

FAO Warns of ‘Catastrophic’ Situation in Yemen



Paris, May 15 (RHC)-- The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations has warned of a “catastrophic” humanitarian situation in Yemen saying more than 15 million Yemenis are suffering from food insecurity in the wake of Saudi airstrikes.

Dominique Burgeon, the emergencies director at the Rome-based Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), said that nearly seven weeks of the Saudi airstrikes have caused severe shortages in water, fuel and medical aid in Yemen.

The UN official added that the attacks have severely harmed Yemen’s trade with other countries and brought its imports to a virtual standstill, adding that “the situation in Yemen is very serious and at the moment the country lacks everything.”

“Some months ago, 12 million Yemenis were suffering from food insecurity. That number has now gone up to between 14 and 15 million,” the UN official said. He also urged the international community to help in lifting Yemenis out of this disastrous situation by allocating funds and resuming trade with the war-ravaged country.

Burgeon said Yemen could begin experiencing famine in the next few weeks if the world nations fail to take action. “When famine is declared it is already too late for many people. It is absolutely important to

act now because the situation is catastrophic.” The Saudi attacks have resulted in the destruction of Yemen’s livestock, irrigation systems and agricultural sector.

Meanwhile, reports indicated that UN agencies and private aid groups have boosted efforts since a five-day ceasefire announced by the Riyadh regime late Tuesday went into effect. A ship chartered by the World Food Program, which arrived in Yemen last week, has begun distributing its shipment of much-needed fuel to areas across the country.

The head of Doctors Without Borders, also known as Medecins Sans Frontieres, in Yemen, Marie-Elisabeth Ingres, says that the five-day truce was “not sufficient given the needs of the population,” insisting on the need for “permanent access” to all regions affected by the Saudi airstrikes.

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