

Yemen: UN Whitewashing Saudi Coalition War Crimes and International Human Rights Violations

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“If those who support aggressive war had seen a fraction of what I’ve seen, if they’d watched children fry to death from Napalm and bleed to death from a cluster bomb, they might not utter the claptrap they do.” – *John Pilger*

Professor Francis Boyle, distinguished Professor of Law in Illinois and long-time thorn in the side of the Imperial Establishment has publicly expressed his disgust at the UN complicity with the sanctions that engendered starvation on a catastrophic scale in Iraq in the early 1990s. Over 500,000 children died from malnutrition:

“During the summer of 1991 I was contacted on behalf of several Mothers in Iraq whose children were dying at astounding rates because of the genocidal economic sanctions that had been imposed upon them by the Security Council in August of 1990 at the behest of the Bush Senior administration.”

Boyle went on to present his complaint accusing President Bush of committing international genocide against the 4.5 million children in Iraq, “in violation of the International Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide of 1948 and in violation of the municipal legal systems of all civilized nations in the world”

“My Complaint estimated that since sanctions were first imposed against Iraq in August of 1990, Iraqi children were dying as a direct result thereof at the rate of about 500 per day.”

Boyle expressed his frustration at the UNSC [Security Council] failure to suspend the crippling sanctions against Iraq.

“Despite my best professional efforts working on behalf of my Clients pro bono publico, the grossly hypocritical United Nations Organization adamantly refused to act to terminate these genocidal sanctions and thus to save the dying children of Iraq.”

Professor Boyle’s full speech: [Legal Protection of Children in Armed Conflict: The Iraqi Children Genocide](#)

Shortly after Professor Boyle’s attempt to derail the genocide being carried out against an entire generation of Iraqis, endorsed by the UNSC, then US secretary of State, Madeleine

Albright made her horrifying statement on [CBS TV network](#).

May 12th 1996 TV presenter, Leslie Stahl posed this question: “We have heard that a half a million children have died [in Iraq]. I mean, that’s more children than died in Hiroshima. And-and, you know, is the price worth it?”

Albright’s reply is still shocking, 20 years after the first US NATO campaign of extermination in Iraq.

“I think this is a very hard choice, but the price – we think the price is worth it.”

Is the UN Repeating History in Yemen?



Mona Relief 1/4/2016: Bani Quis, Hajjah, Northern Yemen on border with Saudi Arabia.

Since the start of the illegal Saudi-led coalition war of aggression against Yemen that began on the 26th March 2015, the UN has appeared to work in lock-step with the lawless aggressor, Saudi Arabia and its allies to exacerbate the widespread suffering of the Yemeni people.

[UNSC Resolution 2216](#) was adopted on the 14th April 2015. It called specifically for the *arms* embargo to be imposed against 5 named individuals.

“Arms Embargo: All Member States shall immediately take the necessary measures to prevent the direct or indirect supply, sale or transfer to, or for the benefit of Ali Abdullah Saleh, Abdullah Yahya al Hakim & Abd al-Khaliq al-Huthi.”

Two other names were included in the Annex to this list, Abdulmalik al-Houthi and Ali Ahmed Saleh.

Basis for Resolution 2216

This resolution was entirely based upon the premise of the legitimacy of the fugitive, former President of Yemen, Abdo Rabbo Mansour Hadi.

“Reaffirming its support for the legitimacy of the President of Yemen, Abdo Rabbo Mansour Hadi, and reiterating its call to all parties and Member States to refrain from taking any actions that undermine the unity, sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of

Yemen, and the legitimacy of the President of Yemen” ~ *Resolution 2216*

On the same day that the UNSC signed off on a resolution of staggering partiality and bias towards one party in the conflict, namely ex President Hadi and his Saudi backers, a letter had been addressed to the UN by [Ali AlAhmed, Director of the Gulf Institute](#). In this letter, AlAhmed clearly states that, legally, Hadi is NOT the legitimate President of Yemen.

“To reiterate, at present Mr. Hadi is a former president of Yemen. The UNSC has no legal authority to appoint him as president of Yemen, or treat him in such capacity. Although his term ended February 25, 2014, Hadi remained in office until February 2015; one year after his term has expired, in violation of the UNSC-endorsed GCC Initiative. He also failed to call for general presidential elections per the agreement he signed.

Because the Saudi-led war on Yemen was built on the false premise that Hadi is the current legitimate president of Yemen, it must be emphasized that he is, in fact, not a legitimate leader of that country. Legally, Mr. Hadi is the former transitional president of Yemen whose term expired February 24, 2014.”

AlAhmed reminds the UNSC that Hadi had been elected in a one-horse-race election in February 2012 under the terms of the GCC Initiative [Gulf Cooperation Council]. That term of presidency had been set to expire after two years, when new elections would be held in Yemen.

One month prior to the agreed election date, in January 2014 the NDC [National Dialogue Conference] took the decision, to extend Hadi’s term under the pretext that the transition period was incomplete and that a draft constitution would not be ready for referendum until March 2015.

[According to Abdulazeez Al-Baghdadi](#), a former legal advisor for the Ministry of Interior, the extension of Hadi’s term in office and the justification for this action was:

“A fraud that has no legal basis in constitutional terms....the NDC has no legal authority to extend Hadi’s term because NDC members do not represent the Yemeni people,” he said. “Hadi’s term expired when his two-year term stipulated in the GCC Initiative ended in February 2014.”

[During the UNHRC](#) [Human Rights Council], 31st Session in Geneva March 2016, Mohammed al Wazir, Yemeni-American Lawyer and Director of [Arabian Rights Watch Association](#) testified that:

“UN Security Council Resolution 2216 is about an arms embargo on 5 people, yet its being used as a cover to justify a blockade on 27 million Yemenis. According to the 2016 Humanitarian Needs Overview released in November 2015, 21.2 million people making up 82% of the population are now in need of some form of Humanitarian assistance. Nearly 2.1 million people are currently estimated to be malnourished, including more than 1.3 million children suffering from severe acute malnutrition.”



Mona Relief: Bani Quis April 2016

According to Al Wazir's statement to the UNHRC, Hadi had in fact resigned on the 22nd January 2015 and despite calls from various political factions, he refused to withdraw his resignation prior to the expiry of his questionable extended term as President of Yemen.

In a bizarre turn of events, perhaps after his Saudi controllers had put pressure on their marionette, Hadi fled Sanaa [Yemen's capital] for the port city of Aden. Once safely ensconced in Saudi loyalist territory, Hadi plucked up the courage to renew his claim to the Presidency.

Hadi even attempted to relocate the Government to Aden but once he realised this was not a popular decision and with the Yemeni army closing in, Hadi fled to Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. From there he requested that the [Saudi Arabian government launch a war](#) against his own people to reinstate him as President, a post he had resigned from, weeks previously.

So are we seeing the UN endorse and sustain an illegal war without a UN mandate, being waged against the Yemeni people by a known human rights violating, totalitarian, absolute monarchy, Saudi Arabia? And if so, on what basis? To protect an illegitimate, fugitive President who has called for the destruction of his own people?

Is the UN Defending Yemen's Sovereignty, Independence & Territorial Integrity?

Resolution 2216 states: "Reaffirming its strong commitment to the unity, sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Yemen, and its commitment to stand by the people of Yemen"

Why then did the UN ignore the [statement](#) of their own Special Envoy, Jammal Benomar, made on the 28th April 2015?

"When this campaign started, one thing that was significant but went unnoticed is that the Yemenis were close to a deal that would institute power sharing with all sides, including the Houthis"

Why then did the UN not strongly oppose the Saudi war of aggression that has decimated the Yemeni people or demand that humanitarian aid be allowed entry to alleviate the universal suffering of the already impoverished nation.

Instead the UN flung the door wide open to the Saudi-led war of aggression against Yemen. A war devoid of any legal, moral or ethical justification. A war that would punish the Yemeni people for striving to form their own government without foreign meddling or Saudi corruption and neo-colonialist intent.

Why is the UN not defending the determination of the Yemeni people to create a [new government](#) that would guarantee equal citizenship and governmental proportional representation for previously marginalised minorities?

Is the UN Preventing the Deteriorating Humanitarian Situation in Yemen?

Resolution 2216:

“Expressing grave alarm at the significant and rapid deterioration of the humanitarian situation in Yemen, and emphasizing that the humanitarian situation will continue to deteriorate in the absence of a political solution.

Recalling that arbitrary denial of humanitarian access and depriving civilians of objects indispensable to their survival, including wilfully impeding relief supply and access, may constitute a violation of international humanitarian law.”

Having allowed the Saudi-led coalition to bomb all hopes of a political solution into smithereens, why is the alarm not being sounded against this oppressive, despotic regime that has the worst human rights record in the region?

Mohammed Al Wazir at the UNHRC:

“So, in summary, the Saudi-led coalition of absolute monarchies and military dictatorships conducted daily airstrikes and imposed a comprehensive land, air and sea blockade for the past year on 27 million Yemenis in order to re-install Hadi, a person whose mandate had expired in Yemen. Is this what we call defending legitimacy? Collective punishment and terror, inflicted on the entire population in order to deter a group called the Houthis who are less than 1% of the population. I can say with utmost confidence, there is a major issue with proportionality and a reckless disregard for the principles of distinction and military necessity not to mention international law.”



Mona Relief: September 2015 KSA
bombing of Humanitarian
convoy on the Hodeida to Taiz
road.

The UN is, in reality, actively allowing the denial of human rights to the Yemeni people by the predatory aggressor, Saudi Arabia. The UN is sanctioning the “depriving of civilians of objects indispensable to their survival”. When the Saudi Coalition bombs humanitarian supply convoys does the UN not consider this to be “wilfully impeding relief supply and access”?

Is the UN wittingly allowing these grave violations of humanitarian law or is it an unwilling victim, prey to far more powerful geopolitical players in the region?

What is the UN’s Mandate in Yemen?

“The UN was established to maintain state sovereignty, and both national and international unity. Instead we appear to be witnessing a process of fracturing society along false sectarian fault lines and the disruption of internal reconciliation and political peace processes within nation states.”

The UN is allegedly seeking a peaceful political transition in Yemen according to the terms laid out in the GCC initiative and its implementation mechanism.

This objective becomes untenable when we consider that effectively, the GCC initiative has expired. So who precisely is obstructing the peaceful political transition? The Yemenis or those who launched an illegal war against them and who are destroying their ability to survive let alone decide their political future?

“That is if we take the GCC initiative as a legal document with full force and effect, which is not conceded by any means....but even by its own terms, it has expired.” - *Mohammed al Wazir*

The illegitimate, fugitive President, Mansour Hadi fled Yemen and incited a war against his own people from Riyadh. A war that has massacred over 8000 people and injured tens of thousands more. A war that has left Yemen without resources, infrastructure, electricity, communication, food and water.

In a logical, rational world all those who supported Hadi’s endeavour should be found by the UN “Sanctions Committee” and Panel of Experts to be “obstructing the peaceful political transition in Yemen” and be considered the main instigators of instability and insecurity in Yemen.

Conclusions

It is almost impossible not to conclude that multiple parties are colluding to starve Yemen into submission to Saudi objectives. Objectives that are aligned with those of the US, NATO and Israel.

“The UN embargo/blockade against Yemen and the Yemenis violates Genocide Convention

article II (e): Deliberately inflicting on the group, conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part.” – [Prof. Francis A Boyle](#)

The Arms Trade

[The UK](#) has sold over £ 2.8bn in arms to Saudi Arabia since this illegal war began. [The US](#), a staggering \$33bn. [Lockheed Martin](#), a major player in the Military Industrial Complex announced in January 2016 that they would be opening an “expanded repair capability centre” in Saudi Arabia, the first support centre for their Sniper Advanced Targeting Pod technology outside the US. To ensure “fleet readiness”. [France has just signed off](#) on a mind-blowing \$ 7.5 billion arms contract with Qatar [member of the Saudi coalition].



The Oil Trade

Saudi Arabia’s annual \$10 trillion oil revenue is a major factor. Yemen is essential for the survival of the Gulf States in this market, and by default, pivotal to US and NATO resource needs. If Saudi Arabia lost control of Yemen, the effects would be catastrophic for the Gulf states.

Saudi Arabia is the only Gulf state with the geographic [potential of an east-west pipeline](#) which would give access to the west and the Red Sea, if ever a conflict should arise with their arch enemy Iran who controls the eastern Straits of Hormuz, the primary crude oil shipping channel. However that east-west pipeline was converted in 2001 to gas and it would take some time to restore it to suitability for oil. [Saudi Arabia has recently replaced Iraq](#) as India’s number one crude oil supplier.

It is no accident that [Saudi proxy forces](#), AQAP [Al Qaeda Arab Peninsula] and ISIS have seized swathes of land in the southern province of Hadramaut and the port of Aden. According to a [2008 Wikileaks cable](#), Saudi Arabia’s intent is to lay a pipeline from the oil and gas rich areas of Al Jawf and Marib in Yemen to the southern coastline, enabling them to avoid both the Straits of Hormuz and the Yemen controlled, Bab el Mandeb straits.

“A British diplomat based in Yemen told PolOff that Saudi Arabia had an interest to build a pipeline, wholly owned, operated and protected by Saudi Arabia, through Hadramawt to a port on the Gulf of Aden, thereby bypassing the Arabian Gulf/Persian Gulf and the straits of Hormuz.” – *Wikileaks*

This would liberate Saudi Arabia from the clutches of Iranian logistical control and challenge Iran’s regional hegemony head on. With Japan, India, China and S Korea representing the

expanding crude oil markets, the geopolitical and economic significance of Yemen to the Gulf States becomes transparent.

The Human Trade

Finally and perhaps most disturbingly, let's review the actions of known US outreach agent and neo-colonialist battering ram, USAID. In July 2015, [USAID announced](#) that it would turn the aid tap off to Yemen.

"Given the current situation in Yemen, USAID is placing most development programs on a full suspension," spokesman Sam Ostrander [told Al-Monitor](#). "The suspension will allow us to keep programs in place so that we can restart development activities quickly when the situation becomes more permissive."

Criticism abounded against this decision accusing the US of facilitating Saudi human rights violations in Yemen. However, nothing should surprise us when we learn that almost simultaneously Saudi Arabia established its first, official, [international Human Rights NGO](#). There are so many oxymorons in that one sentence.

"A UN source said he expected it to operate as the Gulf State's equivalent of USAID – the state aid agency of the United States"

With barely a fanfare, the King Salman Centre was launched to fill the crater left in Yemen, by the departure of USAID and by the US UK and NATO supplied weapons of mass destruction. The *chutzpah* of this move is only challenged by the flattening of Gaza by Israel who is then tasked and paid to rebuild it.

During my recent visit to the UNHRC, to testify against the Saudi coalition's illegal use of US supplied cluster munitions on civilian targets in Yemen, I had the misfortune to attend a Saudi presentation of their [Humanitarian flagship](#). There were numerous UN organisations in attendance. At the end of the Saudi unveiling, oozing with hypocrisy and inflated claims of universal humanitarianism, the representative of UNICEF raised their hand. I paraphrase their comment.

"We would like to thank Saudi Arabia for their continued efforts to provide humanitarian assistance on a global basis and look forward to many years of continued and increased collaboration"

So, having appointed Saudi Arabia to chair of a key human rights panel inside the UNHRC, the UN is now fully endorsing an absolute monarchy's attempt to further whitewash their crimes against Humanity. One look at King Salman Centre's partners, denies UN impartiality when dealing with Saudi atrocities against the Yemeni people. Does it implicate the UN in these crimes? Combined with the unjustified and illegitimate bias of UN Resolution 2216, it must certainly raise questions that need answering. The Yemeni people deserve an answer.



Has the UN been bought and paid for by a Monarch? Is this the ultimate spin cycle to rinse the blood of innocent Yemeni men, women and children from the hands of the Saudi monarchy and its allies, including the UN, US, NATO & Israel.

The UN is disproportionately influenced by the 5 permanent members of the Security Council, with particular reference to the helmsman, the US and it includes 3 permanent members who are *backing* the Saudi-led coalition. France, the UK and the US. Maintaining impartiality is virtually impossible under these circumstances and too much is geopolitically at stake if Saudi Arabia loses its grip on Yemen.

“Impartiality does not - and must not - mean neutrality in the face of evil. In the face of genocide, there can be no standing aside, no looking away, no neutrality - there are perpetrators and there are victims, there is evil and there is evil’s harvest.” ~ *Kofi Annan, Rwanda 1998 after UN peacekeeping forces deserted, handing 1 million civilians over to mass murderers.*

It is incumbent upon all of us to ensure that Iraq does not happen again. Yemen does not deserve this level of collective punishment from one of the world’s most oppressive, soulless and malevolent regimes and the UN must answer for its failure to protect Yemen against the Saudi coalition murderous ravages.



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