

EMBARGOED UNTIL 0001 hrs GMT 22 Jan 2018 (0301, KSA 22 Jan 2018) (1901, EST, 21 Jan 2018)

## PRESS RELEASE

### New Humanitarian Operation Commits Over \$3.5 Billion to Relieve Suffering in Yemen

RIYADH – 22 January 2018 – The Coalition to Restore Legitimacy in Yemen announced today the launch of the new Yemen Comprehensive Humanitarian Operations (YCHO), an expanded relief program that commits billions of dollars in aid and support for the humanitarian response to the conflict in Yemen.

H. E. Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi, President of the Republic of Yemen said,

“On behalf of the people of Yemen, I express my profound gratitude to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for its efforts to alleviate the suffering. This humanitarian operation will reaffirm the longstanding trust and friendship between Yemen and the countries of the Coalition. Nothing demonstrates this more powerfully than the unprecedented humanitarian operation that is being implemented today.”

YCHO's efforts to open land, sea, and air lanes to Yemen will result in 1.4 million metric tons of imports into Yemen each month, up from 1.1 million metric tons per month in 2017. Among the announced efforts, the Coalition will:

- lead the expansion of additional Yemeni ports to receive humanitarian and essential cargo;
- operate an air bridge from Jizan in Saudi Arabia to Ma'rib to run multiple daily flights of C130 cargo planes full of humanitarian aid; and
- set up 17 safe-passage corridors originating from 6 points of entry to ensure safe overland transportation of aid to NGOs operating in the interior of Yemen.

YCHO will support the Yemeni humanitarian situation by addressing immediate aid shortfalls while simultaneously building capacity for long-term improvement of humanitarian aid delivery and commercial imports to Yemen. To meet these objectives, Saudi Arabia has pledged to bridge the gap in humanitarian aid as identified by the United Nations.

Under YCHO, the Coalition will contribute:

- \$1.5 billion in new humanitarian aid funding for distribution across UN agencies and international relief organizations;
- \$2 billion deposited to the Central Bank of Yemen to promote economic stabilization;
- \$30-40 million to expand Yemeni ports' capacity to accommodate additional shipments

H.E. Mohammed Saeed Al Jabir, Ambassador of Saudi Arabia to the Republic of Yemen said,

“These humanitarian operations aim to increase the capacity of Yemeni ports, and to secure sea, land and air corridors, providing urgent relief for the widespread deterioration in food and water security that has occurred as a result of the continued attacks of Iranian-backed Houthis militias, their hindrance of humanitarian aid flows, and their rejection of a political solution. The operation builds upon the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's efforts to support the people of Yemen over the years, including the recent deposit of \$2 billion into the Central Bank of

Yemen. The Kingdom is determined to alleviate the suffering of the fraternal Yemeni nation and redress the criminal activity of the Houthi militias. We continue to stand by the people of Yemen.”

Col. Turki bin Saleh Al-Malki, spokesman for the Coalition in Yemen said,

“The Coalition is placing its military resources at the disposal of these broad-ranging humanitarian operations, protecting the supply routes through air, sea and land with the logistical and technical capacity of the armed forces of the Coalition member states. We are backing a professionally planned and detailed humanitarian mission with military power and precision to guarantee that the humanitarian aid reaches the people who need it to lift their suffering.”

YCHO’s launch follows the re-opening of the Port of Hodeidah on 22 Nov 17, and the Sana’a airport on 23 Nov 17.

The Saudi-led Coalition, in partnership with UN agencies, continues to make the welfare of the Yemeni people its top priority in its efforts to restore peace and stability to Yemen. The Yemen Comprehensive Humanitarian Operations reinforce the Coalition’s commitment to bringing needed food, medicine, humanitarian assistance and fuel supplies to the people of Yemen in all regions.

ENDS

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Notes to editors:

1. For more detailed information, please visit [www.yemenplan.org](http://www.yemenplan.org)
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## **Yemen Comprehensive Humanitarian Operations (YCHO):**

### **Unprecedented Relief to the People of Yemen**

#### **FACT SHEET**

The Yemen Comprehensive Humanitarian Operations's objectives are to improve the Yemeni humanitarian situation by addressing immediate aid shortfalls while simultaneously building capacity for long-term improvement of humanitarian aid and commercial goods imports to Yemen. The plan is specifically designed to address the needs of Yemenis in all regions.

To meet these objectives, the Saudi-led Coalition will substantially contribute to the 2018 United Nations Yemen Humanitarian Response Plan. These operations will enhance the flow and delivery of humanitarian aid and food commercial supplies, including fuel, medical supplies, and food, to all Yemenis. The plan aims to increase imports in Yemen to 1.4 million metric tons per month up from 1.1 million metric tons per month while enhancing capabilities in Yemen to import 500,000 metric tons of fuel derivatives per month up from 250,000 metric tons per month at its peak in 2017.

The Yemen Comprehensive Humanitarian Operations is forward-looking and responsive to concerns about humanitarian aid in the country. The Kingdom is among the highest contributors of humanitarian and developmental aid to Yemen, and this new plan reiterates its commitment to bring needed food, medicine, humanitarian assistance, and fuel supplies to the people of Yemen.

- **Funding:** Under the YCHO, the Saudi-led Coalition will contribute \$1.5 billion in new donations to international organizations to ensure the success of the 2018 UN Yemen Humanitarian Response Plan.
- **Port Expansion:** The Coalition will lead the expansion of additional Yemeni ports to welcome essential imports. This will include the installation of four additional cranes purchased by the Coalition, a move that follows the November 22, 2017 re-opening of Hodeidah to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian, medical, and commercial food goods.
- **Economic Recovery:** The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia directly deposited \$2 billion in the Yemeni Central Bank to promote economic stabilization and improve the Yemeni people's quality of life. This is in addition to a \$1 billion deposit that Saudi Arabia contributed in 2014.
- **Air Bridge:** An air bridge from Jizan to Ma'rib will enable up to six flights of C130s per day. Additional flights will deliver essential aid to Sana'a airport, which was re-opened on November 23, 2017. The air bridge will then be available for use by humanitarian organizations.
- **Safe Passage Corridors:** Saudi Arabia is setting up 17 safe passage corridors originating from six points to ensure safe overland transportation of aid to NGOs operating in the interior of Yemen. The opening of Al Khadra and Al Tuwal border crossings between Saudi Arabia and Yemen will further allow the unabated flow of goods to key areas such as Sa'ada, Sana'a, Hajjah, and Amran.

#### **PROVIDING BILLIONS OF DOLLARS OF ADDITIONAL AID**

As part of the YCHO, Saudi Arabia will contribute \$1.5 billion in new humanitarian funding, with money distributed across the varying UN agencies and international organizations based on urgent priorities determined by stakeholders.

Other prominent donations will include:

- **Fuel:** The Kingdom will make a donation of up to \$2 billion in fuel to facilitate transportation of humanitarian aid.
- **Port Expansion:** A contribution of \$30-40 million will be allocated to expand the long-term capacities of Yemeni ports to accommodate additional humanitarian shipments.
- **Shipment Costs:** The Saudi-led Coalition will provide \$20-30 million to cover land transportation costs to divert shipments in the event that security concerns prevent the entry of goods to the Port of Hodeidah. Funds will be used to improve road infrastructure and facilitate the ground transport of goods carried on vessels unable to dock at their originally intended port of arrival.

The Coalition's efforts to open land, sea, and air lanes to Yemen will result in 1.4 million metric tons of imports into Yemen each month, up from 1.1 million metric tons per month in 2017.

- **Fuel:** 500,000 metric tons per month
- **Food:** 500,000 metric tons per month
- **Medical, Shelter and Non-Food Items:** 117,000 metric tons per month
- **Commercial Goods:** 245,000 metric tons per month

**TOTAL GOODS: 1.362 million metric tons per month**

### **AID BY AIR**

The Yemen Comprehensive Humanitarian Operations includes the creation of an air bridge from Coalition countries to Ma'rib, which is strategically located in the central region of Yemen.

- The Coalition will run up to six flights per day of C-130 cargo planes filled with humanitarian aid. This air bridge will be made available to humanitarian organizations to deliver critical aid supplies.
- The airport at Sana'a, which was reopened on November 23, will receive direct flights of essential humanitarian aid. Approximately 10,000 metric tons of humanitarian aid will be distributed through the airport each month, greatly increasing the capacity of organizations to reach the most vulnerable populations in Yemen.

### **AID BY LAND**

The Yemen Comprehensive Humanitarian Operations will establish safe passage corridors to major population centers in the interior of Yemen where aid is urgently needed.

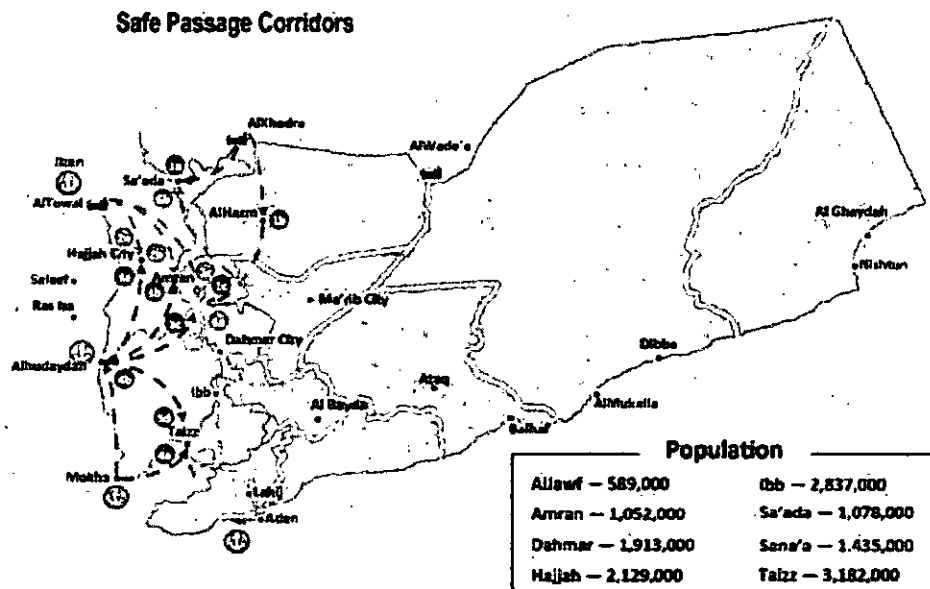
To facilitate the delivery of aid to the interior of Yemen, Saudi Arabia will set up 17 safe passage corridors originating from six points. These routes will be added to the no strike list, which contains in excess of 40,000 sites exempt from targeting.

Corridor originating points include:

- Al Khadara
- Al Tuwal
- Hodeidah
- Mokha
- Aden
- Marib

From those cities, safe passage corridors will reach the following destinations:

- Sa'ada (Population: 1,078,000)
- Hajjah (Population: 2,129,000)
- Amran (Population: 1,052,000)
- Sana'a (Population: 1,435,000)
- Dhamar (Population: 1,913,000)
- Ibb (Population: 2,837,000)
- Taiz (Population: 3,182,000)
- Al-Hazm (AlJawf) (Population: 589,000)



### AID BY SEA

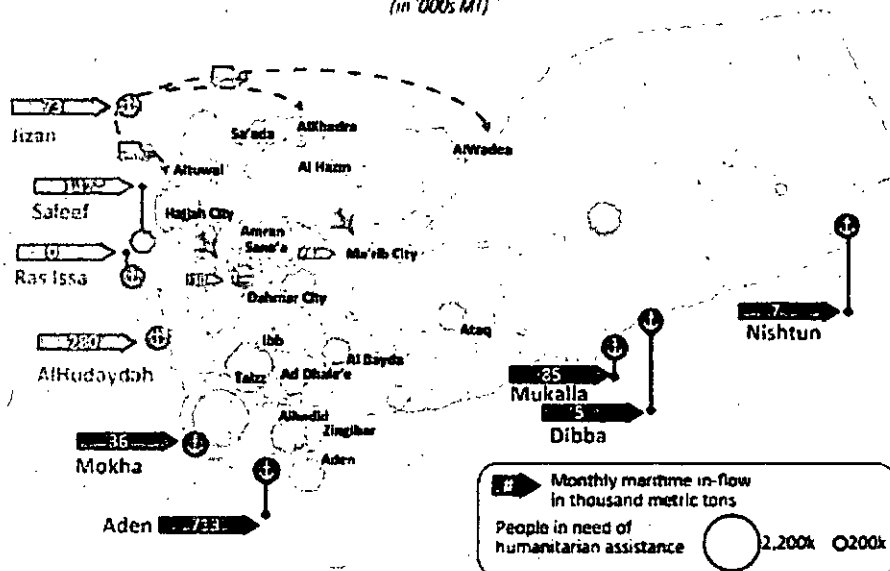
The Coalition reopened the Port of Hodeidah on November 22, 2017 to humanitarian relief. Various ports in Yemen will be expanded to receive additional humanitarian and commercial cargo.

- **Hodeidah:** Will receive humanitarian and medical supplies as well as commercial food supplies. Moreover, the four cranes purchased by the UN World Food Program with the support of the US Agency for International Development were delivered and installed in the port in January 2018.
- **Aden:** In the short term, extra storage tanks will be installed to absorb additional fuel shipments. In the longer term, the Aden refinery power plant will be repaired to import and

refine more crude oil. Infrastructure upgrades will also include an additional crane. Total Aden expansion will reach to \$17-30 million. With this increased capacity, Aden port will be able to receive containers of food (58,000 MT/month), bulk food shipments (66,000 MT/month), shelter and non-food item humanitarian goods (58,000 MT/month), fuel (405,000 MT/month, requiring expansion beyond the current capacity of 310,000 MT/month), containers of medical supplies (3,000 MT/month), commercial cargo containers (37,000 MT/month) and bulk cargo (89,000 MT/month).

- **Saleef:** Will receive medical, humanitarian, food, and commercial goods. The target level of imports for Saleef is 105,000 MT/month of bulk food and 42,000 MT/month of commercial bulk. Since Saleef only receives bulk imports, the risk of smuggling activities is limited and can be mitigated with a strict inspection system.
- **Nishtun:** Will primarily receive bulk food (2,000 MT/month) and fuel (4,000 MT/month), and will help service the import needs of the eastern region of the country.
- **Dibbah:** Will primary receive fuel (4,000 MT/Month) into the eastern region of the country.
- **Jizan:** This Saudi port will be made available if additional capacity is needed. If necessary, Jizan port can leverage its capacity of 5 million MT/year, of which 3 million MTs are used in 2016, 1.8 million metric tons in 2017 (until November). Additionally, it could play an important role in receiving commercial shipments and rapidly delivering them to the northern regions of Yemen.
- **Mukalla:** One mobile crane will be purchased by Saudi Arabia and installed in Mukalla (\$582,000) to enhance the port capacity to receive shipments. Mukalla will primarily be used to receive bulk food (29,000 MT/month) and fuel (52,000 MT/month), and some commercial bulk (4,000 MT/month) which will be delivered primarily to the eastern and southern regions of the country, as well as Sana'a or Hodeidah if necessary.
- **Ras Isa:** Ras Isa port will remain closed, as it is an oil export port controlled by the Houthi militia. Closing the port will ensure that the Houthi militia do not generate revenue to support their military operations and will not have an impact on the delivery of humanitarian aid.
- **Mokha:** Will build new warehouse space (\$3.3 million) and providing port generators (\$70,000), as well as installing two mobile cranes (\$1.2 million). These improvements will enable Mokha to receive up to 36,000 MT/month of fuel and basic commercial goods, as well as bulk food items.

Monthly Port Flows As Per Coalition  
(in '000s MT)



**Fatimah Baeshen, Spokeswoman for the Embassy of Saudi Arabia in Washington, D.C.**

Fatimah Saleem Baeshen is a Saudi former civil servant and consultant who currently serves as a spokeswoman for the Embassy of Saudi Arabia in Washington, D.C. Baeshen is the first woman to hold a spokesperson position in the Saudi Arabian government.

Baeshen was born in Saudi Arabia and raised in the United States. She grew up in Oxford, Mississippi. She received a Bachelor of Arts in sociology from the University of Massachusetts Amherst and a master's degree in Middle Eastern studies (focusing on Islamic finance) from the University of Chicago.

Prior to her appointment to the Saudi Embassy, Baeshen was a director of the Arabia Foundation, a Washington, D.C.-based think tank founded in 2017. She has also been an economic consultant to the World Bank, Islamic Development Bank, and Emirates Foundation.

##

## Comprehensive New Yemen Aid Operation Saudi Arabia Partnered with UN and NGOS

- Infusion of humanitarian aid by land, sea and air
- \$1,5 billion dollar operation
- Attempting to deliver aid to civilians in Houthi controlled areas
- Addresses immediate aid shortfalls while simultaneously building capacity for long-term improvement
- The Coalition will lead the expansion of additional Yemeni ports to import essential aid
- The Kingdom will make a donation of up to \$2 billion in fuel to facilitate transportation of humanitarian aid

Guest Available: Fatimah Baeshen, the press secretary at the Saudi embassy in Washington, to discuss the new unprecedented aid operation. Ms. Baeshen is the first female to hold that position in any Saudi embassy worldwide. *And she is good on TV.* (See below) Availability: Tuesday through Friday, although we are suggesting today or tomorrow.

Video of Fatimah: <http://www.france24.com/en/20171030-interview-fatimah-baeshen-saudi-arabia-driving-ban-king-crown-prince-womens-rights>

The new Yemen Comprehensive Humanitarian Operation (YCHO) is significant. The YCHO was unveiled at a news conference in Riyadh held on behalf of the Saudi-led Coalition to Restore Legitimacy in Yemen, on Monday January 22nd

I would like to follow up with a phone conversation to explain more details and answer any questions.

Attached:

News Release

Fact sheet

Fatimah bio

*This is distributed by Qorvis MSLGROUP on behalf of the Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia. Additional information is available at the Department of Justice, Washington, D.C.*

##

***HRH Princess Reema bint Bandar al Saud***

With Vision 2030 announced by the Crown Prince, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is undergoing a cultural and social shift and is a defining time for women inside Saudi Arabia. Princess Reema is a leading advocate for a woman's changing role and is a force behind the scenes pushing for gender equality in Saudi Arabia.

Princess Reema is also a player in promoting the overall evolution of Saudi society under Crown Prince Mohammed's Vision for 2030, and argues fiercely that the dramatic expansion of the private sector, and other goals, cannot be accomplished without the full participation of women. She is the executive vice president of the Saudi Sports Authority, and has led the way in the explosive growth of women's sports clubs in Saudi and is helping to prepare Saudi women competitors for the 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo.

HRH Princess Reema of Saudi Arabia is in the US this week and may be available *for select on-camera interviews*. She will be able to address the following below. I would love to get on the phone with you at your earliest convenience today to discuss. Thank you for considering. Nancy Baker Qorvis/MSL 202-578-2425.

- **A Woman's role and livelihood in the new Saudi Arabia: How Vision 2030 and the wave of progress in Saudi Arabia is expanding opportunity for women in the Kingdom with job creation and a more balanced engagement in our culture and society.**
- **Investing in Human Capital/Human Capital is the new currency: Women are of imperative value in our growing private sector. We have invested in women's education, and in doing so have created a new resource for our nation. Because of the demand for a well-educated and talented workforce, women must be a significant factor in our evolving economy.**
- **Vision 2030: Addressing quality of life of the individual, including new investment-- not only in new cities and infrastructure-- but also investments in in sports, entertainment and culture, and nurturing a new understanding of the value of the integration of man and woman within the family.**
- **Cultural Change: Driving, Women's Dress and Guardianship Women will begin driving in June 2018. Preparations are underway. Women can now decide for themselves how to dress in public, an abaya in no longer required. The practice of male guardianship is shrinking into a thing of the past as women take on a stronger role in society and the economy**



- **Sports/Olympics:** The number of female athletes and sports clubs are exploding as women are being accepted as legitimate participants and welcome as fans in the stadiums. Preparation for the Olympic Games is strenuous and disciplined, focused on training and fielding a strong team of female athletes to compete in the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo.

Videos of interest:

Princess Reema speaking at Davos in 2018:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FkTjIEoa5zE>

Princess Reema at SXSW in 2015

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UFPbEzlab-o>

<http://www.arabnews.com/node/1235696/saudi-arabia>

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WSJ Sunday 2-11

**A Saudi Luxury Prison': How the Kingdom Squeezed Billions From Billionaires**  
As the Ritz-Carlton reopens after Riyadh used it to detain and probe elite Saudis in an antigraft campaign, questions linger over the rule of law

By Benoit Faucon in London and Summer Said and Asa Fitch in Riyadh  
Feb. 11, 2018 7:00 a.m. ET

After being summoned by an aide to King Salman on Nov. 4, a prominent Saudi showed up at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel expecting a royal audience. Instead, armed men took his mobile phone and escorted him to a hotel room.

"I was told I would be staying here for some time," the man recalled recently.

Over the next 99 days, the Saudi government would close the Ritz-Carlton as a hotel and imprison 381 people there in an unprecedented anticorruption campaign against its most elite citizens.

The Ritz-Carlton reopens on Sunday as a hotel, marking the end of a phase of the crackdown and the beginning of an uncertain new era for the world's largest oil exporter.

The hotel now symbolizes how Saudi Arabia still stands apart from the outside world, despite its leadership's recent promises of new freedoms for women, a more moderate Islam and market-oriented economy less tethered to oil. By targeting Saudi businessmen with deep ties to the West and seizing their assets without publicly detailing any charges beyond unspecified corruption, the purge raised concerns about the rule of law just as the kingdom attempts a historic opening.

"My guess is that the name of the Ritz will forever be associated with being a Saudi luxury prison," said Simon Henderson, a fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy.

The prominent Saudi said investigators were well-briefed and presented him with large stacks of documents about his financial assets. They went through it all methodically, asking questions in "long, tiring" sessions.

He said he was given few details beyond that he was part of a corruption investigation and that he could get out if he settled, which he eventually did. He said some Saudis in the Ritz wanted to fight the charges. They began acquiescing as business partners were brought in to testify against them.

"They really did not see it coming," he said.

Saudi officials say the Ritz was ground zero in a war against corruption, a domestically popular effort that the government says netted \$106 billion in settlements and is now moving forward with dozens of prosecutions.

"The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's leadership is committed to eradicating corruption to ensure transparency, prosperity and an overall healthier business environment," said Fatimah Baeshen, a spokeswoman for the Saudi embassy in Washington.

Critics call it a power grab by King Salman's 32-year-old son, Mohammed bin Salman, whose appointment as crown prince in June had ruptured the kingdom's power structure.

"This doesn't augur well if you are a potential investor in the country," said Bruce Riedel, a fellow at the Brookings Institution specializing in the Middle East.

A spokesman for Marriott International, which runs Ritz-Carlton hotels, said the hotel would resume normal business operations from Sunday. It offered no further comment.

Interviews with detainees and people close to them shed light on a Kafkaesque ordeal. Some were served meals by the royal court's own chefs but allowed only one phone call a day. Some were interrogated for hours but were told all the corruption charges could disappear—for the right settlement price.

The Ritz-Carlton's rich, famous and powerful denizens soon included Prince al-Waleed bin Talal, the country's richest businessman; Bakr bin Laden, the construction magnate; Waleed bin Ibrahim, the owner of the country's largest media company; and the country's economy and state ministers.

Their accommodations were opulent. Built in 2011, the sprawling hotel has over 500 rooms, including 48 presidential suites, a medical care unit with doctors on call and 600-year-old olive trees. The hotel isn't far from al-Yamamah Palace, the headquarters of the Saudi government, putting it close to the everyday work quarters of King Salman and Prince Mohammed.

Some detained Saudis said they were treated well. Prince al-Waleed, in a video interview with Reuters, shows off a kitchen with dallahs, the pot used to make traditional Arab coffee, and says authorities allowed him to eat vegan meals. Tulips sat in a vase of water near his room's entrance, a large-screen television on the wall.

"I exercise, I swim, I stretch, I walk. I have my all diet food. Everything's fine. It's like home," Prince al-Waleed said.

A representative for Prince al-Waleed didn't respond to requests for comment.

Ms. Baeshen of the Saudi embassy said the anticorruption investigations began two years ago. "Substantial evidence was collected," she said.

The Saudi finance ministry commissioned consultancies in Europe and the Middle East to track the assets of wealthy Saudis like billionaire Mohammed Al Amoudi and Prince Bandar bin Sultan, the former Saudi ambassador to the U.S., said people familiar with the matter.

Mr. Al Amoudi was detained at the Ritz for several weeks in November but his current status is unclear, said a spokesman for him, adding that he'd denied wrongdoing. A representative of Prince Bandar—who wasn't detained—didn't respond to a request for comment.

Saudi Arabia's Attorney General, Sheikh Saud al-Mojeb, said in late January that most of the 381 detained were released after the authorities either determined that there wasn't sufficient evidence of

corruption or they reached financial settlements after admitting corruption. Mr. Mojeb said 65 people had refused to settle and remained in custody.

The detained Saudis had access to lawyers, the government says, though it is unclear what protection that afforded. Ms. Baeshen said detainees who provided satisfactory evidence of their innocence were released without charge.

The biggest problem, people familiar with the process said, was the government made financial demands in excess of what some detainees could pay.

Prince al-Waleed was detained for nearly three months as authorities pressed for a settlement of over \$6 billion, The Wall Street Journal has reported. The figure was far more than even the billionaire prince could manage, and he was released last month after making an undisclosed financial settlement, people familiar with the matter said.

##

FT Sunday 2-11

### Saudi Arabia hopes to raise \$13bn by year end from graft purge Crackdown saw hundreds of princes and businessmen detained at Ritz-Carlton hotel

Simeon Kerr in Riyadh

Saudi authorities expect to raise SR50bn (\$13.3bn) for the state's finances by the end of the year as they complete settlements with the princes and tycoons rounded up in Riyadh's corruption crackdown, a senior official said.

Some cash has already been transferred to the government from suspects who signed agreements to secure their freedom and more deals are being finalised. The settlements involve the suspects handing over deposits, real estate and corporate assets to the state.

"By the end of the year, SR50bn will have been paid," the official said.

The crackdown, which saw hundreds of princes and businessmen detained at Riyadh's Ritz-Carlton hotel, is winding down, with most suspects, including billionaire Prince Alwaleed bin Talal, the highest profile detainee, released. The hotel reopened for business on Sunday after being turned into a detention centre when Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman launched the crackdown in November.

The attorney-general has said the government will eventually raise more than \$100bn as all the assets handed over to the authorities are liquidated. Riyadh intends to use that money to help contain its fiscal deficit, which is forecast to hit \$52bn this year as the oil-dependent economy has been battered by prolonged low crude prices.

Shares in some of the kingdom's biggest companies, including Saudi Binladin Group, a construction firm, and Middle East Broadcasting Center, the region's largest television network, are being handed over to the government, people briefed on the matter say. Prince Alwaleed has returned to work at Kingdom Holding Company, his investment vehicle, but no details have been disclosed about the terms of his release.

Seized assets are being overseen by a group of government officials and private-equity specialists hired to manage the portfolio, the official said.

Assets inside and outside the kingdom, including large amounts of real estate, will need to be sold off over time, he said. "With assets, we need to be careful with the liquidation as we need the market to remain stable," he said.

He added that the government does not intend to hold on to the assets, but is wary of selling them off too quickly at discounted values. "We are in no rush to liquidate, we have plenty of reserves and debt capacity left, there is a good tail wind helping us now," the official said.

Funds raised from the crackdown will be deposited into the central bank's reserve holdings, he said, which can be drawn down to help cover the deficit.

The official said details of the settlements would remain private, following similar practice to other jurisdictions. Businessmen who have admitted guilt and signed such deals are free to return to their businesses with a clean bill of health, he said.

Foreign investors and banks should not be concerned about carrying out transactions with any of these people, the official added.

While many Saudis have welcomed Prince Mohammed's purge as an overdue assault on endemic corruption, others regard it as an arbitrary campaign to assert his domestic authority and shake down relatives and wealthy businessmen.

The crackdown has damaged business sentiment within the kingdom and spooked foreign investors who will be needed to help fund the crown prince's ambitious reform plans.

Saudi officials are planning a global roadshow to ease concerns and promote investment opportunities within the kingdom. The meetings, spanning Europe, Asia and the US, will take place ahead of, and alongside, Prince Mohammed's planned visits to Paris, London, Washington and the Silicon Valley in coming weeks.

"People will over time see, through our consistent actions, that this [anti-corruption drive] is serious," he said.

The government was introducing a procurement law to bring transparency to state contractual awards, along with an online portal for government payments, he said.

"This right message will be followed with actions and systems and new laws to prevent this corruption from occurring again."

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