



Security Council

Distr.: General
16 November 2020

Original: English

Letter dated 13 November 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council

I have the honour to enclose herewith a copy of the briefings provided by Mr. Martin Griffiths, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen; Mr. Mark Lowcock, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator; Mr. David Beasley, Executive Director of the United Nations World Food Programme; and Mr. Omer Badokhon, Founder and Executive Director of Solutions for Sustainable Society; as well as the statements delivered by the representatives of Belgium, China, the Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, the Niger, the Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America and Viet Nam, in connection with the video-teleconference on the “The situation in the Middle East (Yemen)” convened on Wednesday, 11 November 2020. A statement was also delivered by the representative of Yemen.

In accordance with the procedure set out in the letter by the President of the Security Council addressed to Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council dated 7 May 2020 (S/2020/372), which was agreed in the light of the extraordinary circumstances caused by the coronavirus disease pandemic, these briefings and statements will be issued as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Inga Rhonda **King**
President of the Security Council



Annex I**Statement by the United Nations Special Envoy for Yemen,
Martin Griffiths**

I thank the President of the Security Council for this opportunity to update the Council.

As Council members are well aware, I have been mediating the text of a joint declaration for many months. I have been carrying out discussions virtually and, when practical, shuttling between the parties. It has been a painstaking process, which has faced many challenges along the way. The parties have remained engaged throughout. But it is immensely frustrating to the Yemeni people that they have not yet been able to agree on a final text. I thank the Security Council again for its steadfast support for the achievement of an urgent agreement on the joint declaration, most recently through its press statement of 16 October (SC/14329).

There is an often-repeated maxim in conflicts around the world that the parties involved must take ownership of the solution for it to be workable and for peace to be sustained. Yemen is no exception to this maxim. The conflict is between the Yemeni parties. Only serious and deliberate commitments by their leaders can bring this conflict to a close. It is now time for them to take the final decisions required to bring the negotiations on the joint declaration to fruition.

I have been moving back and forth between the parties in search of finality on the joint declaration for several weeks. The same challenges have been coming up repeatedly, particularly with regard to economic and humanitarian measures. I have been working with each party to find solutions. But in the end, I am the mediator and not the negotiator. The parties negotiate with each other, and not with me.

I am struck by the example of the meeting recently held in Switzerland on the release of prisoners and detainees. In that case, with all due care for coronavirus-disease protocols, we were able to bring the two parties to meet and successfully produce a result that gave hope to many Yemenis. I am becoming convinced that perhaps this is what is needed in the joint declaration: an opportunity for the parties to explain their positions to each other and together reach the compromises needed. I shall be discussing this and other options with the parties.

No doubt the issues in the joint declaration are among the most challenging and fundamental to the politics of this conflict and the situation on the ground. This cannot be underestimated. But the parties know the issues well. They have been over this ground many times. With determination I believe that they can reach an agreed path towards an end to this conflict.

Since my previous briefing (see S/PV.8770), the violence on the front lines has not been as intense as in previous months. This is positive, but by no means a source of great comfort. I am deeply concerned by the periodic spikes in violence between the parties in Ma'rib and Taiz, and the recent escalation in attacks on Saudi territory. I hope that these spikes do not herald a return to the widespread violence of earlier this year. Several locations have experienced shootings and shelling that destroyed homes, schools, hospitals and places of worship. Once again, I call on the parties to uphold their obligations under international law to protect civilian lives and infrastructure.

My colleague Lieutenant General Guha has told me that the situation in Al-Hudaydah has become calmer, but the tensions between the parties persist. The United Nations Mission to Support the Hodeidah Agreement has continued its efforts to reactivate the Redeployment Coordination Committee and other joint mechanisms to further cooperation between the parties in accordance with the Al-Hudaydah

agreement. Overall, I must underline that there is no better option than a ceasefire, combined with a return to the political process, for the parties to create stability on the front lines. That is what they can bring to the Yemeni people through the joint declaration.

I turn now to the vexed issue of the *FSO SAFER* tanker, whose solution is long overdue. Discussions with Ansar Allah have been far slower than an issue of this urgency and magnitude requires. The United Nations has been trying to negotiate access for months for the expert mission to conduct an assessment of the condition of the vessel, apply essential repairs and formulate recommendations on what is required to avoid a spill. Although discussions have been constructive, we have yet to receive the approvals needed for the mission. Given what is at stake, it is of the utmost importance that Ansar Allah give the United Nations the green light to proceed.

As the conflict in Yemen has become prolonged, broader stability has become an ever-more pressing concern, not least in the southern governorates. One year ago, the Government of Yemen and the Southern Transitional Council signed the Riyadh agreement under the auspices of Saudi Arabia. This gave us all hope of greater stability in the southern governorates, improved functioning of State institutions and the prospect of genuine political cooperation between the signatories. I call on the parties to swiftly implement the agreement, as Yemen needs the agreement to work, and so does the peace process.

The twentieth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000) has rightly intensified the attention to women's participation in Yemen. I am continually amazed by women's courage and their determination to end the war and build peace in Yemen. To mark the anniversary, my Office and UN-Women convened a meeting of 30 Yemeni women leaders, along with international partners. The Yemeni women emphasized the importance of resuming negotiations, ending the war and enhancing women's political participation and representation and protection from political and gender-based violence. These ideas are not just good for Yemeni women; they are good ideas for all Yemenis. To ensure that these ideas become central to the negotiations, we need to see women represented in their delegations. All of us in our different ways can help to make this happen.

And so, Yemen is at a point of decision, not for the first time and certainly not for the last time. As we will be hearing from Mark Lowcock and David Beasley, the plight of its people demands nothing less than a firm bet on peace, ending the shooting war, opening up the country and resuming the search for an inclusive political solution. It is that simple and that important.

Annex II**Statement by the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Mark Lowcock**

The most urgent task in Yemen today is to prevent widespread famine. The data released last week have again confirmed that the risk is growing. As the Security Council will hear from David Beasley, malnutrition has never been worse. In some parts of the country, one child in four is now acutely malnourished. Words such as “acutely malnourished”, “food insecurity” and “excess mortality” are dispassionate, neutral, technical terms that obscure the horrors inflicted on the body and on the soul by famine.

So how do the people, the actual human beings, whom we describe in those technical terms actually experience them? With no food, the body’s metabolism slows down to preserve energy for its vital organs. Hungry and weak, people often become fatigued, irritable and confused. The immune system loses strength. As they starve, people, especially children, are therefore likelier to fall sick or die from diseases that they may have otherwise resisted. There is no shortage of diseases in Yemen that will prey on those weakened immune systems. They include cholera, the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), other respiratory infections and illnesses such as malaria, dengue and diphtheria.

For those who manage to escape disease but still find nothing to eat, their vital organs will start to wither and then fail. Eventually, the body starts to devour its own muscles, including the heart. Many will experience hallucinations and convulsions before the heart finally stops. It is a terrible, agonizing and humiliating death, and it is particularly cruel in a world, such as ours, where there is in fact more than enough food for everyone. It is the fate that the world has left hanging over millions of Yemeni men, women and especially children.

The Nobel Prize winner Amartya Sen wrote decades ago that the history of famines is “full of blood-boiling tales of callousness and malevolence”. In other words, people who could stop famines simply chose not to. That too is the case in Yemen today. Yemenis are not “going hungry”. They are being starved. All of us — parties to the conflict, Security Council members, donors, humanitarian organizations and others — should do everything that we can to stop that. Time is running out.

We prevented famine two years ago. To do so again, the world must act now on the five issues on which I will brief the Council again today: first, the protection of civilians; secondly, humanitarian access; thirdly, funding for the aid operation; fourthly, the economy; and, fifthly, progress towards peace.

The first issue is the protection of civilians. Fighting continues along 48 front lines across the country, with the fiercest clashes occurring recently in Ma’rib, Al-Jawf, Taiz and Al-Dhale’e. The prospects of further escalation in Ma’rib, where 1 million displaced people are living, or renewed clashes in Al-Hudaydah, whose port is a lifeline for millions in the north, remain deeply concerning.

A nationwide ceasefire, as we have long advocated, would go a long way towards protecting civilians. It would also help to stop the slide towards famine, as the data confirm that the worst hunger is in conflict-affected areas. The Secretary-General called for a global ceasefire in the face of COVID-19 in March — a call that he then reiterated specifically for Yemen.

The second issue is safe, rapid and unimpeded humanitarian access. We recently saw two disturbing attacks against humanitarian staff. On 19 October, a Turkish Red Crescent worker was shot and seriously injured in Aden. On 2 November, a grenade was thrown at an aid agency compound, also in Aden. We strongly condemn those attacks.

We are also concerned by the delays and administrative constraints that humanitarian agencies are increasingly facing in some parts of the south. In the north, restrictions have been substantially more severe.

There has been important progress on some of the problems, including assessments and project approvals. On Sunday, a long-planned pilot finally began in Sana'a to introduce the biometric registration of emergency food aid recipients. David Beasley will talk more about that. Those are important steps, but much more remains to be done. Tomorrow, senior donor and agency officials, convened by Sweden and the European Union, will meet to review developments and to plan for the future.

The Council will also be expecting me to update members on the *FSO Safer* tanker. We are yet to receive official approval for the assessment and the initial repair mission. After several more rounds of extensive discussions, the Ansar Allah authorities continue to indicate that they will approve the mission.

My third point is funding for the humanitarian response. With seven weeks left in the year, our response plan has received \$1.5 billion, or about 45 per cent of requirements. At this time last year, we had received twice as much — almost \$3 billion.

David Beasley will give Council members more detail on the implications for emergency food aid. Beyond that, 9 million Yemenis could lose access to basic health services, and the treatment of more than half a million malnourished children could stop.

More money for the aid operation is the quickest and most efficient way to support famine prevention efforts right now. So, I implore donors to fulfil outstanding pledges and to increase their support. More than \$200 million in pledges this year, including new funding announced in September, has still not been paid.

The fourth issue is Yemen's economic decline, which is exacerbating the risk of famine. Yemen's currency continues to lose value. In the south, the exchange rate is hovering around 840 rials to the United States dollar — the lowest rate in its history. The Government is unable to defend the currency or subsidize imports because it lacks the foreign-currency reserves.

Essential fuel imports through Al-Hudaydah also remain far below the requirements as a result of the still unresolved political dispute between the Government and the Ansar Allah authorities over revenue management. That dispute prompted the Government to suspend commercial fuel imports through Al-Hudaydah in June, although the Government has also allowed some vessels through on an exceptional basis, and fuel imports through other ports have reportedly increased. The parties must work with Martin Griffiths's team to resolve the underlying fuel dispute.

Our immediate message on the economy therefore remains the same. Yemen's partners must provide a regular supply of foreign exchange to stave off the worst economic collapse and the famine that would follow.

My final point is progress towards peace. Martin Griffiths just briefed the Council on the status of the joint declaration and its humanitarian and economic confidence-building measures. Many of those measures, including a nationwide ceasefire, resuming salary payments and reopening the Sana'a airport, could be game-changers, especially if they come along with more money for the relief effort.

In conclusion, when I think about what famine would mean, I am at a loss to understand why more is not being done to prevent it.

Annex III**Statement by the Executive Director of the World Food Programme,
David Beasley**

I thank you, Madam President, for convening this briefing on the worsening crisis in Yemen.

Forgive me for speaking bluntly, but I want to make sure that no one is left with any doubt about the scale of the humanitarian disaster now confronting this nation. We are on a countdown to catastrophe in Yemen. The people have already been ravaged by years of conflict-fuelled hunger and malnutrition. A toxic combination of surging violence, a deepening economic and currency collapse and the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is now ratcheting up their misery to a completely new level.

The world must open its eyes to this unfolding humanitarian disaster before it is too late. If we choose to look away, Yemen will be plunged into a devastating famine within a few short months.

The truth is that we have been here before. I briefed the Security Council on Yemen in 2018 (see S/PV.8213 and S/PV.8404) and 2019 (see S/PV.8551 and S/PV.8578). I know Mark Lowcock has done the same. We have sounded the alarm about Yemen time and time again.

In November 2018 (see S/PV.8404), I warned of the horrors that innocent civilians were forced to endure. Today their suffering is more pitiful than ever. I highlighted the deepening economic crisis caused by the collapse in the value of the Yemeni rial. Then it was 720 rials to the dollar. It was 215 before the war started — already one of the poorest nations on the face of the planet. Today it is worth even less — 844 rials to the dollar. And there are predictions that it could soon crash to more than 1,000 rials to the dollar.

I warned that 12 million people were one step away from famine. I ended my briefing to the Security Council by begging for the resources to avoid imminent famine. Donors responded to our call and stepped up with new funding. Thankfully, we were able to pull Yemen back from the brink.

But, in the two years since, so much of our good work has been wiped out. And, once again, famine is knocking at the door. Let me tell members in part why. We are back in this situation because we have been forced to waste so much time. Since 2018, our people have spent countless days, weeks and months negotiating with the Ansar Allah authorities for access to the areas that they control and for permission to set up the monitoring systems that donors rightly expect in return for their taxpayer dollars. Instead of being able to focus on getting life-saving food assistance to the people who desperately need it, we have spent the past two years trying to overcome those unnecessary obstructions.

Even worse, the endless delays caused major donors to lose confidence that their funds would get to the right people, and contributions were reduced. We had clearly explained to the Ansar Allah authorities that, with all the increased demands around the world due to COVID-19, this was no time to play games. As a result, in April, we were forced to cut the rations to 9 million people living in areas controlled by the Ansar Allah authorities. Each family now receives a full ration every two months instead of every month. It breaks my heart.

However, let me give a glimmer of good news. I am grateful that, on Sunday, we finally had a breakthrough when we were able to start the biometric registration of beneficiaries in Sana'a city. It is an important milestone but one that we should

have reached two years ago. However, let me emphasize that this is merely a pilot of 150,000 people.

I hope that this marks the start of a new chapter of cooperation among all parties in Yemen, one that allows us to scale up and roll out biometric registration in Ansar Allah-controlled areas as quickly as possible so as to give donors the confidence to provide fresh funds.

This is also a critical first step in fixing the severe economic liquidity crisis, which threatens to finally break the back of the Yemeni people. We need to stabilize the Yemeni rial at around 550 rials to the dollar in order to restore food prices to some level of affordability.

If we can scale up the biometric registration and restore donors' confidence, we can start getting money back into the hands of the Yemeni people. We believe that we could distribute up to \$0.5 billion in cash/liquidity and vouchers into the marketplace through beneficiaries in 2021. That would stabilize the currency and get the economy moving again.

However, Ansar Allah needs to show that it is willing to help us, and they can do that by meeting the seven preconditions set by donors in February. Of those seven, five have still not been met, although we are slowly making progress on all of them.

Quite frankly, these are things that should be resolved in hours or days, not weeks, months and years. And we are asking for nothing exceptional or new, but just to implement, as we do all over the world. Why would anyone stand in the way? I truly hope that the Ansar Allah authorities will now continue to work with us to meet these criteria and to play their part so that we can raise the funds that will, quite literally, mean the difference between life and death for millions.

We are running out of time. The war now rages across more than 40 front lines. Yemen's foreign-currency reserves, which were boosted with \$2 billion in 2018 to allow the country to import food and fuel, are almost down to zero again. As a result, the cost of basic foods has skyrocketed.

The impact on food security has been devastating. Before COVID-19, analysis found the number of people facing severe food insecurity was expected to exceed 17 million people in 2020. Further analysis in southern districts in July predicted that acute food insecurity would rise sharply — from 25 per cent of the population to 40 per cent by the end of the year. That is 3.2 million people of the 7.9 million surveyed.

The latest internal analysis of the World Food Programme now tells us that famine is a real and dangerous possibility. The warning lights are flashing, and they are not flashing yellow. They are flashing red.

We cannot wait for a formal declaration of famine to act. We have to stop waiting for the crisis to reach boiling point and then doing just enough to pull it back from the brink. It is time to stop with the band-aid solutions.

We need the authorities to continue working with us and to cooperate with efforts to restore donors' confidence. We also need a comprehensive, funded plan to avert the famines glaring us in the face, stabilize the shattered economy, support longer-term development and, above all, bring pressure to bear on the warring parties to silence the guns and make peace.

Today I am therefore calling on all our major donors to step up with additional funds to avoid the looming famine in Yemen. To restore rations to all beneficiaries and resume other activities, such as specialized nutrition support to children and

nursing mothers, we require \$2.6 billion for the whole of 2021. At a bare minimum, to avert famine in 2021, we need \$1.9 billion. We cannot nickel and dime this to death. We have to move now, or people are going to die.

Amid the darkness that threatens to overwhelm Yemen, I ask the Security Council to give the people of this nation a glimmer of hope. I urge Council members not to turn their backs on them. Listen to the alarm that Mark Lowcock and I are sounding before it is too late. Seize the brief opportunity we have to avoid the famine that is already gaining a foothold in parts of Yemen. But do it today, because time is fast running out.

Annex IV

Statement by the founder and Executive Director of Solutions for Sustainable Society, Omer Badokhon

[Original: Arabic]

At the outset, I would like to thank you for providing an opportunity for a young activist in the area of the environment and sustainable development to speak before the Security Council.

It is with great pain that I address you today. For a broad swathe of the population, who are embroiled in the conflict and its harsh effects, environmental protection and the right to development and a good life have become a luxury, a secondary consideration.

I am speaking from the shore of the Arabian sea, which has seen 10 tropical storms, including five hurricanes, in the last five years alone. Because of very limited capacities, the rain and floods, once rare, claimed dozens of innocent lives. Only in recent years have we seen climate events of such intensity. They are an alarming sign for a country whose crumbling infrastructure will not bear up if such severe disasters keep happening at the same rate.

Everyone is aware that the conflict has taken a growing toll on the environment and human development in Yemen. The reports of United Nations bodies and agencies, including the United Nations Development Programme, indicate that if the war ends in 2022, development gains will have been scaled back by some 26 years — virtually a whole generation. If it lasts until 2030, four decades will have been wiped out.

The organization Solutions for Sustainable Societies, which I lead, is staffed only by youths under the age of 30 who believe that, in view of the current conflict, the Sustainable Development Goals can be achieved only by making peace and improving the way we live by building a circular, green economy focused on sustainable consumption and production, in which young people should be empowered to play a pivotal role. There should be a move towards agricultural development and a coordinated use of clean energy products, and other solutions to develop the way we live and help local consumers to save time and money.

Only a week ago, on 6 November, the world marked the International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict. Before this forum, I would like to take this opportunity to call once again on all parties to refrain from exploiting the Yemeni environment and biodiverse zones to fuel conflict. The environment is all too often an unintended casualty. This often happens in Yemen, where the ecosystem has faced numerous disruptions because of a conflict in which the parties have been mired for several years.

Agricultural land has dried up, harvests have failed, sources of fresh water have been polluted, and rare wild animals have been driven to extinction owing to the conflict, in the absence of Government oversight. Ibex and rare gazelles are being hunted in growing numbers. The Arabian leopard, an endangered species, is being hunted indiscriminately; if the situation is not brought under control, it could very soon be driven to extinction. Continuing conflict and war have created an environment where indiscriminate hunting can thrive, and many rare species in Yemen are threatened with extinction.

Yemen also faces a considerable threat from illegal logging. Firewood is used for cooking in the absence of household cooking gas, which has doubled in price and is now unaffordable for much of the population, especially in rural areas.

In 2017, we put forward the Vital Gas for All initiative to empower local people to convert their organic waste, especially goat and cow dung and food scraps into organic that could be used for cooking, something that would take the pressure off the country's scarce green cover, reduce illegal logging and provide an alternative, clean source of energy to replace wood. We hope to receive support for that development effort and others like it, whose primary purpose is to protect the environment.

No discussion of the environmental situation in Yemen would be complete without mentioning the abandoned oil tanker *FSO SAFER*, which is anchored in the Red Sea near the coast of Hudaydah governorate with a cargo of some 1,100,000 barrels of crude oil, or some 150,000 tons. The hull is decaying and corroding. A pipe has been pierced, causing seawater to leak into the engine room.

The *FSO SAFER* can only be described as a ticking time bomb threatening marine life in wide area of the Red Sea. This is an alarming issue; the potential effects are incalculable, not only for fishing but for life along the nearby coast.

As an environmental activist, and as a young person, I urge the members of the Security Council to use all their power to press for a lasting peace in Yemen, for the sake of humankind and the environment. The suffering of Yemenis and of the Yemeni environment will not end until the war does. The following urgent measures are also needed in order to protect the environment.

Action should be taken to prevent the exploitation of the environment as a bargaining chip, as is happening with the *FSO SAFER*. The tanker needs to be emptied urgently before a disaster can happen, and comprehensive inspection and maintenance need to be undertaken. The humanitarian intervention in the area of green technology, including the conversion of waste to energy, should be expanded, and an investment should be made in solar energy, which has proved to be an effective source of sustainable energy for Yemenis in the current crisis.

The Security Council still has an opportunity to protect this planet, put a stop to the bloodshed and safeguard nature and the environment, provided that it has the goodwill and the strength of resolve. What is possible today might not be possible tomorrow. We hope that you will move and act fast.

Annex V**Statement by the Deputy Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations, Karen Van Vlierberge**

[Original: French]

I would like to thank Special Envoy Griffiths and Under-Secretary-General Lowcock for their interesting briefings.

I will focus on three issues today: the joint declaration and the need for political progress, the follow-up to the recent prisoner exchange, and the catastrophic impact of the humanitarian crisis in Yemen on children.

Nearly a month has passed since our last meeting on Yemen (see S/PV.8770) and yet virtually no progress has been made. Unlike last month, there has been no further escalation of violence, but fighting continues, in Ma'rib, Al-Hudaydah and other places. The Yemeni people continue to suffer every day.

Last week was the first anniversary of the signing of the Riyadh agreement. Its implementation remains far too limited.

During his briefing in October, Special Envoy Griffiths seemed to show some optimism about a possible meeting of the parties to finally agree on the joint declaration. However, for this to happen, all parties must show a genuine willingness to sit around the table and talk. Today, this still does not seem to be the case.

I must repeat myself: only dialogue can end the war and resolve the deep differences in Yemen. We urge all actors to re-engage in peace talks under the auspices of the United Nations. It goes without saying that Special Envoy Griffiths continues to have our full support.

Belgium is pleased to note that the agreement on the exchange of a large group of prisoners has been fully implemented. We once again commend the International Committee of the Red Cross for the crucial role it played in negotiating and implementing the agreement. This prisoner exchange is one tool for building confidence between the parties. We clearly need more of these tools. We hope that other similar agreements will be made possible in the near future.

In my third and final point, I would like to address, once again, the humanitarian crisis in Yemen.

While the conflict continues, the humanitarian situation is worsening. Years of conflict, economic decline and the coronavirus disease have made Yemen one of the worst places to live on this planet. This is especially true for children.

A recent joint analysis by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, UNICEF and the World Food Programme revealed that in some areas of Yemen, more than one in five children suffer from acute malnutrition. It is no coincidence that one of the highest figures was found in the Al-Hudaydah lowlands: 27 per cent of children there have an acute need for basic food.

Children suffer from acute malnutrition, as do mothers — a quarter of a million pregnant and lactating women in Yemen need treatment for malnutrition. According to Lise Grande, Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs for Yemen, we are approaching an irreversible situation and risk losing an entire generation of young children.

Additional funds are needed to address this humanitarian disaster. In this respect, the European Union and its member States are assuming their responsibility. Tomorrow, the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid Office will convene

with Sweden a second meeting of humanitarian and development actors on the humanitarian crisis in Yemen. Following a first meeting in February, it will again address the issue of funding and humanitarian access. I am equally proud to inform the Council that Belgium has contributed more than \$30 million this year to the core funding of the Nobel Peace Prize-winning World Food Programme.

But what is most needed is to urgently put an end to the fighting and the war. The parties to the conflict and those who support them bear a grave responsibility. We urge them to lay down their arms and finally put the people of Yemen ahead of their own narrow interests.

Annex VI**Statement by the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations, Zhang Jun**

[Original: English and Chinese]

I would like to thank Special Envoy Griffiths, Under-Secretary-General Lowcock, Executive Director Beasley and Mr. Badokhon for their briefings.

Undoubtedly, the urgency of resolving the Yemeni issue is increasing. China has always supported the political settlement of the Yemeni issue and the United Nations-led peace process. We have played a constructive role in this regard to actively push parties to bridge differences and build consensus. Today, I would like to highlight the following points.

First, force cannot solve any problem and the hostilities must stop as soon as possible. The past month has seen signs of stability in the southern part of Yemen, but also some conflicts in the north, which brought challenges to the overall security situation in the country. At the same time, China is concerned about the recent drone attacks against Saudi Arabia. A political settlement is the only way out of the Yemeni issue. We call on all parties in Yemen to heed the appeal for a ceasefire by the Secretary-General and the Special Envoy, respond to the people's aspiration for a happy and stable life, stop the use of force and restore peace, stability and order in Yemen at an early date. In that regard, the United Nations Mission to Support the Hodeidah Agreement should continue performing its duty of monitoring the ceasefire and ensuring the operation of the Al-Hudaydah port.

Secondly, it is imperative to prioritize the interests of the country and its people and speed up political negotiations. The Stockholm Agreement has been signed for almost two years and the Riyadh agreement has been signed for one year. All parties should fulfil their commitments and effectively implement those agreements and relevant Council resolutions. Recently, the Yemeni Government and the Southern Transitional Council have been engaged in close consultations. Regional countries like Saudi Arabia have actively carried out mediation. Important progress has been made in the formation of a new government. China welcomes all this and hopes that a new Government will be formed soon and military and security arrangements be implemented. We also encourage all Yemeni parties to maintain dialogue, take more confidence-building measures based on the prisoner exchange arrangements and support the Special Envoy's mediation, so as to advance the process of political settlement. In this process, Yemen's sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity must be fully defended and respected.

Thirdly, there should be extensive inclusive dialogue to promote peace and stability in the Gulf region. China firmly supports the efforts of Gulf countries to safeguard national sovereignty and security and promote the easing of regional tensions. On Monday, State Councillor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi attended a China-Gulf Cooperation Council ministerial video conference, in which he once again called on all parties concerned to resolve regional hotspot issues by political means and through dialogue and negotiation. His appeal was unanimously endorsed by the ministers of the Gulf countries. We call on the international community and the Gulf countries to work together to build a platform of dialogue for regional security, continue to accumulate political trust to resolve differences and conflicts and strive to eliminate the root causes of conflict with a view to maintaining peace and stability in the region.

Fourthly, we must strive to ease the humanitarian crisis in Yemen, putting people at the centre. The briefings by Under-Secretary-General Lowcock and Executive

Director Beasley were deeply disturbing. The worsening humanitarian situation in Yemen is affecting people's all aspects of people's lives. We must be particularly vigilant about issues of famine, child malnutrition and the coronavirus disease. The international community, especially the donor countries, should provide sufficient funds to the humanitarian response plan and substantially increase humanitarian assistance to the Yemeni people to prevent famine and fight the pandemic.

China and Yemen have a tradition of friendship. China has been providing Yemen with humanitarian assistance, including food and medical equipment, for a long time. China recently donated testing kits, personal protection equipment and medical masks to help Yemen fight against the pandemic. We will continue providing assistance within our capabilities.

China is also concerned about the lack of progress with the issue of the *FSO SAFER* oil tanker. We call for immediate action to grant access to the United Nations technical team as soon as possible to avert catastrophe, protect the environment in this region and safeguard the safety of international waterways.

Annex VII

Statement by the Permanent Mission of the Dominican Republic to the United Nations

Before I deliver my statement, I would like us to take a moment to reflect on what Mark Lowcock said: “Yemenis are not ‘going hungry’. They are being starved.” (see annex II) I also want to congratulate David Beasley on receiving the Nobel Peace Prize. The Dominican Republic is not the World Food Programme’s (WFP) biggest donor, but it is for sure its biggest supporter.

[Original: Spanish]

We would like to thank Martin Griffiths, Mark Lowcock, David Beasley and Omer Badokhon for their briefings.

At the outset, it is good to emphasize that the progress on the ground is important and welcome. The prisoner exchange that took place last month, the news about the possible composition of a new Yemeni Government and the start of biometric registration of humanitarian assistance beneficiaries are steps that show us some light in the middle of a tunnel that has been very dark for too many years.

However, despite this good news, as our briefers have noted, the situation in Yemen is critical.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations-WFP early warning analysis of focal points of acute food insecurity in Yemen warns us that the expansion of the conflict coupled with the issue of access to humanitarian assistance, the deepening of the economic crisis and the increase in food prices could further exacerbate an already critical food security situation, particularly in the governorates of Al-Jawf, Ma’rib, Amran and Al-Mahwit, where a significant part of the population depends exclusively on humanitarian assistance for its survival.

And thanks to the most recent analysis of the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification of acute malnutrition, we know that acute malnutrition rates among children under five are the highest ever recorded in some parts of Yemen.

Faced with this situation, the international community has the collective responsibility to act. Otherwise, the risk that a number of United Nations programmes will close their operations from January due to a lack of financing will have unimaginable consequences for the future of millions of people. That is why donor countries having pledged but not yet disbursed funds to alleviate the situation must do so with greater urgency. At the same time, we must step up flexible, multi-year humanitarian financing, as well as support and promote early recovery programmes, while ensuring that immediate needs are met.

It is important to look to the future, because if we do not solve the humanitarian crisis, the people and youth of Yemen will not have the strength to rebuild their country when the long-awaited peace arrives.

At the same time, the economic and health crises also deserve mention, because apart from the conflict, they negatively impact the humanitarian situation. We are referring in particular to the coronavirus disease and the threat of a second wave outbreak of the virus in Yemen, where the health system is on the verge of collapse.

We must not let hunger, conflict and the combination of these factors — or worse still, inaction on our part — undermine the future of millions of innocent Yemenis.

Among other urgent measures, we recommend providing an economic rescue package for Yemen; promoting income from remittances by creating transfer channels and reducing remittance fees; achieving a long-term agreement for fuel and commercial imports and negotiating an agreement among all parties to establish a centralized and technocratic management plan for the Central Bank of Yemen to address conflicting monetary and fiscal policies.

It seems that Yemen is a case of one step forward, two steps back. Lasting peace cannot be attained in this way. The solution is in our hands. Together we can change the course of the situation in Yemen, for the benefit of the Yemeni people, who so yearn for peace.

Annex VIII

Statement by the Permanent Representative of Estonia to the United Nations, Sven Jürgenson

I would like to thank Special Envoy Griffiths, Under-Secretary-General Lowcock and Executive Director Beasley for their briefings. I also look forward the presentation by Mr. Badokhon.

At the outset, I would like to welcome the exchange of over 1,000 prisoners between the Government and the Houthis in mid-October. I commend the successful negotiations lead by the team of Special Envoy Griffiths and the International Committee of the Red Cross. This was an important moment of hope in the midst of this prolonged crisis.

We call on the Houthi authorities also to unconditionally release the four remaining journalists who have been arbitrarily detained and are facing the death penalty. In this context, we remind all parties of their responsibility to comply with their obligations under international human rights law and international humanitarian law and to ensure accountability for all violations and abuses.

The prisoner exchange was an important humanitarian measure that, hopefully, will also help build confidence between the parties in order to finally reach an agreement on the joint declaration. We reiterate our call on the parties for an immediate nationwide ceasefire and to agree to the United Nations proposal, thereby allowing for the meaningful resumption of peace talks, involving the full inclusion of civil society, including women.

As we have just passed the one-year anniversary of the signing of the Riyadh agreement, we reiterate our call on the Government and the Southern Transitional Council to implement the remaining elements of the agreement, which is an essential step, including on the path towards reaching a wider peace.

Unfortunately, the fighting on the key front lines has not decreased but resulted in reportedly ever more civilian casualties. The targeting of civilian infrastructure, like the recent shelling of a hospital in Taiz, contravenes international humanitarian law and is completely unacceptable.

Besides the direct impacts and suffering, the hostilities are also the primary reason for the worsening of the economic and humanitarian situation. It is most worrisome to hear the reports by United Nations agencies that Yemen is again on the brink of a food-security crisis and that acute malnutrition rates among children under 5 are the highest ever.

We have noted that the funding situation of the humanitarian programmes has slightly improved, although significant gaps remain. Estonia has contributed to the World Food Programme in order to help alleviate the humanitarian situation. However, in order to respond to the humanitarian situation, including the famine, there is a need to strengthen Yemen's economy and find a long-term solution to ensure the import of fuel and commercial items through the ports.

We also stress the urgency of granting formal approval to the United Nations mission to access the *FSO SAFER* oil tanker, as such a decision by the Houthis is already long overdue.

Annex IX

Statement by the Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations, Nicolas de Rivière

[Original: English and French]

I thank Special Envoy Martin Griffiths, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Mark Lowcock, World Food Programme Executive Director David Beasley and Omer Badokhon for their briefings.

It is high time we saw a political settlement for Yemen. There must be a cessation of hostilities, and a new Government must be formed. De-escalation is needed, and it must lead to a cessation of hostilities.

In the north, the level of tensions around Ma'rib and the resurgence of tensions in Al-Hudaydah are concerning. The Yemeni parties must cease their clashes and renounce any military option in the north and throughout the country. In Al-Hudaydah, we call on the Yemeni parties to resume their talks within the framework of the Redeployment Coordination Committee of the United Nations Mission to Support the Hodeidah Agreement in order to implement the Stockholm Agreement and reduce tensions.

We also condemn Houthi attacks on Saudi territory, which threaten the security of the Kingdom and the stability of the region.

A new Yemeni Government must be formed without delay. The Yemeni political forces must implement the Riyadh agreement and validate the first efforts to distribute ministerial portfolios. Once again, we welcome Saudi Arabia's efforts to facilitate the signing of that agreement and its implementation. That new Government must find a comprehensive political solution. We call on the parties to engage in good faith in the dialogue on the draft joint statement proposed by the Special Envoy, to whom we reiterate our full support.

As Mr. Lowcock and Mr. Beasley stated, the humanitarian situation continues to worsen: the numbers speak for themselves. The spectre of famine is looming yet again. We must therefore act collectively to avoid such a catastrophe. In that regard, I would like to commend the outstanding work done by humanitarian actors, in particular by the World Food Programme. Their fight against hunger in the world is crucial, and they can count on France's support.

We must not underestimate the risk of a second wave of coronavirus disease. The consequences would be tragic.

We will not stop repeating it: all parties have the obligation to guarantee humanitarian access. This issue will be the subject of particular attention at the donors' meeting on 12 November, under the co-chairmanship of the European Union and Sweden. I would also like to recall that the protection of civilians must remain an absolute priority.

Finally, it is essential to allow the inspection mission mandated by the United Nations to have immediate access to the *FSO SAFER* oil tanker. We must do everything possible to avoid a disaster, and this inspection has been delayed for too long.

France will remain fully mobilized, along with the other stakeholders, to find a political solution to the war in Yemen. And the French authorities will continue to work towards a de-escalation throughout the region.

Annex X**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations, Christoph Heusgen**

Our discussion today is basically a repeat performance. The joint declaration has still not been adopted. We continue to see periodic spikes in violence, shelling and bombing. So, we have to be realistic and say that progress is practically non-existent. This is extremely frustrating. Nevertheless, we would encourage Martin Griffiths, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen, to continue his work. I admire his persistence. Please continue to build on the so-called airlift of hope on the International Committee of the Red Cross-facilitated prisoner exchange.

I do not have much to add to what Mark Lowcock and David Beasley, Executive Director of the World Food Programme (WFP), said with regard to the humanitarian situation. The population is being starved and the horrors inflicted by famine abound. We cannot find the right words to react to that.

David Beasley talked about the countdown to a devastating famine. I thank him for his frank portrayal of the situation. Let me also take this opportunity to personally congratulate him and the WFP on receiving the Nobel Peace Prize. It is very well deserved. Germany is proud to be the second-largest donor to the WFP. I congratulate the WFP on getting the biometric data in Sana'a. We hope that the WFP can continue its work based on the data.

I find it really unacceptable to hear about the bureaucratic hurdles. What the Houthis have done in the past in terms of blackmailing donors and humanitarian organizations is totally unacceptable. But it was also mentioned that there are bureaucratic hurdles with regard to the Government and the Southern Transitional Council. I would ask the Ambassador of Yemen to specifically address the criticism being levied against the Government with regard to the bureaucratic hurdles to humanitarian aid.

On humanitarian funding, Germany has fulfilled our commitment, and we are the third-largest donor for Yemen. We have pledged and disbursed \$148 million, in addition to a \$100 million to the WFP and the United Nations Office for Project Services. All together, our humanitarian assistance, stabilization efforts and development cooperation add up to \$370 million. There are others that have not complied with their commitments, particularly those in the region. I do not think it is acceptable that a country like the United Arab Emirates, which is also involved in the military conflict, has not committed to humanitarian aid this year. I would also ask our colleague Kelly Craft, Permanent Representative of the United States of America, with excellent relations to the United Arab Emirates, to please push them to commit to the same level as they did last year.

Let me turn to Omer Badokhon, Founder and Executive Director of Solutions for Sustainable Society, who said a dignified life is not possible in Yemen. I find it wonderful that he has such ambitions for the country with regard to a circular green economy, biogas, conservation of wildlife and timber. This is what we should be talking about, but instead we have to talk about the dire humanitarian situation. He said that young people have to play a role, and I would add the need to have the participation of women. I thank Martin Lowcock for being steadfast on this. In his negotiations on the joint declaration, women must be included.

During last month's briefing (see S/PV.8770), Mark Lowcock said that the Yemeni children were a testament of hope, citing the moving example of a school in Taiz where the children keep going to school without any learning material. Teachers continue to teach without having been paid for months, or even years. This

is an example of hope. Just last week, we read about three children being severely injured by shelling, including a 6-year-old girl. The shelling happened precisely in Taiz. Maybe the injured children were pupils of the school he mentioned, maybe not. But these incidents show once more how horrifying the fighting and the ongoing violations of international humanitarian law are and what consequences they have. They literally killed the last remaining testament of hope for the country. The fighting and, especially, the killing of civilians has to stop.

Annex XI

Statement by the Permanent Representative of Indonesia to the United Nations, Dian Triansyah Djani

I thank Special Envoy Martin Griffiths, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Mark Lowcock and David Beasley for their important updates, and Omer Badokhon for his briefing.

It is sad that the conflict in Yemen has failed to improve, with the deteriorating economy and the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) proving a deadly combination. It is inconceivable that the number of people facing acute food insecurity is expected to exceed 17 million this year, up from 15 million in 2019.

Let me reiterate what my delegation has been saying in the past several months. First, only through a political process can the Yemenis shape the future they want and need. I completely agree with what Martin Lowcock said just now, that, at the end of the day, those who have to negotiate are the parties concerned, and our task is to create a conducive environment for that to happen. We encourage Martin to continue to bring them together.

The option is there — through the three Special Envoy's three proposals, the parties can choose a different path for their people: a path without guns and bloodshed.

The first step would be a nationwide ceasefire, accompanied by measures to restore the economy. The next step should be the resumption of an inclusive political process, with the participation of women and youth. Women are very important in the peace process.

We know that this will take time, but the more protracted the conflict, the more damage it will inflict and the greater the suffering of the people.

Indonesia therefore once again reiterates the importance for all to expeditiously agree on the joint declaration and to resume dialogue on a comprehensive political settlement, in line with the relevant resolutions, including resolution 2216 (2015). The full implementation of Riyadh agreement is also crucial for allowing a more comprehensive political process. We therefore applaud the continuous efforts by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to mediate the process.

Secondly, the parties should exercise maximum restraint and protect civilians. International humanitarian law was created to protect civilians in armed conflict. This is an obligation for all the parties to an armed conflict, whoever and wherever they are. The continuous attacks by the Houthis in civilian areas in the cities of Ma'rib, Taiz and in Al-Hudaydah violate international humanitarian law and must be condemned. We again urge the Houthis to stop targeting civilians and infrastructure. They must reduce violence and thereby give space to measures that could support the peace process.

Thirdly, access to humanitarian efforts should be improved. Restrictions on the humanitarian workers in the biggest humanitarian operation in the world is unacceptable.

With increased violence and COVID-19, humanitarian agencies already have a very complicated job. They should be permitted to deliver the assistance to those in need quickly and safely.

The five urgent priorities updated by Mark Lowcock are now extremely urgent, as we no longer have the luxury of time. Mark Lowcock and David Beasley gave a grim picture of what lies ahead for the children and population of Yemen, due

to famine leading to catastrophic scenario. We need to act now, with resources and with political solutions. But, most important, the parties concerned must act to save their peoples.

On the *FSO SAFER* oil tanker, it is regrettable that the United Nations repair team is still denied access. We question whether there was ever any intention to allow such access. In view of the dangers, my delegation again urges expeditious access for the repair team.

In conclusion, I will not tire of repeating that the parties must take all necessary measures, in a timely fashion, to prevent famine and the further suffering of our Yemeni brothers and sisters. That is the responsibility of leaders. That is the only way to restore to the people the hope and the future that belong to them.

To close, allow me to quote from Dwight Eisenhower's *Chance for Peace* speech, which is still relevant in the context of Yemen:

“Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed”.

Annex XII

Statement by the Permanent Representative of the Niger to the United Nations, Abdou Abarry

[Original: French]

I would like to thank Mr. Martin Griffiths and Mr. Mark Lowcock for their briefings on recent developments in the situation in Yemen. I also thank Mr. David Beasley and Mr. Omer Badokhon for their presentations.

On 15 and 16 October, we welcomed with great satisfaction the exchange of more than 1,000 detainees between the parties to the conflict in Yemen, thus translating into reality the agreement reached at the end of September in Switzerland. Those exchanges will be gravened in the memory of many Yemeni families, which until then had been resigned and desperate but that were relieved to welcome their loved ones after a long separation.

The Niger welcomes this progress, which represents an important milestone in the process of the political settlement of the conflict in Yemen, and it encourages the parties to maintain this positive momentum in order to take the additional step necessary to lead to the signing of the joint declaration on a national ceasefire.

To achieve that objective, it is important that the parties maintain the mutual trust that they have built and, beyond that, that they honour the commitments to which they have previously subscribed. This is, moreover, an essential condition for the continuation of negotiations and the relaunch of the political process, which has been bogged down for several years.

The resolution of the crisis — and the parties to the conflict know this full well — will not be achieved by military means but must be sought through dialogue and negotiation; it must be political. That is why my delegation invites the international community, regional actors and those members of the Council with influence on the parties in conflict to redouble their efforts to achieve a rapprochement between the parties and to encourage them to come to the negotiating table in order to lay the foundations for the settlement of the conflict, which has already claimed so many victims.

While positive developments have been registered at the political level, the expected improvements in the humanitarian situation have been slow in materializing, making life increasingly difficult for thousands of people. It should be emphasized that the humanitarian crisis in Yemen is primarily human-caused; in particular, the continued military campaigns in the country have contributed to the destruction of basic infrastructure.

As the fighting goes on, the humanitarian situation continues to deteriorate, assuming intolerable proportions for the population, in particular given the combined effect of factors such as the obstruction of humanitarian aid; the degradation of the health system, destroyed by long years of war; the coronavirus disease pandemic; food insecurity; the fuel crisis; floods; the sharp depreciation of the rial; the depletion of the national reserves; and the international aid deficit.

On that last point, my delegation remains concerned about the reduction of services in several health-care facilities, as well as the suspension of certain United Nations assistance programmes on which several million people in Yemen depend. That is why we appeal for greater international generosity to alleviate the suffering of the Yemeni people.

We call on those countries that have announced their contributions, in particular those in the region, to honour their commitments in order to ensure the continuity of assistance programmes and avert any further loss of life. We urge the parties to the conflict to show restraint by putting an end to the fighting, as the humanitarian situation cannot improve significantly without a cessation of hostilities.

In conclusion, my delegation would like to express its concern over the situation of the *FSO SAFER* oil tanker, on which inspection work has been slow to start, even though the vessel's state of advanced decay continues to expose Yemen as well as the countries bordering the Red Sea to the serious threat of an environmental disaster with incalculable consequences.

To avert a worst-case scenario, we call on the Houthis to show responsibility and honour their commitments by issuing the necessary clearances to the United Nations team tasked with inspecting the *FSO SAFER* tanker.

Annex XIII**Statement by the Deputy Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations, Anna Evstigneeva**

[Original: Russian]

We thank Special Envoy Martin Griffiths, Under-Secretary-General Mark Lowcock and World Food Programme (WFP) Executive Director David Beasley for their comprehensive overview of the situation in Yemen. We also listened very carefully to Mr. Omer Badokhon.

We take this opportunity to congratulate the WFP, represented here today by Director Beasley, on having been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. We will continue to support the work of the WFP, including on the Yemeni track, in providing humanitarian assistance on a non-discriminatory and unbiased basis.

We are closely monitoring the situation in Yemen, which is in the sixth year of an acute internal political conflict, accompanied by an unprecedented humanitarian disaster that requires an immediate response on the part of the international community.

Many years of conflict have destroyed Yemen's civilian infrastructure and health-care system. Its people are starving and are deprived of basic medicines and social protections; they need help. All of this is exacerbated by the coronavirus pandemic. In that regard, we highly commend the courageous work of United Nations humanitarian aid workers, and we deplore the fact that United Nations programmes aimed at providing basic assistance to the Yemeni people have had to scale back their activities because of insufficient funding.

Russia will continue to assist the people of Yemen, including through United Nations entities. We call on donors, including those from the region, to increase financial support. We would recall that humanitarian assistance to Yemen coming from abroad must be distributed on a non-discriminatory basis among the entire population.

It is clear from what we heard today that the humanitarian situation in Yemen can be improved only through a combination of political and diplomatic efforts to resolve the conflict. However, we note that efforts towards a political settlement have stalled and that military activities are escalating in various parts of the country. We note with regret that the parties still have not managed to sign a joint declaration and that the implementation of the relevant agreements, including the Stockholm Agreement and the Hodeidah Agreement, has not yielded the desired results. That threatens to intensify the violence, which would benefit only extremists and terrorists. We expect to see progress in the implementation of the Riyadh agreement, which would launch an intra-Yemeni national dialogue.

We believe that there is still an opportunity to draw up arrangements, in particular with regard to confidence-building measures, a nationwide ceasefire and a relaunching of the intra-Yemeni negotiations. The exchange of prisoners and detainees under the auspices of the International Committee of the Red Cross is additional proof of this. The fact that such a large-scale humanitarian operation could be conducted by the Yemeni parties shows that they are able not only to reach compromise-based solutions to problems and differences but also to translate them into reality.

Progress also can be achieved on the situation concerning the *FSO SAFER* tanker. We call on all relevant parties, including the United Nations Office for Project

Services, to take into account one another's interests and to act constructively in order to devise solutions that are acceptable to all parties.

We have repeatedly expressed our position, which remains consistent and unchanged, calling for a negotiated solution to the conflict in Yemen. In that regard, we reiterate our full support for Martin Griffiths's efforts to relaunch the political process, develop confidence-building measures and ensure a comprehensive ceasefire. The international community is united in its understanding that there can be no military solution to the conflict in Yemen.

We call upon all parties to actively join in the mediation efforts made by Mr. Griffiths. We will continue to provide assistance to the United Nations mediation presence in Yemen, including through contacts with all political forces of the country and interested parties.

We would like to recall once again the fact that resolution 598 (1987) tasked the Secretary-General with developing a security architecture in the region, in cooperation with the States of the region. We would draw the Council's attention once again to the Russian concept of collective security in the Persian Gulf region, which is aimed at breaking the deadlock in conflict situations and devising confidence-building measures. In October, we organized a Security Council meeting on this issue (see S/2020/1037), at which a call for de-escalation was made once again by both the region and the international community.

Annex XIV**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to the United Nations, Inga Rhonda King**

I thank Martin Griffiths and Mark Lowcock for their usual cooperation and dedication. I also thank our briefers, Mr. David Beasley and Mr. Omer Badokhon, not only for the relevant information provided this morning but also for the invaluable work that they do in Yemen.

People desperately need relief from the conflict and its unjustified consequences. We commend the work of all humanitarian organizations operating in Yemen to mitigate the adverse conditions for life and livelihoods, but this is not a solution. It is merely a transient cure for the symptoms of the conflict. We also recall the importance of the humanitarian response plan. While we welcome additional humanitarian funding, there remains a need for donors that have pledged funds to disburse them with the greatest urgency. A shortage of funds will end life-saving humanitarian assistance. Yemen cannot afford this. In that regard, we also recall the parties' obligations under international law that demand the unhindered passage of humanitarian aid. Moreover, there is a moral onus on all parties to ensure that all persons in need are able to access such aid.

The threat of famine is real, but it need not be inevitable. Under-Secretary-General Lowcock has consistently reiterated the various pillars of the solution that made it possible to avert famine in 2018, including funding and support for the economy, and he has emphasized that these remain relevant. Notwithstanding this, we are approaching a dangerous precipice, and it will be unforgivable if critical action is not taken to save the people of Yemen. The fuel shortages in some parts of Yemen add to the suffering, and we call on the parties to work together for a resolution of the crisis.

The parties have the ability to work together, as was seen on various occasions, including the most recently concluded prisoner exchange. Dialogue has been the necessary basis upon which that cooperation was achieved, and we call on the parties to continue working with each other and with the Special Envoy's Office in good faith to open the pathway to consolidated peace.

We close by noting that the *FSO SAFER* oil tanker remains an unresolved issue requiring urgent action. The threat of an environmental, economic and humanitarian catastrophe still lingers, and we appeal for the necessary concrete steps to be taken as soon as possible, before our window of opportunity is permanently closed.

Annex XV**Statement by the Permanent Mission of South Africa to the United Nations**

We thank Special Envoy Martin Griffiths; the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and Under-Secretary-General Mark Lowcock; the Executive Director of the United Nations World Food Programme, David Beasley; and the Founder and Executive Director of Solutions for Sustainable Society, Omer Badokhon, for their briefings.

South Africa continues to support Special Envoy Griffiths in his quest for a peaceful solution to the situation in Yemen, despite the continuing violence and the unyielding coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

We would like to reiterate that the tragic humanitarian situation in Yemen, deepened by the COVID-19 pandemic, is inextricably linked to the political impasse. As such, our intervention will focus on these two elements, namely, the humanitarian situation and the political situation.

On the humanitarian front, South Africa continues to express concern regarding the devastating effect on the people of Yemen, in particular women, children, older persons, internally displaced persons and those with disabilities.

South Africa remains dismayed at the fact that the escalating violence is aggravating the widespread man-made hunger crisis in Yemen, a grim reality in which two thirds of the population is confronted with food insecurity. Acute malnutrition rates among children under 5 are the highest ever recorded in the southern districts, which is home to 1.4 million children.

Hard-won gains are being lost as the escalating conflict and economic decline, coupled with the overwhelming impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, have pushed an already exhausted population to the brink. South Africa urges all authorities in various governorates to agree to a unified set of measures to counter the spread of COVID-19 in Yemen.

South Africa calls on all parties to the conflict to improve the delivery of humanitarian aid and provide impetus to the overall political negotiations to end the war in Yemen and alleviate the suffering of the Yemeni people. The conflict is not only affecting the people and the nation of Yemen but is also having a negative impact on all neighbouring States and the greater region. It is in the interest of all Yemenis and all citizens of the region that the conflict be brought to an end.

We continue to stress the importance for all parties to abide by their obligations and responsibilities under international humanitarian law and international human rights law and to take all measures necessary to end and prevent violations against civilians.

The report of the Group of Eminent International and Regional Experts on Yemen (A/HRC/45/6) highlights the dangers of the parties opting for military solutions above political negotiations and dialogue, which have the greatest potential for the development of peaceful long-term solutions.

On the political impasse, South Africa remains concerned that the continued fighting, with several cross-border attacks, air strikes and gun battles in Al-Hudaydah and several other cities, threatens to halt the overdue peace process and deepen the world's worst humanitarian catastrophe.

We further call on all parties to show a willingness to compromise and not to be set on gaining absolute positions. After five years, it is clear that there can be no

military solution and that both sides should seek to compromise in order to secure a negotiated political settlement.

South Africa calls on all parties to engage with Special Envoy Griffiths in good faith and without preconditions in order to reach a comprehensive negotiated settlement to end the conflict, and that this be done in parallel with continued efforts to implement the agreements made in Stockholm and Riyadh. South Africa commends the progress made under the Stockholm Agreement in October, when part of the prisoner-swap agreement was implemented and applauds the parties for their success in this regard. This is a valuable confidence-building measure that could move the parties closer to a negotiated settlement and provide impetus towards the much-anticipated implementation of the Hodeidah Agreement and the statement of understanding on Taiz.

South Africa urges all parties involved in Yemen to conclude the issue of the *FSO SAFER* oil tanker by allowing for critical repairs that would avert a human-made disaster in the Red Sea, including the removal of the oil from the vessel, in order for it to undergo substantial repairs. We urge all parties to the conflict to display a willingness to resolve this matter and remove this pending environmental disaster from the Red Sea.

In conclusion, South Africa reiterates that the only solution to the conflict in Yemen is an inclusive Yemeni-led, Yemeni-owned political settlement that delivers on the hopes of the Yemeni people for a strong economic and political future. In this context, we also call for the full and meaningful participation of women in all aspects of an inclusive political process.

Annex XVI**Statement by the Permanent Mission of Tunisia to the United Nations**

[Original: Arabic]

First of all, I would like to thank Special Envoy Martin Griffith, Under-Secretary-General Mark Lowcock, the Executive Director of the World Food Organization, David Beasley, and the founder of Solutions for Sustainable Society, Omer Badokhon, for their valuable briefings on the unfolding situation in Yemen.

The situation in Yemen is still a source of grave concern. Despite the efforts of the United Nations and the repeated calls for a ceasefire and de-escalation, the conflict is intensifying, especially in the areas of Al-Jawf, Ma'rib and the north-east. The situation threatens to jeopardize negotiations, exacerbate the humanitarian crisis, destroy the infrastructure and damage the economy and living standards for the Yemeni people.

We remain convinced that constant military escalation complicates the situation and undermines efforts to find a solution. We call on all Yemeni parties to the conflict to commit to a comprehensive and lasting political solution that would bring an end to the conflict through direct, peaceful political negotiations under United Nations auspices, in accordance with the terms of reference for a solution set forth in the Initiative of the Gulf Cooperation Council and its Implementation Mechanism, the outcomes of the All-Inclusive National Dialogue Conference and the resolutions of the Security Council, including resolution 2216 (2015), so as to preserve the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Yemen. The path of dialogue requires accepting necessary agreements and concessions and putting the national interest first.

My delegation welcomes the recent prisoner release, which shows that the parties to the conflict are willing to reach a comprehensive solution. It hopes that work will continue until the agreement includes all male and female prisoners for the sake of social harmony at the national level.

We wish to reaffirm the importance of a commitment to implement all the provisions of the Stockholm Agreement. We support all efforts to implement the Riyadh Agreement with a view to establishing a new partnership government. We call on the parties concerned to keep building on the positive atmosphere that characterized the negotiations overseen by Saudi Arabia.

We support the efforts of the Special Envoy to push for a political settlement. We hope that the parties of the conflict will respond positively to the draft joint declaration, including by complying with the comprehensive ceasefire, resuming political consultations and taking the necessary humanitarian measures to alleviate the suffering of the Yemeni people. We hope that the adoption of the joint declaration will be a starting point to ensure the protection of the civilian population and facilities, and to bring to fruition direct political negotiations leading to a definitive solution.

In order to make the peacebuilding process successful and long-lasting, the discussions must be comprehensive and participatory. They must bring together all components of society, and include the effective participation of women, young people and representatives of civil society.

Yemen is now facing the worst humanitarian disaster in the world. My country is deeply concerned at the situation. The armed conflict has helped to spread the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and exacerbated the threat of famine

facing millions of Yemenis, particularly children, women and vulnerable categories, especially given the deterioration of the health care infrastructure, the shortage of food sources and the steep decline of the economy. We hope that the international community will agree to alleviate and contain the suffering.

My country also wishes to highlight the risk of an alarming environmental, humanitarian and economic crisis in the Red Sea owing to the precarious condition of the abandoned oil tanker *FSO SAFER* off the coast of Hudaydah governorate. A swift intervention is needed in order to assess the damage and make the necessary urgent repairs. We urge the Houthis to respond to the appeals of the international community and allow the United Nations Panel of Experts to inspect the tanker and take the necessary actions. Such vital issues must be detached from their political context.

Annex XVII**Statement by the Acting Deputy Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations, James Roscoe**

I thank Mr. Griffiths, Mr. Lowcock and Mr. Beasley. I think the briefings left us in no doubt as to the scale of the humanitarian crisis, the human crisis in Yemen and the urgent need to find progress in terms of a political solution.

The United Kingdom fully supports Mr. Griffiths' efforts to make progress on a political solution. The recent success that he described in securing the exchange of over 1,000 prisoners demonstrates that face-to-face dialogue can indeed lead to positive outcomes. We therefore encourage him to do what he can to bring the sides together to finalize the joint declaration. It is clear from everything we have heard today that only an end to the violence can help us bring enduring humanitarian relief and hope to the people of Yemen.

But as Mr. Griffiths has said, we continue to see spikes in violence — in particular the Houthis continuing to launch persistent missiles and drone attacks on Saudi Arabia and to pursue further territorial gains in Yemen, casting doubt over the Houthis' commitment to peace. The recent arrival of a senior Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps envoy in Sana'a underlines this point and highlights Iran's destabilizing role in the Yemen conflict. We therefore urge the Houthis to refrain from such behaviour and, instead, to place their efforts into dialogue. Another necessary step is the implementation of the Riyadh agreement. The United Kingdom therefore calls on the parties to rapidly form an inclusive Cabinet and implement the necessary military reforms.

We also heard today about the dire humanitarian situation. Several sets of data were released last week, and it is clear that the risk of famine is growing. But, as Mr. Lowcock said, this is not about data or statistics for the people and children of Yemen, but a grim human reality. The latest acute malnutrition analysis by the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification for parts of southern Yemen, as we have heard, predicts that malnutrition in the south is soon expected to reach its highest levels since the conflict began. We know how bad it has been, and it is getting worse. By the end of 2020, the number of children suffering acute malnutrition will grow by 10 per cent — risking the fate described just now by Mr. Lowcock.

And as we heard from Mr. Beasley, the World Food Programme has also assessed that food insecurity is worsening faster than expected. With 40 per cent of households across the country now not having enough to eat, the dire picture makes swift action — now, before it is too late — all the more important, particularly in terms of the economy, humanitarian funding and humanitarian access.

With regard to the economy, urgent action is needed to ensure the availability and affordability of food, as we have heard. At present, Yemen's economic problems are escalating and driving up the prices of such basic goods as food and fuel and putting additional pressure on the humanitarian response. The Yemeni rial has fallen, as we heard again today, to record lows against the dollar, and the hard currency reserves of the Central Bank of Yemen are effectively exhausted. The Government of Yemen must set out a realistic and transparent budget, while taking steps to avoid further inflation. External support in the form of getting hard currency to the Central Bank of Yemen is also urgently needed so that food importers can continue to bring food into the country.

The United Nations-led humanitarian response, as we heard again today, remains vastly underfunded, further driving the risk of famine. Only 43 per cent

of the \$3.3 billion appeal by the United Nations has been received to date. As a result, 12 of the 38 major programmes of the United Nations in Yemen have already closed or been significantly scaled back this year. If no further funding is received, more will close, denying life-saving assistance to long-suffering Yemeni children and adults. It is critical that donors disburse their pledges promptly and consider additional funding for 2020. Donors must also commit new funds at the start of 2021, and not wait for a pledging conference. For its own part, the United Kingdom has already disbursed 81 per cent of its £200 million commitment for this financial year.

Shockingly, in this context, severe humanitarian access constraints, particularly in the Houthi-controlled north, continue to hamper the humanitarian response. Aid and humanitarian workers must be able to reach those in need, otherwise vulnerable Yemenis will needlessly die. We also condemn any attacks on aid workers, including the two recent incidents in Aden.

A senior officials donor meeting is taking place this week in Sweden, hosted by the European Commission. It is vital that we use that meeting to send a clear message that we will not tolerate constraints on the distribution of life-saving assistance.

I am grateful to the briefers for their updates on the *FSO SAFER* oil tanker. Last month, the United Nations Office for Project Services and the Houthis agreed in principle on an assessment mission to secure that tanker. But as Mr. Griffiths said, this issue is progressing slower than urgency requires. We understand the revised statement of works is due to be submitted shortly, but we encourage the United Nations to accelerate this process and urge the Houthis to agree to the revised plan so work can begin as soon as possible.

What we have heard today is an urgent call to action from the leadership of the United Nations humanitarian organizations. We need to heed their grave warnings with immediate action.

Annex XVIII**Statement by the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations, Kelly Craft**

I thank the briefers and my colleagues for their remarks today in this very important discussion.

Last month, Mr. Griffiths expressed cautious optimism following the prisoner exchange between the Yemeni Government and the Houthis, and a reduction in fighting in and around Ma'rib and Al-Hudaydah (see S/PV.8770). I thank him for what he is doing to resolve this tragic situation through diplomatic means.

Mr. Lowcock's remarks about the devastating truth about hunger and famine were deeply moving. And as painful and disturbing as it is to hear them, he owes it to us, as he does with every briefing, to bring the truth home. I therefore thank him for bringing the truth to the Security Council. The Council needs to take this to heart and do everything it can for the Yemeni people.

Mr. Beasley's passionate plea for funds and the vision he laid out, which can be achieved with international support, really holds each of us accountable. So, I hope, like the representative of Germany said, that we each use our contacts to be able to bring in more funding for this very important cause. These successes, due in no small part to Mr. Beasley's efforts, remind us that the United Nations and the actions of the Security Council have a real-world impact. We must take from that fact renewed motivation to improve Yemeni lives and support movement towards an inclusive political resolution. Inspiration and political will are the right combination for success.

Unfortunately, the goodwill of the international community has not been matched by the Houthis, who continue to focus their efforts on prolonging the conflict and lashing out against Yemen's neighbours. The United States condemns the Houthis' brazen attacks against Saudi Arabia on 28 October — attacks that included unmanned aerial vehicles launched in the direction of Riyadh, which posed a grave danger to the lives of many civilians, including United States citizens. The Houthis have now launched hundreds of drones and missiles at Saudi Arabia over the past several years.

The Houthis must be held accountable for their murderous conduct, as must their primary supporter, the Islamic Republic of Iran. I am reminded of the Iranian regime's Foreign Minister, Mr. M. Javad Zarif, sending out a preachy tweet on Sunday about the need for multilateralism and Iran's record as a practitioner of "responsible diplomacy". It is so ironic, and it would be funny if it were not so tragic — a diplomat using Twitter to spread propaganda on a platform that his own people are forbidden to use in order to profess innocence and claim that his Government is fighting for peace.

Wherever there is violence, instability and bloodshed in the region, Iran can be found fanning the flames. The regime fuels the Houthis' violence by providing funds, weapons, training and encouragement. It is Tehran that is intent upon undermining the work of Special Envoy Griffiths and the Security Council by making a political solution to this conflict less achievable.

Just weeks ago, the Iranian regime dispatched a member of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, Hassan Irloo, to Sana'a, where Irloo called himself Iran's "Ambassador" to the Houthis. These acts demonstrate that Iran and the Houthis are not serious about a political resolution to the conflict in Yemen. We once again call on Iran to halt its support for terror, end its destabilizing actions across the region and respect the human rights and needs of all its people, its own people.

On the humanitarian front, I thank Mr. Beasley for his powerful and sobering update on Yemen's food insecurity. I congratulate him, as we all have done today, and the World Food Programme (WFP), for its well-deserved and well-earned recognition by the Nobel Committee. The United States is a proud supporter of the WFP's global activities, providing more than 40 per cent of its resources. Despite that generosity, the World Food Programme urgently needs more nations to come to its aid in order to address the growing food security needs around the globe.

We share Mr. Lowcock's concern that, despite recent additional contributions, Yemen's humanitarian response plan remains woefully underfunded. As we have done for months, the United States encourages all donors to provide resources immediately so as to help prevent further suffering. In addition, all parties to the conflict must support the delivery of critical life-saving assistance. The Houthis must end their interference in humanitarian efforts right now and take specific actions to show their readiness to cooperate. Specifically, they must immediately permit the World Food Programme to complete its biometric targeting and registration system across all districts, allow third-party monitoring and provide travel authorizations to humanitarian staff.

As David Beasley mentioned, household food insecurity levels rose between May and September in areas where the World Food Programme had to reduce its distributions due to obstruction by the Houthis. Just last week UNICEF announced that the acute malnutrition rates among children under the age of 5 were the highest rates among children ever recorded in certain parts of Yemen. The sinister political manoeuvring that impedes humanitarian access must stop before a generation of Yemeni children suffers permanent developmental damage.

The United States also reiterates its call for the Houthis to release Yemeni citizen Levi Musa Merhavi from custody immediately. Mr. Merhavi remains wrongfully detained despite a Houthi so-called court ordering his release in September 2019. We call on the Houthis to respect religious freedom, stop oppressing Yemen's Jewish population and release Mr. Merhavi immediately.

Regarding the *FSO SAFER* tanker, it is unconscionable that month after month the reality remains the same. The Houthis continue to withhold the final approval of the United Nations mission's plan for an assessment and initial repairs of this corroding vessel. The United States reiterates the urgent need for the Houthis to cease exploiting the threat of environmental and economic disaster simply to gain political leverage. We must avoid a devastating "we told you so" moment that can happen any day now. The Houthis need to take responsibility by providing their final agreement without further delay.

As this harsh winter approaches, I quote my fellow Kentuckian statesman Henry Clay: "The time will come when winter will ask you what you were you doing all summer."

Annex XIX**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Viet Nam to the United Nations, Dang Dinh Quy**

I would like to thank Mr. Martin Griffiths, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen; Mr. Mark Lowcock, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator; Mr. David Muldrow Beasley, Executive Director of the United Nations World Food Programme; and Mr. Omer Badokhon, Founder and Executive Director of Solutions for Sustainable Society, for their valuable briefings. I welcome the Permanent Representative of Yemen to this meeting.

It has been two months since Special Envoy Martin Griffiths and Under-Secretary-General Mark Lowcock briefed the Security Council about the deteriorating situation in Yemen (see S/PV.8757). Until now, we have not seen any significant improvements. Fighting has escalated across more than 40 front lines, causing a high number of casualties, including women and children.

We are extremely concerned about the threats of a famine facing the Yemeni people. The briefings today, as well as the recent reports of the World Food Programme and other United Nations agencies, have shown us an extremely gloomy picture.

The humanitarian situation is expected to get worse if the World Food Programme and other United Nations agencies do not receive adequate funding from pledged donors. In fact, the United Nations aid programmes in Yemen have been scaled back in the past several months.

Moreover, the second wave of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic is believed to add another layer of complexity to the conflict and the dire humanitarian situation in Yemen. It would aggravate the living conditions of the Yemeni people and undermine the humanitarian efforts.

The inaccessibility of the *FSO SAFER* oil tanker remains our continued concern. The United Nations technical team has been unable to do its job on the tanker without written approval. Time is not on our side. We need to prevent environmental and humanitarian catastrophes for Yemen and the Gulf region. The United Nations expert team must be allowed to carry out its urgent assessment and repair work on the tanker.

Against that backdrop, I would like to make the following points.

First, it is extremely urgent for all parties concerned to heed the ceasefire call of the Secretary-General and his Special Envoy, cease hostilities immediately and resume negotiations so that the joint declaration towards the nationwide ceasefire can be reached. That will lay a crucial foundation for achieving the United Nations peace proposal for Yemen.

Secondly, we reiterate our call on international donors to fulfil their financial commitments so that the humanitarian work in Yemen can be implemented without disruption. We see the urgency of the appeal by the United Nations for more than \$50 million to scale up nutrition programmes. The children in Yemen deserve to receive basic services, like other children in the world. We must act to protect Yemeni children and prevent another crisis for Yemen's future generations.

We also call on the parties concerned to fully cooperate with United Nations agencies by providing protection and favourable conditions for humanitarian workers to carry out their work in parts of Yemen. Famine cannot be averted if we do not act enough now.

Thirdly, we stress the need for the parties in Yemen and the United Nations agencies, especially the World Health Organization, to spare no effort in containing the spread of the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is essential for the parties to ensure access and the unhindered passage of humanitarian and medical supplies to those in dire need in Yemen.

We also join other members in calling on all parties to uphold their obligations under international humanitarian law with respect to the protection of civilians, especially women and children, and civilian objects.

Last but not least, we would like to emphasize that the parties concerned should uphold and fully implement the Stockholm Agreement and the Riyadh Agreement with United Nations mediation. The meaningful participation of women in the political process should also be ensured and further promoted.

We reiterate our support for the work of Special Envoy Martin Griffiths and his team in Yemen.

Annex XX**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Yemen to the United Nations, Abdullah Ali Fadhel Al-Saadi**

[Original: Arabic]

Allow me to begin by congratulating you, Madam President, on your presidency of the Security Council this month. I wish you and your delegation every success, and I wish everyone the best of health.

The Yemeni Government, led by President Abdrabuh Mansour Hadi Mansour, is still working intensively to fulfil its aspiration of bringing an end to the war imposed on the Yemeni people by the armed Houthi militias. The war has caused a dire humanitarian crisis and shattered the dreams and hopes of Yemenis to build a future that would bring about their dream of a modern, civilian democratic State and thus fulfil its aspirations and safeguard its dignity. The social fabric of Yemen has been torn apart. Sectarian and racist ideas have been spread. Yemenis have been displaced in waves. They have been repressed, detained and subjected to enforced disappearance in flagrant violation of the rules of international humanitarian law and human rights law. Under the President's leadership, the Yemeni Government is determined to bring an end to the suffering of the Yemeni people in this futile and unjust war. The Government has made concessions and done everything it can to let the language of dialogue and peace prevail over the language of war and destruction. It has responded positively to the endeavours of the United Nations, acting through the Special Envoy for Yemen, to achieve a just and comprehensive peace based on the agreed terms of reference, namely the Initiative of the Gulf Cooperation Council and its Implementation Mechanism, the outcomes of the All-Inclusive National Dialogue Conference and the resolutions of the Security Council on Yemen, particularly resolution 2216 (2015).

It has responded in a spirit of firm conviction to all invitations and proposals intended to achieve the peace to which the Yemeni people aspires. These include the proposal of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, Martin Griffiths, for a draft joint declaration, to which it reacted positively from the very first draft, out of determination to facilitate his efforts in that regard. Unfortunately, at every turn, the Houthi militias made new conditions to the draft. They proved intransigent, they delayed, and they hampered the efforts of the United Nations and its Special Envoy with regard to the political process and the economic and humanitarian dimensions.

Turning to the issue of prisoners and detainees, the Yemeni Government has endeavoured to ensure the release of all prisoners and persons detained arbitrarily, subjected to enforced disappearance or under house arrest on the basis of the all-for-all principle, including the four individuals mentioned in the Security Council resolution. However, the Houthi militias have hampered the full implementation of the agreement and engaged in blackmail for political gain. Nevertheless, the Government has worked to make the agreement reached in October 2020 a success.

With support from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Yemeni Government has worked to implement the Riyadh Agreement and the mechanism to accelerate its implementation, at a time when our Yemeni people is facing exceptionally complex circumstances that necessitate a unified effort to engage in a national project to revive State institutions, achieve security and stability, overcome economic and development challenges, and work under the legitimate authorities, led by President Abdrabuh Mansour Hadi Mansour, to restore State authority, put an end to the coup, provide services and a dignified life for citizens, and alleviate their suffering. We highly appreciate the support of Saudi Arabia at every stage, and we are fully

confident in the role of Saudi Arabia in moving forward in order to make the Agreement a success.

The Iranian rogue regime has continued to undermine security and stability in Yemen and the region by supporting the Houthi militias with funds, weapons and military expertise, which they use to kill Yemenis, attack navigation lines and civilian targets in Saudi Arabia, and endanger international peace and security. The regime does not respect the rules of international law or the resolutions of the Security Council. It recently announced the appointment of officer of the Iranian Republican Guard as so-called ambassador to the Houthi militias in Sana'a. That decision flagrantly violates the rules of international law, the Charter of the United Nations, the two Vienna Conventions on Diplomatic and Consular Relations, and Security Council resolution 2216 (2015). It sets a dangerous precedent that a rogue state can send its representatives to rebel coup militia groups. Such conduct is one more sign of Iran's expansionist agenda in Yemen and the region, and of its bare-faced interference in the affairs of sovereign States. Once again, we call on the Security Council to assume its responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security by condemning and putting a stop to the irresponsible behaviour of the Iranian regime.

My Government will continue working to achieve economic stability and pay public sector salaries regularly in all regions of Yemen, including by preserving the value of the national currency. However, it faces a great many difficulties and obstacles. The Houthi militias have continued to prevent the circulation of new banknotes in the national currency. In so doing, they have further exacerbated and complicated the economic situation. Their intention is to maximize their profits by boosting the black market in currency and fuel in the areas under their control. They have also bankrolled their factional, sectarian project by imposing illegal, racist levies, such as a supplementary 20 per cent religious tax to prop up the oppressive, racist regime. All the revenue from that tax goes to a given faction. They have continued to misappropriate revenue from petroleum products at the port of Al-Hudaydah and to hamper the entry of vessels carrying fuel to areas under their control.

Despite those violations and obstacles, the President has instructed the authorities to cooperate in order to alleviate the suffering of Yemenis in areas under Houthi control. He has supported the efforts of the Special Envoy and the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs. The Houthis have breached the agreement brokered by the Special Envoy and taken more than 50 billion Yemeni riyals from the account intended to collect fuel revenue for the payment of salaries. Nevertheless, the Government continues to make numerous concessions and to take measures to ease the situation. For instance, in the last six months, it has granted transit permits to fuel trucks carrying more than 1,337,000 tons of fuel headed exclusively for areas under the control of the Houthis. That quantity is enough to meet the needs of those areas until the end of 2020. We call on the Security Council to put pressure on the Houthis to desist from such practices, make the economy a neutral space, stop creating artificial oil crises, and lift restrictions on the circulation of national currency.

More than four months have passed since the Security Council held a special meeting to discuss the oil tanker *FSO SAFER* (S/2020/721). Every month, we keep hearing how the Houthi militias have clearly hindered the efforts of the United Nations to send a technical team to inspect and maintain the vessel and unload its cargo of oil. The Houthi militias' intransigence and their imperviousness to the appeals of the international community — not to mention the potential catastrophic effects of an oil leak or an explosion on board the vessel — merely confirm the

nature of their conduct and their agenda. They seek to destroy all that is beautiful in Yemen, and to increase the suffering of Yemenis, flagrantly defying the efforts of the international community and the Security Council to avoid the environmental and economic disaster that looms closer with every passing day. We appreciate the contributions of numerous States to the fund for the maintenance of the tanker. We reiterate our call on the Security Council to shoulder its responsibility and adopt a decisive position in order to spare Yemen and the region a catastrophe whose effects could be felt for decades. The Council should exercise pressure on the Houthis, who continue to procrastinate and to manipulate the situation to use this issue for political blackmail.
