



Genocide Watch  
The Alliance Against Genocide

## Genocide Emergency: Yemen October 2022

The civil war in Yemen continues to devastate the country. An estimated [233,000 people](#) have been killed since the outbreak of hostilities in 2015. Seven years of conflict have decimated the country's economy, infrastructure, and basic services, creating the world's most severe humanitarian crisis.

24.1 million people in Yemen – over [80 percent](#) of the population – require humanitarian assistance. 58 percent of Yemen's population faces extreme poverty, and over 19 million people require emergency food assistance due to acute levels of food insecurity. The conflict has also triggered an [internal displacement crisis](#): over 4.3 million people have been forced from their homes since 2015.

Yemen's conflict has developed into a [proxy war](#) between the Iran-backed Houthi rebels and the Yemeni government, which is supported by an international coalition led by Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. The U.S. has backed the Saudi-led coalition. Raytheon sells the Saudis the laser guided missiles that have killed thousands of Yemenis. The separatist [Southern Transitional Council](#) and [Islamist terrorist groups](#) further complicate the civil war.

Both warring sides have obstructed humanitarian activity. Houthi authorities have restricted information about [COVID-19](#) and impeded the distribution of vaccines in their areas of control. The Saudi coalition has enforced a blockade of ports since 2016, restricting the delivery of food and medical supplies and contributing to a growing food and healthcare crisis. Mwatana, a Yemeni Human Rights organization, has accused both the Houthi and coalition forces of using starvation as a [weapon of war](#). These blockades of food violate international humanitarian law.

Both sides in the conflict have repeatedly committed war crimes. [Landmines](#) planted by Houthi militias have caused hundreds of civilian deaths. Both Houthi and government forces have inflicted heavy civilian casualties through attacks against hospitals, schools, and residential areas. In January 2022, three [coalition airstrikes](#) killed 80 civilians and injured 156. Despite these attacks on civilians, the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and other western states have continued to license [arms sales](#) to Saudi Arabia. The US, UK, France, and other western powers are complicit in the Saudi coalition's war crimes.

In October 2021, under Saudi pressure, the UN Human Rights Council [voted](#) to end the UN Group of Eminent Experts' (GEE) investigation of war crimes in Yemen. Doing so removed the only independent international mechanism for investigating abuses by the warring parties, undermining the prospect of accountability for war crimes. The UN, US, and the West and Iran have abandoned the people of Yemen.

In April 2022, the UN announced a [two-month ceasefire](#) between the Saudi-led coalition forces and the Houthi rebels. The truce was extended and [largely held](#) across the country, but it [expired](#) in October 2022. A renewed ceasefire and a negotiated settlement are the only hopes for an end to this brutal civil war.

Attacks against civilians by both sides are war crimes and crimes against humanity and constitute **Stage 9: Extermination**. The removal of the UN Group of Eminent Experts represents **Stage 10: Denial**.

### Genocide Watch Recommendations:

- Both sides in the conflict must renew their ceasefire and permit entry of a UN peacekeeping force.
- Houthi forces should stop laying landmines. A UN mine clearance operation should be authorized.
- The Saudi air force must terminate all bombing in Yemen. Iran must end all support for the Houthis.
- The USA, the UK, France, and other states should stop all arms sales to Saudi Arabia.