en

Publication | 06.07.2015

Situation in Yemen

Greens/EFA motion for resolution

Tabled by ***Alyn Smith, Barbara Lochbihler, Michel Reimon, Bodil Valero, Igor Šoltes*** *on behalf of the Greens/EFA Group*

The European Parliament,

– having regard to UN Security Council resolutions 2201 (2015), 2204 (2015) and 2216 (2015) on Yemen, and to UN Security Council resolution 2140 (2014) imposing sanctions,

– having regard to the report by the UN Panel of Experts on Yemen drawn up pursuant to UN Security Council resolution 2140 (2014) of 20 February 2015,

– having regard to the asset freeze and travel ban imposed on five people, namely the Houthi military commanders Abd Al-Khaliq Al-Huthi and Abdullah Yahya Al Hakim, the Houthi leader Abdumalik Al-Houthi, and former President Ali Abdullah Saleh and his son Ahmed Ali Abdullah Saleh,

– having regard to the statements by the European External Action Service spokesperson of 20 March, 26 March, 1 April, 26 April and 9 June 2015 on the situation in Yemen,

– having regard to the Council conclusions of 20 April 2015 on Yemen,

– 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 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 the outbreak of a violent conflict by systematically ignoring the many tribal tensions in the country, as well as widespread insecurity and economic paralysis;

B. whereas the Gulf Cooperation Council, supported by UN Security Council resolution 2051 (2012),

launched an initiative for a National Dialogue Conference (NDC) that saw deposed president Ali Abdullah Saleh step down, with a transitional dialogue process taking place in Sana'a in March 2013, but which ended in January 2014 when Ahmed Sharif Al-Din, a Houthi representative in the NDC, was assassinated in the capital, Sana'a, on his way to the conference, this being the second assassination of a Houthi representative, fuelling tensions between Houthis and government-aligned forces;

C. whereas the conflict between the Houthi part of the population and the Yemen central government has historical roots, partly based on Houthi grievances over discrimination and attempts to spread Wahabi teaching in Yemen; whereas the first armed conflict dates back to 2004, and whereas Saudi and US air strikes have also been involved since at least 2009;

D. whereas failures in political inclusiveness created the conditions for the rise of the Houthi militias, hailing from the north of the country, which exploited the vacuum in governance and security and have made sweeping gains across the country since capturing Sana'a in September 2014; whereas the legitimate president of Yemen, Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi, fled to Saudi Arabia as a result, and has remained in Riyadh ever since;

E. whereas on 26 March 2015, in reaction to the Houthi advances, a Saudi-led coalition of Arab states launched Operation Decisive Storm in Yemen in order to roll back the gains made by Ansar Allah (the dominant Houthi militia), to restore Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi to the presidency, and to bring security and stability to the country; whereas these objectives have not been achieved so far, despite intensive air strikes on Houthi positions; whereas around 3 000 people have been killed and more than 10 000 injured since the outbreak of hostilities;

F. whereas numerous civilian casualties in Yemen have been caused by the Houthi armed groups and affiliated forces, including the use of anti-aircraft munitions which detonate after landing in populated areas, killing and maiming civilians; whereas on several occasions air strikes by the Saudi-led military coalition in Yemen have killed civilians, in violation of international humanitarian law, which requires taking all possible steps to prevent or minimise civilian casualties;

G. whereas, in addition to the air strikes, Saudi Arabia has imposed a naval blockade of Yemen which has had dramatic effects on the civilian population, with 22 million people – almost 80 % of the population – now in urgent need of food, water and medical supplies; whereas the UN has declared a highest-level humanitarian emergency in Yemen and has warned that the country is now one step away from famine, while the World Food Programme has warned that about 12 million people are already suffering from hunger, which will cause lasting physical and mental damage for a whole generation of children;

H. whereas Saudi Arabia is among the four highest military spenders in the world, with a 17 % increase in purchases in 2014, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI);

I. whereas the UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, has called for an investigation after Saudi-led air strikes hit the UN Development Programme compound in Saada, causing serious damage;

J. whereas all parties to the conflict have shown utter disregard for human life, repeatedly attacking civilian infrastructure including hospitals, schools, power stations and water installations;

K. whereas Yemen's national healthcare system has reached breaking point, with dengue fever on the rise, chronic diseases lacking treatment, and vital medical supplies and personnel blocked from reaching targeted people;

L. whereas the country is rapidly running out of fuel, and whereas this is already severely restricting aid distribution and will soon lead to a life-threatening water shortage, since drought-stricken Yemen is

entirely dependent on fuel-run deep well pumps for its water supply;

M. 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;

N. 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;

O. 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;

P. whereas in mid-June 2015 the UN led peace talks in Geneva between the warring Yemeni factions, mediated by the UN Special Envoy for Yemen, Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed, which have yielded no results; whereas Oman, which refrained from joining Operation Decisive Storm and enjoys close relations with both main parties to the conflict, is leading regional diplomatic efforts to achieve a ceasefire;

Q. 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;

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, which leaves only the choice between peace or the starvation of large parts of the population;

3. Calls on all sides to stop the military confrontation immediately and at least to agree to a humanitarian pause during the current Muslim holy month of Ramadan, to allow desperately needed aid to be delivered to the population;

4. Condemns the destabilising unilateral actions taken by the Houthis and military units loyal to ex-President Saleh, and also condemns the air strikes by the Saudi-led coalition and the naval blockade it has imposed on Yemen, which have already led to thousands of deaths, further destabilising Yemen, creating more favourable conditions for the expansion of terrorist and extremist organisations such as IS/Da'esh and AQAP, and exacerbating an already critical humanitarian situation;

5. Urges the Saudi-led coalition to lift the naval blockade of Yemen immediately, allowing 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;

6. Calls, in this connection, on 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 where there is good reason to believe arms are being smuggled;

7. Calls on the Member States to stop all exports of arms to parties to the conflict, as being incompatible with the EU Common Position on arms export controls; criticises, in particular, the recently announced French and British military export deals with Saudi Arabia;

8. Calls on all sides to ensure the protection of civilians and to refrain from targeting civilian

infrastructure, in particular medical facilities and water systems; calls for killings of civilians to be independently and impartially investigated as possible disproportionate or indiscriminate attacks, for the findings of any investigation to be made public and for those suspected of being responsible for serious violations of the laws of war to be brought to justice in fair trials; stresses that all victims of unlawful attacks and their families should receive full reparation;

9. Urges all sides to allow unrestricted access for humanitarian workers and aid relief so that vital assistance can immediately be delivered to the most vulnerable people; stresses that arbitrarily denying humanitarian access and depriving civilians of items that are indispensable to their survival constitute a violation of international humanitarian law;

10. Calls for an independent international investigation into the alleged violations of international human rights and international humanitarian law;

11. Stresses that there can only be a political, inclusive and negotiated solution to the conflict; urges, therefore, all Yemeni parties 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 pending humanitarian catastrophe;

12. 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;

13. Calls on the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, together with the Member States, as a matter of urgency, to gather support within the UN for a grand international plan to secure Yemen's water supply, since, as well as being absolutely necessary, such a move could be decisive in bringing a potential peace process to a successful conclusion and giving the population the prospect of being able to improve agriculture, feed themselves and rebuild the country;

14. Condemns in the strongest possible terms the terrorist attacks carried out by IS/Da'esh against Shiite mosques in Sana'a and Saada, which have killed and wounded hundreds of people; warns against the danger of spreading the extreme sectarian ideology underpinning the criminal actions of IS/Da'esh;

15. 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 instrumentalise these groups as proxies in the fight against perceived enemies will backfire and will only lead to greater instability, sectarian bloodshed and destabilisation in neighbouring countries;

16. 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.

Recommended

Publication



[Call for tenders: Greens/EFA Consultation widget]

18.10.2026

Publication



Call for tenders: The Greens/EFA CRM Software

08.10.2026

Publication



[Human Resources Management System]

02.10.2025

Publication



[Heads of national delegations in the GREENS/EFA Group]

11.03.2025

Responsible MEPs



Barbara Lochbihler

Member



Michel Reimon

Member



Heather Anderson

Member



Igor Šoltes

Member



Bodil Valero

Vice-President

Contact person



Sabine Meyer

Advisor on Foreign Affairs

Please share

- E-Mail