

John Kerry to Visit Saudi Arabia as Criticism of Yemen War Intensifies



Washington, August 23 (RHC)-- U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry is heading to Saudi Arabia as the Barack Obama administration faces increasing pressure for its support of the Saudi-led war in Yemen.

Over the past two weeks, the U.S.-backed Saudi coalition has bombed a Doctors Without Borders hospital, killing 19 people, and bombed two schools in northern Yemen, killing at least 14 children.

Doctors Without Borders has since announced it will withdraw staff from six hospitals in the north of the country. U.S. support to the Saudis includes refueling their jets in midair and assisting with target selection. The U.S. has also sold Saudi Arabia billions of dollars' worth of weapons in recent years.

In the last week, criticism of the U.S. role in Yemen has grown as it has been revealed that targets the U.S. had asked the Saudis not to strike had been hit anyway. The United Nations blames Saudi Arabia for the majority of the conflict's thousands of civilian casualties.

This comes as up to 100,000 people gathered in the Yemeni capital of Sanaa recently to protest the ongoing Saudi strikes. The demonstration was one of the biggest in Yemen since mass protests in 2011

forced former president and U.S. ally Ali Abdullah Saleh to step down.

Saudi Arabia resumed airstrikes on Yemen last week after U.N.-sponsored peace talks ended without a resolution.

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