June 12, 2019

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Senate Majority Leader
The Capitol S-230
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Senate Minority Leader
The Capitol S-221
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House of Representatives
The Capitol H-232
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Steny Hoyer
House Majority Leader
1705 Longworth House Office Building
Washington DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
House Minority Leader
2468 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader Schumer, Speaker Pelosi, Majority Leader Hoyer, and Minority Leader McCarthy,

As Christian faith leaders from across the United States, we write to you about the war in Yemen. Now entering its fifth year, it has brought unimaginable horrors upon the Yemeni people, especially children. Collectively, we represent tens of millions of constituents in every state. We thank you and Congress for playing a key role in pushing for humanitarian relief and ensuring the U.S. government does more to apply pressure to the warring parties, as most recently demonstrated through its unprecedented passage of the Yemen War Powers Resolution. We believe that the President’s veto of that Resolution must strengthen the resolve of Congress to ratchet down the fighting and help broker peace.

We therefore urge you, as elected leaders, to exhaust every possible legislative option to end U.S. support for the war in Yemen; hold all warring parties accountable; and help foster peace that people of Yemen desperately need and deserve. Given the magnitude of human suffering as a result of this war, we call for the immediate end to any policy that continues military support in the form of intelligence, logistical support and through the sale and transfer of weapons.

The war in Yemen has sparked the world’s largest humanitarian crisis and all parties are to blame. The fighting has killed innocent civilians, destroyed health clinics, schools, factories, farms, and precipitated a severe cholera epidemic that has spiked in the number of confirmed cases in recent months. Yemen’s economy has been halved since 2015. Food prices have soared even as household incomes have dwindled. 80% of Yemenis now live below the poverty line, and as a result, nearly 16 million Yemenis do not know where their next meal is coming from. Children, in particular, are among the most vulnerable; with more than one million children malnourished. Given the incredibly bleak humanitarian situation, we call upon Congress to support robust humanitarian assistance to the people of Yemen.
A recent report by the United Nations Development Program reveals perhaps the grimmest statistic to date: nearly 250,000 Yemenis will have died as a result of this war by the end of this year; “of the dead, 60 percent are children under the age of five.”

We ask that you take advantage of the political momentum built in Congress to push for an end to the fighting and to help broker peace.

Our faith compels us to care for the most vulnerable and work for peaceful ends to conflict. Like the prophet Amos, we long for the day when “justice will roll down like waters” (Amos 5:24) for the people of Yemen and throughout the world. As people of faith we will continue to pray for peace in Yemen, and a future for her children, but we call on you, our elected leaders, to make the tangible actions to put an end to this conflict.

Sincerely,

Rev. Eddy Alemán
General Secretary
Reformed Church in America

Joyce Aljouny
General Secretary
American Friends Service Committee

Toufic Baaklini
President and Chairman of the Board of Directors
In Defense of Christians

Rev. David Beckham
President
Bread for the World

Rev. Dr. Mae Elise Cannon
Executive Director
Churches for Middle East Peace

Rev. Dr. Susan Henry Crowe
General Secretary
General Board of Church and Society, The United Methodist Church

Rev. Dr. John Dorhauer
General Minister and President
United Church of Christ

Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton
Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

1 https://www.undp.org/content/dam/yemen/General/Docs/ImpactOfWarOnDevelopmentInYemen.pdf
Susan Gunn
Director
Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns

Dr. Mimi Haddad
President
Christians for Biblical Equality

His Eminence Metropolitan Joseph
Archbishop of New York & Metropolitan of All North America
Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America

Rev. Dr. J. Herbert Nelson
Stated Clerk of the General Assembly
Presbyterian Church (USA)

Rev. Teresa Hord Owens
General Minister and President
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

Diane Randall
Executive Secretary
Friends Committee on National Legislation

Br. Larry Schatz, FSC
President
Conference of Major Superiors of Men

Rev. David Steele
General Secretary
Church of the Brethren

Dr. Steve Timmermans
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Christian Reformed Church in North America

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Evangelical Covenant Church

Nikki Toyama-Szeto
Executive Director
Evangelicals for Social Action (ESA)/The Sider Center
Rev. Jim Wallis
Founder, President
Sojourners Magazine

Jim Winkler
General Secretary
National Council of Churches

Cc:

Senate Foreign Relations Chairman, the Honorable Jim Risch
Senate Foreign Relations Ranking Member, the Honorable Bob Menendez
House Foreign Affairs Chairman, the Honorable Eliot Engel
House Foreign Affairs Ranking Member, the Honorable Michael McCaul
Senate Armed Services Chairman, the Honorable Jim Inhofe
Senate Armed Services Ranking Member, the Honorable Jack Reed
House Armed Services Chairman, the Honorable Adam Smith
House Armed Services Ranking Member, the Honorable Mac Thornberry