



Plenary sitting

B8-0152/2016

27.1.2016

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the statement by the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

pursuant to Rule 123(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on the situation in Yemen
(2016/2515(RSP))

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on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group

**European Parliament resolution on the situation in Yemen
(2016/2515(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Yemen, in particular that of 9 July 2015 on the situation in Yemen¹,
 - having regard to the joint statement of 10 January 2016 by the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Federica Mogherini, and the Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management, Christos Stylianides, on the attack on an MSF health centre in Yemen,
 - having regard to the statement of 15 December 2015 by the European External Action Service (EEAS) spokesperson on the resumption of UN-facilitated talks on Yemen and the joint statement of 2 October 2015 by the Vice-President / High Representative, Federica Mogherini, and the Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management, Christos Stylianides, on Yemen,
 - having regard to UN Security Council resolutions 2201(2015), 2204 (2015), 2216 (2015) on Yemen, and 2140 (2014) imposing sanctions,
 - having regard to the report by the UN Panel of Experts on Yemen established pursuant to Security Council resolution 2140 (2014),
 - having regard to the statements by the EEAS spokesperson on the situation in Yemen of 20 March, 26 March, 1 April, 26 April and 9 June 2015,
 - having regard to the Council Conclusions on Yemen of 20 April 2015,
 - having regard to the statements of 10 January 2016 and 8 January 2016 attributable to the spokesman for the UN Secretary-General on Yemen,
 - having regard to Rule 123(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas, since March 2015 and the start of the Saudi-led intervention in Yemen, the humanitarian crisis in that country has reached catastrophic proportions – greater than any other worldwide when it comes to the number of people immediately affected;
- B. whereas the Saudi airstrikes have proved to be highly indiscriminate, bombing numerous hospitals, schools, markets, grain warehouses, ports, weddings, a camp for internally displaced persons and world heritage sites, which all amount to war crimes, the latest examples of which are the documented use of cluster munitions in heavily populated residential areas on 6 January 2016;
- C. whereas the air, water and land blockade imposed by Saudi Arabia and its allies gravely

¹ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2015)0270.

intensified the deprivation and has only recently been modified in order to allow deliveries of very limited quantities of basic humanitarian aid;

- D. whereas the conflict between the Houthi part of the population and the Yemenite central government has historical roots, which are partly based on Houthi grievances over discrimination, social, economic and political marginalisation and attempts to spread the Wahabi ideology in Yemen; whereas similar armed conflicts, though of lower intensity, have occurred in the past;
- E. whereas the absence of political inclusiveness created the conditions for the rise of the Houthi militia, hailing from the country's north, which exploited the governance and security vacuum and captured the capital city of Sanaa in September 2014, causing the President of Yemen, Abd Rabbu Mansour Hadi, to flee to Saudi Arabia;
- F. whereas the US State Department has publicly declared its support for the Saudi-led coalition and has provided intelligence-sharing, targeting assistance and advisory and logistical support, while the UK Government is training Saudi pilots and is not denying that British advisers have been present in the operations rooms during Saudi raids in Yemen; whereas the coalition has so far failed to re-establish security and stability in the country or to restore President Abd Rabbu Mansour Hadi to power;
- G. whereas, instead, according to the UN, thousands of civilians were killed or wounded in 2015 and the war has led to the internal displacement of more than 2.5 million Yemenites; whereas over 20 million people – 80 % of the population – require some form of humanitarian protection or assistance; whereas more than 2.2 million children are suffering from or at risk of malnutrition, and approximately 14.4 million people are now food-insecure;
- H. whereas the airstrikes have destroyed much of the basic infrastructure, such as bridges, roads, water tanks, telecommunication stations and power plants, in a country which already before the war counted among the least developed; whereas many historic monuments and archaeological sites have also been irreparably damaged or destroyed, including parts of the old City of Sanaa, a UNESCO World Heritage site;
- I. whereas, due to the continuing naval blockade, only 15 % of the pre-crisis volume of imports is getting through to a country that depends on imports for 90 % of its food; whereas 10 of Yemen's 22 provinces have been classified by the World Food Programme as being at the 'emergency' level in terms of food security – on the brink of 'famine';
- J. whereas the blocking of fuel transports is crippling the country's electricity supply and forcing the mass closure of hospitals and schools; whereas the most urgent problem is that the blockade has stopped water pumps from working, bringing to 16 million – nearly two thirds of the population – the total number of Yemenites without access to clean drinking water or sanitation, with dire implications for the spread of disease, including cholera and dengue;
- K. whereas, according to UNICEF, the conflict in Yemen has also had a severe impact on children's access to education, which has come to a standstill for nearly 2 million children, with 3 584 schools – or one in four – being shut down; whereas 860 of these

schools are damaged or sheltering the displaced;

- L. whereas a nationwide ceasefire was declared on 15 December 2015 but has subsequently been widely violated; whereas peace talks held by the warring parties in Switzerland in mid-December 2015 failed to produce any major breakthrough with a view to ending the conflict; whereas the resumption of the UN-led peace talks under the auspices of the UN envoy to Yemen, Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed, which was scheduled for 14 January 2016, has been temporarily postponed amid continued violence;
- M. whereas although Saudi Arabia pledged in April 2015 to finance the USD 274 million UN emergency humanitarian aid fund for Yemen, none of the money has so far been transferred to the UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs; whereas, although the UN launched an appeal in June 2015 for USD 1.6 billion to allow it to assist 11.7 million people, as of 18 November 2015 only 43 % of the funds had arrived;
- N. whereas the EU provided for EUR 52 million in new humanitarian aid for the crisis in Yemen and its impact in the Horn of Africa in 2015;
- O. whereas, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), Saudi Arabia is among the four highest military spenders in the world, with a 17 % increase in purchases in 2014;
- P. whereas Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and IS/Daesh have been able to benefit from the breakdown in the political and security situation in Yemen, expanding their presence and posing an additional threat to the stability and security of the region;
- Q. whereas, in January 2016, Oman closed its two border crossings with Yemen over fears of militant attacks, depriving Yemenis of the only unrestricted land exit from the country and largely sealing them off from the outside world;
- R. whereas EU Member States, in particular the UK, France, Germany, Italy and Belgium, have continued to authorise transfers of weapons and related items to Saudi Arabia since the war started; whereas France signed a series of high-volume strategic contracts with Saudi Arabia during autumn 2015; whereas since 2015 the UK has issued over 100 licences for arms exports to Riyadh, the vast majority of which by value are for combat aircraft and bombs for the Royal Saudi Air Force, with latest government reports showing the value of UK licences to Saudi Arabia to have reached an astoundingly high level of more than GBP 1 billion in bombs, missiles and rockets in the three months from July to September 2015;
- S. whereas the EU Common Position on arms exports explicitly rules out the authorising of arms licences by Member States if there is a clear risk that the military technology or equipment to be exported might be used in the commission of serious violations of international humanitarian law;
- T. whereas the Government of the United States continues to intervene directly in the war via drone strikes directed at 'Al Qaeda' militants in the name of the right to retaliation against the 9/11 terrorist attacks, on the basis of UN Security Council resolutions 1368 (2001) and 1372 (2001);

1. Expresses grave concern at the humanitarian catastrophe unfolding in Yemen, which is characterised by widespread food insecurity and severe malnutrition, indiscriminate attacks against civilians and medical and aid workers, and the destruction of civilian and medical infrastructure caused by the intensification of airstrikes and ground fighting and shelling;
2. Strongly condemns the airstrikes and naval blockade of Yemen imposed by the Saudi Arabian-led coalition and the destabilising unilateral actions taken by the Houthis and military units loyal to ex-president Saleh, which are further weakening Yemen and the region as a whole, creating better conditions for the expansion of terrorist and extremist organisations such as IS/Daesh and AQAP and exacerbating an already critical humanitarian situation;
3. Calls on all sides to stop the military confrontation immediately and at least to agree to a humanitarian pause;
4. Stresses the need for coordinated humanitarian action under UN leadership, and urges all countries to contribute to addressing humanitarian needs; calls on all parties to allow the entry and delivery of urgently needed food, medicine, fuel and other necessary assistance through UN and international humanitarian channels in order to address the urgent needs of civilians affected by the crisis, in accordance with the principle of impartiality, neutrality and independence; recalls that it is therefore essential that commercial shipping access to Yemen be further eased;
5. Reiterates its call on all sides to comply with international humanitarian law and international human rights law, to ensure the protection of civilians and to refrain from directly targeting civilian infrastructure, in particular medical facilities and water systems, and from using civilian buildings for military purposes;
6. Reminds all parties that hospitals and medical personnel are explicitly protected under international humanitarian law and that the indiscriminate, if not deliberate, targeting of civilians and civilian infrastructure amounts to war crimes; stresses the importance of improving the security of aid workers;
7. Calls for an impartial and independent investigation into all alleged violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law, including the latest attacks targeting humanitarian infrastructure and personnel;
8. Is deeply shocked by the fact that EU Member States continue to authorise the provision of arms licences and military training to Saudi Arabia and its coalition allies and underlines the fact that past, present and future arms deliveries by EU Member States to Saudi Arabia represent not only breaches of legally binding EU arms exports rules under Common Position 944/2008 but also violate several provisions of the Arms Trade Treaty and relevant national legislation;
9. Stresses that this ongoing licensing, and direct military training by EU Member States, can be considered to be complicity in war crimes and other serious breaches of international humanitarian law and international human rights law;

10. Urges the Member States to immediately suspend all arms transfers and other military support to Saudi Arabia and its allies in the conflict in Yemen; urges the Vice-President / High Representative to initiate an arms embargo against Saudi Arabia, in the context of the war in Yemen, at the next Foreign Affairs Council meeting on 5-6 February 2016;
11. Condemns US drone strikes also and reiterates its position that there should be an international ban on the use of drones for the purpose of extrajudicial killings;
12. Calls for the EU and its Member States to step up their financial contributions to the Yemen Humanitarian Response Plan so as to meet the 2016 funding requirements; urges the EU to put pressure on all donors to fulfil their promises and to deliver on their pledges in a swift manner;
13. Stresses that there can only be a political, inclusive and negotiated solution to the conflict; urges all parties to engage in good faith in a new round of UN-led peace negotiations as soon as possible; supports the relentless efforts of the UN Special Envoy, Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed, to hold UN-facilitated peace talks on Yemen in accordance with the Gulf Cooperation Council initiative, the outcomes of the National Dialogue Conference, and relevant UN Security Council resolutions, in particular resolutions 2140 and 2216;
14. Calls for the EU to effectively promote compliance with international human rights law and international humanitarian law, as provided for in the relevant EU guidelines; stresses, in particular, the need for the EU, in its political dialogue with Saudi Arabia, to raise the necessity of complying with international humanitarian law; calls on the Council, should such dialogue yield no results, to consider imposing restrictive measures and sanctions on states or individuals involved in violations of international humanitarian law, such as Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, in addition to the already existing restrictive measures against Houthi leader Abdulmalik Al-Houti and Ahmed Ali Abdullah Saleh, the son of the ousted Yemeni President;
15. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the parliaments and governments of the Member States, the Special Envoy of the United Nations Secretary-General to Yemen, the Governments of Yemen and of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the parliaments and governments of the states belonging to the Gulf Cooperation Council and to the League of Arab States.