

# **Statement on The War in Yemen**

by Ellen Rosser the 30<sup>th</sup> of July 2016  
and adopted by the US WILPF Middle East committee

The Middle East Committee of US Section of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom strongly condemns the US involvement in the humanitarian crisis in Yemen. The US is supporting Saudi Arabia's illegal invasion of Yemen by selling Saudi Arabia billions of dollars worth of weapons, by its refueling planes in air, and by launching several missile attacks from US gunships.

Since Saudi Arabia has been accused by the UN and human rights groups of probably committing war crimes against the Houthis in Yemen and since the US is militarily supporting Saudi Arabia, the US is complicit in those inhumane actions. For example, since 2015 Saudi-coalition air strikes have hit in Mazraq a displaced person camp including a hospital and a market; in Hodaida, a dairy factory causing 31 civilian deaths; and in Saada a humanitarian aid warehouse of the international aid organization Oxfam.

Moreover, the Saudi Arabia-led coalition's blockade of Yemen kept out fuel desperately needed for the civilian population's survival. Amnesty International documented that several Saudi Arabian-led airstrikes hit five densely populated areas (Sa'dah, Sana'a, Hodeidah, Hajjah and Ibb), and "raise concerns about compliance with the rules of international humanitarian law." Amnesty International added, that according to its research, at least 139 people, including at least 97 civilians, 33 of whom were children, were killed during these strikes, and 157 injured. U.N. Humanitarian Coordinator for Yemen, Johannes Van Der Klaauw,

said that additional air strikes by the Saudi-led coalition on Sa'ada, where many civilians were trapped, were in breach of international humanitarian law, despite calls for civilians to leave the area. The Saudi-led coalition declared the entire governorate a military target, he said, and scores of civilians were reportedly killed and thousands forced to flee their homes. He also said that coalition strikes had targeted schools and hospitals, in breach of international law,

In short, since the war began, 10,000 civilians have been killed and millions injured.

At present, the situation is dire: seven million people are facing starvation and seventeen million people need urgent humanitarian relief. Indeed, Oxfam warns of a famine crisis for all people in Yemen. Moreover, the situation of the children is desperate.

An estimated 1,000 children die every week from preventable killers like diarrhea, malnutrition and respiratory tract infections. Furthermore, in mid-May, the cholera epidemic grew much worse: 184 people have died and 8500 are infected from unsafe drinking water since the sanitation and water facilities have been largely destroyed in the war.

Two-thirds of the population has no access to safe drinking water. Yet the Saudi-led coalition has maintained a deplorable blockade on relief and humanitarian aid to Yemen.

We therefore call for an immediate end to US involvement in and support for this unconscionable war. Furthermore, we call upon the United States immediately to deliver aid to the people of Yemen, especially to the children, and to influence its ally Saudi Arabia to end its reprehensible attack. Finally, we urge the United States to employ diplomacy to bring about a reconciliation between the former president with his Shia Houthis and the current president with his Sunni Saudi Arabian allies.

A unity government could bring peace.

