At Crisis Action we believe war can only be prevented or resolved by smart collective action.

That’s why we work with a global network of inspirational organisations and individuals. We build powerful coalitions that will have the greatest impact for people caught in warzones. Crisis Action seeks no public profile so we can be an honest broker for our partners, focused only on what will make civilians safer.

There is growing interest in applying this model – a strategic convenor working behind the scenes to unlock the power of a network – to other issues such as climate change, education, and global poverty. That’s why we produced Creative Coalitions: A Handbook for Change as a resource for activists, organisers, and entrepreneurs who want to work together to change the world.

You can download a copy of the handbook at creativecoalitions.org.
SUMMARY OF IMPACT:

The reach and complexity of wars is increasing and basic humanitarian and human rights norms are being eroded. The rise of populism and nationalism, and challenges to regional and multilateral institutions, are making conflicts more likely to occur and harder to resolve.

Intractable conflicts in Syria and South Sudan and the continued suffering of civilians meant that Crisis Action had to seek new ways of leveraging influence. A resurgence of fighting and unlawful attacks on civilians in Yemen caused us to re-engage on that conflict; while the threat of election-related violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo saw us launch a new emergency response.

However, the past year also saw impact on the conflicts Crisis Action worked on:

• In Syria, millions of people received life-saving supplies thanks to aid delivered from outside Syria, a pioneering arrangement that Crisis Action coalitions were instrumental in renewing in December. Crisis Action collaborations helped exist Russia from the UN Human Rights Council due to their conduct in Syria, showing Russia there was a price to pay for its support for the brutal Assad regime. Our networks helped the UN to establish a new investigative mechanism to push for accountability for war crimes committed and reduce the culture of impunity in Syria. With Crisis Action’s help, our partner NGOs convinced the EU to condition reconstruction aid on a political transition, helping to push Assad to the negotiation table for perhaps the most promising peace talks yet.
• Our efforts with partners to spotlight the humanitarian catastrophe of bombing Yemen’s vital Hodeida port, convinced the US, UK and others of the importance of protecting the port, averting an attack that enabled aid to continue to flow and may have saved thousands of lives.
• By identifying the Catholic Church, women’s groups and DRC’s neighbouring countries as key pressure points on the Democratic Republic of Congo’s National Dialogue, we contributed to the successful negotiation of a political agreement in DRC that averted potentially widespread violence in 2016.
• Our support for civil society and their determined demands for accountability and a revitalised peace process in South Sudan started to show promise.

As ever, our impact comes from the networks we have the privilege of convening, and we owe a sincere debt of gratitude to our partners, allies, staff, volunteers, and the brave activists and individuals who work with us. In these challenging times, it is ever more important that we come together to harness the transformative power of coalitions to change the world for the better.

The world is currently experiencing the worst refugee and humanitarian crisis since World War Two.
The past year saw the suffering of Syrian civilians extend and intensify in ways that were both familiar and shockingly new. Sieges – most memorably and devastatingly in eastern Aleppo – were used as a tactic by the Assad regime and its allies, and in April 2017 the government dropped chemical weapons on a rebel-held town in Idlib province, killing over 70 people and injuring more than 550. This was the deadliest use of chemical weapons since 2013. The bombing of a UN aid convoy by the regime in September 2016 also shocked the world, and resulted in a damning UN report accusing the regime of war crimes.

Crisis Action gave our network of over 60 Syrian-led relief organisations a platform to unite with others to call for civilian protection. The voices of all were amplified, especially those of the local Syrian organisations who are on the frontlines of the response.

- DOCTOR KAIS AL DAIRI
Regional Director, Syria Relief Network

Photo by Javier Manzano/Agence France-Presse via Getty Images
Meanwhile, Russia increased its support for President Assad, putting troops on the ground and more planes in the sky, thereby strengthening the government’s position and challenging the influence of the US and its allies. Ceasefires and peace talks provided glimmers of hope but the dominant pattern was the repeated breakdown and violation of these agreements. Much of Crisis Action’s work through this period involved telling the stories of ordinary men and women enduring the assaults and acting within their power to save civilians - a rallying cry for world leaders to do the same.

Giving voice to Aleppo’s doctors

Our collaboration with doctors and other medical staff was central to these efforts: focusing attention on the suffering and fear of Syrian civilians living under constant attack, reminding policymakers about the consequences of their failure to protect civilians at risk. During the assault on Aleppo in the second half of 2016, Crisis Action worked with most of the last remaining doctors in Aleppo to call on President Obama publicly, urging him to stop the indiscriminate bombing of the city. The initiative made global headlines including in the Guardian, the Washington Post, the BBC and CNN. The White House responded publicly the same day and Russia and the US agreed to a ceasefire shortly afterward, with the Aleppo doctors reportedly mentioned in their negotiations.

Crisis Action also supported Dr. Hamza Al-Khatib, a surgeon running one of the few remaining hospitals in eastern Aleppo, to author a piece in Germany’s popular tabloid, Bild. Chancellor Merkel’s spokesperson described the piece as “a wake-up call”, and the Editor-in-Chief of Bild wrote on Twitter to his followers, “If you only read one text today, make it this.” Shortly afterwards, Chancellor Merkel persuaded the leaders of the UK, US, Canada, France and Italy to issue an unprecedented joint rebuke condemning Russia over its role in Aleppo. This and other collective work that Crisis Action co-ordinated also succeeded in convincing the EU and G7 to make a political transition a condition of reconstruction aid to Syria, increasing pressure on Assad to come to the negotiating table.

More than 600 civilians were killed during the battle for Aleppo, and many more terrorised by indiscriminate bombing and fighting on the ground. However, senior policymakers from the UK, US, UN and Germany have all acknowledged that the interventions by Crisis Action-facilitated coalitions helped create pressure that influence Russia to agree to a managed evacuation of Aleppo in December 2016, instead of a fight to the death. The managed evacuation is likely to have saved thousands of lives.

Holding Russia to account

Throughout 2016-17, Crisis Action worked with a number of partners to increase the reputational damage to Russia for its role in the conflict by demonstrating that its active support for a government committing war crimes comes with a cost. In October 2016, we worked with Human Rights Watch to produce a statement, signed by over 80 human rights and humanitarian organisations, questioning Russia’s fitness to keep its seat on the UN Human Rights Council. The vote went against Russia, in what the media called a “stunning rebuke”, and the NGO intervention was credited for tipping the balance against Russia’s re-election. It was the first time a permanent member of the UN Security Council had been voted out of the Human Rights Council and further increased the political pressure on Russia for its conduct in Syria.

Crisis Action also supported Dr. Hamza Al-Khatib, a surgeon running one of the few remaining hospitals in eastern Aleppo, to author a piece in Germany’s popular tabloid, Bild. Chancellor Merkel’s spokesperson described the piece as “a wake-up call”, and the Editor-in-Chief of Bild wrote on Twitter to his followers, “If you only read one text today, make it this.” Shortly afterwards, Chancellor Merkel persuaded the leaders of the UK, US, Canada, France and Italy to issue an unprecedented joint rebuke condemning Russia over its role in Aleppo. This and other collective work that Crisis Action co-ordinated also succeeded in convincing the EU and G7 to make a political transition a condition of reconstruction aid to Syria, increasing pressure on Assad to come to the negotiating table.

The voices of the Syrian people need to reach political leaders in order to urge them to push for peace, accountability and reconciliation. Crisis Action has been important in bridging the distance between them and European political circles.

- MARIETJE SCHAAKE

Dutch MEP
Crisis Action are a steadfast ally in telling the story of the conflict and the impact on the future of their country.

- SALMA KAHALE

Executive Director, Dawlaty

The film provides a gripping insight into the daily lives of Syria’s volunteer rescue workers as they rush towards the gloom and pull victims from the wreckage even as another strike is threatened. Accepting the award, director Orlando von Einsiedel read a statement from White Helmets founder Raed al-Saleh: “We are so grateful that this film has highlighted our work [...] Our organisation is guided by a verse from the Quran: ‘To save one life is to save all of humanity.’”

Crisis Action was privileged to work with the White Helmets, providing them platforms to engage decision-makers from Berlin to Washington DC. Their powerful testimony of their work put a human face on a grim conflict, shattering the prejudice that all Syrians are refugees or rebels, and motivating politicians and individuals to act on Syria who wouldn’t have done so otherwise.

In February 2017, ‘The White Helmets’ won the Academy Award for Best Documentary Short. The film is a powerful, moving depiction of everyday Syrian heroes who risk their lives to save others, working in some of the world’s most conflict-ridden regions.

The film has brought international attention to the White Helmets, a volunteer rescue team in Syria, providing a rare glimpse into their work and the challenges they face daily. It has sparked widespread support and solidarity, inspiring people around the world to take action and support the cause.

In 2016, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution establishing a mechanism to investigate war crimes committed in Syria since the start of the conflict. This is real impact in securing the cross-border aid regime. This is real impact in enforcing the ceasefire and monitoring body to create four ‘de-escalation zones’ in Syria.

Ceasefire agreed mid-August 2016: In an historic move, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution establishing a mechanism to investigate war crimes committed in Syria since the start of the conflict. This is real impact in securing the cross-border aid regime. This is real impact in enforcing the ceasefire and monitoring body to create four ‘de-escalation zones’ in Syria.

Turkey and Russia in agreement to form a joint monitoring body to enforce the ceasefire.

Syrian government’s offensive on Aleppo

Syria’s volunteer rescue workers as they rush towards the gloom and pull victims from the wreckage even as another strike is threatened.

Terrorism and conflict continue in Syria, causing widespread suffering and displacement. The White Helmets continue to provide aid and rescue services under challenging circumstances.

Syria’s volunteer rescue workers as they rush towards the gloom and pull victims from the wreckage even as another strike is threatened.
From the start of the revolution until the end of last year, I served as a doctor in Aleppo. Often I’d be woken by a knock at the door: “Doctor, hurry, there is a massacre.”

I would try to think positively, hoping the injuries would be simple. But every time I’d be shocked at the scene in front of me: patients filling the beds, the floor, the corridors. The children burnt, bleeding, choking. I’d curse my luck for my shift coinciding with such a terrible attack, until I remembered I was extremely lucky just to be alive.

The things I saw and the choices I made have stayed with me. One day I yelled at hospital workers to move four dead children’s bodies out of the way: they were taking up space and I had a lot of injuries to tend to. They said there was nowhere to put them, and I said “take them anywhere, outside even”. A few hours later I went for a quick break just to see the sky; I saw cats licking the blood off the little bodies and biting the children’s fingers.

In spite of the horror, I chose to stay until my last patient was evacuated. Then I too left. Since then, I’ve taken some time to rest and enjoy my family. In 2015, I had my first child. It wasn’t an easy decision, but she changed our lives and gave us strength even during our worst days. Last month we had another little girl. My children inspire me to fight even harder for change so they and the rest of Syria’s children can live their best life. With Crisis Action’s help, I’ll keep fighting for their future.
The fight for justice continues amid famine and fears of genocide

Crisis Action has been campaigning on South Sudan since it gained independence from Sudan in 2011, when what should have been a joyful new beginning quickly descended into civil conflict between former allies. A peace agreement brokered in August 2015 did not hold and the period covered by this report saw disturbing levels of violence against civilians and aid workers, disengagement by the main brokers of the peace agreement, a fracturing of the opposition into rival groups, and the onset of famine, described by the UN as “man made”.

Photo by Sven Torfinn/Panos
Accountability and a court to prosecute war criminals.

Crisis Action focused its efforts on demanding accountability, empowering and protecting civilians, and addressing the drivers and underlying causes of the conflict, including corruption. Specifically, we worked with partners and allies to continue to push for the establishment of a Hybrid Court to hold perpetrators of violence to account. We helped ensure the voices of South Sudanese people were loud enough so that the African Union (AU) had to keep the Court on their agenda. We did this by bringing delegations of South Sudanese activists to Addis Ababa; bolstering their demands by placing op-eds by South Sudanese and international authors in African and global media; coordinating joint letters by partners to the AU and UN; and producing a two-page briefing with South Sudanese civil society making the case for the Court. The campaign also sought to target the Chair of the AU Commission, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma - the official responsible for overseeing implementation of the peace deal - to make justice in South Sudan a legacy issue for her as she departed her role in the spring of 2017.

As a result of these efforts, key players including Madam Dlamini-Zuma and the AU's Special Envoy for Women, Peace and Security came out in support of the Court. In October, the US announced $3.3m for the AU to hire staff and technical experts. The AU has since drafted a legal framework, and there is a proposed Memorandum of Understanding. Thanks in large part to the work of Crisis Action and our partners, the Court has gone from an idea with little backing, to something that has funding and some momentum behind it. The prospect of the Court is vital as it diminishes the culture of impunity, which is one of the main causes of the horrific atrocities being committed in South Sudan.

Supporting women's groups to demand international leadership on South Sudan.

In 2016-17, Crisis Action continued to enable partners and allies to push the UN Security Council for an arms embargo. Of note was a confidential briefing paper Crisis Action helped to produce in December (with support from South African Judge Navi Pillay), debunking arguments against an embargo, which the US Director of African Affairs described as “super smart”. Arguments set out in the paper were reflected in the US Ambassador’s statement to the Security Council ahead of a vote on the embargo. While the UN Security Council refused to agree to an arms embargo, it did put in place a mechanism to monitor arms sales to South Sudan and impose sanctions on key individuals perpetuating the violence.

Over the last year I have seen firsthand how Crisis Action uses its political insider role to maximum effect by mobilising the right mix of civil society voices at key moments to help policymakers look at the situation afresh.

- PETER BIAR
Senior Advisor, International Growth Centre

Crisis Action’s work bolstering civil society focused a lot on women’s groups. We worked with the AU to organise a display of portraits by US photographer, Robert Fogarty, during its 16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence. The outgoing AU Commission Chairperson, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, attended the exhibition, and subsequently used her last speech to call on her successor, Moussa Faki Mahamat, to prioritise South Sudan.

With our help, various women’s leaders sent the photographs in the form of postcards to UN Missions and high-level UN officials in New York.

Both the new AU leader, Moussa Faki, and the new UN Secretary-General, António Guterres, announced South Sudan as their highest priority in early speeches.

Over the last year I have seen firsthand how Crisis Action uses its political insider role to maximum effect by mobilising the right mix of civil society voices at key moments to help policymakers look at the situation afresh.
Recognising the key role Kenya can play in ending the war in South Sudan, Crisis Action engaged in several Kenya-focused initiatives. First, Crisis Action collaborated with the Enough Project and others to highlight corruption as a main driver of the war, specifically by exposing the role of Kenyan banks in accepting money stolen by South Sudan’s warring factions.

Second, Crisis Action worked with popular Kenyan TV presenter, Julie Gichuru, to raise South Sudan in the consciousness of Kenyans and ultimately to encourage Kenyan policymakers to engage more concertedly to stop the war. We planned a series of moments on television, social media and in print that enabled Gichuru to highlight the violence against women and girls in South Sudan and Kenya’s vital role in bringing about peace. This provides a new level of focus on the crisis in South Sudan so we can help partners to challenge Kenya to exercise its considerable leverage over South Sudan’s leaders to choose peace over war.

By early 2017 it was clear that the 2015 peace agreement was moribund. Crisis Action enabled South Sudanese civil society representatives, including youth leaders, and African religious experts to join Kenya’s First Vice-President, William Ruto, and the chair of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) as well as key Kenyan, Ethiopian and Ugandan diplomats to push for a new peace process. We were heartened to see these officials agree to an IGAD Summit tasked with revitalising the peace process, providing some hope that a new and more inclusive peace process might finally bring the fighting to an end.

Seeking a revitalised peace process

Encouraging Kenya to use its leverage to stop the war

Crisis Action’s campaigning in New York that backed for the Hybrid Court on South Sudan to deal with impunity, enabled Gichuru to highlight the violence against women and girls in South Sudan and Kenya’s vital role in bringing about peace. This provides a new level of focus on the crisis in South Sudan so we can help partners to challenge Kenya to exercise its considerable leverage over South Sudan’s leaders to choose peace over war.

Crisis Action demonstrates the impact of global cooperation, helping civil society work together is more essential than ever.

- DAVID MILIBAND

President and CEO, International Rescue Committee
It is now seventeen years since the adoption of the landmark United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, that put women at the forefront of the global peace and security agenda. Yet women and girls continue to suffer the brunt of violence in conflict-affected countries in Africa. The abduction of more than 200 girls by Boko Haram from Chibok in Nigeria was perhaps the most telling illustration of how violence is unleashed on women and girls in times of conflict. But the truth is, violence against women continues unabated in countries like Burundi, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo and South Sudan.

Deeply concerned with this continued scourge, the same year as the Chibok girls were abducted, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission appointed me as Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security. I was given the mandate to raise the voices of women and girls, especially those in affected countries, and to enhance their influence in peace processes across Africa. It is such a privilege to promote women’s leadership in conflict prevention and resolution. When women are involved, they push for positive change and transformation.

Since that time, we have organised many solidarity missions and campaigns to support conflict-affected women and restore their dignity. Crisis Action contributed immensely to a campaign from October to December 2016 to support the women of South Sudan by amplifying calls to end the cycle of violence against women, and to bring perpetrators to justice. The campaign featured also a photo exhibition raising the voices of people of South Sudan calling for peace, security, and expressing hope for a united and peaceful South Sudan.

Our shared mission is to return to a place where the story of just one girl or woman being sexually assaulted is enough to move people to act. To do this, we need to foster deeper connectedness, empowerment and accountability.

I am grateful for Crisis Action’s support and value its partnership in our efforts to end violence against women. I salute their ongoing empowerment of women to find solutions to conflict and commitment to promoting peace across Africa and beyond. I look forward to continued collaboration in the future.
In September 2016, Crisis Action launched an emergency response in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in the face of escalating protests over President Kabila’s apparent reluctance to step down after his allotted two terms. Concern was rising that there could be widespread violence and atrocities. Advised by a coalition of NGOs, including Congolese women’s group SEPPAF; Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa (OSISA); Human Rights Watch and International Crisis Group, we designed a strategy to prevent election-related violence through forging agreement on an electoral process with sufficient support from President Kabila, key opposition figures, and civil society. We focused on working with national and regional actors with the most influence on the DRC.
Crisis Action brought together a ‘who’s who’ of NGOs that played an important role in emphasising the importance of resolute action at the EU level to pressure the politicians in DRC towards democracy and human rights.

- GUILLAUME LACROIX
Former Africa Adviser to the French Minister of Foreign Affairs

Congo’s Constitutional Court rules President Kabila can remain in office “until the installation of the new elected president”, in spite of national statute prohibiting a third term. Protests against delays in organising the election scheduled for November 2016 are met with tear gas & live bullets from security forces; at least one person dies & at least 11 are injured.

Tens of thousands gather in Kinshasa to hear veteran opposition leader, Étienne Tshisekedi, returned from two years in exile.

The National Electoral Commission announces election delayed until at least July 2017, allegedly to enable voter registration.

Radio France Internationale and UN Radio Okapi taken off air by authorities ahead of planned protests in Kinshasa.

National Dialogue talks launch to resolve political impasse; facilitated by the African Union and chaired by former Togolese Prime Minister, Edem Kodjo.

Electoral Commission announces election will be further postponed to July 2018.

Kabila’s mandate comes to an end. Security forces are deployed throughout major cities and at least 40 protestors are killed and hundreds more arrested.

Bishops broker successful deal on political transition, with elections to be held at the end of 2017.

Opposition leader, Etienne Tshisekedi, dies in Brussels aged 84, depriving the opposition of figurehead and casting doubt over the December agreement.

Protestors take to the streets as Electoral Commission misses deadline to announce date for elections. Security forces respond with excessive violence, killing over 60 people.

First, with partners, including Christian Aid and CAFOD (the Catholic international development charity of England and Wales), we identified the Catholic bishops of the DRC as having critical leverage, being the main non-state actors respected by the people, the opposition and President Kabila himself. Working with CAFOD, we shared insight and analysis from our Congolese and international partners with the bishops, as well as encouragement to use their influence to mediate for peace. In October, Crisis Action planned a trip to the African Union for the bishops, so they could make the case for a new approach to mediating the crisis. The trip was cancelled at the last minute when President Kabila himself asked the bishops to facilitate negotiations in Kinshasa.

To complement the work of the bishops, we also identified key women’s organisations with the potential to influence President Kabila. Crisis Action brought together 80 women’s groups from 25 countries in an open letter to urge President Kabila to respect the constitution and take the “chance for the first ever peaceful transition of power in the country’s history”.

Lastly, participants at a roundtable in South Africa with Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa (OSISA) and other partners identified the influence of the Presidents of Angola and Congo-Brazzaville on President Kabila. Taking this insight Crisis Action worked with three prominent African women leaders to privately urge these presidents to use that influence for peace. These leaders were Nobel Laureate, Leymah Gbowee; winner of the Ginetta Sagan award for women human rights champions, Julienne Luseng; and African Union Goodwill Ambassador, Nyaradzai Gumbonzvanda.

On 31 December 2016, the bishops successfully brokered a landmark deal for political transition and elections by the end of 2017. The agreement reflected the demands of the women’s coalitions that Crisis Action had co-ordinated, reducing tension in the country and averting what was predicted to be widespread violence.

The collective strategy Crisis Action co-ordinated aimed to achieve an agreement on a political transition by using three sets of powerful messengers.

We brought together 80 women’s groups from 25 countries to send a letter to President Kabila urging him to respect the constitution and take the “chance for the first ever peaceful transition of power in the country’s history”.

Crisis Action’s work with women’s movements demonstrates the importance of women’s voices and our power to act as agents of transformative change in Africa.

- NYARADZAI GUMBONZVANDA
General Secretary, World YWCA
My name means “joy” in Swahili. Inspired by my mother, a social worker who was a pioneer of women’s empowerment, I have always lived to help others.

I grew up on the shores of Lake Kivu in the east. My friends and I grew vegetables to give to the sick and the elderly.

When war broke out in 1996, I was in Kinshasa in the west, far from my home and family. I felt so powerless. My friends implored me to stay away, they told me peace-making and negotiation was the business of men. But I knew nothing good could come from violence, so I defied them and reached out to the fighters’ parents – my former neighbours – to try to bring their sons back to a peaceful path. I became one of the very few women peace activists in the entire country. This way, as in others, the war changed my life forever.

My second calling was born after I lost my husband and his family tried to take my daughters from me. I had to fight with all my might to keep my family united. This injustice ignited a deeper passion and in 2001 I started ‘Women in Solidarity for Peace and Development’. Ever since, I’ve been working tirelessly to empower women and help survivors and victims of conflict.

Working with Crisis Action has helped me take my work to new levels. Together with women activists from across Africa, we wrote to President Kabila to urge him to respect his term limits. The letter didn’t solve everything but it helped prevent a major conflict from breaking out.

I am still hopeful that, one day, peace will return to the Democratic Republic of Congo. But challenges remain. I have had setbacks, including many death threats. But I have to keep fighting: there are still so many problems to face. This is what I do now. This is in my blood.
Crisis Action re-engaged on Yemen in January 2017 following a breakdown of the ceasefire and political negotiations, and a resumption of attacks, including indiscriminate attacks on civilians.
In March, policymakers warned Crisis Action of a potentially imminent aerial assault by the Saudi-led coalition on Yemen’s critical Port of Hodeida, through which much of the food and aid was being imported for 17 million people in need. Crisis Action worked with our partner NGOs to increase the political costs for the Saudi coalition and its backers (including the US and UK) by galvanising an international outcry against the catastrophic humanitarian effects of such an attack.

This included bringing together a group of over 40 ex-diplomats, humanitarian workers and experts to publicly highlight the risk of famine to British politicians. We also raised the alarm throughout our network, enabling partner NGOs to produce a joint statement, press releases, and to brief senior UN and UK policymakers. A UK government official told us that as a result of UK civil society pressure, the Prime Minister raised the importance of Hodeida and the humanitarian situation with Saudi King Salman and his defence minister.

The Times newspaper cited people close to the Saudi government saying that the international outcry on the humanitarian impact helped inspire them to step back from attacking the port.

Keeping up the pressure to avert an attack on Hodeida, in May, Crisis Action supported Radhya Almutawakel, Chairperson of Yemeni human rights organisation Mwatana, to brief the UN Security Council to call for the port to be protected. It was the first time a Yemeni civil society activist had ever done so. Crisis Action also organised a social media campaign with the hashtag #YemenCantWait, which reached over seven million people in a week.

After a year of near silence from the Security Council, it issued a strongly worded Presidential Statement to protect civilians, calling on the Hodeida port to be safeguarded as “a critical lifeline for humanitarian support”. The UK, French and Swedish governments told us that NGO pressure, which Crisis Action coordinated, was instrumental in this outcome. Given the US and UK supported this statement and are key backers of the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen, at the time of writing it seemed inconceivable that an attack could occur. Preventing the attack on the port has helped aid to continue to flow to millions in desperate need.

23 MAY 2017
Cholera outbreak hits, with 35,000 suspected cases
The British High Court gives permission for judicial review into whether arms sales to Saudi Arabia breach UK arms export laws.

Airstrike by Saudi-led coalition hits a crowded funeral in Sana'a, killing 140 mourners and injuring 500.

The UK informs UN Security Council members it will prepare a new resolution including a call for a cessation of hostilities; this is never tabled.

US announces decision to halt some planned sales of precision-guided missiles to Saudi Arabia because of the high number of civilian casualties from Saudi strikes.

UN humanitarian chief, Stephen O'Brien, warns the Security Council that 18.8 million people in Yemen are in need of humanitarian assistance and 14 million are food insecure.

UN Panel of Experts report finds “widespread and systematic” violations of international humanitarian law by the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen, some of which “may amount to war crimes.”

UN launches emergency appeal for $2.1 billion to avoid famine.

UN Food and Agriculture Organisation reports 60% of the country – 17 million people – are now without reliable access to food, bringing the country closer to famine.

Crisis Action’s in-depth knowledge, active engagement and outreach have had a positive impact on the Security Council’s work on Yemen.

– AMBASSADOR OLOF SKOOG
Permanent Representative of the Swedish Mission to the UN

To increase pressure on Saudi Arabia and the US to be more careful in protecting civilians in Yemen, Crisis Action coordinated partners to bolster US Congressional opposition to the renewal of US arms sales to Saudi Arabia. Crisis Action worked with Oxfam, the Friends Committee on National Legislation and the Yemen Peace Project to convene a roundtable on Yemen attended by 43 Congressional staffers that featured four US national security experts from conservative and progressive think tanks. We also enabled a former US ambassador to Yemen to privately urge senators to oppose the arms sales, and coordinated considerable media work in the US opposing the arms sales. While the US Senate ultimately approved the arms sales, they did so by a very narrow margin. The surprisingly high opposition (the highest ever opposition to Saudi arms sales) made clear the Senate’s concern for human rights violations in Yemen. It also increased scrutiny on how these arms were being used in Yemen and increased pressure on Saudi Arabia and the US to minimise civilian casualties in Yemen.

First outbreak of cholera; cases resurge again in April 2017.
More than half the world’s population is now connected to the internet, and digital communication is becoming an increasingly important way of engaging the public and influencing decision makers. In 2016, Crisis Action hired a digital campaign strategist to up-skill our staff and ensure we could advise and lead partners on digital campaigning and innovation.

Highlights of our digital work over the past year include:

• A petition on Change.org from one of the last doctors in Aleppo, signed by over 700,000 people and counting. Dr. Hamza can now email the people who signed his petition and ask them to take action at other moments. This connects the petition signatories to a Syrian with profound insight into what needs to be done to protect people, and has resulted in thousands of online actions that targeted policymakers and others.
• An organised takeover of celebrity Twitter accounts by Syrian activists to mark the sixth anniversary of the conflict, allowing them to reach over three million celebrity followers they wouldn’t normally.
• A creative ‘hackathon’ – a collaborative evening bringing together partners, policy experts, digital campaigners and designers to create new, visual and social media-friendly ways to tell the story of what is happening in Yemen.
• A ‘call for action’ on South Sudan targeting high-level actors at the AU, EU and UN driven by East African partner organisations using digital content provided by Crisis Action and which was seen by millions of users on social media.

Over the next year, we will seek to strengthen our relationship with digital natives and influencers within our network and beyond so that we can continue to innovate and use digital technology alongside more traditional techniques to support our change-making.

CRISIS ACTION’S CAMPAIGNS IN THE DIGITAL AGE

Crisis Action challenges and galvanises us to take innovative collective approaches to address the world’s most complex and intractable political crises.

- LAURIE LEE
CEO of CARE International UK
As someone who spent over a decade campaigning for the world to adopt the Responsibility to Protect doctrine at the UN – we must now ensure that Governments the world over deliver on their promises on preventing genocide and other crimes against humanity. Never again can we let innocents suffer as they did in the Holocaust. Never again.

The first was supporting the publication of a report started by the late MP and Crisis Action friend, Jo Cox, whose murder in June 2016, just ahead of the referendum on EU membership, shocked the world. The report, The Cost of Doing Nothing, was the result of Jo’s conversations and initial collaboration with fellow parliamentarian, Conservative MP Tom Tugendhat, and King’s College London Professor of War Studies, John Bew.

Tom and Jo represented different political parties, but shared a concern that in the wake of interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan, Britain was becoming more introspective and less engaged in the world. The report, launched at Policy Exchange, with the support of former UK Prime Minister Gordon Brown and former Foreign Secretary William Hague, made the case for “a robust commitment to the prevention [of mass atrocities]” and active backing of the landmark 2005 UN doctrine, the Responsibility to Protect.

Alison McGovern, a friend of Jo’s and fellow Labour MP, stepped in to co-author the piece alongside Tom. Crisis Action staff, in their role as Jo’s friends, supported Tom, Alison and John to finalise the report and help deliver widespread media coverage.

The British Prime Minister issued a statement in support of the report, saying it “will challenge politicians of all parties to consider how we can put [preventing violence and protecting people] at the heart of the decisions we take.” Tom and Alison committed to take forward their bipartisan work to change minds and prevent suffering, including through a re-vamped All-Party Parliamentary Group to Prevent Genocide.

During a turbulent year, Crisis Action also seized opportunities to work with allies in several key Western countries to remind governments of their responsibilities to protect people from atrocities and war.

Crisis Action also collaborated with BOND – the umbrella group for British overseas development agencies – to help shape a vision for Britain’s role in the world post-Brexit. In the face of growing nationalism and antipathy towards immigrants, BOND and Crisis Action helped partners produce a short statement in defence of internationalism to demand specific commitments, including on aid and climate change, from all the UK’s main political parties.

All three main political parties responded to the statement and confirmed that 0.7% of Gross National Income would be spent on overseas aid, alongside other commitments sought by partners.

Crisis Action also supported efforts in France to ensure that foreign policy issues were not overlooked during the 2017 presidential campaign. Crisis Action facilitated private meetings between partners and the diplomatic advisers of leading candidates to provide new insights and recommendations on how best to protect people caught up in the world’s most pressing international crises.

Positive feedback from partners suggested that these activities helped them hugely in their advocacy work.
Arnold Tsunga (Chair)
Location: Johannesburg
Nationality: Zimbabwe
Arnold Tsunga is Africa Director for the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) and is based in Johannesburg. Prior to that he was Executive Director of Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights, Executive Secretary of the Law Society of Zimbabwe (LSZ), National Chairperson of Zimbabwe Human Rights Association (ZimRights) and Vice President of International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH). A Humphrey Leadership Fellow and Paul Harris Fellow, Arnold is one of Africa’s leading human rights lawyers and in recognition of his dedication to defending human rights, in spite of the threat to his own life, he was awarded the prestigious Martin Ennals Award for Human Rights Defenders in October 2006, as well as the Human Rights Watch Highest Award for human rights defenders.

Paul Fletcher
Location: London
Nationality: British
Paul Fletcher is Chairman at Actis, a private equity firm investing exclusively in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Prior to Actis he spent 23 years in the financial services industry, including over 10 years in the emerging markets business and previously ran the bank’s business in East Africa. Paul is a founding director of the Emerging Markets Private Equity Association.

Justice Willy Mutunga
Location: Nairobi
Nationality: Kenyan
Dr. Willy Mutunga is the Commonwealth Secretary General’s Special Envoy for the Maldives. Prior to that appointment, he was the Chief Justice and President of the Supreme Court of Kenya, retiring in June 2016. He is a holder of a Doctorate Degree in Jurisprudence obtained in 1992 from Osgoode Hall Law School at York University in Toronto, Canada. For his outstanding contribution to the development of law, human rights, good governance and social justice, Dr. Mutunga has received several national and international honours and awards, notably recently the Senior Elder of the Golden Heart (2014) and Elder of the Golden Heart for his distinguished service to the nation and for his role in leading reforms in the Judiciary under the new Constitution (2010). He is currently working on two books: his biography, Inspiring Encounters with Natasha Elkington, and Elements of Progressive Jurisprudence in Kenya with Shermit Lamba as co-author.

Vincent Barnouin (Treasurer)
Location: London
Nationality: French
Vincent Barnouin is a partner at Ecofin, an asset management business based in London, focusing on the energy, energy efficiency, renewables and cleantech sectors. He has spent all his professional career in the financial sector, notably with Goldman Sachs and Citigroup. He is currently working on two books: his biography, Inspiring Encounters with Natasha Elkington, and Elements of Progressive Jurisprudence in Kenya with Shermit Lamba as co-author.

Selman Shahid
Location: London
Nationality: British
Selman Shahid is the Founder and CEO of the Shahid Group. He has been involved in the development of the Shahid Group since its inception in 1998. The Shahid Group has been involved in various sectors including media, mobiles, B2B, hospitality, and infrastructure.

Bruno Stagno Ugarte
Location: Paris
Nationality: Costa Rican
Bruno Stagno Ugarte is the Deputy Executive Director for Advocacy at Human Rights Watch (HRW). Before joining HRW, he was Executive Director of Security Council Report from 2011-2014, Foreign Minister of Costa Rica from 2006-2010, Ambassador to the United Nations from 2003-2006 and Chief of Staff of the Foreign Ministry from 1998-2000, among other foreign service postings. He also served as the President of the Assembly of States Parties of the International Criminal Court from 2005-2008 and Co-President of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Article 14 Conferences from 2007-2009. He is a graduate of Georgetown University, the Sorbonne and Princeton University and author or editor of several books, chapters, and articles, including The UN Security Council in the Age of Human Rights (Cambridge University Press, 2014).

Fiona Nagier
Location: Nairobi
Nationality: British
Fiona Nagier is based in Nairobi and advises and consults for a number of social enterprises, NGOs and from 2008-2009, he was Special Envoy for the Maldives. Prior to that appointment, he was the Chief Justice and President of the Supreme Court of Kenya, retiring in June 2016. He is a holder of a Doctorate Degree in Jurisprudence obtained in 1992 from Osgoode Hall Law School at York University in Toronto, Canada. For his outstanding contribution to the development of law, human rights, good governance and social justice, Dr. Mutunga has received several national and international honours and awards, notably recently the Senior Elder of the Golden Heart (2014) and Elder of the Golden Heart for his distinguished service to the nation and for his role in leading reforms in the Judiciary under the new Constitution (2010). He is currently working on two books: his biography, Inspiring Encounters with Natasha Elkington, and Elements of Progressive Jurisprudence in Kenya with Shermit Lamba as co-author.

Fiona Nagier
Location: Nairobi
Nationality: British
Fiona Nagier is based in Nairobi and advises and consults for a number of social enterprises, NGOs and organizations.

Elisa Blanc
director of the Emerging Markets Private Equity Association.

Mabel van Oranje
Location: London
Nationality: Dutch
Mabel van Oranje is a global advocate for freedom, justice and development for over two decades. Mabel van Oranje is the initiator and chair of ‘Girls Not Brides: The Global Partnership to End Child Marriage’ and the co-founder and executive chair of the European Women’s Council on Foreign Relations. She is a member of the (advisory) boards of the Coalition for the International Criminal Court, Global Witness, the Malala Fund, the Open Society Foundations and The Elders.

Fiona Nagier
Location: Nairobi
Nationality: British
Fiona Nagier is based in Nairobi and advises and consults for a number of social enterprises, NGOs and organizations.
Jacqueline Muna Musiitwa
Location: Nairobi
Nationality: Zambian
Jacqueline Muna Musiitwa, Esq. is the Founder and Managing Partner of Hoja Law Group, a boutique legal consultancy that represents clients in corporate governance, commercial and public law matters in Africa. In addition to the Special Court for Sierra Leone, Jacqueline has experience from the International Finance Corporation, the Eastern and Southern African Trade and Development Bank (PTA Bank), the World Trade Organization and several post-conflict governments, advising on matters related to trade, investment and reconstruction. She is also a member of the board of Bank of Zambia. Jacqueline has been an Adjunct Professor of Law at universities in the U.S. and Rwanda.

Dr. Anna Neistat
Location: Paris
Nationality: Russian
Dr. Anna Neistat leads Amnesty International’s global research by setting the research agenda and ensuring consistently high standards for research strategy, methodology and quality. She is a member of the organization’s Senior Leadership Team. Before joining Amnesty International, Neistat worked for more than a decade as Associate Director for Program at Human Rights Watch. Neistat has conducted over 60 investigations in conflict areas around the world, including Syria, Afghanistan, Pakistan, China, Zimbabwe, Nepal, Kenya, Nenue, Chechnya, Sri Lanka and Haiti. She has authored or co-authored over 40 Human Rights Watch reports as well as numerous articles and opinion pieces.

Khaled Mansour
Nationality: Egyptian
Khaled Mansour is an independent writer and consultant on issues of communication and human rights. Prior to 2015, he was the Executive Director of the Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights, UNICEF’s Director of Communication, and has worked for UN missions in Afghanistan, Iraq, Lebanon and Sudan. He also has ten years of experience as a journalist and foreign correspondent in Egypt, South Africa and the US. He is based in Cairo.

DONORS AND PHILANTHROPIC PARTNERS

Crisis Action is an independent not-for-profit organisation that is funded predominantly through voluntary contributions. We receive financial support from a range of foundations, governments and private individuals, many of which provide unrestricted multi-year funding. In addition, all of Crisis Action’s core partners make an annual financial contribution, with the exception of those located in the Global South. To ensure the organisation’s financial viability and safeguard its integrity and independence, we are continuously expanding and diversifying our donor base. Crisis Action applies strict accountability and transparency standards to its funding relationships.

FOUNDATIONS
- Adessium Foundation
- Ford Foundation*
- Greenbaum Foundation
- Hand Foundation
- Humanity Unlinked
- John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation*
- Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust*
- Kettlesons Foundation
- Nduna Foundation*
- New Venture Fund
- Oak Foundation*
- Open Society Foundations*
- Pears Foundation*
- Rockefeller Brothers Fund*
- Sigrid Rausing Trust*
- Silicon Valley Community Foundation
- Skoll Foundation
- Stanley and Marion Berman Family Charitable Fund
- Sundance Institute
- The Eagle Fund
- Wellspring Philanthropic Fund*

GOVERNMENTS
- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Canada
- Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway
- Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Sweden

INDIVIDUALS
- David Avital
- Susan Gibson
- Tatiana Maxwell*

DONORS AND PHILANTHROPIC PARTNERS

We would like to thank the following for their contribution to Crisis Action’s work over the past year: Usha Allear, Elodie Andrault, Amy Barry, Amy Blum, Ansari Brodie, Simon Black loux, the Van Balsacker, Jenser Cuebas, Tom Dale, Vanessa Gathene, Veritata Greenwood, Rosate Gwillim, Lizzie Guillaume, Undleeb Iqbal, Oliver Hall, Ryo Yoshimoto, Hatunato, Natasha Jeffreys and Richard Jackson from Markets of the Earth, Eben Judson, Mugambi Kiria, Kelly Kopm, Chois McGraw, Richard Nobürnberg, Mina Al-Oraibi, Lily Piachaud, Catherine Read, Lawrence Robinson, Najat Abu Sarhan, Catarina Mulder, William Taylor, Elias Youafi, Fat Borhez, Product Forge, Noa and Sennur, Marion Glassen, Ashley Kaye, Kelly Walsh, Irene Carpent, Isabell Glimcher, Stephen Semar, Emily Parker.
STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MAY 2017

INCOME

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funders &amp; Donations</th>
<th>Partners</th>
<th>Interest</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>£</td>
<td>£</td>
<td>£</td>
<td>£</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,989,483</td>
<td>2,756,376</td>
<td>3,838,198</td>
<td>4,079,822</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

EXPENDITURE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Salaries &amp; Related Costs</th>
<th>Occupancy</th>
<th>Travel &amp; Travel Related Costs</th>
<th>IT, Comms &amp; Office Supplies</th>
<th>Publications</th>
<th>Events</th>
<th>Professional Fees</th>
<th>Asset Write Off</th>
<th>Finance Charges</th>
<th>Exceptional Item</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>£</td>
<td>£</td>
<td>£</td>
<td>£</td>
<td>£</td>
<td>£</td>
<td>£</td>
<td>£</td>
<td>£</td>
<td>£</td>
<td>£</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,326,289</td>
<td>172,606</td>
<td>261,734</td>
<td>176,752</td>
<td>20,171</td>
<td>20,371</td>
<td>82,867</td>
<td>13,026</td>
<td>9,969</td>
<td>43,469</td>
<td>2,991,081</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Deficit)/Surplus Before Taxation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funds brought forward</th>
<th>Funds carried forward</th>
<th>Exchange rate at 31st May 2017 (USD)</th>
<th>Exchange rate at 31st May 2016 (USD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>£</td>
<td>£</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,153,283</td>
<td>1,127,144</td>
<td>1.2839</td>
<td>1.462</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Net Assets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Capital &amp; Reserves</th>
<th>Restricted Funds</th>
<th>Unrestricted Funds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>£</td>
<td>£</td>
<td>£</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,315,380</td>
<td>(217)</td>
<td>1,644,765</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Unrestricted finds includes three shares with a nominal value of £1. These shares are owned by the directors and do not earn dividends.
2. £880,338 ($1,130,266) of Creditors is the amount of deferred income carried forward into 2017-18.
3. £112,500 ($144,439) of Debtors are grants due in 2016/17 but received in 2017/18.
4. The opening USD reserves have been revalued using the May 2017 USD/GBP exchange rate.

INCOME 2016/17

EXPENDITURE 2016/17
Crisis Action welcomes enquiries from organisations that share our objectives and are interested in collaborating with us.

### Beirut
Antwork, May Ziadeh street, Spears, Beirut (PO Box 113-7240)
T: +961 1 815 366

### Brussels
Rue de Trèves 45, 1040 Brussels, Belgium
T: +32 2 737 1491

### Johannesburg
Room 707, 7th Floor Heerengracht Building, 87 de Korte Street, Braamfontein Johannesburg 2000, South Africa
T: +27 76 476 3302

### London
Audrey House, 16-20 Ely Place,
London, EC1N 6SN, UK
T: +44 207 269 9450
Registered in the UK
Company Registration No: 04932380

### Nairobi
PO Box 1965, 00606, Nairobi, Kenya
T: +254 20 262 8304 / T: +254 20 262 8303

### New York
708 Third Avenue, Suite 1820
New York, NY 10017, USA
T: +1 646 400 5522
A public charity and tax-exempt organisation in the United States under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code

### Paris
142 rue Montmartre, 75002 Paris, France
T: +33 1 46 07 24 13

### Washington DC
1015 Street NW, Suite 600 Washington, D.C. 20005, USA
T: +1 202 885 9093

Also with a presence in Addis Ababa; New Delhi and Berlin

Illustrations, graphic design & layout by Suketchi Branding & Design Agency
South Africa
info@suketchi.co.za
www.suketchi.co.za

Copywriting and editing by digacommunications.com
Photo by Mahmood Abazid/NurPhoto via Getty Images