

Stop shelling civilians in Yemen, urge MEPs

A ceasefire that halts attacks against civilians, medical and aid workers, ground fighting and shelling in Yemen is urgently needed to allow life-saving aid to reach the Yemeni people, said MEPs in a resolution voted on Thursday. They also called on all parties in Yemen's civil war and their foreign backers to engage in a new round of peace negotiations and seek a political settlement.

The European Parliament is gravely concerned at the deterioration of humanitarian situation in Yemen. The failure of successive governments there to meet the Yemeni people's aspirations for democracy, stability and security led to the current crisis, which has left 21 million Yemeni people (82% of the total population) needing humanitarian assistance and prevented two million children from attending school, the resolution says.

MEPs urge Yemen's warring parties to abide by a ceasefire deal, to allow life-saving aid, such as food or medicine, to reach the Yemeni people. They also call on all sides to refrain from directly targeting civilian infrastructure, medical facilities and water systems.

The resolution acknowledges that Saudi Arabia and Iran are instrumental in resolving the crisis in Yemen, but it also expresses grave concern "at the airstrikes by the Saudi-led coalition and the naval blockade it has imposed on Yemen, which have led to thousands of deaths, [and] have further destabilised Yemen". MEPs call on EU diplomacy chief Federica Mogherini "to launch an initiative aimed at imposing an EU arms embargo against Saudi Arabia".

MEPs stress that only a political, inclusive and negotiated solution to the conflict can restore peace and preserve unity in Yemen. They urge all parties to engage in a new round of UN-led peace negotiations as soon as possible.

The resolution was passed by 449 votes to 36, with 78 abstentions.

Background information

Since early in 2015 forces loyal to President, Abd-Rabbuh Mansour al-Hadi, have been fighting Shia rebels known as Houthis. In March, a coalition led by Saudi Arabia responded to a call for help from Mr Hadi by launching air strikes on Houthi targets. The coalition comprises five Gulf Arab states, Jordan, Egypt, Morocco, Sudan and is backed by the USA and the UK.

Further information

[Adopted texts will be available here \(click on 25.02.2016\)](#)

[Video recording of the debate on Yemen \(20.01.2016\)](#)

[Procedure file](#)

Political groups

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