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**From:** Shiel, Annie <ShielA@state.gov>  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 2, 2017 11:36 AM  
**To:** McIntosh, Kerry E <McIntoshKE@state.gov>; Sullivan, Emily G <SullivanEG2@state.gov>; Khan, Salman <KhanS5@state.gov>; Finucane, Brian C <FinucaneBC@state.gov>; [REDACTED]; Zaid, Zainab Z <ZaidZZ@state.gov>; Morin, Michael D <MorinMD@state.gov>; McClintock, Judith <McClintockJ@state.gov>; Krause, Matthew A <KrauseMA@state.gov>  
**Cc:** Lewis, Lawrence <LewisL1@state.gov>; Blaha, Charles O <BlahaCO@state.gov>; Gonzales, Robert L <GonzalesRL@state.gov>  
**Subject:** For clearance by COB today: incident report on Yemen raid  
**Attach:** CIVCAS Report 2017.01.29.docx

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Hi all,

Please find attached for your **clearance by COB today** an incident report on alleged civilian casualties from the recent Yemen raid, to send to DOD/CENTCOM under our established information sharing mechanism. For those who are not familiar, under this State-DOD mechanism DRL collects, assesses, and shares open source and private NGO reporting on alleged civilian casualty incidents from U.S. operations in order to inform DOD's internal investigation process. As CENTCOM's investigation on this incident is already under way, we would like to get them the attached information as soon as possible.

Please feel free to reach out with any questions.

Many thanks,

Annie

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RELEASE IN FULL

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**CIVCAS Incident Report – January 28, 2017**  
**Yakla, Radaa, Al-Bayda, Yemen**

**BLUF/Brief Incident Summary:** Amnesty International, Yemeni researchers, and media sources reported that at least 15-16 civilians were killed following a U.S. special forces raid on a suspected AQAP base in Yakla, Radaa in al-Bayda governorate in Yemen. Several reports claimed that one of the dead was the 8-year-old daughter of Anwar al-Awlaqi, who was shot multiple times and bled to death. One pregnant woman was reportedly shot, forcing her into labor; the baby, born by Cesarean, reportedly died 24 hours later. UN-OHCA cited a report from the German news agency Deutsche Welle that eight women and eight children were killed in the dawn raid, and that Apache helicopters also struck a school, a mosque, and a medical facility.

- **Recommendation:** State has confidence in the reliability of the primary sources of this report and recommends that DOD investigate the reported incident further.
- **Allegation:** An estimated 15-16 civilians killed by a U.S. operation
- **Date/time:** January 28, 2017, dawn (approx. 5:00am)
- **Location:** Yakla, al-Bayda, Yemen
- **Original Reporting Documents:**
  - UN-OCHA: “Alleged US military raid in Yemen kills civilians and Al Qaeda militants.”
  - Privately received account by Yemeni researcher Nadwa al-Dawsari.
- **Media and International NGO Reporting Documents:**
  - The Independent: “Donald Trump’s first US military raid ‘kills 30 civilians, including 10 women and children.’”
  - Stars and Stripes: “Pentagon Probing Reports of Civilian Deaths in Yemen Raid.”
- **State Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL) POCs:** Annie Shiel (NIPR: ShielA@state.gov and SIPR: ShielAL@state.gov); Larry Lewis (NIPR: LewisL1@state.gov and SIPR: LewisL@state.gov); Kerry McIntosh (SIPR: McIntoshKE@state.gov).

**Notes on the Reliability of the Sources, Methodology, and Limitations**

**Media Sources:** Yemen is difficult to access given the security challenges posed by the ongoing conflict, and there are few, if any, Western journalists based in Yemen. Western journalists and NGO and humanitarian workers generally work out of Sana’a or Aden, and access to al-Bayda is limited. Western media sources tend to receive their information from local media sources, local medical organizations and NGOs, and UN officials. Local Yemeni media is susceptible to

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political influence, and local media reporting tends to be exaggerated and biased and can include conspiracy and rumors. There are pro-Houthi, pro-Saleh, and pro-AQAP media outlets, among others. In the past, for example, pro-Houthi Yemeni media sources have accurately reported the occurrence of events (i.e., Saudi-led coalition airstrikes) but exaggerated the number of casualties, or reported that an incident was caused by a Saudi-led coalition airstrike when in fact the damage was caused by Houthi shelling.

**Nadwa al-Dawsari** is a U.S.-based Yemeni researcher with extensive contacts throughout the country; she last traveled to Aden in December 2016, and is in frequent contact with Yemenis within Yemen, including in al-Bayda. Her research focuses on civil society, human rights, security and counterterrorism issues, and she generally shares information without an apparent ideological motivation. However, she is not currently in Yemen and gathered her report (below) primarily based on conversations with Yemenis and Yemeni social media sources, which are susceptible to bias and can be fueled by rumors.

**Incident Description as Reported by Nadwa al-Dawsari**

*The US military raid in Yakla on January 29, 2017 left at least 16 women and children dead including the daughter of Anwar al-Awlaqi. Her uncle posted on Facebook saying that she was shot in different areas including her neck and bled for two hours before she died. He said she was trying to comfort her mom telling her that she will be OK. The victims also include a baby who was injured while in his mothers' womb when she was shot by the US soldiers in the operation. She underwent a cesarean and the baby survived but he died 24 hours later. The raid created outrage among many Yemenis and many locals launched hashtags like #US\_terrorism\_kills\_Yemenis. It also created resentment towards the US particularly among anti-Houthi tribesmen and groups and an overwhelming assumption that the US is aiding the Houthis against the tribes. Locals are also celebrating "victory" as one of the Apaches used was downed and a US soldier was killed. They believe that because Americans failed, they "frantically" tuned into killing the women and children "intentionally" as a revenge. Some have ben also saying that this is not the first time the US killed Yemenis in Radaa and al-Bayda. Drones killed dozens of civilians in the governorate previously.*

*In 2014 when the Houthis pushed into Radaa city by force, the tribes picked up arms and fought them. Al-Qaeda was present too. US drones then launched a number of strikes that killed Al-Qaeda militants but also many local tribesmen fighting the Houthis, and so unintentionally "aided the Houthis." Ever since, there has been a strong perception among anti-Houthi tribes in al-Bayda that the US is "secretly" in bed with the Houthis. This raid reinforced this perception.*

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