

Iran urges UN rights chief to slam Saudi-led raids in Yemen, hold perpetrators to account

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This photo shows the aftermath of a Saudi airstrike against a detention center is seen in Sa'ada, Yemen, on January 21, 2022. (Via Reuters)

Tehran, January 26 (RHC)-- Iran's top human rights official has deplored the loss of scores of lives in a Saudi-led aerial raid against Yemen, calling on the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to use all available means to hold to account the perpetrators and sponsors of the criminal act.

“On January 21 and as many people around the world were overwhelmed with joy and happiness, the international community witnessed a criminal, cruel, inhuman and unjust act that contravened all principles and fundamentals of international law, especially international humanitarian law (IHL) and international human rights law (IHRL),” Kazem Gharibabadi, secretary general of Iran’s High Council for Human Rights, wrote in a letter addressed to Michelle Bachelet.

He added that more than 100 people were killed and over 260 others wounded when the US-backed and Saudi-led war coalition launched an airstrike against a detention center in Yemen’s northwestern city of Sa’ada, noting that three children were among the fatalities.

The Saudi-led coalition’s fighter jets have launched new airstrikes on the Yemeni capital of Sana’a and nearby cities, as Riyadh escalates its aggression against the war-ravaged country. Gharibabadi highlighted that the Riyadh-led military alliance has carried out more than 839 air raids against ordinary Yemeni people, residential buildings, and public infrastructure so far this month.

“Attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure are prohibited under the international humanitarian law. The principles of segregation, proportion, and necessity are not observed at all during such barbaric attacks,” the rights official said, emphasizing that a failure to comply with the principles will lead to war crimes and subsequent referral to relevant international authorities.

Gharibabadi underscored that more than 70% of the Yemeni people need support, and more than 90% of the population is dependent on medicine and food imported through humanitarian aid. “As a result of obstacles created by the coalition of aggression, the dispatch of such aids [to Yemen] is facing serious difficulties. If we take into account the death of 370,000 innocent Yemenis, most of them women and children, genocide will be added to the list of crimes perpetrated by the coalition as well,” he said.

Gharibabadi went on to say that the Yemeni people have been sacrificing their lives over the past six years simply to exercise their rights to self-determination and independence.

“At a time when [so-called] human rights advocates deliberately turn a blind eye to all crimes being committed against the Yemeni nation, international organizations must expose the criminal acts, condemn them, take necessary measures to prevent their recurrence, and hold the perpetrators to account,” he stressed.

The United Nations must prevent the ongoing crimes against the Yemeni people, facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid to the besieged nation, and hold the Saudi-led coalition and its supporters accountable for their criminal acts, Gharibabadi said.

Saudi Arabia, backed by the United States and regional allies, launched the war on Yemen in March 2015, with the goal of bringing the government of former Yemeni president Abd Rabbuh Mansour Hadi back to power and crushing the popular Ansarullah resistance movement.

The war has left hundreds of thousands of Yemenis dead and displaced millions more. It has also destroyed Yemen’s infrastructure and spread famine and infectious diseases there.

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