

Date: 7/22/2024

Dear Mr. James McGovern and Mr. Christopher Smith

Co-Chairs of the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission in the U.S. Congress,

Subject: Condemnation of Israeli Attacks on Hodeidah Port in Yemen

We, the American Center for Justice (ACJ), write to express our grave concern and condemnation of the Israeli attacks on the port of Hodeidah in Yemen on the afternoon of Saturday, July 20, 2024. These attacks resulted in the deaths of seven people and injuries to 87 others, as well as the destruction of the port, fuel tanks, and the terrorization of the civilians.

We were deeply astonished by the statements reported by Axios, attributed to an Israeli official, indicating that the Israeli airstrike was conducted in coordination with the United States and the international coalition in response to attacks by the Houthi group, without any regard for the consequences of targeting civilian infrastructure and the potential civilian casualties during such attacks.

The American Center for Justice (ACJ) strongly believes that targeting civilian infrastructure not only violates international legal standards but also infringes upon the principle of the independence, security, and safety of Yemen and its innocent citizens. Additionally, the deprivation of basic goods and supplies will further exacerbate the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Yemen.

We emphasize that such actions constitute a blatant violation of international humanitarian law, which provides stringent protection for civilian objects during armed conflicts based on Article 52 of the Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions of 1949. This article states that "civilian objects shall not be the object of attack or reprisals." Article 48 of the same protocol emphasizes the necessity to distinguish between civilians and combatants and between civilian objects and military objectives, underscoring the principles of proportionality and necessity in military operations.

Furthermore, Article 51 of the protocol prohibits indiscriminate attacks and considers such actions war crimes under Article 8 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

The American Center for Justice (ACJ), urge you as members of the U.S. Congress to condemn these Israeli attacks and call for the cessation of Israeli military operations in Yemen and Gaza, which result in civilian casualties and suffering.

The protection of civilian lives and adherence to international law must remain at the forefront of any military engagement.

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue. We look forward to your prompt and decisive action to uphold the principles of human rights and international humanitarian law.

Sincerely,

The American Center for Justice (ACJ)

Latifa Jamel

President,