#CanadaStopArmingSaudi

Days of Action to End the War in Yemen

March 25-27, 2023

Marking 8 Years of the War in Yemen

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As the war in Yemen enters its eighth year, the Canada Peace and Justice Network calls on the Trudeau Liberal government to end its complicity with the aggressors—the Saudi-led coalition--and to help the victims, the people of Yemen.

Who are the parties to this war?

In 2015, a coalition led by Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates started a brutal bombing campaign and a military intervention in Yemen against the Ansar Allah movement (also known as Houthis). The stated goal of the Saudi-led coalition was to reinstate the deposed former president Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi. Thus, an internal dispute in Yemen became an international military intervention led by Saudi Arabia and backed by the United States, United Kingdom (UK), France, Canada, Germany and Italy.

Yemen is a land of rich history and ancient civilization; beautiful and complex culture; and resilient people. The Yemeni people deserve to determine the future of their country freely without any foreign military intervention or coercion. The Saudi-led war in Yemen is an attack on Yemen's sovereignty and self-determination.

The humanitarian situation

Saudi Arabia's war in Yemen has killed hundreds of thousands of people and wreaked havoc on the country. The United Nations has declared the Yemen war to be " the worst humanitarian crisis in the world."

This war breaks the conditions of the Geneva Convention by deliberately targeting civilians and civilian structures, schools, markets, hospitals, roads, water tanks, sanitation facilities and places of worship in Yemen, as documented by Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, Médecins Sans Frontières and the United Nations.

A staggering 21.6 million people in Yemen require some form of humanitarian assistance in 2023, as 80 per cent of the country's population struggles to access food, safe drinking water and adequate health services. Multiple emergencies have pummeled the country: violent conflict, an

economic blockade by the Saudi-led coalition, currency collapse, natural disasters and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Canada's role

Canada has played a huge role in perpetuating this disastrous war. One of the first actions of the newly-elected Trudeau government in 2015 was to reaffirm the signing of a $15 billion deal to sell Light Armored Vehicles (LAVs) to Saudi Arabia. This was the largest arms exporting contract in Canadian history and included training in the use of the vehicles. Canada also trained Saudi pilots in Alberta and Saskatchewan.

Canada continues to sell weapons and military equipment to Saudi Arabia and the UAE. The United Nations panel of experts on Yemen has twice named Canada, in 2020 and 2021, as one of the states fueling the ongoing war in Yemen. Canada provides well over $1 billion in weapons to Saudi Arabia and the UAE every year.

U.S. military support for Saudi Arabia has been constant since the war began, even in the face of a 2019 UN report revealing that Saudi Arabia was committing war crimes and that its Western supporters were complicit. In Canada, many politicians want to keep the war profits from weapons sales rolling in. These war profiteers and

our compliant media cheer on the proxy war in Ukraine and are mute as the war in Yemen drags on.

Alarmingly, a Breach (Canadian online investigative news outlet) investigation shows that this complicity extends to the Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. As it's reported the Canadian government is buying two aircraft, for $133 million, for a fleet to be used by the prime minister. The seller is a company controlled by notorious Saudi Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammed bin Salman.

It's despicable for Canada to be profiting from selling billions in arms to Saudi Arabia and the UAE. Owen Schalk, writing in Canadian Dimension, summarizes the situation:

Canada's involvement in the war on Yemen can be explained in two words: blood money. It is that simple, and there is no excuse for the federal government's consistent facilitation of these weapons transactions, no matter how many pathetic justifications they conjure up. You can't make nationwide famine disappear by insisting upon the importance of Canadian manufacturing jobs. You can't eliminate the Houthis' domestic popularity by blindly applying the "Iran-backed" descriptor to any discussion of their resistance. And Yemen can't wait for the Liberal Party to grow a conscience.

Our demands

- We call on the Trudeau Liberal government to take these steps to permanently end Canadian complicity in this war:
- Cancel active and pending sales of Canadian arms (light armored vehicles and other weapons) to Saudi Arabia and the UAE.
- Call on the Saudi-led coalition to end its illegal military offensive.
- Call on the Saudi-led coalition to fully lift the land, sea and air blockade on Yemen.
- Open unconditionally the door to all Yemeni refugees under the same terms as has been done for Ukrainian refugees.
- Increase humanitarian aid to Yemen to an amount that will be meaningful given the scale of misery and destruction that Yemenis have suffered in this eight-year war. After the Canadian government cancels the $15 billion LAV sale, they must donate the refunded amount (after penalties) for humanitarian aid in Yemen.

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