



(RSADO)

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PRESS RELEASE

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Eritrean Afar Civilians in Small Vessels Killed by Saudi Arabian-Led Coalition off the Coast of Yemen

Several news sources affirmed that the Saudi Arabian-led Coalition planes have indiscriminately and deliberately hit Eritrean Afar civilian small fishers' men's boats near the ports of Mokha near Bab al-Mandab strait off Yemen. The Fishing boat was carrying livestock and civilians. The civilian boat had left for Yemen from the Dankalia Region of Eritrea to import basic food commodities, household items, clothing and footwear to meet their basic needs. **At least 5 civilians** were indiscriminately killed and 10 other people injured, including women, children and elderly people. This type of air attack against a civilian boat is a serious violation of international humanitarian law. RSADO has therefore found that the Arab Coalition Forces appear to have carried out indiscriminate air strikes with foreknowledge of their indiscriminate effect.

RSADO unequivocally condemns in the strongest terms possible this indiscriminate air strike attack directed at the Eritrean Afar civilian population by the Arab Coalition Forces. **RSADO expresses its sincere condolences and deepest sympathy** to the victims and their families and to the Afar People in the Dankalia Region of Eritrea.

We can confirm the Arab Coalitions Forces stationed in Dankalia that since November 2, 2015 thousands of Afar families have been made homeless, forcibly evicted from their traditional land and homes. Internally displaced, children and families are deliberately kept in destitute or unhealthy conditions by the regime. They were forced from their homes and off their grazing lands and fishing areas violently, without compensation and without Free, Prior and Informed consent (FPIC) in order to make Afar land available for the Saudi Arabia-led Alliance. On November 2, 2015 the State of Eritrea leased the Port of Assab to the UAE for 30 years and it has allowed the Saudi Arabia-led Gulf Alliance to use the Hanish islands to conduct military operations against Houthi rebels in Yemen.

Saudi Arabia and its Gulf Allies have established their military presence in Afar Land in Eritrea in return for monetary compensation and fuel supplies for the brutal Eritrean regime. Forcibly removing the Indigenous Afar People in Eritrea from their traditional homes and territories is against the United

Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples 2007 (UNDRIP), Islamic law and the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948.

The Saudi Arabian-led Alliance Military Base in Dankalia (Afar Land) has already had a devastating impact on the indigenous Afar because their economic, social and cultural survival is deeply linked to their traditional lands, the fishing of the Red Sea Coastal, and commercial and business activities between Eritrea and Yemen. RSADO alleges the Eritrean regime is fully responsible for committing crimes and human rights violations against Afar people. The regime has deliberately leased Afar Land to the Saudi and UAE Coalition Forces in order to systematically remove the Afar from their traditional lands in the name of development. We may otherwise suppose that the Eritrean regime hopes that the solution to the 'Afar Problem' is to allow Saudi Arabia-led Coalition Forces and Houthi rebels- Salih Forces to collaterally eradicate the Afar people in the crossfire. Additionally, we think that equating or nullifying this incident with fighting international terrorism which were targeting the International Maritime Routes in the Bab-el-Mandeb route is adding insult to injury.

RSADO strongly calls on and urges the Saudi Arabian led Coalition to immediately withdraw from our traditional territory (Dankalia) to let the Afar people live in their land peacefully. Otherwise, an internationalization of Bab-el-Mandeb route will set in when the Afar small boat owners will be forced to team with Houthis and their far away allies.

RSADO calls upon the international community, USA, EU, UK, Human Rights Organisations and the Russian Federations to urge and pressure Saudi-led Coalition Forces (Saudi Arabia and UAE) to abide and comply with the Law of War and International Humanitarian and Human Rights Laws and to immediately halt military operations targeting innocent Eritrean Afar Fishermen and civilians in Eritrean National waters and International waters near the Bab al-Mandab strait off Yemen.

Red Sea Afar Democratic Organisation (RSADO)
Centre Committee (CC)