



Plenary sitting

6.7.2015

B8-0683/2015

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
(2015/2760(RSP))

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on behalf of the S&D Group

**European Parliament resolution on the situation in Yemen
(2015/2760(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Council conclusions on Yemen of 20 April 2015,
 - having regard to the UN Security Council resolutions on Yemen, in particular resolutions 2201 of 15 February 2015 and 2216 of 14 April 2015,
 - having regard to the remarks on Yemen made by the UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Stephen O'Brien, on 25 June 2015,
 - having regard to the joint statement of 3 July 2015 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 crisis in Yemen,
 - having regard to Rule 123(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the current crisis in Yemen is the result of a failure by successive governments to meet the legitimate aspirations of the Yemeni people for democracy, economic and social development, stability and security; whereas the failed transition following the resignation of long-serving President Ali Abdullah Saleh in favour of Vice-President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi has created the conditions for an outbreak of violent conflict by failing to establish an inclusive government and fair power-sharing, and systematically ignoring the country's many tribal tensions, widespread insecurity and economic paralysis;
- B. whereas these failures created the conditions for the rise of Houthi militias, hailing from the north of the country, which exploited the vacuum in governance and security and captured the capital city of Sana'a in September 2014, and which have made sweeping gains across the country since then, aided and abetted by forces loyal to ex-President Saleh, resulting in the imprisonment of political opponents and an onslaught on major population centres such as Aden and Taiz; whereas the legitimate president of Yemen, Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi, fled to Saudi Arabia as a result and has remained in Riyadh ever since;
- C. whereas, as a reaction to the Houthis' advances and in response to a request from President Hadi, on 26 March 2015 a Saudi-Arabian-led coalition of Arab states launched Operation Decisive Storm, later renamed Operation Restoring Hope, in Yemen in order to roll back the gains made by Ansar Allah (the dominant Houthi militia), to restore President Hadi to power and to bring security and stability to the country; whereas these objectives have not been achieved so far, despite intensive bombardments of Houthi positions; whereas, however, this intervention has succeeded in exacerbating the already dire humanitarian situation; whereas more than 3 000 people have been killed, and more than 10 000 injured, since the outbreak of hostilities;

- D. whereas, in addition to air strikes, Saudi Arabia has imposed a naval blockade of Yemen which has had dramatic effects, with 22 million people – almost 80 % of the population – in urgent need of food, water and medical supplies; whereas the transport of humanitarian aid and goods inside the country is being seriously hampered by road blocks, fighting and the overall lack of security; whereas the UN has declared the highest-level humanitarian emergency in Yemen and has warned that the country is now one step away from famine;
- E. whereas 9.9 million children have been severely affected by the conflict, with 279 children killed and 402 injured since March 2015; whereas at least 1.8 million children have lost access to education owing to conflict-related school closures, placing them at increased risk of recruitment or use by armed groups and of other forms of abuse;
- F. whereas UNICEF estimates that more than half a million children under the age of five are at risk of developing severe acute malnutrition, while 1.2 million children under the age of five are at risk of moderate acute malnutrition – a near-twofold increase since the beginning of the crisis;
- G. whereas the health system is on the verge of collapse, with the interruption in vaccination services putting an estimated 2.6 million children under the age of 15 at risk of contracting measles and 2.5 million children at risk of diarrhoea – a potentially fatal disease that spreads rapidly in times of conflict and population displacement; whereas the number of dengue fever cases is rising, chronic diseases lack treatment, and vital medical supplies and personnel are being blocked from reaching the people targeted;
- H. whereas UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon called for an investigation after Saudi-led air strikes hit the UN Development Programme compound in Saada, causing serious damage;
- I. whereas Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) has been able to benefit from the deterioration of the political and security situation in Yemen, expanding its presence and augmenting the number and scale of its terrorist attacks;
- J. whereas the so-called Islamic State (IS) / Da'esh has established its presence in Yemen and carried out terrorist attacks against Shiite mosques, killing hundreds of people; whereas both AQAP and IS/Da'esh are expected to exploit Yemen's security vacuum to increase their capabilities and plot attacks against Yemeni security forces, Houthis and any Western presence;
- K. whereas the continuing war and the expansion of AQAP and IS/Da'esh in Yemen pose a direct threat to the stability and security of other countries in the region, and to the EU and the global international community;
- L. whereas the UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Yemen, Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed, is continuing to negotiate with all sides in order to work towards a 'humanitarian pause'; whereas Oman, which refrained from joining Operation Decisive Storm, later renamed Operation Restoring Hope, and which enjoys strong relations with both the main parties to the conflict, is leading regional diplomatic efforts to achieve a ceasefire;

- M. whereas, following the beginning of the war in Yemen, the Old City of Sana'a, a UNESCO World Heritage site, was hit in a bombing raid; whereas, as a result, many historic buildings, monuments, museums, archaeological sites and places of worship have been irreparably damaged or destroyed;
- N. whereas, for several reasons, Yemen is closer than ever to Europe, first of all because many Yemeni refugees – together with people from the Horn of Africa who have settled in Yemen in recent years – will now apply for asylum in Europe, and secondly because the instability in Yemen provides fertile ground for the training of terrorists who carry out attacks in European countries (as in the case of *Charlie Hebdo* in Paris);
1. Reaffirms its strong support for the unity, sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Yemen, and stands by the people of Yemen;
 2. Expresses grave alarm at the rapidly deteriorating political, security and humanitarian situation in Yemen, and urges all sides in the conflict to agree to a humanitarian pause, at least during the current Muslim holy month of Ramadan, to allow desperately needed aid to be delivered to the population, as a first step towards a lasting ceasefire which should prepare the ground for a negotiated political solution; expresses its deep concern about the 13 million people in Yemen who face a food security crisis and the 9.4 million who have little or no access to water;
 3. Condemns the destabilising and violent unilateral actions taken by the Houthis and military units loyal to ex-President Saleh, especially in the cities of Aden and Taiz; also condemns the air strikes by the Saudi-Arabian-led coalition and the naval blockade it has imposed on Yemen, which have led to the deaths of thousands of people, have further destabilised Yemen, have created more conducive conditions for the expansion of terrorist and extremist organisations such as IS/Daesh and AQAP, and have exacerbated an already critical humanitarian situation;
 4. Urges all warring parties to end the use of violence immediately; urges the Saudi-Arabian-led coalition to lift the naval blockade of Yemen immediately, allowing the full resumption of commercial imports to Yemeni ports in order to avoid even more serious hunger and shortages, in particular of food, fuel and medical supplies; calls on all parties to engage with a view to the effective delivery of humanitarian aid to people in need in every region of the country;
 5. Calls, in this connection, for the EU, its Member States and the USA to intensify their pressure on the Government of Saudi Arabia to concentrate only on stopping and searching individual ships on which there is good reason to believe that arms are being smuggled; calls on the Member States to stop any exports of arms to sides in the conflict as being incompatible with the EU Common Position on arms export controls;
 6. Calls on all sides to ensure the protection of civilians and to refrain from targeting civilian infrastructure, in particular medical facilities and water systems;
 7. Urges all sides to uphold their obligations under international humanitarian and human rights law and, as a matter of urgency, to grant unrestricted access for humanitarian workers and aid relief so that vital assistance can be delivered immediately to the most vulnerable people;

8. Recalls that arbitrarily denying humanitarian access and depriving civilians of objects indispensable to their survival constitute a violation of international humanitarian law;
9. Calls for the independent international investigation of all alleged violations of international human rights and international humanitarian law;
10. Stresses that there can only be a political, inclusive, negotiated solution to the conflict; urges all Yemeni parties, therefore, to work towards resolving their differences through dialogue, compromise and power-sharing leading to the formation of a government of national unity in order to restore peace, avoid economic and financial collapse and address the humanitarian crisis;
11. Expresses its full support for the efforts of the UN and of the UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy to Yemen, Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed, to broker peace negotiations between the parties; supports Oman's efforts in achieving a ceasefire between the Houthis and forces loyal to the Government of Yemen as a first step towards a negotiated political solution;
12. Condemns in the strongest possible terms the terrorist attacks carried out by IS/Da'esh against Shiite mosques in Sanaa and Saada, which killed and wounded hundreds of people, together with the spread of the extreme sectarian ideology underpinning these criminal acts;
13. Is alarmed at AQAP's ability to benefit from the deteriorating political and security situation in Yemen; urges all parties to the conflict to demonstrate firm commitment and a determination to fight extremist and terrorist groups such as IS/Da'esh and AQAP as a matter of the highest priority; warns that any attempts to use these groups as proxies in fights against perceived enemies will backfire and only lead to greater instability, sectarian bloodshed and the destabilisation of neighbouring countries;
14. 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 United Nations Secretary-General's Special Envoy to Yemen, the Governments of Yemen and of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the parliaments and governments of the states of the Gulf Cooperation Council and of the League of Arab States.