



## INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL SUPPORTING FAIR TRIAL & HUMAN RIGHTS

Registration No. 2795/2012

OFFICIAL LETTER HEAD OF THE ORGANIZATION

### SAUDI-LED COALITION REJECTS UN'S YEMEN 'WAR CRIMES' REPORT



The Saudi-led coalition, which is waging a destructive war in Yemen for more than three years, dismissed on Wednesday as inaccurate a [report](#) by UN investigators that highlighted possible [war crimes](#) in the conflict-torn country including deadly airstrikes by the alliance.

In the report released on Tuesday, a team of UN-mandated investigators said all parties in Yemen's bloody conflict have committed a “substantial number of violations of international humanitarian law,” mainly by “making little effort to minimise civilian casualties”.

However, in a statement released by the official *Saudi Press Agency*, the coalition affirmed “inaccuracies in the report and its non-neutrality,” adding that it would later provide a “comprehensive and detailed legal response” to the report.

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## **What does the report say?**

Many of these violations may amount to “war crimes”, the report said, pointing to widespread arbitrary detention, enforced disappearances, rape, torture and recruiting of children, some as young as eight years old – and used to participate actively in hostilities.

The report said coalition airstrikes had caused “most of the documented civilian casualties”, pointing to a large number of strikes on residential areas, markets, funerals, weddings detention facilities, civilian boats and medical facilities.

It said there were “serious concerns about the targeting process applied by the coalition,” pointing out that in many cases there were no apparent military targets in the vicinity of the attacks.

The report says they have reasonable grounds to believe that “the coalition may have conducted attacks in violation of the principles of [distinction](#), [proportionality](#) and [precaution](#) that may amount to war crimes”.

They add that the naval and air restrictions imposed by the coalition on rebel-held areas to halt alleged weapons smuggling may also constitute a violation of the proportionality rule of international humanitarian law, while the effective closure of Sanaa airport may violate the principle of [protection for the sick and wounded](#).

The experts also found evidence of widespread arbitrary detention throughout the country, and ill-treatment and torture of some facilities.

Victims and witnesses also described to the experts “persistent and pervasive aggressive behaviour”, including sexual violence perpetrated by a pro-coalition force known as the [Security Belt](#) and UAE personnel, according to the report.

## **Staged Saudi-led coalition's investigations**

The Saudi-led coalition's investigations into alleged war crimes in Yemen have [lacked credibility](#) and failed to provide redress to civilian victims.



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For more than two years, the coalition has claimed that the Joint Incident Assessment Team ([JIAT](#)) was credibly investigating allegedly unlawful airstrikes, but the investigators were doing nothing other than covering up war crimes.

## **Saudi-led coalition's war crimes**

In October 2016, a coalition airstrike killed 140 people at a funeral in the rebel-held capital Sanaa.

In the most recent deadly incident, [forty children](#) were among 51 people killed in a Saudi-led coalition airstrike on a bus in northern Yemen in August.

Yemen's devastating conflict has left nearly [10,000 people dead](#) since March 2015, when a Saudi-led coalition intervened in the armed conflict.

The UN human rights office said Tuesday that some 6,660 civilians were among the dead, while more than 10,500 had been injured. Thousands more civilians have died from preventable causes, including malnutrition, disease and poor health.

The UN has already described the situation in Yemen as world's worst humanitarian crisis.

The fighting and the blockade imposed by the coalition has also left 22 million people in need of humanitarian aid, and led to a cholera outbreak that is thought to have affected 1.1 million people.

## **What happens next?**

The UN human rights experts will present their report to the UN Human Rights Council next month.

They say they have identified, where possible, individuals who may be responsible for war crimes and have passed a confidential list of their names to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.



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They have also urged the international community to “refrain from providing arms that could be used in the conflict,” which is a reference to Western countries – mainly US, UK and France – which are lavishly selling weapons to the coalition and supporting it further by providing logistical and intelligence support.

ICSFT deplors the Saudi incapacity to recognise the war crimes which its coalition has been committing in the frame of the aggressive war that it is leading against Yemen.

It is no longer just the voice of international human rights organisations, now an expert body of the UN is declaring that the Saudi-led coalition is perpetrating serious human rights violations in Yemen such as deliberate targeting of civilians, restriction of humanitarian aid, torture and rape.

We firmly condemn all violations of international law committed by this criminal coalition in its aggressive war against the Yemeni population.

ICSFT will participate in the [39<sup>th</sup> Session of the Human Rights Council](#) covering the development of the events related to the Saudi-led coalition war crimes in Yemen while actively advocating for the human rights of the Yemeni people.