

The Yemen genocide accelerates

On January 26th, 2017, the UNSC had "a briefing and consultation about the Yemen crisis focusing on the humanitarian situation". OCHA (UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs) gave a report on the humanitarian disaster. The Yemen genocide accelerates. It is the worst humanitarian crisis in the world now, OCHA stated.

The years of malnutrition is now beginning to take its toll in a devastating way. The civilian deaths from the war was estimated to 11.403 in November 2016 after 600 days of bombing. Now the hunger deaths are rapidly overtaking the direct casualties of the war. UNICEF reported January 11 that 63.000 children had died during year 2016 because of malnutrition in Yemen. Almost half a million children are in "severe acute malnutrition", that is, about to die. 3.3 million, among them 2.2 million children, are in "acute malnutrition".

(<http://english.aawsat.com/2017/02/article55366693/unicef-63000-yemeni-children-died-2016-malnutrition>) 14 million people are currently "food insecure" of whom half are "severely food insecure". This means that at least 7 million people need emergency food assistance to survive. (<http://reliefweb.int/report/yemen/under-secretary-general-humanitarian-affairs-and-emergency-relief-coordinator-11>)

The UNSC on January 26th discussed the possibilities to open the airport and the harbour Hudaydah for emergency humanitarian assistance. 20.000 persons are waiting to go abroad to get specialized medical treatment. The Sanaa airport, that is closed because it was bombed, is also important to bring in journalists as it is almost impossible to travel to Yemen now, and very little independent news come out. The only harbour under the Sanaa government control, Hudaydah, is under the sea blockade. The harbour cranes there were bombed by the Saudis and four new mobile cranes brought by the World Food Program are not allowed to land and are currently waiting in the ship at sea, OCHA reported. Hudaydah the only major harbour that can reach the majority of the population in Yemen.

There is no new resolution or amendment of the UNSC Resolution 2216 in the pipeline. It belongs to the picture is that the British are the so-called "penholder". This means that the British UN representatives are the ones supposed to write any amendment of this resolution.

What therefore has to be clarified, to bring in the food and to stop the war, is that the bombing of Yemen is a breach of international law. The Saudi-led bombings started five weeks before any UNSC resolution existed. No one of the delegates in the UNSC, cited in the resolution, mentions any bombing, which shows even stronger that the Resolution 2216 has nothing to do with that. This is also the Russian position which is clear from a article in Sputniknews, May 2nd, 2015 where the late Russian UN-Representative Vitaly Churkin["added also that the UN Security Council's previous resolution on Yemen 2216 did not authorize air strikes by the Saudi Arabia-led Coalition"]. "It is clear from Resolution 2216 that it did not authorize the use of military force. Some colleagues were saying that the Saudi led coalition is trying to make sure that resolution 2216 is implemented. This is not the case. Their action is completely outside the resolution."

(<https://sputniknews.com/amp/politics/201505021021620895/>)

A Pakistani scholar, Sikander Ahmed Shah, successfully advising his government not to join the war against Yemen, pointed at the fact that the former president Hadi had lost control over the capital and territory, when he from Aden called for the Saudi-led military intervention. April 6th, 2015, a week before the adoption of the Resolution 2216, Shah writes: "... an intervention would not violate the sovereignty of Yemen if the incumbent government consents to or invites external military intervention. ...However, such assistance can only be lawfully provided if the incumbent government requesting it exercises 'effective control' over its territory. ... However, under international law, it no longer enjoys effective control if it loses control over the capital city and is in "imminent danger of collapse. Yemen is in the midst of the latter, where the capital city and sizeable chunks of territory are under the rebels. Control enjoyed by Hadi is limited to Aden and that too is not far from collapse. Therefore, legally speaking, relying on the president's consent for military intervention is highly problematic." (<http://www.dawn.com/news/1174185>)

Furthermore the Resolution 2216 violates the statutes of the UN Charter by putting the whole blame on one party of a domestic conflict. This is not according to the UN policy of reconciliation and noninterference in domestic conflicts.

The war has no legal ground. The Resolution 2216 is providing for the arms blockade, which has resulted in a mission creep allowing for a genocide against the Yemeni people. This implementation of the Resolution 2216 is illegal. The UN does not allow starvation or war crimes in the implementation of its policies and resolutions.

Here all pressure from both international NGO:s and governments are absolutely necessary. There are so many tricks with the implementation of the resolution and the blockades, that have to be identified. One of them is that most imports of food, medicine and fuel is stopped already in the harbour of origin, pending acceptance of an application for import permission. this permission is almost never accepted, as the application has to be sent to the Yemeni Transport Ministry of the Hadi government in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, where they block it, and thereby prevent the imports getting to the North. Even paperwork requests for humanitarian assistance have difficulty getting permission.

The Hadi government is in physical control of the other major harbor in Yemen, Aden, but this harbor is extremely insecure because of the proliferation of undisciplined militias and outright terrorist bands like Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and Daesh (ISIS). The UN relief organizations organizations cannot bring the food ashore in Aden, and the food remains at sea or in Djibouti in eastern Africa.

On December 6, 2016 Oxfam demanded the lifting of the import restrictions to Yemen for food, fuel and medicine. Mark Goldring, Oxfam GB Chief Executive, said: "Yemen is being slowly starved to death. First there were restrictions on imports - including much need food - when this was partially eased the cranes in the ports were bombed, then the warehouses, then the roads and the bridges.

This is not by accident - it is systematic. The country's economy, its institutions, its ability to feed and care for its people are all on the brink of collapse. There is still time to pull it back before we see chronic hunger becoming widespread starvation. The fighting needs to stop and the ports should be fully opened to vital supplies of food, fuel and medicine." <http://www.oxfam.org.uk/media-centre/press-releases/2016/12/yemen-running-out-of-food>

There are 12 international humanitarian NGOs that demanded on Aug. 16, 2016, that the restrictions for the civilian air traffic to Yemen be lifted. These NGO:s were ACF International, ACTED, Care, Danish Refugee Council, Global Communities, Handicap International, International Rescue Committee, Intersos, Mercy Corps, Norwegian Refugee Council, Oxfam and Save the Children. The bombing war is illegal as it perpetrates war crimes against Yemen by systematically attacking 1) civilian targets like houses, hospital, schools, markets, funerals; 2) the food procurements, the harbour, the roads and bridges, fuel and food storages, food production, water dams and even made farm fields unusable with cluster bombs; 3) the ancient cultural heritage, musems, cities, mosques - a world heritage.

Even the U.K. Ministry of Defence has said it has noted 252 alleged violations of international humanitarian law carried out by the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen's civil war. This also makes the arms trade to Saudi Arabia from U.K., U.S. and other countries like Sweden illegal.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/ministry-of-defence-saudi-arabia-coalition-forces-yemen-clsuter-bombs-humanitarian-law-violations-a7549581.html>

Addressing these illegalities is now urgently needed to stop the genocide. The realignment of the U.S. and Russia is desperately needed to begin to clear out this implementation of the resolution that has resulted in artificially creating the biggest humanitarian crisis in the world now.

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