

French intelligence summons journalists after release of classified report on arms in Yemen

Today, the country is gripped by what the United Nations (UN) has described as “one of the worst humanitarian crises in the world”. Many among Yemen’s population of more than 28 million continue to face aerial bombing raids by the Saudi-led coalition which, according to statistics from the Yemen Data Project, an independent NGO that researches and cross-checks data on coalition strikes, have already killed more than 8,300 civilians, including 1,283 children.



A leak of classified French defense ministry documents, revealed, details the massive use of French-made weapons in the ongoing, four-year-old war in Yemen.

The CAESAR is one of the most powerful weapons France has sold to Saudi Arabia. Manufactured by Nexter, an entirely state-owned French defence company, it is an artillery piece made up of a mighty gun mounted on an all-wheel-drive truck chassis. It is now suspected that the CAESAR units exported to Saudi Arabia are being used to shell zones in Yemen which are inhabited by hundreds of thousands of people. The French government, despite knowing of the risks of this, continues to supply the weapon. No less than 129 CAESARs are due to be delivered to Saudi Arabia between now and 2023.



Disclose has traced the path of one of these deliveries, carried out in September 2018. Using satellite images and information obtained from open sources, Disclose has produced a video of the itinerary of the CAESAR guns which were delivered at the end of 2018.

Using information sourced from the Yemen Data Project, it has analysed the details of 19,278 aerial bombing raids recorded between March 26th 2015 and February 28th 2019. The results: these show that 30% of the bombing raids were against civilian targets. The intent of the coalition was clearly to destroy infrastructures that are essential for the survival of Yemen's population of 28 million people. A total of 1,140 bombing missions targeted agricultural production and the country's food and water supplies, including farms, markets, fishing boats and reservoirs of drinking water. That figure places the food sector as the third most important military objective for the Arab coalition, behind military targets (4,250 raids) and inhabited zones (1,883 raids).

These bombings have greatly contributed to creating in Yemen the worst humanitarian crisis seen anywhere in recent history. According to the United Nations (UN), no less than 80% of the country's population are in need of urgent food supplies.



The investigation reveals a deliberate strategy of causing famine in Yemen, a war of starvation led by Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) with planes, guided bombs and navy vessels 'Made in France'. Since the beginning of the conflict, the coalition has enjoyed with the unwavering diplomatic support of the French government.

The Institute for Protection of Women's Rights

French arms including tanks and laser-guided missile systems sold to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates are being used in the Yemeni war against civilians, leaked intelligence published by investigative website Disclose showed.

Entitled “Yemen: security situation”, a 15-page classified report written by France’s DRM military intelligence agency includes maps that detail the positioning of French-made weapons inside Yemen and on the Saudi side of the border.

It demonstrates that swathes of Yemen’s population lives under the threat of the French-made arms, according to Disclose.

The leaked report will be awkward for President Emmanuel Macron and his government, which has said that as far as it knows French-made arms sold to Saudi Arabia are used solely for defensive purposes on the border.



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The intelligence document states that Caesar cannons, manufactured by French company Nexter and deployed along the Saudi-Yemeni frontier, conduct defensive shelling of Houthi forces as well as back up “loyalist troops and Saudi armed forces in their progression into Yemeni territory”.

The intelligence dossier is dated September 25, 2018. It was presented to Macron and Prime Minister Edouard Philippe, as well as France’s defense and foreign ministers.

The Disclose report was part of an investigation carried out with Mediapart, Konbini, France Inter radio, Arte television and U.S.-based The Intercept.

France is a signatory of the U.N. Arms Trade Treaty that regulates the international trade of conventional weapons and bans the sale of weapons that fuel human rights violations or war crimes.



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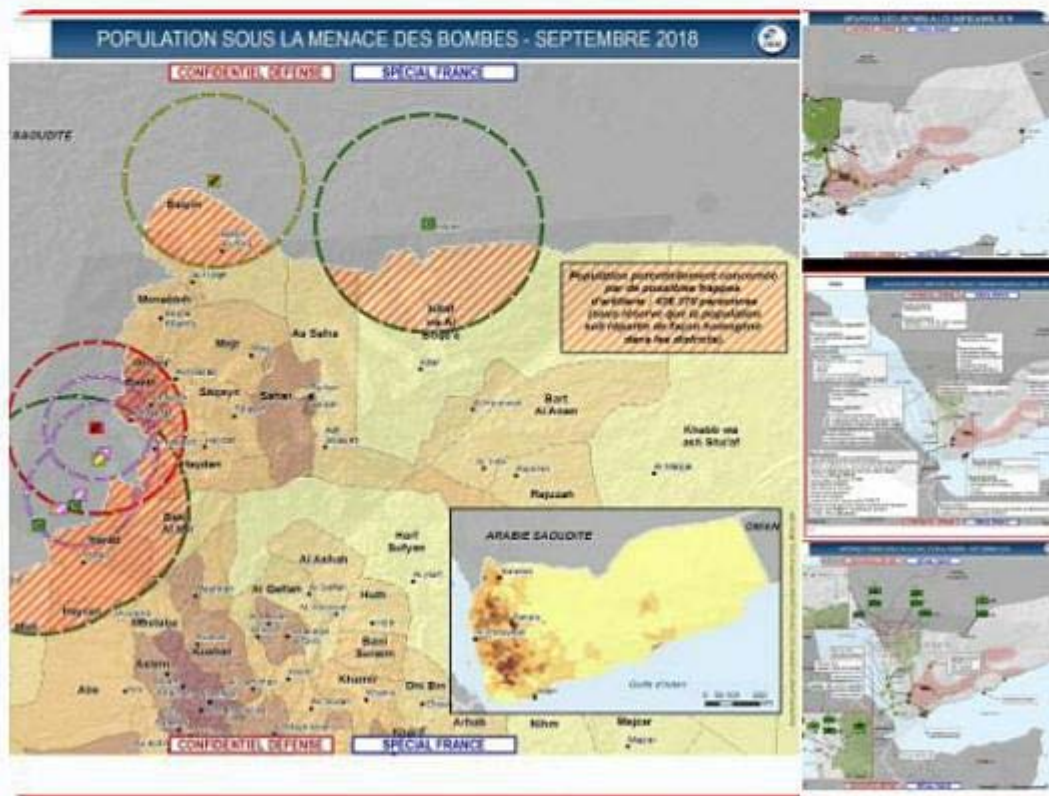
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Ces documents ont été présentés lors d'une réunion à l'Elysée, le 3 octobre 2018, en présence d'[#EmmanuelMacron](#). Le gouvernement a pourtant continué à déclarer "ne pas avoir connaissance que des armes [françaises] soient utilisées" au [#Yemen](#). [#Yemenpapers](#)
[#madeinfrance](#)

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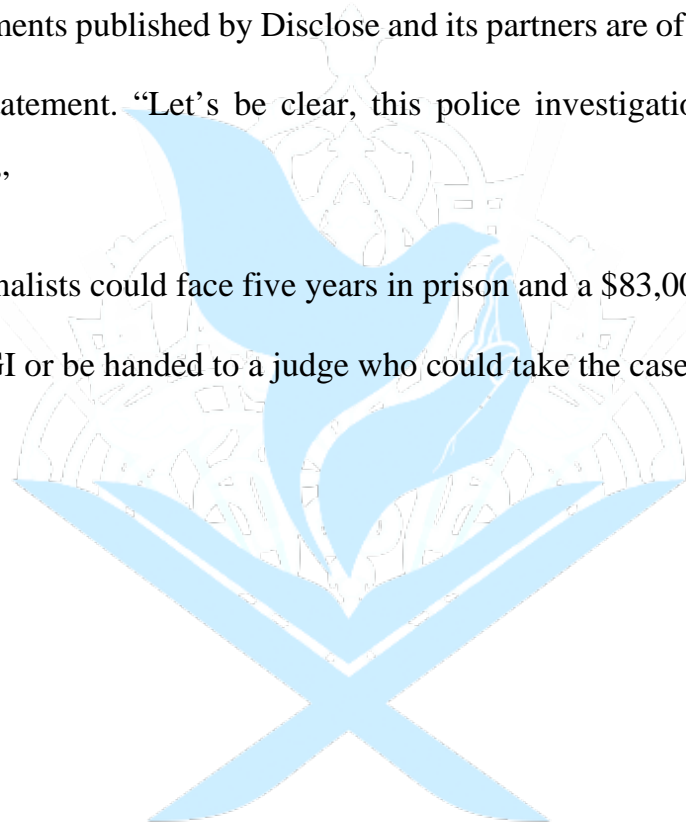


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Eight journalists have been summoned for questioning by France's domestic intelligence services. Livolsi, Destal and Collombat's summons have stoked fears that protections for journalists who shield anonymous sources and whistleblowers may be under threat.

"The classified documents published by Disclose and its partners are of major public interest," Disclose said in a statement. "Let's be clear, this police investigation is an attack on the freedom of the press."

If convicted, the journalists could face five years in prison and a \$83,000 fine. The case could be closed by the DSGI or be handed to a judge who could take the case to trial.



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