



# General Assembly

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## Human Rights Council

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Agenda item 10

Technical assistance and capacity-building

### **Written statement\* submitted by Organization for Defending Victims of Violence, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status**

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[21 August 2022]

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\* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.



## **Presentation of High Commissioner/Secretary General Country Reports and Oral Updates (Cambodia, Georgia, Yemen): Situation of Human Rights in Yemen**

Millions of victims of the war on Yemen, many of whom are children and women, are still suffering the continued unrest. Yemen civil society, some international organizations affiliated with the United Nations, and Group of Eminent Experts on Yemen, have documented thousands of air, sea and land military operations undertaken by the Coalition countries, logistically and technically supported by the United States of America and many European countries, which targeted civilians in various civilian neighborhoods.

While civilian targets are protected under international humanitarian law, the coalition has destroyed the critical civilian infrastructure in a way that the survival of civilians cannot be supported and great amount of time is required for the reconstruction of ruined civil service sectors. The continued war has had detrimental repercussions for millions of citizens who have lost the access to services provided by most notably the health centers, water facilities and food and medicine supply chains. In addition, thousands of patients with chronic diseases, including many children and women are banned from traveling abroad to receive treatment and save their lives.

Direct and indirect military operations have thousands dead and wounded. The number of dead has reached more than 377000 thousand by 2022 February (1), including thousands of children and women while the numbers keep increasing. Many people have been killed by indirect causes including imposition of arbitrary restrictions and a comprehensive siege on the Yemeni people. The Coalition has attacked civilian targets including schools, hospitals, health centers, food and drug storage centers, markets, roads and bridges leading to complete destruction and demolition affecting the lifelines of the Yemeni people who benefited from most of those facilities.

Civilians continue to suffer greatly as a result of the actions committed by the Coalition including the use of cluster munitions. During the current month, there have been cases of children and women falling on farms and roads due to the explosion of cluster bombs. Hundreds of thousands of cluster bombs have remained in Yemen taking the lives and health of victims and removing them requires a great deal of time and budget. Unfortunately, the Coalition have prevented the entry of devices required for demining civilian areas and collecting the remnants of cluster bombs and various unexploded munitions. The Coalition has also used a number of forbidden weapons and smart bombs on a number of populated civilian areas. killing and maiming people and destroying, homes, schools, hospitals, farms, factories, cultural, religious sites.

We assure the Council that the number of victims exceeds the ones recorded in the past seven years following the failure of the Coalition to follow the rules and principles of wars, including the non-distinction between military and civilian targets. The Saudi border army continues to bombard homes and civilian gatherings in crowded villages and cities, specifically in Manabeh, Baqim, Shadaa, Razih, Haradh, Midi and other villages on the Yemeni-Saudi border, up to February 2020, 24000 Coalition air raids have been recorded.(2)

The civil society is alarmed by the Human Rights Council decisions on Yemen. Instead of maintaining the mandate of the Group of Eminent Experts on Yemen to impartially monitor human rights violations in the country, the Council has removed the mandate and there was supposed to be an independent and impartial international investigation committee investigating human rights violations in Yemen and bring perpetrators of crimes to international trial.

So far, we note that the Human Rights Council lacks this mechanism and is not gathering or publishing any information or data on human rights violations in Yemen as a result of the ongoing war and operations of the Coalition.

Our NGO and the Yemeni people highly regret the decisions of the representatives of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Yemen - the Yemen Office - who have withdrawn their members from the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights located in the North Yemen and moved to the Southern area under the Coalition control,

without sufficient field access to monitor human rights violations taking place in the conflicted zone, especially the killings and maiming of women, children and citizens by unexploded cluster munitions and other unconventional and smart weapons left in the civilian areas.

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1. <https://caat.org.uk/homepage/stop-arming-saudi-arabia/the-war-on-yemens-civilians/>
  2. *ibid*