

Netherlands halts arms export to Saudi Arabia, UAE, Egypt over Yemen war



Amsterdam, December 3 (RHC)-- With the ongoing deadly campaign led by the regime in Riyadh against Yemen, the Netherlands has said it will halt arms export to Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Egypt.

Dutch Foreign Trade and Development Minister Sigrid Kaag said that “restrictive conditions for the export of weapons applied to Saudi Arabia” had been expanded to include Egypt and the UAE. “There will be no arms exports from the Netherlands to Saudi Arabia, Egypt and the UAE unless it is proven that they will not be used in the Yemen war.”

In November, Finland and Denmark stopped exports of military equipment to Saudi Arabia in the wake of the murder of prominent Saudi dissident journalist Jamal Khashoggi as well as the campaign in Yemen.

The European Parliament said in the same month that the European Union’s arms exports to Saudi Arabia were stoking the war on Yemen, calling for sanctions on the countries that refuse to respect the EU’s rules on weapons sales.

Many governments have promised to stop arms exports to Saudi Arabia, but only Germany has suspended its sales until clear explanations are made about the murder. The UK, France and Spain have all signaled that they will continue business as usual.

According to figures compiled by the Middle East Eye, European countries have since 2015 approved arms sales worth over 86.7 billion to Saudi Arabia and the UAE. A new report by the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED), a nonprofit conflict-research organization, says that the Saudi-led war has so far claimed the lives of around 56,000 Yemenis.

The conflict has also taken a heavy toll on the country's infrastructure, destroying hospitals, schools, and factories. The UN has already said that a record 22.2 million Yemenis are in dire need of food, including 8.4 million threatened by severe hunger. According to the world body, Yemen is suffering from the most severe famine in more than 100 years.

A number of Western countries, the U.S. and Britain in particular, are also accused of being complicit in the aggression as they supply the Riyadh regime with advanced weapons and military equipment as well as logistical and intelligence assistance.

The war in Yemen has been the focus of international attention since the assassination of Khashoggi at Riyadh's consulate in Istanbul, Turkey, in October, which is widely believed to have been ordered by Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. There have been numerous calls over the past weeks for the U.S. and its allies to end military support for the Saudis.

Last week, the International Rescue Committee, Oxfam America, CARE US, Save the Children, and the Norwegian Refugee Council said in a joint statement that 14 million people are at risk of starving to death in Yemen if the parties to the conflict do not change course immediately.

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