



HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL - 46th SESSION

Interactive Dialogue on Oral Update of the Group of Eminent International and Regional Experts on Yemen

(25 February 2021)

Pursuant to the Human Rights Council's resolution [A/HRC/RES/45/15](#) of 6 October 2020, "**Situation of human rights in Yemen**"

The resolution requests the Group of Eminent International and Regional Experts to present an oral update on the human rights situation in Yemen, at the HRC46th session.

Kamel Jendoubi, Chair of the Group of Eminent Experts on Yemen (GEE) (*video message*):

Due to financial constraints, the Group of Experts has faced serious difficulties in accomplishing its mandate.

While Yemen will soon enter its seventh year of war, international human rights and humanitarian law violations continue to occur. In this situation, civilians are those who suffer the most. Enforced disappearances, arbitrary detentions, threats to journalists and human rights defenders, and sexual abuses are just a few examples of human rights violations, which affect the Yemeni people. Freedom of expression, freedom of religion and right to access affordable health care are also denied. Such violations seem to be perpetrated by all warring parties concerned. With the continuation of the conflict, the number of internally displaced people (nearly half of whom women) and malnourished children (+2.3 million children under the age of 5) is likely to increase.

At political level, the formation of a government following the negotiations between the internationally recognized Yemeni government and the Southern Transitional Council (STC) has been remarkable. For the first time in twenty years, women have not, however, been included in the political process.

The spread of the COVID-19 pandemic has further endangered the lives of the Yemeni people since national health facilities do not have sufficient resources to counter the virus. To achieve peace, and in view of the warring parties' manifest unwillingness to comply with international law, the international community should intervene in the conflict in an inclusive manner and increase its financial support.

The GEE has welcomed the decision of Italy and the USA on the arms export to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Other countries, which continue to provide weapons to the warring parties, are hence invited to reconsider their position.

Melissa Park, Member of the Group of Eminent Experts on Yemen:

Today around four million people are internally displaced in Yemen. In addition, about 400 000 children suffer from severe malnutrition. Over the last year, the contributions for humanitarian aid have however decreased.

Human rights violations prevent the achievement of peace, security, and development. To achieve peace in Yemen, it is thus crucial to stop such violations and establish proper accountability processes.

Ardi Imseis, Member of the Group of Eminent Experts on Yemen:

Since warring parties seem unwilling to end the conflict, the international community should intervene to alleviate the hardships of the Yemeni people. In this regard, to provide effective remedies for the Yemeni people, mechanisms of accountability should be established.

Issue of concern remains the supply of arms to warring parties by the outside powers.



Yemen – Speaking as the country concerned, statement delivered by H.E. Mr. Ali Mohamed Saeed Majawar (video message):

Aligned with the statement of the Arab group, Yemen does not recognize the GEE's report, since it is not based on reliable sources. Neither is it transparent nor objective. According to Yemen, the document is indeed full of contradictions, and lacks neutrality.

Yemen also urges the Human Rights Council to support the work of the national commission of inquiry (COI), which is committed to investigate human rights violations and ensure accountability for perpetrators.

INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE

Delegations that took the floor during the Interactive Dialogue (29 delegations):

European Union, Denmark (on behalf of the Nordic-Baltic States), Ireland (on behalf of Belgium, Canada, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands), Bahrain (on behalf of the Gulf Cooperation Council), Libya (on behalf of the Group of Arab States), Russian Federation, Germany, Australia, France, Switzerland, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Iran (Islamic Republic of), United States of America, China, Austria, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, New Zealand, Jordan, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Mauritania, Kuwait, Cameroon, Egypt, Sudan, Pakistan, Maldives.

Some delegations (e.g., the EU, Germany, Australia, Switzerland, Austria) reiterated their support for the GEE, and expressed their concern over the human rights situation in Yemen. Violence perpetrated against religious and ethnic minorities, women, children, journalists, and human rights defenders was condemned. It was also urged that, to achieve a ceasefire, all parties to the conflict collaborate with the UN Special Envoy, and stated that, to provide justice to the Yemeni people, accountability mechanisms should be established.

The Russian Federation recalled that humanitarian aid should be provided in a non-discriminatory manner, and that a constructive dialogue among all parties concerned should be encouraged.

On the other hand, some delegations (e.g., Bahrain, Libya, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Mauritania) declared their support for the Yemeni government and urged the Human Rights Council to assist the work of the national COI.

As to questions for experts, among others, New Zealand asked about how to protect Yemeni children from being recruited as child soldiers.

Saudi Arabia and Iran exercised the right of reply.

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) that took the floor during the Interactive Dialogue (10):

Baha'i International Community, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (Joint Statement), Save the Children International, Reporters Without Borders International (RSF), Amnesty International, Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada, Human Rights Information and Training Center, Villages Unis (United Villages), Arab-European Forum for Dialogue and Human Rights.

Most NGOs denounced the violence perpetrated against religious and ethnic minorities, journalists, and human rights defenders. The use of sexual and gender-based violence as weapon of war, and attacks on schools were also condemned.

To watch full ID on oral update of GEE on Yemen, refer to [UN Web TV](#)