

Yemen: The Silent Slaughter

Global Research News Hour Episode 108

By [Michael Welch](#) and [Abayomi Azikiwe](#)

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

Theme: [GLOBAL RESEARCH NEWS HOUR](#)

“There are shortages of food, cooking gas, fuel and drugs...The health system is collapsing. Patients with chronic diseases cannot get their drugs, bodies are on the streets, and the city is an open dump with trash covering the streets....It is extremely important to lift the blockade on food and medication and to set up unobstructed channels for air, sea and land access, to provide the population with what they need to survive.” -Hassan Boucenine, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), head of mission in Yemen, June 11, 2015 statement [1]

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Since March 25, Saudi Arabia and a coalition of Arab countries have been launching air assaults against targets in Yemen. The stated purpose has been to restore to power the so-called legitimate Yemeni president Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi. [2]

Over the course of the last two and a half months, the infrastructure has been dealt a serious blow. Electrical grids, water supplies, sewage, food shipments and medical supplies have been affected.

Already the poorest country in the region, Yemen is now quickly becoming a major humanitarian crisis. According to the UN, 20 million people, or 80% of the population of the country, are now in urgent need of humanitarian assistance. [3]

According to World Health Organization Statistics, 15 million Yemenis do not have access to basic health care with 53 health facilities closed. One million are now internally displaced. Approximately 2000 have died since the commencement of the bombing. Twelve million have become food insecure. This situation has become exacerbated by a Saudi enforced blockade which denies humanitarian aid to the suffering denizens of this besieged state. [4][5]

Now in the lead up to UN brokered peace negotiations in Geneva, thirteen international humanitarian organizations are calling for a permanent cease-fire, an end to the Saudi-led commercial blockade, an end to arms transfers to those responsible for breaching international law, and an increase humanitarian and long term development funding. [6]

Despite the lives of millions being at risk, the Yemen tragedy has gotten shockingly little attention in the mainstream press compared to those generated from natural disasters the world has witnessed in recent years. [7]

This week's Global Research News Hour investigates the humanitarian situation on the ground and probes some of the background to the conflict, and the geo-political and other factors leading to this carnage.

Hisham Al-Omeisy is a Yemen information and political analyst based in Sana'a. He has through social media been relaying what he has been seeing and experiencing during the siege. He spoke to the Global Research News Hour about what he and other Yemeni citizens had been witnessing and experiencing in Yemen's capital city over the course of the two and a half month long siege. His twitter handle is @omeisy.

Ali Saeed is the General Secretary of the Solidarity Committee for Ethiopian Political Prisoners ([SOCEPP](#)). He discusses the unique plight faced by Ethiopian and other migrants and refugees in this country, before and after the bombing.

Abayomi Azikiwe is a geo-political analyst and the Editor of [Pan-African NewsWire](#). In the second half hour of the program, Azikiwe reviews the history of the conflict, the geo-political and regional factors propelling Saudi-Arabia and other countries into this conflict, the roles of the US, Israel and Iran, and the prospects for peace moving into the June 14 Geneva talks.

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Notes:

- 1) <http://www.msf.ca/en/article/yemen-msf-medical-teams-receive-100-injured-in-one-day-after-shellings-of-residential-areas>
- 2) [Heba Fahmy](#) and [Peter Kovessy](#), (March 26, 2015); DohaNews, 'Qatar joins Saudi-led bombing campaign of Houthi targets in Yemen'; <http://dohanews.co/qatar-joins-saudi-led-bombing-campaign-of-houthi-targets-in-yemen/>
- 3) <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=51091#.VXzWN8VdXYh>
- 4) *ibid*
- 5) Julian Borger (June 5, 2015), The Guardian, 'Saudi-led naval blockade leaves 20m Yemenis facing humanitarian disaster'; <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jun/05/saudi-led-naval-blockade-worsens-yemen-humanitarian-disaster>
- 6) <http://www.rescue.org/press-releases/aid-agencies-permanent-yemen-ceasefire-needed-now-save-millions-24975>
- 7) <http://rabble.ca/news/2015/05/canadas-complicity-saudi-yemen-war>

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