** **

**PRESS RELEASE**

**For immediate release - 12 September 2023**

**GLAN and Mwatana request to appeal High Court judgment that green-lights UK government licensing of weapons sales to Saudi Arabia despite evidence of serious violations of international law**

GLAN and Mwatana for Human Rights have filed a request to the Court of Appeal of England and Wales to appeal against a recent judgment on UK arms sales to Saudi Arabia. The High Court upheld UK government licensing of weapons to Saudi Arabia for use in Yemen despite Mwatana and partners, Campaign Against Arms Trade, providing extensive evidence of patterns of unlawful airstrikes causing grave civilian harm which, we argue, should legally require the government to halt all licences.

The government has adopted an untenable and illogical methodology to assess how past arms sales have impacted Yemen, which wrongly filters out from the assessment the vast majority of airstrikes as either not ‘credible’ or not capable of being a ‘possible’ violation of international law - despite substantial evidence to the contrary.

The government’s ultimate risk assessment was therefore conducted on a number of airstrikes that was so small and unrepresentative of reality as to be worthless as an exercise. In reaching its conclusions, the government relied on as ‘independent’ the Joint Incidents Assessment Team (JIAT) Coalition accountability body that has been widely criticised, with Human Rights Watch calling their investigations a sham and a UN Panel of Experts also expressing serious concerns about the credibility of their investigations, identifying multiple failings.

Radhya al Mutawakel, Chairperson of Mwatana, said:

"Wherever there is law, there should be justice. By this appeal and by the law of the United Kingdom, Mwatana is emphasising for the world that none of the included incidents is an isolated incident, but all included incidents are patterns of violation against civilians in Yemen."

Dearbhla Minogue, solicitor for Mwatana and Senior Lawyer at GLAN, said:

“The High Court has heaped praise on the government for its licensing processes, despite the fact that the Saudi-Emirati led coalition has conducted airstrikes that have taken thousands of lives. We are taking the government back to court and look forward to this wrong being righted on appeal.”

**####**

**Notes**

From March 2015 to March 2022, a vast military air campaign in Yemen has been carried out by the Saudi-led coalition. During this period, there were 1,026 air attacks documented by Mwatana for human rights specifically aimed at civilians or civilian objects. These attacks resulted in the loss of 3,599 civilian lives, including 493 women and 1,201 children. Additionally, 3,622 civilians were injured, including 459 women and 711 children. The targeted areas encompassed residential neighbourhoods, hospitals, villages, markets, bridges, schools, as well as service and commercial facilities, among other civilian structures.

Mwatana is represented by Siobhán Allen, Dearbhla Minogue and Charlotte Andrews-Briscoe of GLAN and Bindmans, Alice Hardy of Bindmans, James McClelland KC and Aarushi Sahore of Brick Court Chambers and Admas Habteslasie of Landmark Chambers.

**About GLAN**
The Global Legal Action Network (GLAN) is a non-profit organisation that works to pursue innovative legal actions across borders to challenge powerful actors involved in human rights violations and systemic injustice by working with affected communities. GLAN has offices in the UK (London) and Ireland (Galway) | @glan\_law | [glanlaw.org](http://www.glanlaw.org)| Contact: Abigail Casey acasey@glanlaw.org

**About Mwatana**
Mwatana is an independent Yemeni organization established in 2007 and advocates for human rights through the verification and documentation of violations, provision of legal support to victims, lobbying, as well as awareness raising and capacity building.
[www.mwatana.org](http://www.mwatana.org) |[@MwatanaEN](https://twitter.com/MwatanaEn) | Contact: Radheya almutawakel ralmutawakel@mwatana.org | Ali Mayas amyas@mwatana.org

More about the case: <https://www.glanlaw.org/uk-arms-licensing>

Mwatana and the GLAN legal team are available for further comment.