

The Might of Petro Dollar: Why Saudi Arabia Can Continue Its Atrocities in Yemen?

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Global Research, July 24, 2018

[Pakistan Politico](#) 9 July 2018

Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

Theme: [Law and Justice](#), [Military and Militarization](#) and [WMD, Oil and Energy](#), [Terrorism](#)

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*Back in April 2018, The United Nations **Secretary General Antonio Guterres** explained at a conference in Geneva that three-quarters of the Yemeni population were in desperate need of aid and protection as the war continued to rage.*

He explained that

over 8 million people in Yemen “did not know where they will obtain their next meal,” and that “every ten minutes, a child under five dies of preventable causes” and because of this, “nearly two-thirds of girls are married before the age of 18, and many before they are 15.”

It is clear that there is a significant humanitarian disaster occurring in Yemen that is mostly being ignored internationally as the world keeps its eyes on Syria, Iran, Venezuela and North Korea. So why then is Yemen being ignored?

To answer this question, we must ask why Syria, Iran, Venezuela and North Korea are the focus. The most straight forward way to answer this critical question is by highlighting that neither of these four countries are under the orbit of American imperialism and are therefore targeted whether it be by military means and/or by severe economic sanctions in the hope that they become compliant and open their economy to corporate domination and US dollar hegemony. Accompanied with these acts of economic subversion are the constant accusations of human rights abuses made by Washington and their allies against these governments. They are accused of perpetrating human rights abuses against their own people.

But with Yemen having a food shortage crisis with ports blockaded, a cholera crisis, and civilians targeted by double-tap airstrikes, including attacks against schools, hospitals, weddings, funerals and any other social event possibly imaginable, why is there little international condemnation against the main perpetrator, Saudi Arabia?

Turkish energy analyst and the Chairman of Ankara-based Institute for Energy Markets and Policies, **Dr. Volkan Ozdemir**, said in an interview with Sputnik Turkiye in 2017 that:

“For the last 44-45 years, the petrodollar system has been ruling the world, which means that the international oil trade had been mostly paid for in US dollars. It stems from the Middle Eastern crises of the 1970s, when Saudi

Arabia bound itself to selling oil only in US dollars. Given that Saudi oil has played the major role in the US dollar becoming the world's reserve currency, the US turned into the guarantor of the security of Saudi Arabia. Being the world's reserve currency, the US dollar has remained the foundation of the US' global hegemony.”

As Dr. Ozdemir explains, there is a very intimate relationship between Saudi oil and the US dollar. So long as the dollar hegemony is not threatened, any state can perpetrate human rights atrocities as Saudi Arabia perpetrates against its own people and Yemenis on a daily basis, but threaten this hegemony, then the full force of American might will be felt.

Libyan leader **Colonel Muammar Gaddafi** had ambitions to unify Africa through a single currency called 'the Dinar' that would be backed by gold and would liberate the continent from the US Dollar monopoly. The new gold-backed currency would have meant African states would have traded its vast and precious resources for gold, thus undermining the dollar that is literally only paper. What we saw in 2011 was his capture, torture, sodomization and murder by US-backed militants. This was also repeated earlier in the Muslim World with long-time Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein dumping the Dollar to trade Iraq's oil in Euros; this being one of the main reasons for the US invasion of Iraq in 2003.

Syria, Iran, Venezuela and North Korea in different manners are either outside the orbit of the US Dollar or have challenged its hegemony. Their resistance to being economically dominated by the US Dollar and to achieve, or maintain, sovereignty over their own economic destinies has seen the constant accusations of human rights abuses levelled against them.

However, as Saudi Arabia is a compliant state to US imperialism and is a bulwark of protecting the Dollar hegemony on the global economy, it can escape all criticisms and allegations made against it. It is for this reason that Saudi Arabia can escape sanctions and criticisms despite its use of cluster munitions and White Phosphorus, killing journalists, attacking facilities run by aid organizations, and while all this occurs, the US and the UK have accelerated weapon sales to the puritanical kingdom.

Rather, Washington and London should have at the minimum taken on the example made by Islamabad who were asked by Riyadh to join in the coalition against Yemen, but maturely opted to remain neutral in such an aggression against the Arab world's most impoverished state. This is unsurprising as we continue to see Pakistan liberate itself from US control that previous leaders put the country under and we now see Islamabad operate mostly independently to make decisions that are in the best interests, at least in foreign policy, of the Pakistani people.

So long as Saudi Arabia continues to help preserve the hegemony of the US Dollar, it will be able to continue human rights abuses, including the starvation of the Yemeni population, to achieve its goal of regional hegemony. Saudi Arabia believes that it is countering Iranian influence on its southern border, but this is literally coming at the price of thousands of deaths because of preventable diseases, starvation and airstrikes. The question then remains whether we can take US accusations against other states of human rights abuses seriously when considering the daily human rights abuses perpetrated by Saudi Arabia?

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