



Plenary sitting

B8-0153/2016

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 humanitarian situation in Yemen
(2016/2515(RSP))

Marietje Schaake, Petras Auštrevičius, Dita Charanzová, Gérard Deprez, Filiz Hyusmenova, Ivan Jakovčić, Petr Ježek, Ilhan Kyuchyuk, Javier Nart, Norica Nicolai, Urmas Paet, Jozo Radoš, Jasenko Selimovic, Pavel Telička, Ivo Vajgl, Johannes Cornelis van Baalen, Hilde Vautmans
on behalf of the ALDE Group

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

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Yemen and 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 (VP/HR), 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 to the joint statement of 2 October 2015 by the VP/HR, Federica Mogherini, and the EU Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management, Christos Stylianides, on Yemen,
 - having regard to the Foreign Affairs Council conclusions on Yemen, in particular those of 20 April 2015,
 - having regard to the UN Security Council resolutions on Yemen and, in particular, to resolutions 2216 (2015), 2201 (2015) and 2140 (2014),
 - 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 the dramatic humanitarian situation in Yemen, resulting from the Saudi-led military intervention, which included the use of cluster bombs, and the ongoing political, security, economic and humanitarian challenges that are affecting the country's population, have serious implications for the region and constitute a threat to international peace and security; whereas members of Yemen's civilian population, already affected by dire living conditions, are the first victims of the current military escalation;
- B. whereas according to the spokesperson for the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, since the start of the Saudi-led intervention in late March 2015, there have been 8 119 civilian casualties – 2 795 deaths and 5 324 wounded; whereas there are hundreds of women and children among the victims; whereas the humanitarian impact on the civilian population of the ongoing fighting between various militias, bombardments and the disruption of essential services is reaching alarming proportions;
- C. whereas according to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian

¹ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2015)0270.

Affairs (OCHA), the conflict has internally displaced more than 2.51 million Yemenis; whereas 21.1 million people – 80 per cent 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;

- D. whereas there are multiple reports that airstrikes have hit civilian targets, including hospitals, schools, markets, grain warehouses, ports and a camp for displaced persons, severely damaging essential infrastructure for the delivery of aid and contributing to the severe food and fuel shortages in the country; whereas a hospital supported by *Médecins Sans Frontières* (MSF) in Northern Yemen was bombed on 10 January 2016, resulting in at least five people being killed, a dozen being injured, including MSF staff, and severe damage to medical facilities; whereas this is the latest in a series of attacks on health facilities;
- E. whereas a naval blockade is impeding access to vital humanitarian aid for the civilian population who are in urgent need of food, water and medical supplies; whereas according to UN sources only 15 % of the pre-crisis volume of imports is getting through, in a country that depends on imports for 90 % of its food supply; 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 – one step below 'famine';
- F. whereas tankers carrying petrol, diesel and fuel oil are also being stopped routinely by the naval blockade 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 working;
- G. whereas according to Oxfam, the fighting and the embargo have led to 3 million Yemenis being cut off from a clean water supply since March 2015, bringing to 16 million – the equivalent of nearly two thirds of the population – the total number of people without access to drinking water or sanitation, with dire implications for the spread of disease, including cholera and dengue;
- H. whereas, according to Save the Children, hospitals in at least 18 of the country's 22 governorates have been closed as a result of, or severely affected by, the fighting or the lack of fuel; whereas, in particular, 153 health centres that previously supplied nutrition to more than 450 000 at-risk children have closed down, together with 158 outpatient clinics responsible for providing basic healthcare to nearly half a million children under the age of five;
- I. whereas according to UNICEF, the conflict in Yemen has also had a severe impact on children's access to education as the education system has come to a standstill for nearly 2 million children, with 3 584 schools, or one out of every four, being shut down; whereas 860 of these schools are damaged or sheltering the displaced;
- J. whereas a nationwide ceasefire was declared on 15 December 2015 but has since been widely violated, and whereas peace talks held by the warring parties in mid-December 2015 in Switzerland failed to produce any major breakthrough towards 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;

- K. whereas maintaining this ceasefire is the appropriate response in order to avoid further civilian casualties and the destruction of critical civilian infrastructure; whereas it also offers the possibility of fully enabling access to emergency assistance to address the unprecedented needs of the Yemeni population;
 - L. whereas, in April 2015, Saudi Arabia pledged that it would completely finance a USD 274 million UN emergency humanitarian fund for Yemen, but so far no money has been transferred to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs; whereas in June 2015 the UN launched an appeal for USD 1.6 billion to help it to assist 11.7 million people, but as of 18 November 2015, it had received only 43 % of the total funds needed;
 - M. whereas in 2015 the EU provided EUR 12 million in additional humanitarian aid for the crisis in Yemen and to help alleviate its impact on the Horn of Africa; whereas the EU will provide up to EUR 2 million for the establishment of the UN Verification and Inspection Mechanism (UNVIM) for commercial shipping to Yemen, thus facilitating the unimpeded flow of commercial items and humanitarian aid to Yemen;
1. Expresses grave concern at the alarming deterioration of the humanitarian situation 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 as a result of the intensification of airstrikes, ground fighting and shelling, despite repeated calls for a renewed cessation of hostilities; reaffirms its commitment to continuing to support Yemen and the Yemeni people;
 2. Stresses the need for coordinated humanitarian action under UN leadership, and urges all countries to contribute to addressing humanitarian needs; urges all parties to allow the entry and delivery of urgently needed food, medicine, fuel and other necessary assistance through UN and international humanitarian organisation channels in order to address the urgent needs of civilians affected by the crisis, in accordance with the principles of impartiality, neutrality and independence; recalls that it is therefore essential that commercial shipping access to Yemen be further eased;
 3. Calls on all parties involved in the conflict to allow unrestrained and unimpeded access for humanitarian workers and aid relief to the Yemeni population, which is in dire need of vital assistance, and consequently calls for a humanitarian pause to allow life-saving assistance to reach the Yemeni people as a matter of urgency;
 4. 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;
 5. Reminds all parties that hospitals and medical personnel are explicitly protected under international humanitarian law and that the deliberate targeting of civilians and civilian infrastructure amounts to a war crime; stresses the importance of improving the security of aid workers so that they can respond to attacks more effectively; 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; calls on the VP/HR to launch an initiative to install a European arms embargo against Saudi Arabia given the serious nature of these allegations and the fact that the continued selling of weapons meets Criteria Two, Four and Six of Council Common Position 2008/944/CFSP of 8 December 2008;

6. 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;
7. Reminds the VP/HR and the Member States, as a matter of urgency, to gather support within the UN for an international plan to secure Yemen's water supply, which might prove to be an essential move in the successful conclusion of a potential peace process, thereby raising the prospect of the population being able to improve agriculture, feed itself and rebuild the country;
8. 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;
9. 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 governments and parliaments of the Member States, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Secretary-General of the Gulf Cooperation Council, the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, and the Government of Yemen.