



Ms. Federica Mogherini  
High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission

Brussels, 20 October 2017

Dear High Representative,

The war in Yemen has entered its third year and the effects are devastating. As of the beginning of 2017 the civilian casualties alone had surpassed 10 000 people and 40 000 injured. In 2015 a UN report stated that in populated areas a staggering 93 per cent of deaths and injuries were civilians. There have been numerous reports of air strikes on schools, weddings and hospitals. UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein has said that "Intentional attacks on hospitals or ambulances being exclusively used for medical purposes would amount to war crimes". The recent UN annual report of Children and Armed Conflict had Saudi Arabia listed as The Saudi-led air coalition was responsible for inflicting the deaths of at least 683 children, the largest number of child casualties in the report.

Last year a UN report estimated that 2.5 million people had been displaced and 80 per cent of the population were in need of humanitarian aid. The naval blockade of the country's imports is blocking food and medicine supply which has left up the people with grave famine. The UN estimates that about 20 million people are in need of some form of aid. Many will die from starvation.

The bombings of health infrastructure such as water plants and hospitals, along with the naval blockade has led the health system to collapse. Millions of people are cut off from clean water, and waste collection has ceased in major cities. With deteriorating hygiene and sanitation conditions and disruptions to the water supply, Yemen's is currently suffering the largest cholera epidemic in the world. Last month the WHO reported that the total number of suspected cholera cases in Yemen this year hit half a million and that nearly 2000 people have died since the outbreak began to spread rapidly at the end of April. These victims are also a direct result of Saudi-led coalition's military actions.

Despite all of this, EU Member State's arms export weapons to Saudi Arabia have continued. Last month the European Parliament adopted the annual report on the union's arms export control in which it re-iterated its call from 26 February 2016 on the urgent need to impose an arms embargo on Saudi Arabia, in line with Council Common Position 2008/944/CFSP of 8 December 2008.



It is our view that any such exports to Saudi Arabia are in direct violation of at least criterion 2 of the Common Position in regard to the country's involvement in grave breaches of humanitarian law as established by competent UN authorities. Since April 2015 there is a UN arms embargo against the Houthi rebels in Yemen.

We call on you as the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR) to respond to the European Parliament's repeated request and put forward a proposal in the Council to impose an EU arms embargo on Saudi Arabia.

Best regards,

Ska Keller, co-president Greens/EFA group  
Philippe Lamberts, co-president Greens/EFA group  
Gianni Pittella, president S&D group  
Guy Verhofstadt, president ALDE group  
Gabriele Zimmer, president GUE/NGL group