

Sweden asks UN to urge 'immediate freeze' to Yemeni port offensive



United Nations, June 16 (RHC)-- The Swedish deputy ambassador to the United Nations has urged the Security Council to demand a swift freeze to an ongoing Saudi-led military operation against Yemen's port of Hudaydah.

Carl Skau said in a statement that the United Nations had to act immediately to stop the offensive by Saudi Arabia and its allies against Hudaydah, saying the operation could escalate the humanitarian catastrophe in Yemen.

"It is time for the Security Council to call for an immediate freeze of the military attack on Hudaydah," said Skau, adding: "This is needed to give the special envoy and United Nations-led efforts a chance to avert disaster and find a sustainable political solution to the conflict."

Forces backed by the Saudi-led coalition launched an offensive against Hudaydah on Wednesday, aiming to take the city that has been controlled by the Houthi Ansarullah movement.

The UN has earlier warned that the Hudaydah operation could complicate the humanitarian situation in Yemen, a country that has been suffering from a brutal Saudi-led military campaign for the past three years.

More than 15,000 people, mostly civilians, have been killed in Saudi airstrikes and ground operations across Yemen since the kingdom launched its illegal campaign in March 2015.

The offensive on Hudaydah comes as aid groups warned that some 300,000 children risk death, injury and starvation as they are trapped in Hudaydah, which is the main route for food to reach most Yemenis, 8.4 million of whom are already on the verge of famine.

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