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Human rights situations that require the Council's attention

Written statement* submitted by Amman Center for Human Rights Studies, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[02 June 2019]

* Issued as received, in the language(s) of submission only.



A call to stop arms sales to countries involved in the Yemen war

The Amman center for Human Rights studies would like to draw particular attention to the arms sales to the countries involved in the war in Yemen

Governments involved in arms sales to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates can no longer deny their implication in war crimes committed in Yemen. Moreover, to continue arming those countries is to continue violating the international Arms Trade Treaty, which exhort the exporting State Party to prohibit arm sales that may commit war crimes, affect civilians or facilitate a serious violation of international human rights law¹. We urge the governments of the United States of America, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and France, the three main arms providers, to stop the arms trade with countries involved in the war in Yemen. We call for a complete embargo on arms sales to the countries involved in the Yemen War. We also call on the Islamic Republic of Iran to stop its arm supplies to the Houthis militias in Yemen.

The presence of weapons in Yemen is dramatically worsening the situation in the country. Armed militias are using arms from main weapons providers of the world today. Those militias, mainly armed by the United Arab Emirates but also by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Iran, are committing war crimes and severe human rights violations on the ground in Yemen. It is no more a secret that weapons made in Western countries are being used by militias, often classified as terrorist organizations in Yemen. The Yemeni civilian population are the first victim of these crimes.

According to our partner organization, the Yemen Organization for Defending Rights and Democratic Freedoms, direct military strikes have caused the death of more than 15,000 civilians and injured more than 24,000, while the same weapons brought in billions of USD\$ for some nations. According to a recent report, American and British weapons killed or injured nearly 1,000 civilians in Yemen. The international community must put an end to this hypocrisy.

Which human rights violations are we talking about? The resolution A/HRC/RES/36/31, voted during the 36th session of the HRC, requested the HC to establish a group of Eminent International and Regional Experts on Yemen. This group of experts from the OHCHR issued their report² on August 2018. It is a crucial source of fact and numbers to highlight the violations of human rights occurring in Yemen. According to the report, they have reasonable grounds to believe that human rights and international humanitarian law have been violated several times by all parties to the conflict:

- Attacks affecting civilians (more than 16,706 civilian casualties)
- Access restrictions (severe naval and air restrictions in Yemen)
- Arbitrary detention, enforced disappearances, torture and ill-treatment
- Violations of freedom of expression, threats against journalists and human rights defenders
- Sexual violence: According to Amnesty International's latest report, children as young as eight years old have been raped in the Yemeni city of Ta'iz.
- Child recruitment and use by both armed parties in the ongoing conflict

¹ Treaty Text: https://thearmstradetreaty.org/hyper-images/file/ATT_English/ATT_English.pdf?templateId=137253.

² Report: <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G18/252/79/PDF/G1825279.pdf?OpenElement>.

We call on this council to adopt initiatives preventing further arms sales to the countries involved in the war in Yemen.

We demand the respect of the Arms Trade Treaty by all its signatories.

We demand the adoption and the respect of the several reports issued by the different bodies of the OHCHR regarding the situation in Yemen.

We demand the end of arms sales to all warring parties, in order to strengthen the peace building efforts.

We demand the establishment of an international commission for investigating the crimes caused by the war and aggression in Yemen.
