Aden’s many informal detention facilities: “This is a no-return prison.” The UAE is reported to run some of these detention facilities and to have moved high-profile detainees outside the country, including to a base it has in Eritrea. Former detainees and family members also told Human Rights Watch that some detainees had been abused or tortured inside detention facilities, most often through heavy beatings with officers using their fists, their guns or other metal objects. Others mentioned electric shocks, forced nudity, threats to the detainees or their family members, and caning on the feet.



An Emirati and South Yemen flag painted in Yemen’s port city of Aden. By 2017, Emirati and South Yemen flags flew in many parts of Aden, which President Hadi declared the temporary capital of Yemen after Houthi-Saleh forces took over Sanaa in 2014. © 2017 Kristine Beckerle/Human Rights Watch

One man, who was able to visit a detained relative, a child, in Aden, said the boy “looked insane” when he emerged from a crowded cell. He later disappeared from the detention center.

Houthi-Saleh forces have also arbitrarily detained and disappeared scores of people in northern Yemen. Human Rights Watch has separately documented abuse in Houthi- Saleh run detention facilities. All parties carrying out detentions in Yemen should immediately stop forcibly disappearing, arbitrarily detaining, or torturing detainees, Human Rights Watch said. They should release anyone arbitrarily detained or detained for involvement in peaceful political activities, including especially vulnerable people such as children. They should immediately provide a list of all detention sites and of everyone currently in detention or who have died in custody. People taken into custody during a civil war are entitled to the fundamental protections that all detainees should have, including being promptly brought before an independent authority, like a judge, provided specific reasons for their detention, and given the ability to contest the detention. Anyone not being prosecuted for a criminal offense may only be held for exceptional reasons of security, set out clearly in domestic law, and must be released as soon as the reasons for the deprivation of their liberty cease to exist. All such detainees should be brought promptly before a judge. Detention under such circumstances should be reviewed at least every six months.

Every detainee must be treated humanely at all times. Visits from family members must be allowed if practicable. Under applicable human rights law, children should be detained only as a measure of last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time. In all cases, children should be held separately from adults, unless they are detained with their family.

The ban against torture and other ill-treatment is one of the most fundamental prohibitions in international human rights and humanitarian law. No exceptional circumstances may justify torture, and states are required to investigate and prosecute those responsible for torture.

Yemen is obliged to ensure that the Security Belt and Hadrami Elite Forces, as well as any other forces operating with the Yemeni government's consent, comply with relevant legal requirements and procedural safeguards, including taking active steps to prevent disappearances, such as through regularizing the procedure of registering detainees and notifying family members of their whereabouts. The UAE has similar obligations, given its role in detentions.

The US works closely with the UAE in its efforts against AQAP, and members of the US government have repeatedly praised the UAE. In 2016, the US deployed a small number of special operations forces to Yemen to assist UAE efforts against the armed group. The US has also reportedly conducted joint raids with the UAE against AQAP in central and eastern Yemen, according to the New York Times and the Intercept. Human Rights Watch investigated a January raid in al-Bayda governorate that killed at least 14 civilians, including nine children. “Wives, mothers, and daughters in the north and south of Yemen want to know whether their husbands, sons, and brothers are all right, if they are even alive,” Whitson said. “Yemen, the UAE, Houthi-Saleh forces, and any other party disappearing people should immediately inform families of where their loved ones are and release those held arbitrarily.”

Because of the danger of reprisals against those who spoke with Human Rights Watch or against their families, pseudonyms are used below and identifying details have been removed. All participants were informed of the purpose of the interview, the ways in which the data would be used, and given assurances of anonymity. The UAE leads coalition efforts in southern and eastern Yemen, including its counterterror operations. People interviewed by Human Rights Watch used “UAE” and “coalition” interchangeably to describe the UAE and its role in the detention campaigns.

A Web of Secret Detention Sites

Yemeni human rights groups and lawyers have documented hundreds of cases of people arbitrarily detained or forcibly disappeared in areas of Yemen formally under the control of the internationally recognized government of President Hadi. Other security forces – beyond those that are UAE-backed – have also been implicated in abuses. The southern port city of Aden, for example, is currently home to multiple, often competing, security forces and militias. While technically under the Interior Ministry, these forces operate with separate command and control structures, with units aligned to Yemen, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE. These forces are arresting and detaining people, and operating unofficial detention sites, local activists, journalists, and lawyers say.

One man described to Human Rights Watch a recent protest calling on the UAE and Hadrami Elite Forces to reveal the whereabouts of the disappeared: “There were small kids saying release our dads. We were writing on the posters that we are against terrorism, but terrorism is also taking people in this way.”

There are multiple informal and secret detention facilities in Aden, Hadramawt, and the areas of the country under Houthi-Saleh control to which independent monitors, lawyers and families of detainees have not been granted access. All parties running detention facilities in Yemen should provide immediate access to detention facilities, official and unofficial, for monitors of detention conditions, lawyers, medics, human rights monitors, and families, Human Rights Watch said.

Under international human rights law, an enforced disappearance occurs when the authorities take someone into custody and deny holding them or fail to disclose their fate or whereabouts. “Disappeared” people are at greater risk of torture and other ill-treatment, especially when they are detained outside formal detention facilities, such as police jails and prisons.

Possible Transfers Outside Yemen

Human Rights Watch was not able to verify these claims, but according to lawyers and activists, as well as relatives of men who had been disappeared, the UAE was transferring high-level detainees outside of Yemen.

According to one of the activists, about 15 people accused of being members of AQAP or IS-Y had been transferred to the base the UAE has been developing in Eritrea’s port city, Assab, over the past two years. A man whose relatives had been disappeared said at least five officials told him the UAE transferred the men outside of Yemen, including three who said the men were being held in Eritrea.

In 2016, the UN Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea reported on “the rapid construction of what appears to be a military base with permanent structures” at Assab. According to security analysts, the base includes its own port, airbase, and a military training facility, where the UAE has trained Yemeni forces, including the Security Belt and Hadrami Elite Forces, according to the Middle East Institute. The UN Monitoring Group also reported that the base

has “expanded to encompass not only personnel from Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, but also Yemeni troops and other troops in transit.”

Yemen is responsible for taking all reasonable steps to protect the well-being of anyone they transfer to the UAE or other governments or groups. Anyone being transferred out of a country should be able to contest the transfer in that country’s courts. Transfers cannot be made if the person would likely face torture or other major human rights abuses.

The UAE-Backed Security Belt in Aden

In Aden, many of those arbitrarily detained or forcibly disappeared were arrested by the Security Belt, a force created in spring 2016. It is officially under the Interior Ministry but is funded, trained, and directed by the UAE, said several activists, lawyers, and government officials. The UN Panel of Experts on Yemen and a Center for Civilians in Conflict (CIVIC) report found that the Security Belt operated largely outside the Yemeni government’s control.

In dozens of interviews, people detained by the Security Belt or detainees’ family members said Security Belt officers claimed they were following UAE orders in detaining terrorism suspects and that they lacked the authority to release detainees without specific UAE authorization. A former detainee said a high-ranking Security Belt Commander told him he had initially trusted the UAE was detaining suspects based on strong intelligence but he had increasingly come to believe not everyone they arrested was in fact linked to extremist groups. A man whose brother was arrested in July 2016 said a Security Belt officer told him the UAE has given the Security Belt orders, including a list of names of people to arrest, and that after their arrest the UAE would decide what to do with them. The UAE did not provide the Security Belt with the charges or accusations against the men, he said.

The Security Belt has arbitrarily arrested and abused dozens of people. Several families reported that the security forces, including the Security Belt, had used excessive force when carrying out arrests, including beating men with their guns and forcing entry into homes. The Security Belt has also arrested suspects’ family members when unable to find the person they hoped to arrest to pressure the actual suspect to turn himself in. Muneer and

Kareem: One night in the autumn of 2016, Security Belt officers came at 2 a.m. to the family home of “Kareem” and “Muneer,” both in their twenties, intending to arrest Muneer. Muneer was not home, so the Security Belt officers blindfolded Kareem, took him to a nearby camp and interrogated him. After a few hours, the men dumped a still blindfolded Kareem in a location he could not immediately identify. When he discovered where he was, he walked home. A family member said he “was very scared” when he arrived. The next day, Muneer surrendered at the Central Prison. Prison officials told Muneer’s father his son’s file was “with the coalition.” The general prosecutor issued a release order for Muneer. The prosecutor’s office told the family they could not secure his release, as the authorities did not respect their orders.

Laith and Hamid: One night in the autumn of 2016 at about 2:30 a.m., Security Belt forces came to the home of “Hamid” looking to arrest his son, “Laith.” When they could not find him, they kicked and beat Hamid. An officer also hit Hamid’s wife with his rifle. They blindfolded Hamid, kicked him again when he tried to loosen the blindfold, then detained him, beating him again and released him, telling him to bring his son. He told Human Rights Watch: “Yes, I promised to take my son to them and I did the following day. I’m really very sorry for my son because if I knew he would be detained for this long I would never have taken him to them.” Laith remains in detention.

Secret Prisons, Mistreatment of Detainees in Aden

Aden has two official detention facilities, the Central Prison and the Criminal Investigations Department (CID). In February 2017, the CID was holding about 220 people and the Central Prison about 231 terrorism detainees and 480 criminal detainees, according to the prosecutor’s office.

While the court system in Aden is largely not functioning, the prosecutor’s office is continuing to issue release orders for people if there is insufficient evidence to detain them. The prosecution’s orders are often not respected, particularly concerning terrorism cases, which is “where the power of the prosecutor stops,” a prosecutor said. Families, lawyers, and government officials repeatedly said that people arrested by the Security Belt whose case files were “with the coalition” were most likely to remain detained despite a prosecutorial release order even in the official sites.



This map depicts formal and informal detention facilities in which Human Rights Watch documented cases of people arbitrarily detained or forcibly disappeared since 2016, and where Human Rights Watch was able to secure GPS. It does not depict all locations currently being used as detention centers in Aden, Aden governorate. © 2017 Human Rights Watch

The Central Prison is divided into criminal cases, controlled by a prison director, and terrorism cases, overseen by a Security Belt officer who was appointed by and reports to UAE officers in Aden, said analysts, activists, and lawyers in Aden. One man previously detained in the Central Prison said that at least four people in the prison ward with him had release orders, but they remained detained because, they were told, “the coalition” refused to let them out. He, and two other men detained with him, said that prison officials said that the Security Belt ran the prison and they reported to the UAE.

In late 2016, the general prosecutor’s office issued release orders for 27 people who had been arrested by the Security Belt and detained on suspicion of terrorism. By February 2017, 10 had been released. The Security Belt officers in the prison told the office the remaining 17 could not be released without an order from the coalition, as they had been arrested by the Security Belt and thus fell under coalition control. Soon after, the prosecutor’s office

identified 35 additional detainees, all also accused of terrorism, for release. Three lawyers said that the prison director told them in a meeting he could not release certain people, even if they had release orders, as the decision rested with the coalition.

Omar and Mustafa: One night in August, at about 1:30 a.m., Security Belt officers broke down the door of a house, shouting they were there to arrest “Mustafa,” a 17-year-old high school student. Mustafa was accompanying an elderly relative on a trip, so the men took his older brother “Omar” with them instead. A week later, Mustafa turned himself in, and Security Belt personnel released Omar. While Mustafa’s family eventually secured a release order for him, Central Prison officials, including the de facto head of the prison, claimed his file was “with the coalition and there was nothing they could do about it.” A family member said, “And you can’t go to the coalition. They will shoot you if you try and go to the coalition.” A relative who had visited Mustafa said, “He is in a very bad way... he is a student, this shouldn’t have happened to him.”

Human Rights Watch has documented multiple allegations that various security forces in police stations and in official and secret detention facilities are mistreating detainees. One man detained in the Central Prison said that he and a few other detainees were blindfolded, handcuffed, and taken to a separate room in the prison. He said he was given multiple electrical shocks. He said he also heard the other three men with him being beaten and given electrical shocks. One of them fell over him, and he could hear the man screaming in pain.

In late August, in a separate case, a man who was out of Aden visiting relatives said his wife went to visit their two sons in the Central Prison, where they had just been transferred after being forcibly disappeared. After the visit, his wife told him that one of their son’s vision was impaired, he was only semi-conscious, his head had been visibly wounded, and he had handcuff marks on his wrist. The young man told his mother he had been beaten with a metal object and given electrical shocks. The other son looked psychologically shaken, but not physically abused, their mother said. About two weeks later, the two men “disappeared completely.” A government official later told the family the men were “with the coalition.”

In another case, a family member visited a relative in an informal detention facility. His relative told him he had been detained at the UAE base for months before his transfer to the current detention facility. He said he had been interrogated and beaten daily in the base, once until he lost consciousness and after which he remained bedridden.

One lawyer said that when they visited the Central Prison in late 2016 they heard four complaints of mistreatment, but the detainees were afraid to raise the cases or act as witnesses due to fears of retaliation. Journalists and human rights activists also told Human Rights Watch they had documented abuse in Aden's prisons.

Vice Interior Minister Ali Nasser told Human Rights Watch that the

Interior Ministry is working on improving the conditions in prisons, but that the ministry requires funding to properly equip the buildings and train staff.

Human Rights Watch documented four cases of children arbitrarily arrested or forcibly disappeared in Aden who were held with adults in the Central Prison and Camp Tariq, a military camp controlled by Aden's Security Administration. In addition, a former Central Prison detainee said that seven or eight children were in the ward with him, boys about 15 or 16 years old, when he was there in 2016. He said these boys would come back to the ward crying after interrogations, later telling the prisoners they had been blindfolded and beaten and that officers had threatened to take off their clothes. The father of a 17-year-old who had been detained for more than a year said: He is young; in the days of the war [when Houthi-Saleh forces entered Aden in 2015] he would shake because of the war. ... My son is struggling from psychological problems. He is a student. He doesn't want to be in prison.

Lawyers, activists, family members, and former detainees described at least six informal or secret detention facilities in Aden. One person who had collected more than 150 names of those detained by security forces cross-checked their lists with the lists of those detained in the Central Prison and CID, and found that about 50 of them were in neither detention facility. Sources, including government officials, said that lawyers, activists, judges, prosecutors, and international organizations did not have access to the informal detention facilities or secret prisons in Aden.

In February, Vice Interior Minister Nasser denied there were any informal detention facilities or secret prisons in Aden.

Many people who have been forcibly disappeared were initially arrested by the Security Belt, and were later told by various government officials that they had been transferred to detention facilities under UAE control and that Yemeni officials and Security Belt officers no longer had the power to intervene.

Multiple sources, including government officials, confirmed that the UAE ran at least one detention facility for terrorism suspects they deemed to be high-value or sensitive cases in Aden. An individual following these cases said they knew of 10 detainees by name who had been transferred to the Central Prison after being missing for three to seven months, and who later reported they were detained by UAE forces. Three men told Human Rights Watch that while they were detained in Central Prison a few men were transferred into the prison who told them they had been detained by the UAE. Former detainees said that, while they were being transported to another detention facility, the truck carrying them stopped outside the UAE's headquarters in Buraika, a neighborhood in Aden, and deposited there some of the other men who had been arrested. A Yemeni nongovernmental group monitoring detentions said that the Security Belt transferred more than 50 detainees from the Central Prison to the UAE headquarters in Buraika in 2017.

One case involved "Saleheddine," who was detained in 2016. A relative of his said contacts in Aden told the family he had been transferred to the UAE's headquarters in Buraika. Multiple high-level officials told the family they did not have power to intervene in the case, as the matter was with the UAE. Months later, guards at the UAE headquarters said there were plans to transfer dozens of detainees to another location. Soon after, Saleheddine called. He confirmed he had been held with the coalition and had been transferred to an informal Security Belt detention facility.

Multiple people in Aden also alleged that the Security Administration, which falls under the Interior Ministry but whose top official is UAE-supported, also ran informal detention facilities and secret prisons, including in Tawahi, an Aden district where the Security Chief lives, and at Camp Tariq in Khormaksar. Human Rights Watch spoke to two former detainees who said

they had been detained in an unknown location in Tawahi, and the relative of another detainee who visited his family member in Camp Tariq. In 2016, a 15-year-old and a 17-year-old were arrested, first taken to a police station, but then disappeared a few days later, family members said. A government official told a family member the 17-year-old had had been transferred to an informal detention facility run by the Security Administration. The family member who was able to visit, described the prison as having about seven or eight large metal hangars filled with people. The 17-year-old was in one of them and, when he came out, “he looked insane.” He later disappeared from the camp.

Nadim and Yusuf: “Nadim” and “Yusuf” were arrested one night in early 2017, at about midnight. Yusuf said that one of the officers shoved his face to the ground and accused him of working with ISIS. The officers hit them with the butts of their guns and handcuffed them. Nadi resisted arrest. The officers blindfolded the men, put them in military trucks, and took them to an informal detention facilities. The men were taken to a smaller room. Seven other men were inside, including one who had been shot in the leg – he said by the security forces – and whose wound was infested with worms. A man in the cell said: “This is a no return prison.” One man had been detained for eight months. The men told them they were only allowed to wash every two weeks and that when their drinking water ran out, detainees had turned to drinking their own urine. Both men were released after friends and family members intervened, although three of the men arrested with them remained detained. The two men contacted the family of the man who had been shot. His mother was “very happy,” as she had thought her son had died. Local activists in other areas under the Yemeni government’s control, for example in Taizz, Lahj, Abyan, and Marib, described similar abuses by government affiliated security forces. The UAE and Hadrami Elite Forces In April 2016, the coalition retook Mukalla, which AQAP had controlled for months. Extremist groups continued to carry out attacks on military installations, killing and wounding dozens of military forces.

The UAE has continued to support and direct Yemen forces carrying out counter terror and other security campaigns in Hadramawt, primarily the Hadrami Elite Forces. The Hadrami Elite Forces are formally a part of the Yemen Army, specifically the Second Military Zone, which covers parts of

Hadramawt governorate. But activists, lawyers, and family members of detainees said that the UAE provides salaries, training, weapons, and direction to the Elite Forces. The UAE informed the UN Panel of Experts on Yemen it had provided “military, financial, and training assistance” and “intelligence, logistic information and aerial intervention,” but that the forces were under the control of the Yemeni Armed Forces. The UN Panel concluded that: “While nominally under the command of the legitimate Government, they are effectively under the operational control of the United Arab Emirates, which oversees ground operations in Mukalla.” A 2016 CIVIC report concluded the same.

The US deployed a small number of special forces to offer intelligence and logistical support to UAE-led efforts in Mukalla in April, indefinitely extending the deployment in June. According to VICE News, the US special forces in Mukalla are indirectly backing the UAE-trained forces by advising the UAE on how to carry out the campaign against AQAP. Reuters, however, reported that the UAE is “working with” the US “to train, manage and equip Yemeni fighters in that effort [against AQAP].” A former Yemeni government official also alleged that the Hadrami Elite Forces had received US tactical and technical antiterrorism support.

The Hadrami Elite Forces have arbitrarily detained and forcibly disappeared dozens of people. Human Rights Watch met members of a committee representing family members of the disappeared who collected the names of 87 people disappeared in Hadramawt’s coastal area. Yemeni rights monitors shared a list of 142 people who they said had been arbitrarily arrested or forcibly disappeared in Hadramawt since May 2016, the vast majority by the Hadrami Elite Forces. A family member of a man disappeared in May 2016 said that about 25 men from his town had been disappeared since the UAE entered Mukalla.

The UAE runs unofficial detention facilities in Mukalla, with the principal detention facility at al-Riyan airport, Mukalla’s main airport, said family members of detainees, former detainees, and local lawyers and activists. A man whose son was detained by the Hadrami Elite Forces said recently released prisoners and guards working at the prison had confirmed the airport held dozens of prisoners. Families said the forces detained men in the Presidential Palace in Mukalla and at various checkpoints, often before transferring them to al-Riyan.

Lawyers, activists, and independent monitors do not have access to either detention facility. Individuals in Hadramawt said they had spoken by phone with Emirati officers who admitted holding their family members, allowed the families to talk to their missing relatives over the phone, and told them not to protest or speak to the media. Emirati officers use *noms-de-guerre*. As one woman said, “We never know their names. Never.” The UAE officials’ refusal to provide real names was reminiscent of the Houthis and AQAP, family members said.

Remi: In the spring of 2016, during the first large-scale security campaign after the coalition pushed AQAP out of Mukalla, men in a military truck arrested “Remi.” Remi was later released. He had been imprisoned in al-Riyan airport and interrogated by Abu Ahmed, the *nom-de-guerre* for a UAE officer who multiple families said was in charge of detention facilities. Soon after his release, Remi was again arrested and taken to al-Riyan, on UAE orders, local officials said. In the course of about a year, the family received only one phone call from Remi. He said he was “okay” and he was calling from a UAE officer’s phone. Family members said they had heard that men in the detention facility were being beaten and abused. One of the detention committee members said Yemeni and Emirati officers interrogated detainees and that there had been reports of torture, beating and “a lot of things I can’t say, that I am embarrassed to say.” A prisoner who had been detained said he had been beaten by seven Hadrami Elite Forces officers, punched in the face and hit with wires while being interrogated at a military checkpoint before being transferred to al-Riyan airport.

Human Rights Watch examined written statements by two men who had been detained at the Security Intelligence headquarters, Presidential Palace, and al-Riyan airport. The statements described abuse including beating, exposure to cold temperatures, insults, death threats, and sexual abuse, including forced nudity and threats of rape. Human Rights Watch confirmed that the men had been detained by speaking with friends and family members.

A father whose two sons had been arrested said he was worried about them, as some of the men who had been released from al-Riyan had told him they had been tortured. A Hadramawt local government official told the family the men had been transferred to al-Riyan. He said he could not do anything about the case, as the airport is under Emirati control. Abu Ahmed,

the Emirati officer, told the family the men were being held at the airport. One of his sons called after close to a year in detention. His father said his voice seemed weak, that he was crying, and that he said he was suffering. He still did not know what he had been accused of. He said he was kept handcuffed and blindfolded at all times except when eating and using the bathroom. He did not know if his brother was in the same prison.

People in Hadramawt have organized multiple protests and written numerous letters, often addressed to the Hadi government, the Hadramawt governor, and the coalition, asking the authorities to reveal the fate of their family members, allow them to visit the prisons, and refer any cases where there is evidence against an individual to courts. A former detainee told one man's family he had been detained with their relative in al-Riyan. "Abdulkader" had been arrested a year earlier. While the governor and regional military commander told the family they did not have the authority to release him, a UAE officer promised the family he would be released soon. He remains detained. His mother, discussing the impact of the disappearances on families, in particular mothers, said: "We just want to see our sons." On February 12, the governor of Hadramawt issued a circular addressed to the coalition, the head of the Second Military Zone, the General Prosecutor, the General Security Director and the police, stating that no forces should arrest anyone without an order from the prosecutor. The same day, Abubakr Hussein Salem, the governor of Abyan, issued a similar circular, a Yemeni outlet reported. However, people in Hadramawt said the Hadrami Elite Forces continued to raid homes and arbitrarily detain and disappear men in Mukalla after the circular was issued.

In May, just before the start of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, about 18 men were released from al-Riyan, family members said. Dozens remained detained. The UAE, Yemen, and others should immediately release all those held arbitrarily, Human Rights Watch said.



Yemen: Saudi-Led Coalition Airstrike Near School

(Beirut) – A Saudi-led coalition airstrike near a school in northern Yemen on January 10, 2017, killed two students and a school administrator and wounded three children, Human Rights Watch said today. The unlawful attack reinforces the urgent need for an international investigation into alleged laws-of-war violations in Yemen, an end to arms sales to Saudi Arabia, and the return of the coalition to the United Nations secretary-general’s “list of shame” for abuses against children in armed conflict.

“The bombing death of an 11-year-old girl on her way to school shows how little the Saudi-led coalition took to heart its brief inclusion on the UN secretary-general’s ‘list of shame,’” said Sarah Leah Whitson, Middle East director at Human Rights Watch. “How many more schoolchildren need to die and be maimed before the UN responds?”



The informal gas station in Bani Mea’asar village after it was hit by a Saudi-led coalition airstrike on January 10, 2017. The attack killed two students and a school administrator and wounded three children. Mwatana, a leading Yemeni human rights organization, visited the site six days after the attack and photographed building damage and munitions remnants.

On January 10 at about 8 a.m., a coalition airstrike hit an informal gas station in the village of Bani Mea’asar, in the Nihm district, Sanaa governorate, killing three civilians and wounding five others. The attack shattered a

number of the nearby school's windows and damaged its electrical wires and speakers, witnesses said. Al-Falah school, 150 to 200 meters from the gas station, provides primary and secondary education to about 900 boys and girls. In the winter the school usually starts about 8 or 8:30 a.m. Students were either on their way or getting ready to head to the school when the strike took place. Muhammad Mea'asar, who has served as Al-Falah school's director for more than 20 years, told Human Rights Watch he was at home with his family preparing to head to the school's morning assembly when the munition hit. "It landed north of the school wall... next to some shops and an informal gas station," he said. "If it landed at that time on the school building it would have been a disaster."

Ahmad Mea'asar was at home about half a kilometer from the school when he heard the explosion. His two children, in the fifth and seventh grades, had already left for school. He immediately ran to the site of the attack, initially worried the munition had hit the school, as it looked like smoke was coming from the building. He helped in the rescue effort once he arrived.

Ali Mudafeer, the school's deputy director, was killed in the strike. Muhammad Mea'asar said that Mudafeer had been standing outside the school to "reassure the students who were still coming that [an earlier] strike [in the area] was far away and the school was okay." The munition also killed Ishraq al-Moa'fa, 11, who was on her way to school, and Shamkh Sa'soua', a 19-year-old who had enrolled at Al-Falah after his previous school closed due to nearby fighting. The strike also wounded two girls, ages 8 and 12, and a 16-year-old boy.

Muhammad al-Radi, a mathematics teacher at the school, was about to leave his house, which is in the school compound, with his 9-year-old son when the munition detonated. He said: Suddenly... I realized because of all the smoke, dust, and glass that came over us that the airstrike occurred in front of us, in front of the school. ... My wife ran out with my two kids, out of the school, because we were worried that they will attack again. We were terrified. Al-Radi said that he and at least 10 other people immediately ran to help the wounded: We saw body parts scattered on the ground, and we saw Ishraq, and her severed foot. From the traces of the blood, it seems that she crawled... to the other side [of the road], and she was holding her bag, but we arrived and she was dead.



Munitions remnants found by Mwatana near the site of an airstrike by the Saudi-led coalition on an informal gas station in Bani Mea'asar village on January 10, 2017. © 2017 Mwatana Organization for Human Rights

Mwatana, a leading Yemeni human rights organization, sent a team to the village to examine the attack site on January 16. Mwatana photographed remnants of munitions. Human Rights Watch examined these photos and concluded from the thickness of the fragments that the remnants were from the guidance unit and fin assembly system from an air-dropped bomb, but the images were insufficient to make a positive identification.

Coalition airstrikes had previously hit the area around the village, which was about eight kilometers from ongoing fighting between coalition-backed Yemeni forces and Houthi forces and forces loyal to former President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The gas station had previously fueled military vehicles passing through the town, Mwatana and a witness said. Three witnesses told Human Rights Watch that the coalition had often struck military targets in the area, including military vehicles, but that there was no military vehicle at the gas station at the time of the attack.

International humanitarian law, or the laws of war, applies to all sides fighting in Yemen. Deliberate or indiscriminate attacks against civilians and civilian structures are prohibited. The laws of war require the parties to a

conflict to take constant care during military operations to spare the civilian population and to “take all feasible precautions” to avoid or minimize loss of civilian life and damage to civilian objects.

While the occasional use of the fuel station by military vehicles may have made it a lawful military objective, there was no evident urgency to strike so close to a school at the beginning of a school day.

The coalition should have provided an effective advance warning of the attack and taken all feasible precautions to minimize harm to civilians, including, for example, carrying out the strike when the school was not in session. Since March 2015, the Saudi Arabia-led coalition has carried out military operations in Yemen, supported by the United States, against Houthi-Saleh forces. The coalition has unlawfully attacked homes, markets, hospitals, schools, civilian businesses, and mosques. The UN secretary-general’s 2016 annual report on violations against children in armed conflict found that at least 785 children were killed and 1,168 wounded in Yemen in 2015, with 60 percent of the casualties attributed to the coalition. The report also found that the coalition was responsible for nearly half of 101 attacks against schools and hospitals.

On June 2, 2016, then-Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon included the Saudi Arabia-led coalition on his annual “list of shame” for grave violations against children during armed conflict. A few days after the report was published, Saudi Arabia and its allies issued threats to withdraw hundreds of millions of dollars in assistance to the UN. In response Ban announced he was removing the Saudi-led coalition from the list “pending the conclusion of [a] joint review” and publicly admitted these financial threats influenced his decision.

After the Saudi-led coalition was removed from the list of shame, coalition attacks continued to kill and maim children and damage schools and hospitals. In December, for example, a coalition cluster munition attack struck an area near two local schools in Saada city, in northern Yemen, killing two civilians and wounding six, including a child. Students were told not to return to school the day after the attack, as the schools had to be checked for any explosive remnants, including unexploded submunitions. The secretary-general also included the Houthis, government forces, pro-government militias, and Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula on his 2015 list for grave violations against

children during the armed conflict in Yemen. Human Rights Watch has documented Houthi- Saleh forces in Yemen using landmines that killed and maimed children, recruiting and using child soldiers, and arbitrarily holding and abusing child detainees.

“Yemeni children have been among those paying the heaviest price during this nearly two-year-long war,” Whitson said. “Both the Saudi-led coalition and Yemeni forces on both sides need to better protect children from the fighting.”

December 8, 2016 12:00AM EST



Yemen: US-Made Bombs Used in Unlawful Airstrikes

Dozens of Civilian Deaths Underscore Need for Saudi Arms Embargo

(Beirut) – The Saudi Arabia-led coalition killed several dozen civilians in three apparently unlawful airstrikes in September and October 2016, Human Rights Watch said today. The coalition’s use of United States-supplied weapons in two of the strikes, including a bomb delivered to Saudi Arabia well into the conflict, puts the US at risk of complicity in unlawful attacks.

The attacks underscore the urgent need for foreign governments to suspend all arms sales to Saudi Arabia and for the United Nations human rights office to send additional investigators to Yemen to carry out credible investigations of alleged abuses by the coalition, the Houthis and their allies, and all other parties to the conflict, Human Rights Watch said.

“Saudi-led forces are bombing civilians in Yemen with newly supplied US weapons,” said Priyanka Motaparthi, senior emergencies researcher at Human Rights Watch. “The Obama administration is running out of time to completely suspend US arms sales to Saudi Arabia or be forever linked to Yemen wartime atrocities.”



The Saudi Arabia-led coalition killed several dozen civilians in three apparently unlawful airstrikes in September and October 2016. The coalition's use of United States-supplied weapons in two of the strikes, including a bomb delivered to Saudi Arabia well into the conflict, puts the US at risk of complicity in unlawful attacks.

Since the beginning of the Saudi-led campaign in March 2015, Human Rights Watch has found remnants of US-supplied weapons at the site of 23 apparently unlawful coalition airstrikes, including more than a dozen attacks involving US-made cluster munitions. Researchers did not find identifiable remnants in every attack documented. The US approved more than US\$20 billion in military sales to Saudi Arabia in 2015 alone. Three US arms sales in 2015 and 2016, worth nearly US\$3 billion, involved replenishing Saudi weaponry used in Yemen.

Human Rights Watch located remnants of US-made weapons at the site of coalition airstrikes in Arhab in Sanaa governorate and in the Hodeida governorate. A September 10 attack on a drilling site for water in Arhab killed at least 31 civilians, including three children.



Remnant of a wing assembly that is mounted on a US-made GBU-12 Paveway II laser-guided 500-pound bomb found at the Arhab water drilling site, Sanaa governorate, where at least 31 civilians were killed in an airstrike on September 10, 2016. According to the manufacturing date as well as the national stock number, this wing assembly was produced by Raytheon Company, a US defense contractor, in October 2015.

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Human Rights Watch researchers found remnants of two US-made GBU-12 Paveway II laser guided 500-pound bombs. One Paveway II laser guidance system had markings indicating it was manufactured by Raytheon, Inc., a US arms manufacturer, dated October 2015 – seven months after the start of the war. The other weapon was manufactured at an undetermined date in 2015. By October 2015, the UN as well as Human Rights Watch and others had already reported numerous unlawful attacks by coalition forces.

A coalition airstrike on October 29 struck the al-Zaydiya security administration building north of the city of Hodeida. Many of the about 100 people who were being detained in the facility died in the bombing. The Houthis and allied forces stationed military personnel and trucks mounted with machine guns at the site.



[LAUNCH MAP](#)

But even if a strike was on a military target, it may have unlawfully caused disproportionate civilian casualties. Human Rights Watch researchers found remnants consistent with a US-made JDAM satellite-guided bomb at the site.

A coalition airstrike on Souq al-Hinood, a densely populated neighborhood in Hodeida, on September 21 killed at least 28 civilians, including eight children, and wounded 32 others. The only known military target in the vicinity was the city's Presidential Palace, about 450 to 500 meters away, which was bombed earlier that day.



[LAUNCH MAP](#)

Between March 2015 and October 2016, at least 4,125 civilians were killed and 7,207 wounded in Yemen, according to the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the majority by coalition airstrikes. OHCHR reported in August that airstrikes had been the “single largest cause of casualties” over the past year.

The Saudi-led coalition has repeatedly used US-produced weapons in unlawful attacks. US-produced weapons were used in two of the war’s deadliest incidents so far: the March 15 attack on Mastaba market, which killed at least 97 civilians, and the October 8 attack on a funeral hall in Sanaa, the capital, which killed at least 100 people and wounded more than 500. Both attacks appear to have been war crimes.

The continued transfer of arms by the United States to Saudi Arabia, despite evidence of their repeated use in unlawful attacks, may make the US complicit in some of the coalition’s violations in Yemen. The US is also party to the conflict in Yemen, providing targeting intelligence and refueling planes during bombing raids, but the US has not announced any independent investigation into its actions in the Yemen war. According to a Reuters investigation, US officials debated internally whether US support to the coalition could make US personnel criminally liable for war crimes in Yemen.

In May, the US suspended transfers of cluster munitions to Saudi Arabia. However, President Barack Obama, before he leaves office, should halt all arms transfers to Saudi Arabia and make the cluster munition ban permanent and extend it to all other countries, Human Rights Watch said.

Immediately following the October 8 funeral hall attack, the US National Security Council announced the US had “initiated an immediate review of our already significantly reduced support” to the coalition and was “prepared to adjust our support.” The US has made no further announcements regarding how it planned to alter support for the war in Yemen nor released any findings from the review. President Obama should ensure that the review examines whether US forces participated in any unlawful coalition attacks in Yemen, and release the review findings before leaving office, Human Rights Watch said.

The government of the United Kingdom also sells arms to Saudi Arabia, despite growing parliamentary pressure over its support for Saudi Arabia’s military campaign in Yemen and evidence of the use of British-made weapons in Yemen. Human Rights Watch has documented the use of UK-made weapons in three apparently unlawful coalition attacks in Yemen. Since March 2015, the UK has approved £3.3 billion in military sales to Saudi Arabia, according to the London-based Campaign Against Arms Trade.

On November 15, the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office concluded, despite considerable evidence to the contrary, that there was no clear risk of serious Saudi breaches of international humanitarian law in Yemen. The ministry had previously issued six corrections to statements, walking back its initial denial of coalition laws-of-war violations in Yemen. But it noted that, “UK Defence personnel are unable to form a complete understanding of the coalition’s regard for international humanitarian law in Yemen as they do not have access to all the information required to do so.”

Neither the Saudi-led coalition’s Joint Investigation Assessment Team (JIAT) nor the Yemeni-led National Commission has announced investigations into the three airstrikes. JIAT, after releasing initial investigation results into eight airstrikes on August 4 that largely absolved the coalition of responsibility, has only published initial results of one additional investigation, the October 8 funeral hall airstrike, after the strike received widespread international condemnation. JIAT’s published investigations have failed to

meet international standards for credible and transparent investigations into laws of war violations, Human Rights Watch said.

In September, the UN Human Rights Council passed a resolution mandating the UN human rights office to deploy additional human rights experts to investigate abuses by all sides, and report publicly on its findings. These three attacks highlight the need for the warring parties and concerned governments to fully support the office’s expanded investigative mandate, Human Rights Watch said.

“Governments selling weapons to Saudi Arabia cannot with any credibility rely on either coalition or Yemeni-led investigations to determine whether these weapons are being used against civilians,” Motaparthy said. “The US, UK, and others selling weapons to Saudi Arabia should suspend these sales until unlawful attacks are curtailed and properly investigated.”

Arhab Water Drilling Site, September 10, 2016

Casualties: At least 31 civilians killed, including three children, and 42 injured.

Munitions Identified: Two GBU-12 Paveway II laser guided 500-pound bombs. One bomb wing assembly produced by Raytheon in the US in October 2015. Second bomb wing assembly produced in the US in 2015, exact manufacture date unknown.



[LAUNCH MAP](#)

Before dawn on September 10, coalition aircraft struck the site of a water drilling rig near Beit Saadan village in the Arhab district, 30 kilometers north

of Sanaa. The drill rig was in an unpopulated area reachable only by dirt road, about two kilometers from the nearest village. Multiple strikes over the course of the morning killed at least 31 civilians and wounded 42 more, according to OHCHR.



Remnant of a wing assembly that is mounted on a US-made GBU-12 Paveway II laser-guided 500-pound bomb found at the Arhab water drilling site, Sanaa governorate, where at least 31 civilians were killed in an airstrike on September 10, 2016. According to the national stock number, this wing assembly was produced in the US in 2015, some time before October.

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The first strike hit near a workers' shelter occupied by nearly a dozen workers and managers, killing six and wounding five others. At about 9 a.m., after several dozen villagers came to remove the bodies of those killed and examine the site, three planes returned and proceeded to bomb the vicinity at least 12 more times, about 15 minutes apart, witnesses said. The strikes lasted until about noon, killing at least 15 civilians, and wounding dozens more. Human Rights Watch independently confirmed the names and ages of 21 people who died in the attack, including three boys ages 12, 14, and 15.

Yehia Abdullah, a 34-year-old teacher, said he spent the evening with his brother Muhammed and other workers at the site. His brother died in the first strike. Abdullah, who had left the site 20 minutes earlier, was on his way back when he heard the bombing:

I saw the light of a bomb on the site of the drill rig. I tried to reach them by

phone, but no one answered. ... I arrived while the drill machine was operating and saw scattered and charred bodies. Everyone was in his place where he had been working or sitting. I saw five bodies including my brother Muhamad. First I found my brother's severed leg outside the [workers' shelter], about six meters, his arm on the door ... and half his body buried in the ruins.

Salim al-Sadani, a local farmer, said that when he learned that his uncle Mahdi al-Sadani had died in the airstrike, he went to the site, arriving at about 8 a.m.

About 300 people, including the dead's relatives, [were there] to remove the bodies. ... I saw two warplanes arriving from the south. Between 8 and 9 a.m., I saw the missile coming down to ground as I was [here] next to my uncle's body.

Sadani said he lost consciousness briefly when the strike threw him to the ground:

I saw myself full of blood and ran away. I just saw smoke and flame. I saw a body of an old man in front of me, he is from [Thinah], the neighboring village. He was dead. I was taken to [the] hospital. I was injured by [fragments] in the left hand ... as well as [fragments] in my back.

Several witnesses said that three coalition planes circled overhead, striking the area in widening circles as those gathered attempted to escape. People ran in all directions to escape the bombing, they said.



Remains of the workers' shelter at the Arhab water drilling site in the Sanaa governorate. At least 31 civilians died, including 3 children, when several airstrikes hit the drilling rig and surrounding area on September 10, 2016.

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Human Rights Watch visited the site on November 10, and examined the rubble of the workers' shelter, as well as the burned wreckage of a fuel tanker truck. There were at least 11 bomb craters or impact sites in the immediate area. Footage of the site taken the day of the strikes shows many burned and mutilated bodies.

Human Rights Watch examined and photographed remnants of a US-made GBU-12 Paveway II laser guided 500-pound bomb. A part of the guidance system (wing assembly) was produced by Raytheon in the US in October 2015, according to markings on the remnants.

Residents of Beit Saadan said that they had pooled together 22 million Yemeni Rials (US\$88,000) of their personal funds to pay to drill the well to supply drinking water to their village. The bombing occurred on the last day of planned drilling, after the villagers had struck water, a local farmer said. Several witnesses said that no Houthi fighters or military equipment were stationed in the area before the strikes.



The burned remains of a fuel tanker in Arhab at the site of the water drill attack in the Sanaa governorate. The well under construction was meant to supply Beit al-Saadon, a nearby village, with water. Human Rights Watch found no evidence of military operations or materiel at the site.

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When Agence France Presse questioned a coalition spokesman, Gen. Ahmed al-Assiri, about the attack, he replied, “All our strikes in that area target Houthi positions.” The coalition has not announced an investigation into the attack.

Deliberate or indiscriminate attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure are a serious violation of the laws of war, and if carried out intentionally or recklessly are war crimes.

Al-Zaydiya Security Administration, October 29, 2016

Casualties: 63 Houthi personnel and civilians killed and 67 wounded.

Weapons Identified: US-made JDAM satellite guidance system.



One of the three bombs that hit al-Zaydiya security directorate, Hodeida governorate, came through the ceiling next door to the director's office. The attack killed at least 63 security personnel and detainees.
© 2016 Kristine Beckerle / Human Rights Watch

The strikes killed at least 63 people and injured 67, according to OHCHR. Many of the casualties were alleged criminal and security detainees held at the facility without charge, including at least two children. The Sanaa-based Foreign Affairs Ministry wrote on December 1, in response to a Human Rights Watch letter, that there were about 126 people, including both prisoners and staff, at the detention facility at the time of the attack. The ministry wrote that

62 people were killed, including 30 prisoners. Human Rights Watch could not confirm how many of those killed or injured were prisoners and how many were security administration officials.



Remnants of a US-made JDAM satellite-guided bomb at the al-Zaydiya security directorate in Hodeida governorate, where coalition bombs killed at least 63 people on October 29.
© 2016 Priyanka Motaparthy / Human Rights Watch



The destroyed remains of one of the wards in al-Zaydiya security directorate in Hodeida governorate. This ward and two others held at least 100 prisoners at the time of the coalition attack. Witnesses told Human Rights Watch that trucks equipped with mounted machine guns were sometimes stationed at the site.
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The airstrikes hit the roof of the administration building; one of two cells holding male suspects; and the facility's women's cell, the separate building used to house security detainees.

“Ahmed,” who had been detained in the facility’s main section, said that when the first strike hit:

[We] ran to the door and tried to get out, [we were] asking to be let out. ... Then the second missile hit, and then the third on my ward. All the prisoners were at the door when it hit.

Ahmed said he lost consciousness after the third strike. He suffered burns on more than 40 percent of his body as a result of the strike.

“Abdullah,” another detainee, said:

I was injured in my leg... in the first strike. I tried to protect [myself by lying] on the ground after the first bomb. The third bomb came into my cell. After it finished, I saw that most of the prisoners were dead. I saw a hole in the wall so I went out, then I was in the street. Two people with a motorbike took me to [the hospital].

A guard at the facility said:

I [had gone] home to eat dinner. I was 200 meters from here...[when] I heard the bombing. It shook the home. I ran outside to see what was happening, then there were more strikes. I was scared and ran away.

The prison workers made an opening so they [the prisoners] could leave. I didn’t have time to get the key, I feel ashamed about that. I was scared and far away. Some people [prisoners] ran away through the opening in the wall.

Human Rights Watch visited the facility on November 6. The attack had significantly damaged the jail’s reception area and destroyed one of two large cells holding male detainees, as well as the main hallway of the men’s detention center.

Human Rights Watch examined and photographed remnants of the munitions used in the attacks and determined they were consistent with a US-made JDAM satellite-guided bomb.

Souq al-Hinood Neighborhood, September 21, 2016

Casualties: At least 28 civilians killed, including 8 children, and 32 wounded.

Munitions Identified: No remnants found at the site.



A three-story house in Souq al-Hinood, a crowded residential area in Hodeida city, that was hit by an airstrike on the evening of September 21, 2016. A single bomb killed at least 28 civilians, including 8 children.
© 2016 Priyanka Motaparthy / Human Rights Watch

At about 7:15 p.m. on September 21, coalition aircraft attacked the Presidential Palace in Hodeida, which was still being used by local authorities. About an hour later, an airstrike hit a home in the densely populated residential neighborhood of Souq al-Hinood, about 500 meters from the palace. The strike killed at least 28 civilians, including eight children, and wounded 32, according to OHCHR. Human Rights Watch confirmed the names and ages of 24 of those killed, including six children.

Mohammed Ahmad Abduljalil, a local resident, said that on the night of the bombing, he was holding a funeral for his wife. At least 50 people had gathered on the street in front of his house, where the family had set up a tent for mourners, with separate sections for women and men. The strike hit approximately 30 meters from the funeral site. He said:

When the strike came, [the guests] ran in all directions.... I was sitting in the men's funeral [section]. I and my [granddaughter], she is only 4-years-old, flew in the air. We were thrown [from the street] to the back of the house.... She was injured in the head. My 23-year-old son... was cut on his neck and face, his jaw detached. He also had [fragments] lodged in his leg.

Abduljalil's son-in-law and his grandson were killed.

Muhammad Ghareib, 41, a shop owner whose store is about 150 meters from the strike location, said:

I was inside my shop [when] I heard a very loud explosion. All the glass in my shop shattered, the dust filled the shop.... I went outside and saw people running away: men, women, and children, some of them were falling on the ground, some covered with dust and some with blood.

The airstrike directly hit the three-story building in the middle of [the building]. All the bricks and one balcony fell over the funeral and [those attending]. About 12 houses were damaged.



A narrow street in the Souq al-Hinood neighborhood of Hodeida city that was bombed on the evening of September 21, 2016. At the time of the attack Mohammed Ahmed Abduljalil was holding a funeral for his wife in front of his house. Abduljalil's son and 4-year-old granddaughter were injured in the strike; his son-in-law and his grandson were killed.

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None of the witnesses described any military target in the area other than perhaps the Presidential Palace, which had at times been used to host meetings with high-level Houthi officials involved in military operations. The palace was located 450 to 500 meters away from the neighborhood. The house of the Houthi-affiliated deputy governor, was about 20 meters away, a neighborhood resident said. Armed men in military trucks used to visit the deputy governor's house, but the resident was uncertain whether any were there at the time of the strike.

Human Rights Watch visited the site on November 7. There was no

evidence of a possible military target in the area other than the Presidential Palace.

The attack on Souq al-Hinood may have been intended as part of the attack on the Presidential Palace, but it was apparently unlawfully indiscriminate as it did not distinguish between civilians and a military objective. Indiscriminate attacks carried out recklessly are war crimes. The coalition has not announced if it will investigate the attack.

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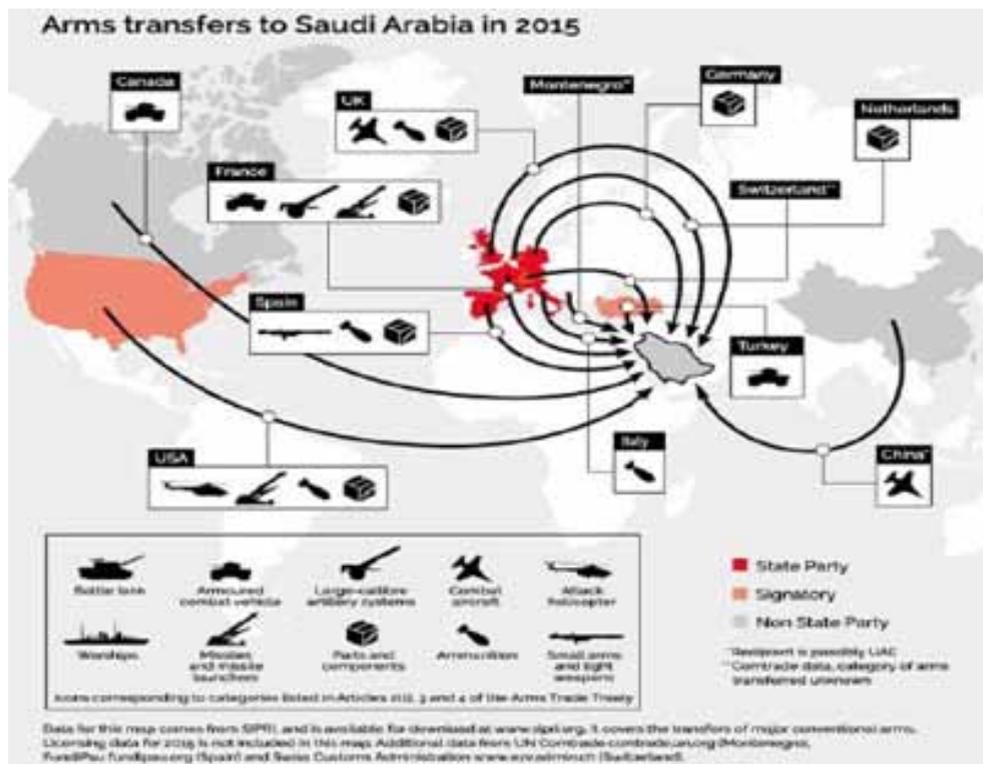


States must stop selling weapons to Saudi Arabia for use in Yemen conflict

26 February 2016, 00:01 UTC

Campaigners are today calling on governments due to attend the latest round of discussions on the implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) in Geneva on 29 February to set their hypocrisy aside and stop selling billions of dollars worth of deadly weapons to Saudi Arabia being used to attack Yemeni civilians.

In a new report released today, the Control Arms Coalition names France, Germany, Italy, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, the UK, and the US as having reported licenses and sales to Saudi Arabia worth more than \$25bn in 2015 including drones, bombs, torpedoes, rockets and missiles. These are the types of arms currently being used by Saudi Arabia and its allies for gross violations of human rights and possible war crimes during aerial and ground attacks in Yemen..



Arms transfers to Saudi Arabia in 2015. ©

Control Arms All the arms exporting countries identified in the report are States Parties or signatories to the ATT, which has the aim of “reducing human suffering” through new global rules for the arms trade, which forbid arms transfers that would be used for war crimes or risk being used for serious violations of international law.

Governments are attending the Extraordinary Meeting of the Conference of States Parties to the ATT in Geneva on Monday to discuss how implementation of the ATT will be funded and other logistical details regarding the Treaty’s official Secretariat.

“These countries are arming and aiding a campaign that’s bombing, killing and starving civilians,» said Yemeni researcher Nawal al-Maghafi, who has witnessed the aftermath of recent airstrikes in Yemen and will be attending Monday’s meeting.

These countries are arming and aiding a campaign that's bombing, killing and starving civilians. “

Nawal al-Maghafi, Yemeni researcher for Control Arms

“I have witnessed the reality Yemenis are having to endure - watching bodies pulled from underneath the rubble in Sana'a or seeing body parts strewn across the site of a water-plant hit by an airstrike in Hajjah or attending a wedding party only to see it turn into a funeral. “Yemen needs a peaceful, negotiated settlement. Its people need humanitarian assistance, not more bombs. But instead these countries are helping to escalate this war, aiding a cruel regime that knows it is bombing civilians. This is criminal - literally. And these governments must be held responsible for it.” Control Arms has called on States Parties to include a discussion of the grave situation in Yemen as part of Monday's meeting, and to commit immediately to halting the transfer of weapons to Saudi Arabia and to its allies where these are at serious risk of being used in Yemen.

“Governments such as the UK and France were leaders in seeking to secure an ATT – and now they are undermining the commitments they made to reduce human suffering by supplying Saudi Arabia with some of the deadliest weapons in the world. It's truly sickening,» said Anna Macdonald, Director of Control Arms.

The UK and France were leaders in seeking to secure an ATT – and now they are ... supplying Saudi Arabia with some of the deadliest weapons in the world. It's truly sickening.

Anna Macdonald, Director of Control Arms

“There is irrefutable evidence showing that these weapons are being used to target residential areas and civilian objects. Around 35,000 people have been killed or injured in less than a year already in this conflict and more than 2.5m people have lost their homes. Enough is enough. “Monday's meeting in Geneva must not fiddle while Yemen burns – governments must address this major breach of the ATT. States supplying weapons to Saudi must stop making huge profits from the suffering of Yemeni families and start applying the strict criteria set down in the ATT to all future arms transfers.” Based on the limited public domain information available, the report estimates the total

reported value of arms export licenses and announced sales to Saudi Arabia was more than \$25bn during 2015. Of this,

States Parties accounted for over \$4.9bn, though the exact amount is likely to be much higher.

Many states have still not yet fully reported on licenses approved or transfers made over the period 201415- but they include the following:

Between January 1 and September 30 2015, the UK issued a total of 152 licences for exports of military equipment to Saudi Arabia, totalling \$4.16bn – seven of these licences were worth a total of more than £1bn for bombs, torpedoes, rockets and missiles From January to June 2015, Spain authorized eight licences for export of aircraft, fire control systems, bombs, torpedoes, rockets and missiles to Saudi Arabia worth \$28.9m (27m euros) From January to November 2015, Italy exported arms, ammunition and spare parts to Saudi Arabia, worth \$39.7m

Under the ATT, all arms deals must be assessed against strict criteria, including the risk of the arms being used for serious human rights violations or war crimes, or of being diverted for terrorist and other criminal acts. The treaty requires that if the transferring state has reasonable knowledge to anticipate that the arms would be used in war crimes, or there is a substantial risk the export will breach any of those criteria, the arms transfer cannot be authorised.

Violations are also being committed by Houthi forces, who according to UN experts have captured and acquired arms via diversion, though today's report does not address this issue due to a lack of reliable data.

“Governments approving the export of arms to Saudi Arabia capable of use in Yemen have received many detailed and credible reports from the UN and other reputable bodies over the past months pointing to a pattern of horrific human rights abuses and war crimes committed throughout Yemen by the Kingdom's forces and allies,» said Brian Wood, Amnesty International's Head of Arms Control and Human Rights.

In the face of unbearable suffering of civilians and mounting casualties those governments ... are carrying on business as usual, even escalating arms transfers. This is a clear breach of the golden rules in the Arms Trade Treaty.

Brian Wood, Head of Arms Control and Human Rights at Amnesty International

“In the face of unbearable suffering of civilians and mounting casualties those governments have failed to enact convincing measures to prevent further violations, conduct independent and impartial investigations or bring the perpetrators to justice, yet, they are carrying on business as usual, and in some cases even escalating arms transfers. This is a clear breach of the golden rules in the Arms Trade Treaty. “Given the obvious high risks, we appeal to all states to immediately halt arms transfers and military support to Saudi Arabia and its coalition partners that are capable of being used to commit or facilitate further serious violations of international human rights and humanitarian law in Yemen.”



Yemen: Bombing of MSF hospital may amount to a war crime

27 October 2015, 15:44 UTC

The apparently deliberate targeting and destruction of a hospital supported by Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) in northern Yemen last night, which may amount to a war crime, demands an urgent, independent and thorough investigation, Amnesty International said today.

According to sources on the ground, at around 11.30 pm on 26 October the Saudi Arabia-led coalition forces allegedly carried out up to six consecutive airstrikes on Haydan Hospital, located in the Haydan Directorate in Sa'da governorate. The hospital had more than 20 people inside at the time, including three patients and various medical and other staff members. Seven staff members were injured, but could not be taken to another hospital 60km away in Sa'da until 7am due to fears of further strikes. "The attack on Haydan Hospital appears to have been an unlawful attack causing harm to civilians and civilian objects. The consecutive airstrikes show deliberate targeting of the medical facility - this is another sad day for civilians," said Philip Luther, Director for the Middle East and North Africa at Amnesty International.

The attack on Haydan Hospital appears to have been an unlawful attack causing harm to civilians and civilian objects. The consecutive airstrikes show deliberate targeting of the medical facility - this is another sad day for civilians

Philip Luther, Director for the Middle East and North Africa at Amnesty International.

“Hospitals and medical units must be respected and protected in all circumstances - they only lose their protection against attack if they are used for military purposes - and the destruction of this one means the loss of vital humanitarian treatment for civilians across four directorates of northern Yemen.»

MSF staff confirmed the attack, saying they witnessed two consecutive airstrikes before fleeing the hospital compound. Three to four further airstrikes were reported, coming around five minutes apart. According to Hassan Boucenne, MSF head of mission in Yemen, the Saudi Arabia-led coalition has the coordinates of all MSF hospitals in Yemen, including Haydan Hospital.

According to the hospital's director Dr Ali al-Mughli, the hospital is now completely destroyed with the exception of the storage rooms. He said that while the hospital often receives injured fighters, there was no military activity in the hospital at the time of the attack.

Haydan is 60km south-west of Sa'da city, where the injured have now been taken. Dr Ali said there was a delay in taking them to the city's al-Jamhuri hospital because airstrikes have been targeting convoys of people, meaning that even ambulances are not safe. The hospital also lost 60 litres of petrol and 1,000 litres of diesel in the strike, a huge loss at a time when fuel supplies are scarce.

This is not the first strike on a hospital in Sa'da since the Saudi Arabia-led coalition's military intervention in Yemen began last March. On 4 September 2015, the coalition reportedly bombed al-Sh'ara hospital in Razih, in the west of Sa'da governorate, resulting in the killing of six patients and the injury of six others.

MSF personnel who visited the site afterwards said there was no evidence that the hospital was being used for any military purposes.

We call on all parties to the conflict to respect and protect medical personnel and units and take every precaution to protect civilians caught up in the conflict. There must be an independent investigation into why hospitals and their patients are being targeted, rather than protected, as international humanitarian law requires.“

Philip Luther

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Bombing of schools by Saudi Arabia-led coalition a flagrant attack on future of Yemen's children

11 December 2015, 00:01 UTC

Saudi Arabia-led coalition forces have carried out a series of air strikes targeting schools that were still in use, in violation of international humanitarian law, and hampering access to education for thousands of Yemen's children, said Amnesty International in a new briefing published today. The coalition forces are armed by states including the USA and UK.

The briefing 'Our kids are bombed': Schools under attack in Yemen, investigates five air strikes on schools which took place between August and October 2015 killing five civilians and injuring at least 14, including four children, based on field research in Yemen. While students were not present inside the schools during the attacks, the strikes caused serious damage or destruction which will have long-term consequences for students.

"The Saudi Arabia-led coalition launched a series of unlawful air strikes on schools being used for educational – not for military – purposes, a flagrant violation of the laws of war," said Lama Fakih, Senior Crisis Advisor at Amnesty International who recently returned from Yemen.

Schools are central to civilian life, they are meant to offer a safe space for children. Yemen's young school pupils are being forced to pay the price for these attacks. On top of enduring a bitter conflict, they face longer term upheaval and disruption to their education – a potentially lifelong burden that they will be forced to shoulder

Lama Fakih, Senior Crisis Advisor at Amnesty International.

"Schools are central to civilian life, they are meant to offer a safe space for children. Yemen's young school pupils are being forced to pay the price

for these attacks. On top of enduring a bitter conflict, they face longer term upheaval and disruption to their education – a potentially lifelong burden that they will be forced to shoulder.”

In some cases the schools were struck more than once, suggesting the strikes were deliberately targeted. “Deliberately attacking schools that are not military objectives and directly attacking civilians not participating in hostilities are war crimes,” said Lama Fakih.

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Lama Fakih

The damage has severely disrupted the schooling of the more than 6,500 children who attend classes at the schools in Hajjah, Hodeidah and Sana’a governorates. In certain cases the schools had been the only ones in the area. No evidence could be found in any of the five cases to suggest the schools had been used for military purposes.

In October 2015 the Science and Faith School in Beni Hushayash, Sana’a was attacked on four separate occasions within the space of a few weeks. The third strike killed three civilians and wounded more than 10 people. The school, which was the only one in the village, was providing education to 1,200 students.

The Kheir School in the village of Hadhran, Beni Hushaysh, also suffered multiple air strikes causing extensive damage rendering it unusable. Other air strikes on the same village struck two civilian homes, killing two children and injuring their mother, and a nearby mosque, killing one man and injuring another, who were praying at the time of the attack.

Amnesty International is calling for the five attacks highlighted in this briefing to be investigated independently and impartially and for those responsible to be held accountable. It is also asking the coalition to provide full reparation to victims of unlawful attacks and their families. “The lack of investigations by the Saudi Arabia-led coalition, and those who provide them with arms and other support, into a growing list of suspected unlawful attacks suggests a chilling apathy for the devastating consequences this war



Yemen: Call for suspension of arms transfers to coalition and accountability for war crimes

7 October 2015, 15:45 UTC

Damning evidence of war crimes by the Saudi Arabia-led coalition, which is armed by states including the USA, highlights the urgent need for independent, effective investigation of violations in Yemen and for the suspension of transfers of certain arms, said Amnesty International in a new report published today.

‘Bombs fall from the sky day and night’: Civilians under fire in northern Yemen examines 13 deadly airstrikes by the coalition in Sa’da, north-eastern Yemen, which killed some 100 civilians, including 59 children. It also documents the use of internationally banned cluster bombs.

“This report uncovers yet more evidence of unlawful airstrikes carried out by the Saudi Arabia-led coalition, some of which amount to war crimes. It demonstrates in harrowing detail how crucial it is to stop arms being used to commit serious violations of this kind,” said Donatella Rovera, Amnesty International’s Senior Crisis Response Adviser who headed the organization’s fact-finding mission to Yemen.

“The USA and other states exporting weapons to any of the parties to the Yemen conflict have a responsibility to ensure that the arms transfers they authorize are not facilitating serious violations of international humanitarian law.”

Amnesty International is calling for a suspension of transfers to members of the Saudi Arabia-led coalition, that are participating in the military campaign, of weapons and munitions which have been used to commit violations of international humanitarian law, including war crimes in Yemen: in particular, bombs from the MK (MARK) 80 series and other general purpose bombs,

fighter jets, combat helicopters and their associated parts and components.

More civilians have died as a result of coalition airstrikes than from any other cause during the conflict in Yemen. The city of Sa'da has suffered more destruction from coalition airstrikes than any other city in the country.

The USA and other states exporting weapons to any of the parties to the Yemen conflict have a responsibility to ensure that the arms transfers they authorize are not facilitating serious violations of international humanitarian law.

Donatella Rovera, Amnesty International's Senior Crisis Response Adviser.

The report reveals a pattern of appalling disregard for civilian lives displayed by the Saudi Arabia-led military coalition which declared the entire cities of Sa'da and nearby Marran - where tens of thousands of civilians live - military targets in violation of international law. In at least four of the airstrikes investigated by Amnesty International, homes attacked were struck more than once, suggesting that they had been the intended targets despite no evidence they were being used for military purposes.

“The designation of large, heavily populated areas as military targets and the repeated targeting of civilian homes are telling examples revealing the coalition forces’ flagrant failure to take sufficient precautions to avoid civilian loss of life as required by international humanitarian law,” said Donatella Rovera.

Overall at least 59 children were killed in the 13 airstrikes documented by Amnesty International in the Sa'da region between May and July 2015, many of them while they were playing outside their homes, others while sleeping.

In one airstrike on 13 June 2015 at a home in Dammaj valley in al-Safra, coalition forces killed eight children and two women from the same family and injured seven other relatives.



A member of the al-Sailami family stands in rubble of destroyed house in al-Safra, Sa'da"

There were 19 people in the house when it was bombed. All but one were women and children. The children who would usually be outside during the day were in the house because it was lunchtime. They were all killed or injured. One of the dead was a 12-day-old baby," said, Abdullah Ahmed Yahya al-Sailami, whose one-year-old son was among those killed.

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Abdullah Ahmed Yahya al-Sailami

Another relative who helped with the rescue efforts said the body of a one-year-old baby was found in the wreckage with his dummy [pacifier] still in his mouth. Amnesty International researchers found only household items – children's toys, books and cooking utensils – among the rubble. No sign of weapons or military-ware could be found, nor any other evidence to suggest the house was a legitimate military target.

Other attacks struck vehicles carrying civilians fleeing the conflict, foodstuff, humanitarian supplies and animals. The report also details several attacks on shops, markets and other commercial properties. Civilians in Sa'da living under the terror of constant airstrikes are also contending with a major humanitarian crisis, which has seen electricity cut off to the whole of the city, the healthcare system collapsed in remote areas and a severe shortage of doctors.

Amnesty International researchers also found remnants of two types of cluster bombs, BLU-97 submunitions and their carrier (CBU-97) and the more sophisticated CBU-105 Sensor Fuzed Weapon. Cluster bombs, which are banned under international law, scatter scores of bomblets over a wide area. Many of the bomblets fail to explode upon impact, posing an ongoing deadly threat to anyone who comes into contact with them.

Mohammed Hamood al-Wabash, 13, sustained multiple fractures in his left foot after stepping on an unexploded bomblet from a cluster bomb. Amnesty International is urging coalition members to cease the use of cluster munitions immediately, and for all states to stop transferring such weapons.



Mohammed Hamood al-Wabash, who was injured by a cluster bomb, Sa'da
Calls for accountability

Last week, attempts to set up an independent, international investigation into the conflict at the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva collapsed and instead a resolution was adopted supporting a national-led binvestigative committee.

The world's indifference to the suffering of Yemeni civilians in this conflict is shocking

Donatella Rovera

An international investigation or inquiry could be established through a resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly or the UN Security Council - or by the UN Secretary-General or the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights acting on their own initiative.



UN: Shameful pandering to Saudi Arabia over children killed in Yemen conflict

7 June 2016, 13:23 UTC

The credibility of the United Nations is on the line after it shamefully caved in to pressure to remove the Saudi Arabia-led military coalition from the UN's list of states and armed groups that violate children's rights in conflict, Amnesty International said today.

Last night a spokesperson for UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon announced the change to the list published on 2 June as part of an annual report by his Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict. The move was a direct result of diplomatic pressure from Saudi Arabia, angry at the UN's conclusion that coalition operations had led to the death and suffering of children in the armed conflict in Yemen.

“It is unprecedented for the UN to bow to pressure to alter its own published report on children in armed conflict. It is unconscionable that this pressure was brought to bear by one of the very states listed in the report,” said Richard Bennett, Representative and Head of Amnesty International's UN Office.

Blatant pandering such as this undermines all of the UN's work to protect

children caught up in war

Richard Bennett, Representative and Head of Amnesty International's UN Office

“Blatant pandering such as this undermines all of the UN's work to protect children caught up in war.

Secretary-General Ban must not succumb to pressure and undermine the important role of his own Special Representative. By doing so he also damages the credibility of the UN as a whole.

“This is a stark example of why the UN needs to stand up for human rights and its own principles – otherwise it will rapidly become part of the problem rather than the solution.”

According to the UN, the removal is temporary while it reviews the report’s findings jointly with Saudi Arabian authorities. But Saudi Arabia’s diplomats to the UN were quick to hail what they saw as an “irreversible” moral victory.

The UN has never before removed a state it had already listed, but it was widely criticized for backing off from including Israel in last year’s report, following many credible allegations of hundreds of children killed and thousands injured in the 2014 armed conflict in Gaza.

“By taking a step further, the Secretary-General has set a dangerous precedent that will put the lives of children in countries in conflict at even greater risk,” said Richard Bennett.

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Richard Bennett

According to the UN report as published on 2 June, the Saudi Arabia-led coalition was responsible for 60% of child deaths and injuries in the Yemen conflict last year, killing 510 and wounding 667. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon was quoted as saying: “Grave violations against children increased dramatically as a result of the escalating conflict”.

Amnesty International has repeatedly documented violations of international human rights and humanitarian law by coalition members during the conflict, including against children. This includes airstrikes on schools and the use of internationally banned cluster munitions which have killed three children and maimed nine.

Children account for a third – at least 127 – of the 361 civilian deaths that resulted from the 32 apparently unlawful airstrikes documented by Amnesty International since the start of the coalition campaign.



Yemen: Multibillion-dollar arms sales by USA and UK reveal shameful contradiction with aid efforts

23 March 2017, 09:20 UTC

The USA and UK are fuelling serious violations that have caused devastating civilian suffering through multibillion-dollar arms transfers to Saudi Arabia that vastly overshadow their humanitarian efforts, said Amnesty International.

Since the conflict began two years ago in March 2015, the US and UK have together transferred more than US\$5 billion worth of arms to Saudi Arabia which is leading the military coalition in Yemen. This is more than 10 times the estimated US\$450 million that the US State Department and the UK's Department for International Development have spent or budgeted to spend in aid to Yemen over the past two years.

“Two years of conflict have forced three million people to flee their homes, shattered the lives of thousands of civilians and left Yemen facing a humanitarian disaster with more than 18 million in desperate need of assistance. Yet despite the millions of dollars’ worth of international assistance allocated to the country, many states have contributed to the suffering of the Yemeni people by continuing to supply billions of dollars’ worth of arms,” said Lynn Maalouf Deputy Director for Research at Amnesty International’s Beirut regional office.

“Weapons supplied in the past by states such as the UK and USA have been used to commit gross violations and helped to precipitate a humanitarian catastrophe. These governments have continued to authorize such arms transfers at the same time as providing aid to alleviate the very crisis they have helped to create. Yemeni civilians continue to pay the price of these

brazenly hypocritical arms supplies.”

Many states have contributed to the suffering of the Yemeni people by continuing to supply billions of dollars’ worth of arms. The international community must act immediately to impose an arms embargo and establish a credible international investigation into gross violations committed by all parties to the conflict.

“All states, including the USA and the UK, must immediately halt the flow of any arms that could be used to commit war crimes or other serious violations of international humanitarian law in Yemen,” said Lynn Maalouf.

By continuing to supply weapons to Saudi Arabia and its coalition partners for use in Yemen, the UK, which is a state party to the Arms Trade Treaty, and the USA, which is a signatory to it, are undermining the spirit of this treaty.

Humanitarian crisis

An estimated 18.8 million people in Yemen rely on humanitarian assistance and are in desperate need of food, water, fuel and shelter in order to survive. The UN has warned that malnutrition is so severe that the country is on the brink of famine.

At least 4,600 civilians have been killed and more than 8,000 have been injured since the Saudi Arabia-led coalition began carrying out air strikes in Yemen in March 2015 sparking a full-blown armed conflict.

Violations by all parties to the conflict

Over the past two years, Amnesty International has documented a wide array of violations of international law by all parties to the conflict, in some cases amounting to war crimes. The Saudi Arabia-led coalition has carried out relentless airstrikes, killing and injuring civilians and destroying civilian homes, property and infrastructure in indiscriminate attacks and attacks on civilian objects.

On several research trips to Yemen, the organization has documented at least 34 airstrikes by the Saudi Arabia led-coalition that appear to have violated international humanitarian law, killing at least 494 civilians, including 148

children, across six governorates (Sana'a, Sa'da, Hajjah, Hodeidah, Ta'iz and Lahj). Some of these airstrikes used arms manufactured in the USA and the UK.

Members of the coalition have also used internationally banned cluster munitions – made in the USA, UK and Brazil – in Sa'da, Hajjah and Sana'a. Amnesty International documented cases in which children were among civilians killed and maimed after coming into contact with unexploded submunitions left behind after attacks using these inherently indiscriminate weapons.

“The long list of appalling abuses by all parties to the conflict underscores how crucial it is for an independent, international investigation, led by the UN to investigate alleged violations by all parties to the conflict to ensure that those who have committed these reprehensible crimes are brought to justice.”

Background

According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute the USA and UK combined have made arms transfers worth more than US\$5 billion to Saudi Arabia since 2015.

According to the UK Department for International Development and ForeignAssistance.gov, which is managed by the US State Department's Office of US Foreign Assistance Resources, the UK and US governments together have provided or planned to spend an estimated US\$450 million in aid to support Yemen since March 2015.



Yemen: Saudi Arabia-led coalition uses banned Brazilian cluster munitions on residential areas

9 March 2017, 09:12 UTC

Amnesty International has corroborated new evidence the Saudi Arabia-led coalition recently fired Brazilian-manufactured rockets containing banned cluster munitions striking three residential areas and surrounding farmland in the middle of Sa'da city, injuring two civilians and causing material damage.

The attack, which took place at 10.30pm on 15 February 2017, is the third confirmed use of Brazilian-manufactured cluster munitions documented by Amnesty International in the last 16 months. "The Saudi Arabia-led coalition absurdly justifies its use of cluster munitions by claiming it is in line with international law, despite concrete evidence of the human cost to civilians caught up in the conflict," said Lynn Maalouf, Director of Research at the Beirut regional office.

"Cluster munitions are inherently indiscriminate weapons that inflict unimaginable harm on civilian lives. The use of such weapons is prohibited by customary international humanitarian law under all circumstances. In light of mounting evidence, it is more urgent than ever for Brazil to join the Convention on Cluster Munitions and for Saudi Arabia and coalition members stop all use of cluster munitions."

Cluster munitions are inherently indiscriminate weapons that inflict unimaginable harm on civilian lives

Lynn Maalouf, Deputy Director for Research at Amnesty International's Beirut Regional office

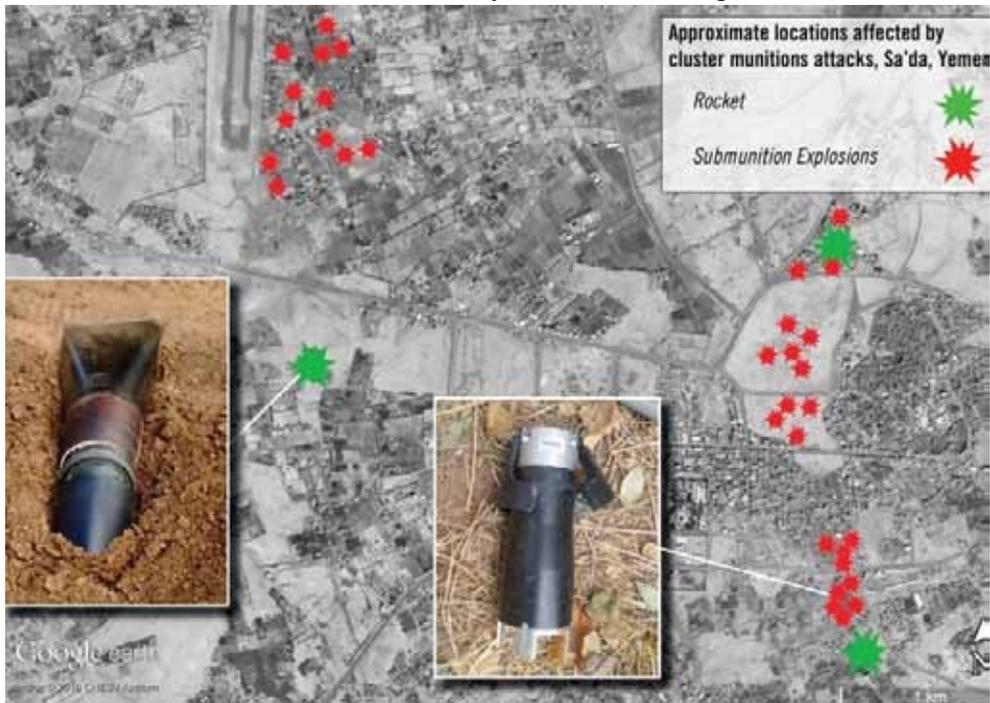
Following the rocket attacks, Amnesty International interviewed eight local residents over the phone, including two witnesses – one of whom was injured in the attack. It also spoke to a local activist and analyzed photographic

and video evidence provided by the national munitions watchdog, the Yemen Executive Mine Action Centre (YEMAC), which inspected the site within 30 minutes of the attack.

YEMAC staff also confirmed the use of the same type of cluster munitions in a separate attack that occurred in late January in the directorate of Abdeen, five kilometres south of Sa'da city.

Neighbourhoods affected

According to witnesses and local residents, rockets struck the residential areas of Gohza, al-Dhubat and al-Rawdha, resulting in submunitions also landing on homes in al-Ma'allah and Ahfad Bilal, as well as on the new and old cemeteries in the middle of the city, and surrounding farms.



Areas affected by Brazilian Cluster munition attack on 15 February 2017 in Sa'da City © DigitalGlobe; CNES/Astrium; Google Earth. Map produced by Amnesty International

Latifa Ahmed Mus'id, 22, described the attack in Ahfad Bilal, which took place while she was asleep at home. She was with her husband Talal al-Shihri, her three-month old son, Hasan, and three-year old son, Hussain.

“The bomb came into the house, into the bedroom from the ceiling. There is a big round hole in the ceiling. At the time, we heard a big explosion and seconds later the bomb exploded in the room and we got hurt. Three exploded right outside the house... The children were unhurt but in shock... My husband sustained shrapnel injuries on his foot. I hurt my left foot and we went to al-Salam hospital that very night.”

«The bomb came into the house, into the bedroom from the ceiling. There is a big round hole in the ceiling...Three exploded right outside the house...»

«The children were unhurt but in shock... My husband sustained shrapnel injuries on his foot. I hurt my left foot»

Latifa Ahmed Mus'id, survivor of a cluster munition attack

The family fled 78km to Sa'da city four months ago after their home in Baqim, 12km south of the Saudi Arabian border was bombed.

“We were forced to leave our home in Baqim when it was bombed. The bomb went right into our living room and destroyed the house. Everyone had to leave the area. The bombardment was constant. We left twothree months after the strike on our house... We made our way to Sa'da on foot.

We walked for 20km and I was six months pregnant at the time and then a car gave us a lift to Sa'da city.”

A local resident of al-Ma'allah, one of the affected areas in the recent attack, described to Amnesty International hearing a loud explosion.

“I heard a really loud sound. And directly after I heard very dense sounds, as if something was spreading. It was so rapid and it lasted 2030- seconds.”

Head of the YEMAC 12th team Yahya Rizk told Amnesty International about his team's visit to the neighbourhoods of al-Rawdha and Ahfad Bilal.

“We found one carrier and one unexploded submunition in al-Rawdha. Al-Rawdha is a densely populated area where bombs [submunitions] penetrated the roofs of two houses. One bomb went through the roof and injured a man and his wife in Ahfad Bilal - it went into their bedroom at [approximately] 11pm. They were taken to the hospital the same night.

Most of the damage was to the property, houses and cars. We noted 12 impact holes in al-Rawdha, by the fruit farms. And 1213- impact sites in Ahfad

Bilal. We found one unexploded bomb [submunition] in al- Rawdha which came down from a tree and landed in the soil, which we photographed.”

Members of the YEMAC team also confirmed carrying out a sweep of residential areas in densely populated Gohza where they noted impact holes and damage to houses. Yahya Rizk said, “The bombs [submunitions] landed in people’s porches and between houses. They all exploded and no people injured. But windows were all broken and up to 30 cars damaged.»

Based on the description of the YEMAC team, and after examining photographs and videos of the aftermath of the attack, including photos of the carriers and one unexploded submunition, Amnesty International was able to identify the remnants used in the attack as being an ASTROS II surface-to-surface rocket.

The ASTROS II is a truck-loaded, multiple launch rocket system (MLRS) manufactured by Brazilian company Avibrás. ASTROS II is capable of firing multiple rockets in rapid succession, with each rocket containing up to 65 submunitions, with a range of up to 80km, depending on the rocket type.

The company’s marketing presentations describe it as being “an important defence system with great deterrent power.

Mounting evidence

Amnesty International documented the first known use of these types of cluster munitions in Yemen on 27 October 2015 on Ahma north of Sa’da city, which wounded at least four people, including a four-year old girl.

In May 2016, Amnesty International found further evidence of the same type of cluster munitions in villages 30km south of the Saudi Arabian border in Hajjah. As recently as December 2016, Human Rights Watch also documented the use of Brazilian manufactured cluster munitions on Sa’da city.

To date, Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have documented the use of seven types of airdelivered and ground-launched cluster munitions made in the USA, the United Kingdom, and Brazil. The coalition has admitted using UK and US-made cluster munitions in attacks in Yemen.

“How many more civilians need to be killed, injured, or see their property destroyed through use of these internationally banned weapons, before the international community condemns the use of cluster munitions by the Saudi

Arabia-led coalition and pressures coalition members to immediately become parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions?” said Lynn Maalouf.

Cluster munitions contain between dozens and hundreds of submunitions, which are released in mid-air, and scatter indiscriminately over a large area measuring hundreds of square metres. They can be dropped or fired from a plane or, as in this instance, launched from surface-to-surface rockets.

Cluster submunitions also have a high “dud” rate – meaning a high percentage of them fail to explode on impact, becoming de-facto land mines that pose a threat to civilians for years after deployment. The use, production, sale and transfer of cluster munitions is prohibited under the 2008 Convention on Cluster Munitions, which has almost 100 states parties. On 19 December 2016, the Saudi-run Saudi Press Agency reported that the Saudi Arabian government would stop using a UK-made cluster munition, the BL-755 but contended that, “international law does not ban the use of cluster munitions” and while some states are party to the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM), “neither the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia nor its coalition partners are state parties” to the CCM. It further claimed that UK-made cluster munitions used by the coalition had been used against “legitimate military targets” and that the cluster munitions were “not deployed in civilian population centres” and that the coalition “fully observed the international humanitarian law principles of distinction and proportionality.”

While Amnesty International is aware of the presence of a military objective, Kahlan Military base, 3km north-east of the city of Sa’da, the presence of a military objective in itself would not have justified the use of internationally banned cluster munitions – particularly not its use on populated civilian neighbourhoods. And even though Brazil, Yemen, Saudi Arabia and members of the Saudi Arabia-led coalition participating in the conflict in Yemen are not parties to the Convention, under the rules of customary international humanitarian law they must not use inherently indiscriminate weapons, which invariably pose a threat to civilians. The customary rule prohibiting the use of inherently indiscriminate weapons applies to their use under all circumstances, including when the intention is to target a military objective.

According to Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor, Avibrás has sold this type of cluster munition to Saudi Arabia in the past, and Human Rights Watch documented their use by Saudi Arabian forces in Khafji in 1991.



Yemen: Brazilian cluster munitions suspected in Saudi Arabia-led coalition attack

30 October 2015, 17:00 UTC

Saudi Arabia-led coalition forces appear to have used a Brazilian variant of internationally banned cluster munitions on a residential neighbourhood in Ahma in Sa'da, northern Yemen, this week, wounding at least four people and leaving dangerous unexploded submunitions strewn around the surrounding farmland, Amnesty International said today.

The organization interviewed a number of local residents including two victims, the medical personnel treating them, an eyewitness and a local activist who visited the site shortly after the attack. Unexploded "duds" pictured at the attack site bear similarities to Brazilian-manufactured cluster bombs Saudi Arabia is known to have used in the past.

"Because cluster munitions are inherently indiscriminate weapons, their use is prohibited by customary international humanitarian law. In fact, nearly 100 states have totally banned their production, stockpiling, transfer and use, in recognition of the unique and lasting harm they cause," said Philip Luther, Middle East and North Africa Programme Director at Amnesty International.

In addition to killing and injuring civilians when they are initially used many submunitions fail to explode upon impact and continue to pose a risk to the lives of anyone who comes into contact with them for years. The Saudi Arabia-led coalition must immediately cease their use and all sides should publicly commit never to deploy cluster munitions and agree to join the global Convention on Cluster Munitions.

Philip Luther, Middle East and North Africa Director at Amnesty International

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to pose a risk to the lives of anyone who comes into contact with them for years. The Saudi Arabia-led coalition must immediately cease their use and all sides should publicly commit never to deploy cluster munitions and agree to join the global Convention on Cluster Munitions.”

Eyewitness accounts

The cluster munition attack was carried out at around noon on 27 October 2015 in a residential area of Ahma, approximately 10km north-west of al-Talh in Sahar directorate, near Sa'da city. Ahma is approximately 40km south of the border with Saudi Arabia.

A local activist who visited the site several hours after the attack found three unexploded submunitions around 20m apart, one in the field of a local farm, another near a greenhouse and the third next to a mosque. The nearest military objective known to Amnesty International is a market in al-Talh, approximately 10km to the south-east, which is known to sell weapons and has been targeted by airstrikes on at least five different occasions since the start of the Saudi Arabia-led bombardment campaign in March.

Eyewitnesses described how, despite the complete absence of military aircraft, a series of rockets screamed across the sky and exploded in mid-air, followed by dozens of explosions on the ground. These accounts and the remnants found on the ground are consistent with the use of cluster munitions fired via surface-to-surface rockets, using a multiple launch rocket system (MLRS).

Salah al-Zar'a, 35, a local farmer, was on the main road 50m away when the strike occurred: “I was on my motorcycle going in the direction of Dhahyan with another friend, when I saw... four rockets coming down... Each went in a different direction with two minutes between each rocket. There were four explosions in the sky first and then 50 explosions when they hit the ground. They landed on a group of 30 houses and shops.”

Saleh al-Mu'awadh, 48, a farmer who has 10 children, spoke to Amnesty International over the phone from his hospital bed in al-Jamhuri hospital in Sa'da city: “I was passing by on my motorbike on the main road next to the attack site, when all I felt was pieces of shrapnel. The impact of the strike affected farms a couple of kilometres away from the site.”

Shrapnel wounds

According to medical personnel treating the patients, one of the injured, 25-year-old Abdelaziz Abd Rabbu is in a critical condition with shrapnel injuries to the abdomen and chest.

Abdelbari Hussein, 22, another civilian injured in the attack, told Amnesty International: “I was sitting in my shop when the attack happened. I did not hear a plane, all I heard was the explosions.” He sustained shrapnel injuries to the abdomen.



Four year old Hasna Mohamed Hussein Jumaan's left leg was injured a couple of day after the attack when she came into contact with an unexploded submunition. Pictured with her her father, Mohamed Hussein Jumaan.

Even though the attack may have targeted Huthi and other armed groups among the civilian population, the use of inherently indiscriminate weapons like cluster munitions is absolutely prohibited by international humanitarian law. Any use of cluster weapons violates this rule.

Banned cluster bombs

Cluster bombs and munitions contain between dozens and hundreds of submunitions, which are released in mid-air, and scatter indiscriminately over a large area measuring hundreds of square metres. They can be dropped or fired from a plane or, as in this instance, launched from surface-to-surface rockets.

Cluster submunitions also have a high “dud” rate – meaning a high percentage of them fail to explode on impact, becoming de-facto land mines that pose a threat to civilians for years after deployment. The use, production, sale and transfer of cluster munitions is prohibited under the 2008 Convention on Cluster Munitions, which has almost 100 states parties.



Unexploded submunitions pictured at the attack site bear similarities to Brazilian-manufactured cluster bombs Saudi Arabia is known to have used in the past. The attack was on a residential neighbourhood in Ahma, Sa'da, Northern Yemen on 27 October 2015

Even though Brazil, Yemen, Saudi Arabia and the other members of the Saudi Arabia-led coalition participating in the conflict in Yemen are not parties to the Convention, under the rules of customary international humanitarian law they must not use inherently indiscriminate weapons, which invariably pose a threat to civilians.

Brazilian ASTROS II

Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and the Cluster Munition Coalition have documented the Saudi Arabia-led coalition's use of four types of cluster munition in the Yemen conflict to date, including three US manufactured variants.

But this marks the first suspected use of Brazilian-made cluster munitions in the conflict.

Several Brazilian companies produce cluster munitions. While Amnesty International was unable to independently verify with absolute certainty the make and model of the submunitions dropped on Ahma, they bear similarities to one manufactured by a Brazilian company called Avibrás Indústria Aeroespacial SA.

The ASTROS II is a truck-loaded, multiple launch rocket system (MLRS) manufactured by Avibrás. ASTROS II can fire multiple rockets in rapid succession and three of its rockets can be fitted with up to 65 submunitions, with a range of up to 80km, depending on the rocket type. The company's website describes it as "capable of launching long-range rockets, designed as a strategic weapon system with great deterrent power."

According to Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor, Avibrás has sold this type of cluster munition to Saudi Arabia in the past, and Human Rights Watch documented their use by Saudi Arabian forces in Khafji in 1991, "leaving behind significant numbers of unexploded submunitions."

Brazil must immediately come clean about the extent of its international transfers of banned cluster munitions, which go back decades. Brazil and other states that continue to allow the production and transfer of these weapons cannot claim ignorance of the toll they are taking on civilians in Yemen and elsewhere. Brazil must stop production immediately, destroy its stockpiles and accede to the Convention on Cluster Munitions without delay.

Átila Roque, Executive Director of Amnesty International Brazil

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states that continue to allow the production and transfer of these weapons cannot claim ignorance of the toll they are taking on civilians in Yemen and elsewhere. Brazil must stop production immediately, destroy its stockpiles and accede to the Convention on Cluster Munitions without delay,” said Átila Roque, Executive Director of Amnesty International Brazil.

Amnesty International spoke to a senior official at Avibrás today who had seen the images from Yemen. He said the shape “resembles” Avibrás designs and did not rule out that it was theirs, but he said the probability of this was low because of the calibre size. However, he admitted that the company manufactured similar calibres in the early 1990s, and said he would investigate further.



Yemen: Coalition used UK missile in unlawful airstrike

25 November 2015, 15:33 UTC

The Saudi Arabia-led coalition used a British-made missile to destroy a Yemeni ceramics factory, a civilian object, on 23 September, 2015, Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch said today, based on field research and interviews with eyewitnesses at the scene.

The attack on the factory in the Sana'a governorate, which appeared to be producing only civilian goods, killed one person, and was in apparent violation of international humanitarian law (IHL), the laws of war. This strike, using a British missile supplied in the 1990s, undermines the claim of Ministers that the Saudi Arabia-led coalition's use of UK military equipment is consistent with IHL, and that the UK monitors such compliance "very carefully". The organizations are unaware of any credible coalition investigation into this or other apparently unlawful airstrikes for possible IHL violations.

"The UK Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond claims he favours 'proper investigations' into possible breaches of the laws of war in Yemen. This strike provides a perfect test case – the UK should urgently press the Saudi Arabia-led coalition to open a credible investigation into this strike, as well as others that appear to have violated the laws of war," said

Lama Fakih, Senior Crisis Advisor at Amnesty International.

The UK Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond claims he favours 'proper investigations' into possible breaches of the laws of war in Yemen. This strike provides a perfect test case – the UK should urgently press the Saudi Arabia-led coalition to open a credible investigation into this

strike, as well as others that appear to have violated the laws of war.

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“The latest revelations show UK policy to be both misleading and seriously ineffective. Despite multiple, well-documented cases of violations of the laws of war by the Gulf coalition in Yemen, UK Ministers have consistently refused to acknowledge this. The UK should suspend further sales of aerial munitions to coalition members pending a thorough investigation into this case, and other apparently unlawful air strikes,” said David Mepham, UK Director at Human Rights Watch.

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David Mepham, UK Director at Human Rights Watch

Analysis of weapon remnants

Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have examined the weapon remnants at the 23 September strike site and identified the munition used as a PGM-500 ‘Hakim’ air-launched missile, supplied in the mid- 1990s and manufactured by the UK firm Marconi Dynamics. The analysis compared fragments photographed at the strike site with unexploded remnants of the same missile type from a separate strike and found both were consistent with the deployment of an air-launched PGM-500 ‘Hakim’. The other recorded strike using this type of missile hit an open field on 4 or 5 November in Sahar in Sa’da governorate in northern Yemen and did not result in any known casualties.

Marconi markings are clearly visible on a component part recovered from the Sana’a strike site. Stocks of this missile are in service with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Air Force, which has the capability to fire them from both Mirage 2000s and F-16F aircraft.



"This was depressingly predictable. Amnesty has repeatedly warned that UK-made weapons were likely to end up causing civilian casualties in Yemen, but those warnings have been recklessly ignored" - Kate Allen

Witness accounts of 23 September strike

Amnesty International staff visited the Sana'a strike site on 6 November and they, as well as Human Rights Watch, later interviewed one of the factory owners and other witnesses to the strike.

The airstrike took place between 11 and 11:30 a.m. on 23 September in the village of Matna in Beni Matar district, west of Sana'a. Witnesses and one of the factory owners said that four missiles hit the Radfan Ceramics Factory in quick succession.

Ibrahim Ghaleb Mohammad al-Sawary, the son of one of the factory directors, who was in the vicinity during the attack, told Human Rights Watch: "I was getting ready to pray, leaning back on the wall of the factory when suddenly I heard whizzing followed by a very loud explosion. I started running away but less than two minutes later we heard the second explosion. I saw people running away from their homes – kids, older people and young people – all of them scared like us and running away without knowing where."

He later returned to the factory, which had smoke rising from it and was in ruins, particularly the section with heavy machines used to heat and press the ceramics, which was entirely destroyed.

One man in the vicinity, Yahya Abd al-Karim al-Sawary, 28, was killed by shrapnel as he was fleeing the area. A local resident who asked to remain anonymous told Human Rights Watch that the victim had been working as a guard at a makeshift detention facility run by Ansarullah, the political wing of the Huthis, a Zaidi Shi'a armed group in northern Yemen. The site had originally been a government building known as the Productive Families Centre, approximately 140 metres from the factory compound. The airstrikes did not hit the detention facility.

Ali Ahmad al-Faqih, 55, who was injured in the attack, said that he had been on a motorbike trying to check on his family who live next to the factory during a brief lull between airstrikes – not realizing the attack had not finished: “I heard a whizz and knew it was a rocket coming,” he said. “I lay down and prayed out loud. I saw all my body covered in blood.” Al-Faqih was later taken to a private hospital, where he underwent surgery to remove shrapnel from his chest.

Another local resident told Human Rights Watch that a second civilian, Elham Hussein Hussein Taher, a 14-year-old girl who lived near the factory, was also injured in the attack. Ghalib Muhammad al-Sawary, one of the factory owners, told Amnesty International that the factory had never been used for any military purpose. Other witnesses told Human Rights Watch that no fighters or military vehicles were in or near the factory at the time of the attack.



One of the factory owners told Amnesty International that the factory had never been used for any military purpose. © Amnesty International

On-site investigation

During its on-site investigation Amnesty International did not observe any evidence that would indicate that the factory had been used for a military purpose. The organization observed that the area directly surrounding the factory compound appeared to be residential and that it was next to the 26 September Hospital.

The strikes on the factory caused minor damage to the hospital. Amnesty International visited the hospital on 6 November and observed the damage and spoke with staff who had been there during the strike.

The owners of the ceramics factory, which opened in 1994, said that it was the only such facility in the country, and employed around 330 workers, primarily from the village of Matna. However, its owners said they were forced to stop operations in April this year due to security fears for its staff and difficulties obtaining fuel to operate machinery.

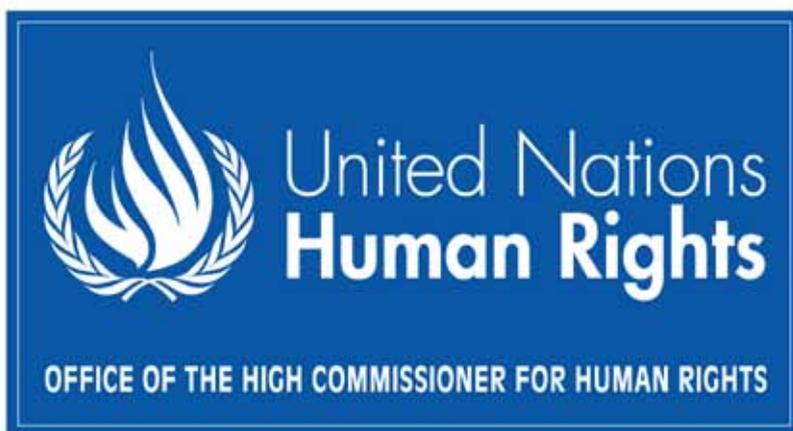
IHL prohibits deliberate attacks on civilians not taking a direct part in hostilities and on civilian objects, and attacks that do not distinguish between civilians or civilian objects and combatants or military objectives, or that cause disproportionate harm to civilians or civilian objects in relation to the direct military advantage that may be anticipated. Such attacks are serious violations of IHL and if committed with criminal intent can constitute war crimes.

All countries have legal responsibilities under international law to control the transfer of weapons and to restrict or prohibit their transfer in certain circumstances. The UK is a party to the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), which came into force in late 2014, and played a leading role in its establishment. Under article 6 of the treaty, a country is prohibited from authorizing an arms transfer if it has knowledge at the time of authorization that the arms would be used in the commission of “attacks directed against civilian objects or civilians protected as such, or other war crimes as defined by international agreements to which it is a Party.” Further, article 7 of the ATT requires that states assess the potential that the arms being exported could be used to commit a serious violation of international human rights or humanitarian law; if there is an overriding risk of this, their export shall not be authorized.

As it is now evident that there is such a risk, the UK and all other countries that supply arms to the members of the Saudi Arabia-led coalition should suspend all transfers of weapons that pose a substantial risk of being used in unlawful airstrikes in Yemen, particularly air-to-ground munitions, Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch said.

An independent international inquiry should be established to investigate alleged violations by all parties to the conflict in Yemen, establish the facts, and identify those responsible for violations with a view to ensuring that they are held accountable.

▶ *Convictions by:*



UNITED NATIONS





Stop the Yemen conflict now to save a generation of famine and reduce the «serious» mortality rates for children - experts from the United Nations

GENEVA (Reuters) - The fighting in Yemen must be stopped now and the blockade of the country's ports must be lifted to allow people facing famine access to food and life-saving medical supplies, two UN experts said. The two experts spoke on the occasion of the opening of a high-level event aimed at raising funds for the existing humanitarian crisis.

«If no immediate initiative is taken, a whole generation may be affected by widespread famine,» said Ms. Hilal Alfar, Special Rapporteur on the right to food. «The deliberate starvation of civilians in international and internal armed conflict may constitute a war crime and may also amount to a crime against humanity in the event of deliberate deprivation of food,» adding that «all parties to the conflict are responsible for such criminal acts. The responsibility to protect civilians, especially women and children, by providing humanitarian assistance to prevent a humanitarian tragedy.

The warning issued by Ms. Al-Far supported Mr. Danyos Boras, Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. «I regret, in particular, that a large number of health care facilities have been destroyed or badly damaged by air strikes and not working as a full capacity until now only 37 percent.» «I am very concerned about access to health care and the spread of infectious diseases in Yemen, there are at least 10 people in need of medical assistance,» he said.

Mr Boras also expressed concern over the outbreak of cholera in the country, with more than 15,000 suspected cases of the disease recorded. The lack of improved access to potable water (only 55 per cent of the population) and inadequate sanitation in urban areas have been exacerbated. The piles of rubbish contribute to the spread of the disease, with approximately 2.5 million

children at high risk. «Child mortality has also increased to serious levels due to lack of access to health care along with shortages of vaccines and acute malnutrition, while children are at risk of measles and severe infections in the respiratory tract,» the expert said.

The two experts reiterated what had been called for by the Special Rapporteur on human rights and international sanctions, Idriss Jazairi, regarding the need to lift the siege on Yemen's ports. The Republic of Yemen relies on importing more than 90 percent of its basic foodstuffs. The maritime blockade, air strikes and hostilities in the vicinity of the ports, combined with the financial complications created by the conflict, contributed to a sharp reduction in these imports. It was also reported that the air raids targeted local markets and trucks for the delivery of food.

Also, the blockade and delays in licensing goods imports caused severe shortages of medicines. There is also a shortage of fuel, which causes high problems for generators-dependent hospitals and also affects the transfer of patients, the distribution of food and medical supplies.

«Given that 60 percent of households rely on agriculture, the impact of the conflict is catastrophic and long-term likely because the blockade prevents them from getting the necessary equipment,» she said. «The blockade of coastal areas also deprives communities of fishing livelihoods, which is the only way to support themselves.»

Describing Yemen as the «greatest humanitarian crisis in the world,» the fundraising event in Geneva on April 25 aims to mobilize \$ 2.1 billion to deliver emergency food, medicine and other life-saving assistance to the Yemeni people. Nearly 17 million people are at risk of starvation. The crisis is particularly acute for more than three million internally displaced persons forced by various armed forces to flee their homes.

Ms. Halal Al Far (Turkey) was appointed Special Rapporteur on the right to food by the Human Rights Council in 2014. She is a professor of research and a distinguished international member of the University of California, Center for Food Law and Policy of the Faculty of Law. She holds a law degree and a doctorate from the Ankara Law University and a doctorate in law sciences from the Okla College of Law. She began her educational career at the Faculty of Law at the University of Ankara.

Mr. Danyos Boras (Lithuania), Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, is a physician with significant experience in mental health, child health and public health policies. He is Professor and Chair of the Pediatric Psychiatry and Pediatrics Center at Vilnius University and teaches at the Faculty of Medicine, the Institute of International Relations and Political Science, and the Faculty of Philosophy at Vilnius University, Lithuania.

Special rapporteurs and independent experts form part of the so-called special procedures of the Human Rights Council. The Special Procedures, the largest independent expert body of the United Nations human rights system, is the general designation of the Council's independent mechanisms for investigation, monitoring and monitoring, which deal with either specific country situations or thematic issues around the world. Special procedures experts work on a voluntary basis; they are not United Nations staff members and do not receive a salary for their work. They are independent of any government or organization and act in their individual capacity.



World community must solve Yemen water crisis to halt spiralling cholera outbreak – UN experts

GENEVA (16 June 2017) – Yemen and the international community must act urgently to provide safe drinking water to halt a spiralling cholera outbreak, UN human rights experts have warned.

More than 135,000 people are already feared to have contracted the water-borne disease, as the country grapples with the ongoing conflict, which has led to the deterioration of water and sanitation infrastructure in Yemen. WHO figures show that more than 950 people have already died, and officials fear an extremely high death toll as the outbreak continues to spread.

“We welcome the efforts being made to mitigate the outbreak, but it is critically important to address the underlying problem of unsafe water supplies, which has a negative impact on the enjoyment of the right to health by the population, in particular children and those in most vulnerable situations,” said Léo Heller, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on water and sanitation, and Dainius Pūras, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on health.

“We urge all stakeholders to strengthen the initiatives to build and repair infrastructures and to improve access to safe drinking water and sanitation,” the experts said.

The Special Rapporteur on water and sanitation warned that the lack of good quality, reliable drinking water forces people to get supplies from alternative, unsafe sources. “They are having to buy water from private sellers who use uncontrolled and unreliable sources, such as unprotected wells, exposing them to water-borne diseases such as cholera and other diarrheal diseases,” he said.

The experts added: “Children are at particular risk of contracting water-borne diseases from these unsafe supplies, although the whole population is

vulnerable. The spread of cholera has been exacerbated by the breakdown of water and sanitation systems.”

The impact is being felt across the country, with reported cases in Taiz, Aden, Lahj, Al-Hudaydah, Hajjah, Sana’a, Al-Baida and Ibb governorates.

Earlier this year, the Special Rapporteurs contacted the Government of Yemen to seek clarification about the situation. In April, UN experts urged an end to the conflict and blockade, warning that the deliberate starvation of civilians may constitute war crimes or crimes against humanity.



Yemen: UN report urges probe into rights violations amid ‘entirely man-made catastrophe’

5 September 2017



The United Nations human rights chief has called for an independent, international investigation into the allegations of serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law in Yemen, in a new report published today.

“An international investigation would go a long way in putting on notice the parties to the conflict that the international community is watching and determined to hold to account perpetrators of violations and abuses,” said UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra’ad Al Hussein in a news release on the report.

“I appeal to all the parties to the conflict, those supporting them and those with influence over them to have mercy on the people of Yemen, and to take immediate measures to ensure humanitarian relief for civilians and justice for the victims of violations,” he added.

According to the report, which records violations and abuses of human rights and international humanitarian law since September 2014, such acts continue unabated in Yemen, with civilians suffering deeply the consequences of an “entirely man-made catastrophe.”

Between March 2015, when the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) began reporting on civilian casualties, and 30 August, at least 5,144 civilians have been documented as killed and more than 8,749 injured.

Children accounted for 1,184 of those who were killed and 1,592 of those injured. Coalition airstrikes continued to be the leading cause of child casualties as well as overall civilian casualties. Some 3,233 of the civilians killed were reportedly killed by Coalition forces.

The report states that the past year witnessed airstrikes against funeral gatherings and small civilian boats, in addition to markets, hospitals, schools, residential areas, and other public and private infrastructure.

The report stresses that “the minimal efforts towards accountability in the past year are wholly insufficient to respond to the gravity of violations and abuses continuing every day in Yemen,” adding that the National Commission established to investigate human rights violations in Yemen is not perceived to be impartial.

The report also found that the governorates most affected by the conflict were Aden, Al-Hudaydah, Sana’a and Taizz.

The humanitarian crisis – with nearly 18.8 million people in need of humanitarian aid and 7.3 million on the brink of famine – is a direct result of the behaviour of parties to the conflict, including indiscriminate attacks, attacks against civilians and protected objects, sieges, blockades and restrictions on movement, the report states.

“In many cases, information obtained...suggested that civilians may have been directly targeted, or that operations were conducted heedless of their impact on civilians without regard to the principles of distinction, proportionality and precautions in attack. In some cases, information suggested that no actions were taken to mitigate the impact of operations on civilians,” the report states.



UN expert: Lift blockade of Yemen to stop «catastrophe» in which millions of people are facing famine

GENEVA (12 April 2017) - The embargo imposed on war-ravaged Yemen must be lifted immediately to allow relief supplies to be brought in to tackle the humanitarian disaster in which millions of people are facing famine, a UN expert said. The United Nations Special Rapporteur on human rights and international sanctions, Driss El-Jazairi, pointed out that the plight of the people in the country has become increasingly desperate.

Figures from the United Nations show that more than 21 million people - about 82 percent of the population - need humanitarian assistance, including seven million people facing famine. Thousands of civilians have also been killed in air strikes that continue as the conflict deepened more than two years ago following military intervention by a Saudi-led coalition.

«The unjustified restrictions on the flow of goods and commercial and humanitarian goods to Yemen and the disruption of their distribution throughout the country are paralyzing a nation that has long been a victim of war,» said Mr. Jazairi, stressing that the blockade imposed on Yemen by air and sea by coalition forces since March 2015 was one of the main causes of the humanitarian catastrophe. The blockade has been blocked and the import and export of supplies of food, fuel and medicine, as well as humanitarian assistance, have been hampered.

The existing blockade includes a number of regulatory restrictions, mostly arbitrary, imposed by Coalition forces - including delaying and / or unreasonably preventing the entry of ships to Yemeni ports. Mr. Al-Jazairi said that such acts amounted to the level of unlawful unilateral coercive measures under international law. The United Nations special rapporteur referred to the tragic situation in the port of Hodeidah, which is the main artery for

imports into Yemen, a country that relies 80-90 percent on importing its food, medicine and fuel needs.

Following its air strikes in August 2015, the port currently operates at less than its capacity. He specifically deplored the inability to develop new cranes that could replace those destroyed by air strikes and help restore the port of Hodeidah to its full absorptive capacity. Prolonged clearance procedures hamper activities at port facilities and cause very slow import of humanitarian needs, resulting in Damage to vital supplies.

«Despite the guarantees provided by the coalition forces, the situation on the ground is still hopeless,» he said. «The embargo entails serious violations of the most fundamental standards of human rights law, as well as the law of armed conflict, which can not be ignored.» He expressed «deep concern about this man-made and conflict-induced famine». «I appeal to all warring parties to preserve the basic rights to life, food and decent living for innocent civilians and to pursue the settlement of disputes through negotiations, while the access to the port of Hodeidah will be immediately restored, .

His appeal was supported by the Special Rapporteur on the right to food , Ms. Hilal Alfar, and the independent expert on the establishment of a democratic and equitable international order , Mr. Alfred de Zayas.

The Human Rights Council appointed Mr. Idriss Jazairi as the first Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights. Assumed his duties in May 2015. Mr. Al-Jazairi has a long history of international relations and human rights with the Algerian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the United Nations Human Rights System and international non-governmental organizations. He holds an MSc in Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Oxford University) and a Master of Public Administration (Harvard University). He also graduated from the National School of Management (France). He has written and published numerous articles in the international press on topics related to development, human rights and current issues.

Special rapporteurs and independent experts form part of the so-called special procedures of the Human Rights Council. The Special Procedures, the largest independent expert body of the United Nations human rights system, is the general designation of the Council's independent mechanisms

for investigation, monitoring and monitoring, which deal with either specific country situations or thematic issues around the world. Special procedures experts work on a voluntary basis; they are not United Nations staff members and do not receive a salary for their work. They are independent of any government or organization and act in their individual capacity.



Press briefing notes on Yemen

Spokesperson for the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights: Rupert Colville

Location: Geneva

Date: 21 July 2017

Yemen

Our office in Yemen has gathered more information about a deadly airstrike that took place in a small village in Taizz Governorate in Yemen on Tuesday, 18 July. The Arab Coalition Forces airstrike took place in Al Asheerah village, which is near the town of Mawza, and is currently controlled by the Houthis, at around 8:30 a.m. on Tuesday. According to witnesses who fled the area and were interviewed by one of our monitors, the airstrike destroyed a makeshift house made of straw, killing all three families who were inside it at the time. At least 18 civilians in all, including ten children and two women, are believed to have died in the incident.

The three families had been recorded by our office in Yemen as displaced, along with three others, from their homes in a different village nearby three months ago as a result of other airstrikes, and had set up four rough shelters in an open area in Al Asheerah. The village is located approximately eight kilometres away from Khalid Bin Al Walid Military Camp, where clashes between pro-Hadi forces, backed by the Coalition Forces, and the Houthis are taking place, and, according to available information, there do not appear to have been any military objectives anywhere in the immediate vicinity of the destroyed house.

Attacks targeting civilians or civilian objects or indiscriminate or disproportionate attacks are prohibited under international humanitarian law, and we also remind all parties to the conflict, including the Coalition, of their duty to ensure full respect for international humanitarian law and to respect their obligations under international human rights law. We call on the relevant authorities to carry out a comprehensive and impartial investigation into this incident.

Since March 2015, OHCHR has documented 13,609 civilian casualties, including 5,021 killed and 8,588 injured. These numbers are based on the casualties individually verified by the UN human rights office in Yemen. The overall number is probably much higher, with some estimates suggesting a total of more than 11,000 civilians have been killed since the beginning of the conflict.



As the conflict entered its second year in Yemen, the fighting killed more than 100 civilians in a month, including a number of fishermen and refugees

GENEVA (24 March 2017) - The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Raad al-Hussein said today that two years later, with more than 13,000 civilian casualties, the conflict is still raging in Yemen, with hostilities increasing over the past three months. This has exacerbated one of the most severe human-made disasters, with children starving and shelling of refugees and fishermen.

Sunday, March 26, marks the anniversary of the escalation of the current conflict in Yemen. Since 26 March 2015, at least 4,773 civilians have been killed and 2,872 injured as a result of the violence - the total number of civilian casualties is 13,045. These figures reflect only the figures for deaths and injuries that the United Nations Human Rights Office has documented. He asserts that they are civilians. It is established that the actual toll of victims is much higher. Another 21 million Yemenis - 82 per cent of the population - are in urgent need of humanitarian assistance.

Over the past month alone, 106 civilians have been killed, most often by air strikes and bombardments by coalition warships. The worst incident occurred near Hodeidah on 16 March, when 32 Somali refugees and one Yemeni civilian were killed, while another 10 Somali refugees were reportedly killed. Twenty-nine Somali refugees were seriously wounded, including six children. According to survivors' testimony, the ship carrying refugees across the Red Sea was hit by a missile fired by a coalition warship without warning, followed by air fire from an Apache helicopter.

The United Nations Human Rights Office also documented a number of incidents in which fishing boats were shelled, as well as air raids targeting

four truckloads of foodstuffs and an air raid on one of the markets from elsewhere. On 10 March, at least 18 civilians, including three children, were killed in an air strike targeting a khat market in Khoukhah district of Hodeidah province. On 15 March, an Apache helicopter was reportedly bombed by a fishing boat off the coast of Hodeidah, killing two fishermen and wounding five others, reportedly without warning. Another boat in the same area was hit by a missile that was reportedly fired from a coalition warship, killing five fishermen. On the same day, five fishermen were killed in a rocket attack near the coast of the Durahmi district of Hodeidah province. On 16 March, another 10 fishermen were reported missing. Their boat was found burnt north of Hodeidah. The search continues for fishermen.

«This is the scene of the conflict in Yemen two years after it began,» Zeid said. «It is absolutely appalling, with little attention to the lives of civilians and infrastructure.» «The fighting in Hodeidah has left thousands of people in detention - as was the case in Mukhaba last February - and has revealed the urgent need to distribute humanitarian aid.» After two years of brutal violence and bloodshed, thousands of dead and millions of people I urge all parties to the conflict and influential people to work urgently towards a complete ceasefire to end this catastrophic conflict and to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid rather than obstructing it.

The United Nations Human Rights Office continues to provide support to the Yemeni National Commission, at the mandate of the United Nations Human Rights Council. But High Commissioner Zeid stressed the need to establish an independent international investigation body to look into hundreds of reports of serious abuses in Yemen. «The international community can not allow those responsible for the killing of thousands of civilians to continue to fully impunity,» he said.



Yemen: UN concern over air raids in Sa'ada and UN demands to ensure fuel supplies for operations in the country



The effects of destruction in Saada Governorate in Yemen. Photo: OCHA / Philippe Kropf

UNAMID Humanitarian Coordinator Jamie McGoldrick expressed his deep concern about reports of air strikes on civilians in Sa'ada governorate, including attacks on a house and a private car in two separate areas, killing at least 12 people. Including women and children.

Mr. McGoldrick said these new incidents, which are being investigated by the United Nations Office for Human Rights, are an example of the brutality of the conflict, adding that all parties to the conflict remain unaffected by the protection of civilians and the principle of distinction between civilians and

combatants in hostilities, «Mr. McGoldrick once again urged all parties to the conflict and influential parties to support them to fulfill their responsibilities under international humanitarian law and to protect the safety of civilians,» said Stefane de Garrick, quoting McGoldrick . With regard to the United Nations ability to obtain fuel for its humanitarian operations in the country, de Garrick said that some of the comments made by the UNDP country director, Oak Lutsma, which took place last week in this regard, may have been misunderstood or excluded from context. «Since then, the ongoing dialogue between our colleagues on the ground and the authorities concerned has cleared some misunderstandings and resulted in assurances that the fuel will be transported this week from Aden to Sana'a.» We ask the authorities to develop a mechanism to help ensure that aviation fuel is regularly delivered to UN operations He said. «All United Nations agencies in Yemen will continue to work with all».



Yemen: UN denounces suspected air strikes on civilians in Saada governorate



The UN humanitarian coordinator in Yemen, Jamie McGoldrick, has expressed deep concern at reports by humanitarian field partners of air strikes, on civilians in Saada governorate, APS reported on Tuesday.

“Attacks on a house in the As Safra district and on a private vehicle in Razih district, reportedly resulted in the deaths of at least twelve civilians, including women and children, and injured ten others,” Said Mr. McGoldrick in a press release, issued Monday by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OHCHR).

While these new incidents are being investigated by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), “they are an example of the brutality of this conflict,” he added.

“All parties to the conflict continue to show contempt for the protection of civilians and the principle of distinction between civilians and combatants in the conduct of hostilities. As I have said, even wars have rules and these rules must be respected,” he noted.

The Humanitarian Coordinator has reiterated its call to all parties to the conflict and to those who influence and support them to respect their responsibilities, under international humanitarian law to ensure safety for civilians”.

“The people of Yemen deserve peace and it is imperative that there be a return to the negotiating table, to end the suffering of innocent civilians caught up in the conflict,” said McGoldrick.



A report urges an international investigation into the human-made disaster in Yemen



A displaced Yemeni child sits on the wreckage of his family home in Saada. Photo: UNICEF / Dia Al-Adimi

A recent international report says that human rights violations continue unabated in Yemen as well as serious violations of international humanitarian law, while civilians suffer the consequences of a «man-made disaster».

The report, issued by the UN Office for Human Rights, records violations committed within three years since September 2014.

Number of victims

Between March 2015 and August 30, 2017, more than 5,100 civilians, including about 1,200 children, were killed and 8,700 injured.

The report, commissioned by the Human Rights Council, said that coalition bombing operations continue to be the main cause of child victims and civilians in general.

According to the report, coalition forces killed about 3,233 civilians.

In addition to markets, hospitals, schools, residential areas and other public and private infrastructure, the past year saw aerial bombardment of gatherings on consulates and small civilian boats.

The report reported the occurrence of such incidents.



Director of the International Organization for Migration from Sana'a: Yemen on the verge of a humanitarian disaster



High number of cholera infected in Yemen. Photo: Giles Clarke \ UNOCHA

William Lacy Swing, director-general of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), warned of the dangers of famine and cholera on Yemen, which threaten to drag the country deeper into a humanitarian crisis.

He called on the authorities to allow immediate expansion of humanitarian access in order to save lives there.

This came during a visit by the Director General of the Organization to Yemen on Monday to find out the latest humanitarian efforts in response to the humanitarian crisis that has plagued the country for years.

«Already 80 percent of the population, 21 million people, is in desperate

need of aid as a result of years of armed conflict, which regularly sees clashes and air strikes in urban areas,» said Lacy Swing from Sanaa.

«The authorities have a responsibility to give humanitarian workers more access, including reopening the airport to provide basic aid, and the world has an obligation to help the right people,» he said.

He was accompanied by the Director-General of the visit, his senior regional adviser to the Middle East, Hassan Abdel Moneim, who spoke to the United Nations news from Sanaa, saying:

«The purpose of the visit is purely humanitarian, namely to identify the situation in Yemen, the number of displaced is very large, more than three million displaced people in the country There are many humanitarian needs to address cholera, food and medicine needs ... Unfortunately the world faces many natural and «We need more support, solidarity and human solidarity so we can help the innocent, and ultimately these civilians are innocent regardless of their nationality, religion or race.»



Human Rights Office confirms 33 civilians killed in air strikes in Sanaa



A child stands on a piece of artillery shell that fell near his house in the village of Al-Mahjar, on the outskirts of Sana'a, Yemen. Source: UNICEF / Mohamed Hamoud

201725/8/ - The United Nations Office for Human Rights confirmed the killing of thirty-three civilians and wounding 25 others in aerial bombardment of coalition forces hit a hotel in Sanaa province on Wednesday, the twenty-third of this month.

After collecting information on the bombing, Liz Throsel, a spokeswoman for the office, said the witnesses reported two consecutive shelling between 3:30 and 4:00 in the village of Arhab.

At a press conference in Geneva, the first bomb hit a checkpoint run by the

Huthis, without causing casualties, it added. A few minutes later, another shell hit the Al-Shehab Hotel, destroying the second floor and severely damaging the rest of the building.

Witnesses said 67 people were in the hotel when the shelling occurred. The hotel is located on the main road 10 or 15 meters from the checkpoint.

Throssell pointed to other previous incidents, and said:

«Attacks against civilians or civilian objects are prohibited under international humanitarian law, which also prohibits indiscriminate and disproportionate attacks, and reminds all parties to the conflict, including the Alliance, of their duty to ensure full respect for international humanitarian law.»



UN: Yemen's human-made disaster could have been avoided



Yemeni woman displaced with her daughter Photo: Giles Clarke / UN OCHA

For the tenth time in two years, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Stephen O'Brien briefed Yemen on the United Nations Security Council, saying that the suffering of the Yemenis continues unabated.

Before his term ended at the end of this month, O'Brien expressed his deep sorrow that he had not achieved any noticeable improvement despite his tireless efforts with his team to put an end to the terrible calamity that human beings had made and could have been avoided in Yemen.

«Today, millions of people in Yemen are facing a triple tragedy: the specter of famine, the biggest outbreak of cholera in a single year in the world, the daily deprivation and injustice caused by a brutal conflict that allows the

world to persist in what could have been prevented, avoided and dealt with. Available now, can be stopped. »

17 million Yemenis suffer from food insecurity, and 7 million face the threat of famine. O'Brien stressed that these figures represent enormous human suffering, and parents who can not feed their families and children at risk of malnutrition or disease.

O'Brien spoke of a 6-year-old girl whose family had to sleep in a hole in the ground at night for fear of aerial bombardment near their home. The child, who was malnourished, had deteriorated during her hiding with her family. After several rounds of treatment, while recovering, she suffered severe watery diarrhea and died shortly after leaving the hospital.

«For this innocent child and many others, the horrific numbers of this crisis should not obscure the fact that the Yemen disaster is entirely human-made, a direct result of the policies, methods and deliberate actions of the parties and their powerful agents in the conflict.»

The United Nations Emergency Relief Coordinator, who has visited Yemen three times since he took office in 2015, said humanitarian action alone can neither and should not replace public or commercial sectors in Yemen and can not resolve the crisis.

The international official stressed a number of demands are:

- Ensure the opening of all ports, land, sea and air, for civilians including in front of commercial traffic.
- Influencing the parties to the conflict to respect international humanitarian law and human rights.
- Paying employees' salaries.
- Strengthening accountability.
- Demand an immediate cessation of hostilities, a return to negotiations and a political settlement.

► *Convictions by:*



WORDL HEALTH ORGANIZATION





Media centre

Cholera count reaches 500 000 in Yemen

WORDL HEALTH ORGANIZATION

14 AUGUST 2017 | GENEVA -

The total number of suspected cholera cases in Yemen this year hit the half a million mark on Sunday, and nearly 2000 people have died since the outbreak began to spread rapidly at the end of April.

The overall caseload nationwide has declined since early July, particularly in the worst affected areas. But suspected cases of the deadly waterborne disease continue to rage across the country, infecting an estimated 5000 people per day.

The spread of cholera has slowed significantly in some areas compared to peak levels but the disease is still spreading fast in more recently affected districts, which are recording large numbers of cases.

Yemen's cholera epidemic, currently the largest in the world, has spread rapidly due to deteriorating hygiene and sanitation conditions and disruptions to the water supply across the country. Millions of people are cut off from clean water, and waste collection has ceased in major cities.

A collapsing health system is struggling to cope, with more than half of all health facilities closed due to damage, destruction or lack of funds.

Shortages in medicines and supplies are persistent and widespread and 30 000 critical health workers have not been paid salaries in nearly a year.

«Yemen's health workers are operating in impossible conditions.

Thousands of people are sick, but there are not enough hospitals, not

enough medicines, not enough clean water. These doctors and nurses are the backbone of the health response – without them we can do nothing in Yemen. They must be paid their wages so that they can continue to save lives,» said Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General.

WHO and partners are working around the clock to set up cholera treatment clinics, rehabilitate health facilities, deliver medical supplies, and support the national health response effort.

More than 99% of people sick with suspected cholera who can access health services are surviving. Furthermore, nearly 15 million people are unable to get basic healthcare.

«To save lives in Yemen today we must support the health system, especially the health workers. And we urge the Yemeni authorities – and all those in the region and elsewhere who can play a role – to find a political solution to this conflict that has already caused so much suffering. The people of Yemen cannot bear it much longer – they need peace to rebuild their lives and their country,» said Dr. Tedros



World Health: More than 8,000 displaced people have been forced to flee the city of Mukha

2017/02/13

The World Health Organization said that the directorates of the province of Hodeidah recently received more than 8000 displaced persons who were forced to flee the violent conflict in the city of Mukha, Taiz province in the south of the country.

The organization said in a statement on Sunday that thousands were still trapped in the clashes in the city of Mukha, and the flow of displaced people from the city in the coming days is expected to continue in search of safe areas.

In response to the needs of displaced people, WHO sent medical teams to the province of Hodeidah to provide primary health care and treatment services to displaced people from the camp, and provided essential medicines and medical supplies to health facilities crowded with displaced people.

New IDPs represent an additional burden on essentially degraded sanitation and host communities suffering from extreme poverty and lack of adequate living opportunities.

Many of the displaced live in overcrowded housing, while others live in vacant buildings or in the open. As a result of the limited health services in the areas of displacement, IDPs are vulnerable to respiratory infections, skin and eye diseases and pneumonia. While confirmed cases of cholera have been reported in Hodeidah province for the last few months, the influx of new arrivals may contribute to exacerbating this health problem, especially in light of the limited availability of safe water and environmental sanitation services. Concerns about the spread of infectious diseases such as malaria and dengue have also increased among the displaced, especially with the spread of mosquitoes in areas inhabited by displaced people in Hodeidah, the statement said.

«Hundreds of families have suddenly found themselves homeless, many of whom urgently need urgent health care,» said Dr Nivio Zagaria, acting WHO representative in Yemen. As the influx continues, the WHO-supported medical teams are on high alert to meet the needs of displaced people, including children, women and the elderly who are at greater risk of disease. »

WHO has dispatched mobile medical teams to provide primary health-care services in the host districts of Hodeidah. WHO also provided health facilities with medicines and medical supplies to cover the needs of primary health care for some 20,000 people for three months. To ensure medical care for the wounded, WHO sent a surgical team to Hays Hospital in Hodeidah Governorate and provided the necessary medical supplies to treat enough injuries to conduct 400 surgical interventions at four major hospitals.



World Health: Cholera cases exceed 100,000 in 19 Yemeni provinces

2017/06/14



The World Health Organization (WHO) has reported that the number of suspected cases of cholera in Yemen has exceeded 100,000.

A total of 798 deaths have been recorded in 19 of the 22 Yemeni provinces since April 27.

Oxfam says the epidemic kills one person every hour in Yemen.

Yemen's health, water and sanitation system collapsed after nearly two years of war between government forces and the Houthis.

Cholera is an acute diarrhea infection and is caused by ingestion of food or water contaminated with cholera.

Most people who develop the infection have minor symptoms, or may have no symptoms at all. But in severe cases, the disease can cause the death within hours if it is not treated.

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said on Wednesday that the epidemic in Yemen was «at an unprecedented level».

Over the past four weeks, the death toll was three times that of October 2016, when the Yemeni government first announced the spread of the disease and between March 2017.

More than half of Yemen's hospitals and medical facilities have been out of work, and some 300 have been damaged or completely destroyed by fighting there.

Workers in the health and sanitation system have not received their salaries for eight months, and the country has imported only about 30 percent of the medical supplies it needs.

In Yemen, garbage collection is not carried out regularly and more than 8 million people are unable to access safe drinking water or proper sanitation.

The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said that the threat of a wider epidemic is compounded by the rainy season, food insecurity and malnutrition.

Children and malnourished women and people with other chronic diseases are at high risk for cholera.

The war in Yemen has caused some 18.8 million people, out of the total population of 28 million, to receive humanitarian assistance, while some seven million people are on the verge of famine.

The director of Oxfam in Yemen, Sajjad Mohammed Sajid, warned that the spread of cholera there may be worse this century, if not faced with immediate and massive action to control it.

«Cholera is a disease that is easy to treat and prevent. But as fighting continues, that task is getting harder. «There is a need for huge relief efforts now.»

«Those who support this war in Western capitals and the capitals of the Middle East should press the warring parties to agree to a ceasefire, allowing public health workers and aid workers to begin that task,» he said.

Source: BBC



2017/21/10

WHO | Comments at the launch of United Nations and humanitarian partners international appeal to provide life-saving assistance to Yemen

Humanitarian Health Action

Comments at the launch of United Nations and humanitarian partners international appeal to provide life-saving assistance to Yemen

Dr Rick Brennan, Director WHO Emergency Operations

Essentially the health system in Yemen is extremely challenged and highly dependent on international support.

Currently, more than 14.8 million people lack access to basic health care. Less than 45% of health facilities are still functioning. 17% are completely non-functional. At least 274 of those facilities have been damaged or destroyed during the current conflict.

Health care workers have not received their salaries regularly for about 6 months. Medical supplies are in chronic shortage despite extensive support from WHO and Health Cluster members, further complicating the delivery of life-saving health care.

Beyond the direct casualties of the armed conflict, many Yemeni people die in silence and are largely unaccounted for, unnoticed and unrecorded. Girls, boys, women and men are dying of malnutrition and diseases that could be easily preventable and treatable. People with chronic diseases, including high blood pressure, diabetes, kidney conditions etc. are slowly dying as they lack access to life-sustaining treatments.

Humanitarian partners are increasingly being asked to fill gaps created by the collapsing health institutions, including helping with payment of salaries of health professionals and the procurement of medicines and medical supplies. It is therefore essential for all stakeholders to help stem this collapse, including through selective reengagement and prioritization of interventions and districts to be supported.

During 2016, WHO and our Health Cluster partners targeted 10.6 million people with life-saving health services in Yemen and were able to sustain the functionality of more than 414 health care facilities. Together, we operated 406 health and nutrition mobile teams in 266 districts, conducted 541 child health and nutrition interventions in 323 districts, and vaccinated 4.5 million children against polio.

We thank all Member States that supported the Health Cluster and WHO's emergency operations in Yemen in 2016 and we encourage you to continue and scale-up your support for this year in order to respond to the increasing needs. The Health Cluster in Yemen is appealing for US\$ 322 million, of which WHO is requesting US\$ 126 million.

* Corrigendum: The first two paragraphs were updated after initial posting on 8 February; updating the description of the health system in Yemen to «extremely challenged» in the first paragraph and correcting/adding figures to reflect the Humanitarian Response Plan in the second paragraph.



2017/21/10

WHO | Comments at the launch of United Nations and humanitarian partners international appeal to provide life-saving assistance to Yemen

Director-General's Office

Yemen and joint mission with UNICEF and World Food Programme

WHO Director-General, Dr Tedros's statement at the Member States briefing Geneva, Switzerland

4 August 2017

Ambassador Ali Mohamed Saeed Majawar, distinguished Ambassadors and representatives, thank you for the opportunity today to brief you on my recent mission to Yemen and the health situation there.

It was not by chance that my first mission to a WHO country programme was to Yemen. The dire situation in Yemen explains my leadership priorities: we must strive to provide universal health care in the most fragile and complex settings, we must ensure health systems have the capacity to detect and respond to unplanned events and circumstances - particularly from infectious hazards, we must ensure that our WHO country offices have the capacities and skills to lead and to be accountable, predictable and professional.

This joint mission was the first of its kind—3 heads of agency going together to look at how we can strengthen our collective ability to ensure the provision of key social services to a population in desperate need in a highly complex and fragile setting. We visited hospitals and talked with the sick, their families and the health workers caring for them.

Two years of conflict have devastated the lives of ordinary people and left nearly 15 million without access to basic health care. 17 million people on the

brink of famine. 16 million – that is equivalent to the populations of London and New York combined – with no access to clean water and sanitation. Children and other vulnerable populations always suffer most. Nearly 80 percent of Yemen’s children need immediate humanitarian assistance. At least 10,000 children have died in the past year from preventable diseases and nearly 2 million are acutely malnourished - making them more susceptible to diseases like cholera which in turn worsens malnutrition.

Of particular concern is the fragility of the health system. The ongoing cholera outbreak is a symptom of this weakened system. And cholera flourishes in a weakened health system. We are witnessing the second wave of an outbreak that first started in October 2016. From 27 April to 1 August, we have recorded 1921 deaths and more than 443,000 suspected cases. It has affected 22 out of the country’s 23 governorates.

While there has been a downward trend in the number of cholera cases in recent weeks, the situation remains dire, the rainy season is coming, so we may see another spike in cases.

Together with UNICEF, we have set up more than 1000 diarrhoea treatment centres and oral rehydration corners. The delivery of food supplements, intravenous fluids and other medical supplies, including ambulances, is ongoing, as is the rebuilding of critical infrastructure – the rehabilitation of hospitals, district health centres and the water and sanitation network. WHO and UNICEF are also partnering to roll out a public awareness campaign – engaging 16,000 volunteers going door-to-door to explain to people how they can protect themselves, and how cholera is treatable. We are also working to attack cholera at its source and to significantly scale up the availability of clean water. Together we are achieving results: more than 99 per cent of people who are sick with suspected cholera and who can access health services are now surviving.

At the same time, Yemen suffers from a shortage of doctors and nurses to help treat and care for those who are ill. Some have fled the country.

Yet many continue to come to work, even though they have not been paid for more than ten months. WHO and UNICEF are paying incentives,

travel costs, overtime and other allowances where and when we can to help get them through this period but this is not a sustainable solution.

Other challenges include the fact that more than 55% of all health facilities are closed or only partially functional, there are no doctors in 49 of 333 districts, the supply chain is hampered by restrictions on importations and logistics, as well as the limited amount of implementing partners and funding. And access to the most needy is an enormous challenge to the humanitarian response in Yemen.

Despite the many challenges, I saw dedicated and courageous people working hard, around the clock, to deliver services and to reach the most vulnerable. I saw first-hand the joint work of WHO, UNICEF and WFP in Yemen supporting the provision of social services in part thanks to a nascent partnership with the World Bank that has made available more than 200 million dollars for nutrition and health to fend off the collapse of social services while rebuilding capacities and infrastructure.

I visited the national Emergency Operations Centre for health that leads and coordinates the national and international efforts to provide services in this emergency setting. In the EOC, WHO, UNICEF and WFP are pooling our resources and making joint decisions on how best to use them to achieve maximum impact. We are setting up joint EOCs across the country, even in the most difficult areas to access. The Yemeni health authorities have told us that this new way of working, and of coordinating the efforts of international and national humanitarian and health partners, is making a real difference: they can now sense the presence, not of individual agencies working on their own, but of a unified humanitarian response effort.

Our joint mission resulted in our four main priorities for joint action and dialogue:

- 1- First, to accelerate the peace process to bring an immediate end to this conflict so that people can not only survive but thrive. WHO, UNICEF and partners are doing all that we can to save lives and support the health system. But without peace there will be no end to the suffering of the people. When we met Yemeni leaders -- in Aden and in Sana'a -- we called on them to give humanitarian workers access to areas affected by fighting and urged them to find a political solution to the conflict.

- 2- Second, in areas of continuing conflict, ensure civilian infrastructure such as water and sanitation and health facilities are always protected in accordance with International Humanitarian Law. Again in Aden and Sana'a, we called on the parties to respect international humanitarian law and to refrain from attacking civilian infrastructure.
- 3- Third, donors need to fulfill the pledges that were made at the high level event on Yemen in April and also provide funds for this crisis in a more flexible manner. Ensuring health workers are paid and given incentives to remain at their posts and continue to serve their communities. WHO's component of the Humanitarian Response Plan is relatively well-funded; however the overall appeal is not.
- 4- Lastly, provide political, financial and technical support for longerterm recovery and development. The partnership between the World Bank, UNICEF and WHO on providing services while revitalizing the health sector provides a useful model. We need to re-build the country health and sanitation systems, so that we can prevent and better contain future health risks.



The life and death struggle against cholera in Yemen

July 2017

Cholera continues to spread in Yemen, causing more than 390 000 suspected cases of the disease and more than 1800 deaths since 27 April.

WHO and its partners are responding to the cholera outbreak in Yemen, working closely with UNICEF, local health authorities and others to treat the sick and stop the spread of the disease.

Each of these cholera cases is a person with a family, a story, hopes and dreams. In the centres, where patients are treated, local health workers work long hours, often without pay, to fight off death and help their patients make a full recovery.



Fatima Shooie sits between her 85-year-old mother and 22-year-old daughter who are both receiving treatment for cholera at the crowded 22 May Hospital in Sana'a

Fatima Shooie sits between her 85-year-old mother and 22-year-old daughter who are both receiving treatment for cholera at the crowded 22 May Hospital in Sana'a.

“We have no money even for transportation to the hospital. My husband works as a street cleaner but he hasn't received a salary for 8 months and he is our only breadwinner,” Fatima said. “I'm afraid that the disease will transmit to other family members.”



Dr Adel Al-Almani is the head of the diarrhoea treatment centre in Al-Sabeen Hospital in Sana'a. He and his team often work 18 hours a day to deal with the influx of patients.

More than 30 000 Yemeni health workers have not been paid in more than 10 months. Yet many, like Dr Al-Almani, continue to treat patients and save lives.



Eight-year-old Mohannad has overcome cholera following 3 days of treatment in the diarrhoea treatment centre at Al-Sabeen Hospital in Sana'a. Mohannad lost his mother and sister when a bomb went off near their home in Hajjah. He and his father have since fled to Sana'a. "Mohannad is all I have in this life after my wife and daughter died. When he was infected with cholera I was very anxious that he would have the same fate of his mother and sister," said Mohannad's father.



A health worker tends to Khadeeja Abdul-Kareem, 20. Khadeeja was forced to flee the conflict in Al-Waziya District, Taiz. Displaced from her home, she struggles to make ends meet – a situation compounded by her illness.



It was a long and painful journey in search of treatment for Abdu Al-Nehmi, 53. The road from his village in Bani Matar District to Sana'a City was bumpy and the car broke down along the way. The whole time he was suffering from kidney pain in addition to severe diarrhoea and vomiting.

To date, WHO, UNICEF, and partners have supported the establishment of 3000 beds in 187 diarrhoea treatment centres and 834 fully operational oral rehydration therapy corners.



Nabila, Fatima, Amal, Hayat and Hend are working as nurses in Azal Health Centre in Sana'a and have dedicated themselves to treating patients arriving with severe dehydration.

“Every day, we receive severe cases that come with complicated conditions, but we manage to save the lives of most of them. Sometimes, a new severe case arrives while we’re so busy treating another case,” said Nabila Al-Olofi, one of nurses working in the centre.

“Yes, we have no regular salaries as nurses, but saving lives is our biggest gain.”

WHO, together with UNICEF, is also delivering medical supplies and paying incentives, travel costs and overtime payments for health workers to enable them to continue to treat patients.



WHO releases emergency funds to support cholera response in Yemen



27 October 2016 – The World Health Organization (WHO) has released approximately US\$ 1 million from its internal emergency funds to support the ongoing response to the cholera outbreak in Yemen. Since the outbreak was announced by the Ministry of Public Health and Population on 6 October, a total of 1184 suspected cases of cholera, including 6 deaths, have been reported. 47 cases have tested positive for *Vibrio cholerae*. However, a chronic lack of funding for Yemen is impeding action by WHO and health partners to effectively control and respond to the current outbreak.

These new funds, provided by WHO's Contingency Fund for Emergencies

and the Eastern Mediterranean Regional Emergency Solidarity Fund, will allow WHO to rapidly scale-up priority response activities to effectively monitor and control the outbreak by:

- continuing to scale-up WHO and national surveillance interventions
- enhancing diagnosis capacity by providing essential support to laboratories
- increasing the number of diarrhoea/cholera treatment centres
- training national staff on case definition and management
- pre-positioning medical supplies in high-risk areas
- organizing health education campaigns among at-risk populations.

More than 7.6 million people are currently living in the areas affected by the outbreak, and more than 3 million internally displaced persons are especially vulnerable. Without a sustained response, cases of acute watery diarrhoea/cholera are likely to increase, with predictions of up to 76 000 additional cases across 15 governorates, including 15 200 severe cases requiring admission for cholera treatment.

In response to the cholera outbreak, on 17 October, WHO issued a donor appeal on behalf of the Yemen Health and WASH Clusters for US\$ 22.35 million. Of this amount, US\$ 8.5 million was requested by the Health Cluster. As of 26 October, contributions totaling US\$1.7 million (20% of health requirements) have been received for health activities against this appeal:

- US\$ 700 000 from the UN Central Emergency Response Fund
- US\$ 506 000 from WHO's Contingency Fund for Emergencies
- US\$ 498 000 from WHO's Regional Emergency Solidarity Fund

► *Convictions by:*



**INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF
THE RED CROSS**





CICR INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

10 NOVEMBER 2015

Yemen: Attacks on health care facilities must stop



Taiz city. Al-Thawra hospital after being hit by shells. The three patients who had been laying in this room were pulled out of their beds when the shelling started. CC BY-NC-ND / ICRC / W. Al-Absi

Geneva / Sana'a – The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is appalled by the continuing attacks on health care facilities in Yemen, the latest of which took place in the city of Taiz.

«Al-Thawra hospital, one of the main health care facilities in Taiz which is providing treatment for about 50 injured people every day was reportedly shelled several times on Sunday. The shelling endangered the lives of patients and stay on site,» said the deputy head of the ICRC delegation in Yemen,

Kedir Awol Omar. It is not the first time health facilities have been attacked. An MSF hospital in Haydan district of Saada was also attacked on the 26th of October. Close to a hundred similar incidents have been reported since March 2015.

«The neutrality of health care facilities and sta_ is not being respected. Health facilities are deliberately attacked and surgical and medical supplies are also being blocked from reaching hospitals in areas under siege,» said Mr Omar.

Deliberate attacks on health facilities represent a flagrant violation of international humanitarian law (IHL). All those taking part in the fighting are, in accordance with IHL, obliged to protect medical facilities and personnel at all times.

The health situation in Taiz has been particularly dire for months. Less than half of the previously functioning health facilities are having to deal with a large number of wounded people amidst a severe shortage of supplies.

The ICRC has been trying to deliver medical supplies to Taiz for nearly two months but to no avail. The ICRC calls on all those taking part in the fighting to allow such supplies to be delivered to Taiz and other areas in the country and to stop all attacks on health care facilities.



CICR INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

13.June.2017

Yemen: A health system on the edge of anarchy coinciding with an outbreak of cholera at Unprecedented rates

Geneva- Sana'a- Whit suspected cases of cholera in Yemen reaching unprecedented level, one out of every 200 Yemeni is suspected to infect with the disease, the international committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is stepping up efforts to tackle the crisis.

That is because the public health care system is severely debilitated due to the ongoing conflict in the country and in ability to provide care to the population.

Maria Del Pillay Bauza Moreno, health services coordinator of the state committee of the Red Cross in Yemen, said "During the last week, more than 5.000 new suspected were reported daily. The spread of disease, which begun before more than month, has taken an accelerating run. She added "The warning situation is severely suspected cases account for about half of all cases. This exceeds the double of the number we normally observe during similar outbreaks.

According to health authorities in the capital Sana'a, the number of suspected cases of cholera across the country exceeded 124.000 two days ago. Those who died as a result of the disease exceeded 900 people.

Mr. Alexander Feit, head of the ICRC delegation in Yemen, said; two years of armed conflict have pushed the health care organization to the edge of collapse.

This outbreak of cholera epidemic serves as the latest and clearest evidence

over the severity of the vulnerability of people and infrastructure because of the way in which this conflict is taking place. The attacks on water and sanitation systems and no maintenance as well as stifling restrictions on the importation of essential goods such as spare parts and fuel have caused a situation in which millions could not obtain clean water.

The ICRC, in cooperation with the Yemeni Red Crescent society, has moved quickly to address the crisis, which prompted health authorities in Sana'a to declare a state of emergency on last May 14. The ICRC transported large quantities of chlorine intravenous fluids and other medical supplies by four chartered planes over the past few weeks. The ICRC staff (health workers) and engineers work around the clock in order to support health facilities and detention facilities in 14 Yemeni governments, improve case management, supervision of personal hygiene conditions and public a awareness of cholera. Cholera is a disease that is transmitted by water. It can spread rapidly in densely populated areas, which suffer from poor hygiene and sanitation system.



CICR INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

25 AUGUST 2017

Yemen: Airstrikes in residential area of Sana'a are outrageous



Airstrikes in the city of Sana'a in Yemen have left 14 dead and injured another 16 people. EPA / Yahya Arhab

The ICRC strongly deplores last night's airstrikes in Sana'a, which killed 14 people and injured another 16. The casualties included at least 5 children, the youngest of them only 3 years old.

«I am deeply shocked and saddened by last night's airstrikes on a residential neighbourhood in Sana'a. Eight of the victims were members of the same family, including five children between 3 and 10 years old. Seven died, while a four-year old girl was injured.» said the deputy head of ICRC's delegation in Yemen, Carlos Morazzani, after visiting the site of the attack. «Such loss

of civilian life is outrageous and runs counter to the basic tenets of the law of armed conflict.»

Faj Attan is a residential neighborhood in the south of Sana'a where three buildings were hit by airstrikes around 2 am local time. The strikes reduced two of them to rubble, and severely damaged the third one, making the retrieval of bodies and of the injured extremely difficult.



CICR INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

Yemen: War in the time of cholera



A father sits next to his cholera-sick daughter in Yemen. CC BY-NC-ND / ICRC / R. El Hage

With over 20 million reliant on aid, Yemen is the world's single largest humanitarian crisis.

Now it's in the grip of a deadly cholera outbreak.

On 5 May, the Ministry of Health and Population in Sana'a declared a state of emergency. Nearly four months on, over 500,000 people are suspected to be ill with cholera, while around 2,000 people have lost their lives to the disease. Numbers affected are now expected double to 600,000 cases by the end of 2017.

Health-care workers are struggling to cope, with the country's health-care system decimated by two years relentless war. Today, only 45% of hospitals

are operational, while only 30% of the country's needed medicines and medical supplies are getting in.

«The disease should not be so ferocious. Preventing cholera is pretty simple in theory: wash your hands with clean water, drink clean water, and eat food that has been boiled or cooked. But clean water in Yemen is a luxury. Municipal workers in Sanaa have not been paid in months. And so we have no electricity, rubbish piling high in the street, and a crippled water system.» Said Johannes Bruwer in an article on BBC website: The horrors of Yemen's spiralling cholera crisis.

«Children dying in hospital hallways. Four sick people crammed into one bed.»



CICR INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

13 june 2017

Yemen: Patients in dire need in ruined hospitals

The ICRC estimates there have been more than 100 attacks on health-care facilities since the conflict began in March 2015. Over 30,000 have been injured – with little or no access to health care.



CICR INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

11 Nov. 2015

The point of collapse ...21 million Yemeni are struggling for life By: Adel Ali Thamer

Media and Publication officer of Yemeni Red Crescent Society – Sana'a branch

In a shelter for the displaced in Sana'a, more than one family live in the same room because of the conflict. A small room houses the family of the displaced Mohamed Aluqbi which consists 11 people. Al-uqbi family displaced from Fajj Atan in the Capital of Yemen, Sana'a.

Despite the difficult circumstances faced by this big family at the shelter, at least they get the basic needs of food and medicine. The family does not want to repeat the harsh experience after destroying their house by the conflict. Al-uqbi and his family didn't find a place better than water channels as a shelter before finding a real shelter.

” During my visit to another shelter, and while I was carrying the camera, I found Ghadir Najm Addin, a displaced child from Saada Governorate, who was staring at me and drawing sad looks while drawing a boat on the pages of a sketchbook. I asked her where you want to sail this boat? She answered with confidence (to our home, which was destroyed by the war) Then she added (the war has turned us from a family that has a house to a homeless family ... Despite my longing for our home, I try with my friends here to be happy. We have new things to do together every day).

Yemen is witnessing a major humanitarian disaster that is worsening day after day. The fears of the local community escalate with it , as a result of deteriorating the humanitarian situation with continued shelling and clashes on a daily basis, leading to a significant lack of basic daily needs of life of

food, drink, as well as insecurity which came with shortage of nutrition and medicine. Total power outage and lack in drinking water as well as the cessation of humanitarian operation and relief Not to mention the obstacles that prevent the timely arrival of humanitarian aid to affected people add to this huge increases in the numbers of displaced families to multiple and scattered places, all this has led to unprecedented disruption of the situation.

The medical section

The health sector has taken a good part of the attacks which targeted the infrastructure of the country. Many medical facilities such as hospitals and medical center were directly and indirectly targeted. Furthermore, the health system faces challenges in adapting to current conditions. Hospitals suffer from enormous logical difficulties in its endeavor to maintain the provision of its services due to lack of fuel and electricity. The fighting inside the health facilities forced the medical staff to leave. As the case of the surgical medical team following the international committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and all the local staff and sick people who had to leave the Republic Hospital in Aden, when the hospital building itself became a front line for fighting. The scale of humanitarian aid has doubled due to the decline in the volume of commercial imports which paralyzed the locomotion in the country. Millions of people have been threatened a result of the siege imports about 90% of its food and pharmaceutical stocks from abroad.

In the last period < the restrictions on importing of medicines have led to a severe shortage of



CICR INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

04 MAY 2015.

Yemen: ICRC and MSF alarmed by attacks on country's lifelines



CC BY-NC-ND/ICRC/T. Glass

(ICRC) and Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) are extremely concerned about the severe damage caused by recent Coalition attacks on airports in Sana'a and Hodeida, obstructing delivery of much needed humanitarian assistance and movement of humanitarian personnel.

«Yemen depends almost completely on imports of food and medication, especially for the treatment of chronic diseases,» says Cedric Schweizer, who heads a team of 250 ICRC staff in Yemen. «Sana'a airport was an essential

piece of civilian infrastructure, and the main lifeline for supplying essential humanitarian goods and services. The harsh restrictions on importations imposed by the Coalition for the past six weeks, added to the extreme fuel shortages, have made the daily lives of Yemenis unbearable, and their suffering immense,» Mr Schweizer added.

The disruption of the key logistic infrastructure, including airports, sea ports, bridges and roads, is having alarming consequences on the civilian population, and the humanitarian situation has now become catastrophic. Checkpoints operated by the different armed factions have obstructed the delivery of urgent medical supplies to hospitals and have prevented patients and casualties from accessing essential health care.

«The current conflict has already caused extreme hardship for the population across the country,» said Marie Elisabeth Ingres, who heads the MSF mission in Yemen. «The destruction of the runway at Sana'a means that countless lives are now more at risk, and we can no longer afford to stand and watch as people are forced to drink unsafe water and children die of preventable causes,» Ms. Ingres added.

MSF and the ICRC demand that robust and unobstructed channels for the provision of humanitarian assistance are opened and respected by all parties to the conflict in this increasingly desperate situation. We call for an end to attacks on these vital lifelines and for the Yemeni civil aviation authority to be given the chance to repair the airports, so that humanitarian assistance can be sent to Yemen.



CICR INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

Yemen: Health system crippled, fuel shortage alarming



Patients are evacuated from Al Jamhouria hospital after receiving threats that they may be directly attacked. CC BY-NC-ND/ICRC/J. De Barros E Sa

Patients are evacuated from Al Jamhouria hospital after receiving threats that they may be directly attacked.

After a month of airstrikes and fighting, Yemen's health system is struggling to cope and there are severe shortages of essential items especially food and fuel. Import restrictions have made the situation worse.

The surgical team from the ICRC and all local staff and patients were forced to evacuate Aden's Al Jamhouria hospital when the building itself became a front line in the fighting.



An ICRC nurse bandages a wounded civilian at Al Jamhouria hospital in Aden. CC BY-NC-ND/ICRC/M. Dhaiby

«We are shocked by the lack of respect for the hospital, as a neutral health facility, by the fighting parties,» said the head of the ICRC delegation in Yemen, Cedric Schweizer. «Under no circumstances should this be happening, and under no circumstances should hospitals be targeted or used for fighting purposes. Our team had been working in that hospital for three weeks but, after all the patients and staff were put at risk, the hospital had to be vacated.»



People have been sleeping at petrol stations for over 20 days, hoping that fuel will arrive. CC BY-NCND/ICRC/T. Glass

Every morning in the capital, Sana'a, there are huge queues at petrol stations. The situation is similar across the country. This comes on top of water and electricity shortages.

«We are facing tremendous logistical difficulties in trying to keep this hospital working,» said the head of Al Kuwait Hospital in Sana'a, Issa Alzubh. «We are running out of diesel. Our ambulances can no longer transport patients. Only half of our staff can come to work as the hospital buses have stopped running.»



Due to the lack of fuel and diesel, ambulances at Al Kuwait Hospital are running on empty and must siphon fuel from one vehicle to another to run. CC BY-NC-ND/ICRC/T. Glass

A senior doctor in Al Kuwait's emergency unit, Zine El Abidine, said the severe shortage of lifesaving supplies in hospitals was due to the lack of essential imports. «We used to have our own oxygen factory, but now production has stopped as maintenance and spare parts can no longer be brought in. So now we are relying on oxygen cylinders from outside. And when they run out, then what?»

The ICRC has maintained contact with key health facilities around the country that stabilize, treat and transfer the wounded to hospital. To date, the ICRC has provided dressing materials, IV fluid, stretchers, crutches and medication to more than 15 hospitals in Sana'a, Saada, Maareb, Taiz, Aden, Abyan and Al Dhalea provinces. Fuel was also supplied to three main hospitals in Saada, Abyan and Aden.



Women and children line up for water close to the Al-Kuweit Hospital. CC BY-NC-ND/ICRC/T. Glass



Following an airstrike in Faj Attan, buildings are assessed for damage. CC BY-NC-ND/ICRC/T. Glass



CICR INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

08 AUGUST 2017

Yemen: Airstrikes against civilians are an alarming trend



People hold a wheelchair recovered from under the wreckage of a house destroyed by an airstrike in Sa'ada, Yemen. REUTERS/Naif Rahma

Geneva/Sana'a (ICRC) – The ICRC is extremely alarmed at a pattern of recent airstrikes that have killed and injured dozens of civilians in the

Sa'ada and Taiz governorates in Yemen. In the latest such incident, nine members of one family were killed and three critically injured. The casualties were between 3 and 80 years old.

«Our colleagues have been to the village of Mahda, on the outskirts of Sa'ada city, where they saw a house literally flattened by the explosion, while

a crater showed where the impact had occurred,» said the head of the ICRC delegation in Yemen, Alexandre Faite.

«According to two eyewitnesses, a single strike hit the house in the early morning of 4 August,»

continued Mr Faite. «We strongly deplore the trend whereby public places, such as markets, as well as private houses, have been targeted by the belligerents. This is a pattern that runs counter to the basic tenets of the law of armed conflict, and it must be stopped. Civilians keep paying far too heavy a price in this conflict.»

According to international humanitarian law, civilians must not be attacked and warring parties must do everything feasible to verify that targets are military objectives. The ICRC is calling on all parties to ensure that constant care is taken to spare civilians and civilian objects in the conduct of military operations.



CICR INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

ICRC president leaves Yemen, issues urgent plea



A Yemeni child receives treatment for cholera at a hospital in Sana'a, Yemen. EPA / Yahya Arhab

Statement by Peter Maurer, president of the International Committee of the Red Cross

I am leaving Yemen profoundly concerned for the plight of its people. The cholera outbreak remains alarming. With the rainy season approaching, we expect more than 600,000 cases by the end of the year. This is unprecedented.

This outbreak is manmade. It is a direct consequence of more than two years of warfare. The health care system has collapsed, with people dying from easily-treatable chronic diseases. Key services like garbage disposal have ceased to function, as I saw all too clearly in Taiz.

Unless the warring parties improve their respect of the laws of war, I am afraid we must expect more epidemics in the future.

Yemenis are resilient people, but how much more must they resist? We have seen, in Syria and elsewhere, how two years of conflict turns into six, ten.

Yemen's fate can be different, but I see few signs of hope. The suffering of its people only grows in intensity. I've met families forced to make impossible choices about whether to buy bread, water or medicine for their children.

Thousands of people have been detained by parties to the conflict, languishing in prison unable to contact their loved ones. Yesterday, some of their families protested outside our office in Sana'a, demanding answers. Their wellbeing is our priority, but to help them we must be allowed to visit detainees.

I've seen for myself this week how war is destroying cities, communities and families.

This, then, is an urgent plea for behaviors to change. It is imperative that parties to the conflict stop the attacks on hospitals, and electricity and water plants. Otherwise, more tragedy will ensue.

The warring parties, including coalition states, should take concrete steps, now, to alleviate the situation.

- They must Stop holding humanitarian action hostage to political ends. Instead, facilitate the flow of aid - and essential supplies like medicine - into and across Yemen
- Guarantee access for humanitarian agencies to the most vulnerable populations
- Give the ICRC regular access to all conflict-related detainees. We received encouraging commitments from both sides this week, and hope these will materialize in the weeks to come.
- Ease import restrictions so economic activity can resume

Moreover, others providing support to the warring parties in Yemen have the responsibility for making sure the laws of war are respected.

Humanitarian funding is more needed than ever. But the international community must go a step further. It must actively seek out solutions to this enormous crisis, and wield influence over the behavior of warring parties as a matter of urgency.

The ICRC has doubled its Yemen budget this year to over USD100 million. We will continue to fight cholera and do all we can to help the most vulnerable people in Yemen. I call on others to step up their efforts and do likewise. The people I met this week in Yemen are counting on us to come to their aid. Let us prove to them that we care about their plight.

▶ *Convictions by:*



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(<https://www.oxfam.org.au/media>)

Oxfam condemns aid warehouse bombing in Yemen

Oxfam has vehemently condemned a Coalition airstrike on one of its storage facilities in Saada Governorate in northern Yemen.

Grace Ommer, Oxfam's country director in Yemen said: "This is an absolute outrage. The contents of the warehouse had no military value. It only contained humanitarian supplies associated with our previous work in Saada, bringing clean water to thousands of households. Thankfully, none of our staff was present at the time, though this conflict as a whole has now claimed more than 1,000 lives, the majority of which are civilians."

Oxfam has been working in the northern governorate of Saada for several years, building water networks to bring clean water to 70,000 people in rural communities through the generous support of the European Union and Swiss Government. Before the escalation in violence, 10 million people were without access to clean water across the country.

Ommer added: "This incident demonstrates again that all Parties to this conflict are adding to an increasingly dire humanitarian situation on the ground. All parties must now find a negotiated peace and allow for humanitarian access."

PLEASE NOTE: On 19 April 2015 Oxfam issued a statement to media confirming that one of our warehouses in Yemen had been destroyed during the Coalition military action in the country, despite the fact that we had shared co-ordinates of the warehouse with the Coalition.

Oxfam is now aware that the co-ordinates of the warehouse had not in fact been shared with the Coalition, so we have amended our statement and formally retract the previous version.

Oxfam stands by our condemnation of the destruction of our warehouse. All parties to the conflict have an obligation to obey international humanitarian law and any deliberate destruction of civilian infrastructure or indiscriminate attacks must cease immediately.

▶ *Convictions by:*

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THE WORLD IN WAR

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EU: Stop arms sales to Saudi Arabia

sign the petition

To members of the EU Parliament, and leaders of the UK, US, Canada, Germany,

France, and all other countries that have arms deals with Saudi Arabia:

As concerned citizens from across the globe, we strongly urge you to suspend all arms deals with Saudi Arabia until they end their assaults in Yemen and begin a genuine peace process.

With 119 violations of international humanitarian law documented in a recent UN report, it's unacceptable to look the other way when Saudi Arabia could be using weapons from our

countries to indiscriminately bomb civilians.



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