

Mr. President,

Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain would like to praise the High Commissioner's update to the Council, particularly his concern regarding the humanitarian crisis in Yemen. We raise our grave concern regarding violations of human rights in counter-terror operations, the rights of internally displaced persons (IDPs), and use of summary executions perpetrated during current operations in Yemen.

Since the Saudi-led military coalition of GCC and other Arab States commenced operations in Yemen, the World Health Organization estimates that nearly 2,600 people have been killed and more than 8,000 injured. Approximately 80% of the population now requires aid, as 21.1 million Yemenis experience severe shortages of food, medicine, fuel, and clean water - increasing the devastating effects of disease. We fear these conditions are a direct result of the Saudi-led coalition's failure to abide by international standards of military conduct.

The Saudi-led air campaign has engaged in both the systematic destruction of infrastructure and the indiscriminate bombing of civilian areas. Airstrikes are reported at IDP camps, residences, schools, hospitals, and aid sites. By May the coalition destroyed at least eight medical facilities. In the same month it attacked an Oxfam warehouse, killing a bystander. Just days after the humanitarian ceasefire, Saudi forces shelled a Yemeni aid office, reportedly killing 5 Ethiopian refugees. Earlier this month, Saudi airstrikes destroyed a civilian convoy fleeing Aden, killing at least 31 people.

Though Saudi forces have absolute control of the air and sea, they have repeatedly targeted airports and harbors. Such destruction has not only isolated civilians from life-saving humanitarian aid; it has hastened the complete collapse of the Yemeni state.

In light of this information, we are gravely concerned that Saudi/GCC-led coalition forces have failed to observe their obligations under international humanitarian law, and may therefore have perpetrated acts amounting to war crimes.

As the parties to the Yemeni conflict meet in Geneva this month, we urge the Council to call on all states engaged in military operations to ensure the protection of civilians in conflict.

Thank you.