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Provisional

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Sekeris/Mr. Stamatekos	(Greece)
<i>Members:</i>	Algeria.	Mr. Yahiaoui
	China.	Mr. Sun Lei
	Denmark	Ms. Lassen
	France	Mr. Bonnafont
	Guyana	Mrs. Rodrigues-Birkett
	Pakistan.	Mr. Ahmad
	Panama	Mr. Alfaro de Alba
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Hwang
	Russian Federation	Mr. Nebenzia
	Sierra Leone	Ms. Swallow
	Slovenia.	Mrs. Blokar Drobič
	Somalia	Mr. Osman
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Mr. Kariuki
	United States of America.	Ms. Shea

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Yemen to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Mr. Hans Grundberg, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen; Mr. Tom Fletcher, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator; and Ms. Dina El-Mamoun, Yemen Country Director, Center for Civilians in Conflict.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I give the floor to Mr. Grundberg.

Mr. Grundberg: Developments in Yemen and the wider region have evolved at pace since my previous briefing to the Council (see S/PV.9873). Allow me to begin by welcoming the announcement on 6 May of a cessation of hostilities between the United States of America and Ansar Allah. That step represents important and necessary de-escalation in the Red Sea and in Yemen following the resumption of United States air strikes against targets in Ansar Allah-controlled areas on 15 March. I sincerely commend the Sultanate of Oman for its efforts to achieve that agreement. As I have said many times before, it has become increasingly clear that a level of de-escalation in the Red Sea and in the wider region is needed to bring Yemen back to the path towards peace.

However, events in recent weeks have also served as stark reminders that Yemen is ensnared in the wider regional tensions. The attack carried out by Ansar Allah on Ben Gurion Airport on 4 May and the subsequent strikes by Israel in response on the Al-Hudaydah port, the Sana'a airport and other locations represent a dangerous escalation. And regrettably, the threats and attacks continue. I renew my call for all parties to abide by their obligations under international law to protect civilians and civilian infrastructure.

Nevertheless, the announcement of 6 May provides a welcome opportunity on which we must collectively build to refocus on resolving Yemen's conflict and advancing a Yemeni-owned peace process. The challenges facing Yemen are immense — from the deep and significant levels of mistrust between the parties, with some still reportedly preparing for war, to near economic collapse. As an indicator of the deep economic instability that Yemen is facing, there was continued deterioration of the currency during the past month, now surpassing 2,500 Yemeni rials to the dollar. Citizens have suffered worsening electricity blackouts in Government of Yemen-controlled areas, with recent reports of electricity outages for up to 15 hours per day in Aden and a total blackout for over two weeks in the neighbouring governorates of Lahj and Abyan. On Saturday, women took to the streets in Aden to protest and demand better public services and their basic rights.

Meanwhile, in Ansar Allah-controlled areas, the population also suffers from a loss of purchasing power, civil servants' salaries have not been paid in full for years, the physical quality of the currency is deteriorating and liquidity is drying up. Yet as ordinary people are increasingly unable to afford the most basic commodities, civil society voices there are being repressed. In that regard, I look forward to listening to the briefing by Ms. El-Mamoun from the Center for Civilians in Conflict.

Across Yemen, the general economic degradation serves to reinforce how urgently Yemen requires a political path to allow for the collaboration needed for economic growth. I continue to actively work with the Yemeni parties and regional partners to identify solutions to economic challenges and resume dialogue towards that goal. I have been clear and consistent in my approach, and I will remain so. The United Nations is committed to offering a viable alternative to military and economic escalation and a potential return to war, and we will continue to work to bring the parties to the table to identify and agree on solutions that are acceptable to all. It may seem to some that, amid so much upheaval and so much mistrust, a political process is an unrealistic and naive goal. I am here to argue that that is not the case. The fact is that the parties have already committed to the basis of what should be the beginning of a political process in Yemen, namely, a nationwide ceasefire, measures to address urgent economic and humanitarian issues and an inclusive political process. Those are commitments that need to be fulfilled for there to be a sustainable peace. That is the case now and will be the case in the future. All Yemenis can rest assured that the United Nations will remain ready and unwavering in our support for a negotiated exit from conflict and for a just, inclusive and sustainable peace.

However, I recognize that, as time passes, the positions become further entrenched and challenges become more complex. Some may be questioning whether the road map is still valid. My answer remains resolutely the same. Yemen will still need the elements of the road map — a ceasefire, economic recovery and an inclusive political process — in order to move forward. Nevertheless, I recognize that the mediation environment has changed significantly since late 2023, and the need for additional guarantees to enable the buy-in of the parties and to ensure the support of the region, the international community and the Council.

Yemenis want to move forward. The status quo is untenable. And while the front lines may currently appear relatively stable, what Yemen has now is not peace. The continued engagement of the international community is needed to help Yemenis realize their desire to build a country that is stable, prosperous and safe. Yemen's neighbours and international partners are needed to support a viable Yemeni-led inclusive political process. And since I previously briefed the Council, I have held meetings with the parties and the diplomatic community in Riyadh and Muscat, reiterating that message.

As I draw my briefing to a conclusion, I want to again raise the unlawful, arbitrary and prolonged detention by Ansar Allah of United Nations staff as well as those from international and national non-governmental organizations, civil society and diplomatic missions. Not only is their detention in violation of international law, but it has also caused a significant chilling effect throughout the international community, which has only one outcome, that is, undermining support to Yemen, which will sadly impact the Yemenis most in need. I welcome the recent releases of staff members from the Dutch Embassy and international organizations. That demonstrates what is possible, but those releases are woefully insufficient. I hope Ansar Allah will hear very clearly what I am saying: change course, release the remaining detainees immediately without conditions and bring this unacceptable situation to an end.

Yemenis have endured over 10 years of instability, uncertainty and economic collapse. I speak directly to them now and reiterate what I have said before. I see them. I hear them. They have not been forgotten. And I will not relent in my efforts to pursue peace and stability in Yemen. To the parties, I urge them to be courageous and choose dialogue. The United Nations will not waiver in its commitment to support them in finding a negotiated settlement to the conflict. And lastly, to those here today in the Chamber: the collective global membership of the United Nations has conferred upon the Council the primary responsibility for the maintenance of

peace and security. That is particularly true for Yemen. Real peace and security in Yemen can be achieved only through international commitment, coordination and a common and long-term approach. We must therefore redouble our efforts to offer a credible alternative to war and a vision for Yemen beyond status quo and stagnation. I am grateful for the Council's continued unity and support for my efforts to achieve a peaceful, stable and prosperous Yemen.

The President: I thank Mr. Grundberg for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Fletcher.

Mr. Fletcher: I thank Special Envoy Grundberg for his briefing and his tireless and creative work. I also join him in condemning the arbitrary detention of our colleagues in Yemen and in calling for concerted and sustained advocacy by all Member States to secure the immediate release of our United Nations and non-governmental organization colleagues. I also share the Special Envoy's relief at the cessation of hostilities in Yemen and the Red Sea between the United States and the Houthis, including what we hope to be an end to air strikes.

But let us be clear that Yemen is not out of the woods. The humanitarian situation is deteriorating, and those most in peril are the country's children. The numbers say it all. Half of Yemen's children — or 2.3 million — are malnourished, with 600,000 of them severely so. Malnutrition is not just about hunger; it attacks immunity, leaving children vulnerable to deadly infections such as pneumonia and diarrhoea, both of which are leading causes of child mortality in Yemen. Moreover, only 69 per cent of children under 1 year of age are fully immunized, and 20 per cent of them have received no vaccines at all — one of the worst rates in the world. As a result, vaccine-preventable diseases are compounding the humanitarian crisis. Cholera and measles cases are rising. Last year Yemen accounted for over a third of global cholera cases and 18 per cent of related deaths, while also reporting one of the highest measles burdens globally. That is not all. Children also have to contend with fields littered with landmines and schools emptied of teachers, books and opportunities.

And of course, children are not alone in being disproportionately impacted. As I have briefed previously, malnutrition also now affects 1.4 million pregnant and breastfeeding women, placing both mothers and newborns at grave risk. Overall, 9.6 million women and girls are in severe need of life-saving humanitarian support, while facing hunger, violence and a collapsing healthcare system. Despite that, women and girls remain on the front line of recovery and survival, and I applaud the Council's commitment to supporting them and their struggle to have their fundamental rights respected.

However, we are running out of time and resources. The 2025 humanitarian response plan for Yemen is barely 9 per cent funded — less than half of what we had received at the same time last year. Of course, those shortfalls have very real consequences. Nearly 400 health facilities, including 64 hospitals, will stop operating, thereby impacting nearly 7 million people. Funding for 700 midwives whom we are supporting right now is quickly running out. Twenty therapeutic feeding centres and 2,200 therapeutic feeding programmes have already been forced to close down, denying life-saving nutrition treatment to more than 350,000 malnourished children and mothers in areas controlled by the de facto authorities. We expect pipeline gaps as early as June or July, right when malnutrition numbers will peak. And while I note the Council's proper concern for survivors of gender-based violence, funding cuts also mean that many survivors no longer have access to life-saving healthcare, psychosocial support and legal aid. Almost 1 million women and girls have lost access to safe spaces and associated support networks.

Later this month, senior officials from across the donor community will convene in Brussels to assess the humanitarian situation in Yemen. We count on them and on

those present to recommit their collective support with concrete contributions to the humanitarian appeal at this critical moment.

As the Council heard, last month saw yet further challenges on the road towards a more peaceful future for Yemen. According to local authorities and open-source reporting, almost 1,000 civilians have been killed or injured in Yemen since the beginning of the year, a significant number of them since the resumption of air strikes in mid-March. Strikes that impacted Ras Issa port and a detention centre in Sa'ada resulted in hundreds of casualties, including injuries to first responders. Civilian infrastructure, including health facilities, has been damaged. The Al-Hudaydah port — a vital access point for food and medicine — and the Sana'a airport were also badly damaged, in addition to power stations and other critical infrastructure. I echo the Secretary-General's appeal for respect for international humanitarian law and urge all parties to protect civilians and the infrastructure on which they rely on for their basic needs.

This is a tough time to be a humanitarian. But when backed to do so, we can deliver on the Council's behalf. Over the past four weeks, health partners have deployed surgical teams to hospitals in Sana'a and Al-Hudaydah, supported mobile medical teams and delivered trauma units to hospitals in eight governorates. Life-saving cash assistance has continued for 4,000 families — roughly 28,000 people — enabling them to access essential needs like food, medicine and shelter. Roughly 20,000 health consultations are conducted monthly for migrants. Water networks have been extended in Ma'rib city to provide displaced families with clean water.

That builds on solid progress made since the beginning of the year. In the first quarter of 2025, almost 150 humanitarian partners provided life-saving assistance across Yemen's 333 districts. Nearly 5 million people received emergency food assistance, 1.2 million received clean water and hygiene services and 154,000 children resumed learning through temporary classrooms, supplies and teacher support. We give thanks for the support that allowed us to reach them.

Noor, 16 months old, from a small community in Lahj governorate, was severely malnourished. A visiting community health volunteer, supported by a non-governmental organization partner, diagnosed her and referred her to a nearby health facility, where — with time and treatment — her condition improved, and she recovered fully.

With the support of the Council and that of Member States, that work makes a difference to individuals — many individuals. But we cannot stop there. A child like Noor may recover from malnutrition, only to be readmitted later because their family cannot access clean water. A displaced family may find safe harbour from violence, only to be uprooted shortly thereafter when fighting again reaches their doorstep. Yes, the people of Yemen need aid. But they also need peace. They need a respite from the violence and economic hardships that have caused so much suffering over the past decade. They need the opportunity to rebuild their lives.

The cuts, as I described, are biting hard. People are dying. Here in Yemen, as elsewhere, we are determined to save as many lives as we can with the money that we have. Over the past two months, we have overhauled our response in Yemen, aligned with the global humanitarian reset that I set out in March (see S/PV.9885). We are substantially reducing our operational costs so that more money can be spent on saving lives. We have prioritized our humanitarian appeal to identify only the most urgent life-saving work. We are also doubling our investments in local partners. We have also simplified our coordination structures, bringing decision-making closer to the communities that we serve. Their voices will drive the reset in Yemen and elsewhere, because behind the numbers are people like Noor. We know that there are many that we will not reach. But in the six months that I have been in this job, I

have seen first-hand the relentless tenacity that drives humanitarians not to give up. And Yemen is no different. Despite funding shortfalls, surging needs and the risks we face, we will continue to serve people like Noor.

As ever, I conclude with three asks of the Council. First, please take action to ensure respect for international humanitarian law, including the protection of civilians and humanitarian access to all those in need. Secondly, please provide scaled-up, flexible funding to sustain critical aid operations. Thirdly, as the Special Envoy has underlined, back efforts towards lasting peace.

The President: I thank Mr. Fletcher for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ms. El-Mamoun.

Ms. El-Mamoun: I thank you, Mr. President, for the opportunity to address the Council today on behalf of Center for Civilians in Conflict. I speak with urgency and purpose as we mark 25 years since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security — a commitment that is yet to be fulfilled for Yemeni women and girls.

I would like to begin with the words of Amat Al-Salam Al-Hajj, Founder and Chair of the Association for the Mothers of Abductees. She said that

“Women in Yemen have suffered greatly from the war. They aspire to peace and justice. Mothers are waiting for their loved ones and calling for freedom for their children. We say peace begins in the hearts of mothers.”

After 10 years of conflict, the humanitarian crisis in Yemen remains one of the most severe, and its most punishing consequences are frequently borne by women and girls. The protection of civilians, particularly women, is failing, and the structures meant to uphold international law are faltering. Women and girls in Yemen continue to be killed, wounded and displaced. They are not just caught in the crossfire; they are often deliberately targeted and systematically marginalized. Gender-based violence is on the rise, often perpetrated with impunity, and life-saving basic services, including gender-based violence response services, remain inaccessible for millions.

Three out of four Yemenis displaced by the conflict are women and children. In many cases, girls under 18 head households and are trying to survive in camps without adequate shelter or protection. Economic collapse is driving more families to resort to early marriage, deepening existing inequalities and stripping girls of their rights and futures. And still, in those dire circumstances, women lead. Every day on the ground, they play vital roles across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. Women are at the forefront of humanitarian response efforts, community-based conflict resolution and peacebuilding initiatives. They deliver aid to those beyond the reach of large institutions. In 2024 alone, women-led organizations reached more than 2 million Yemenis with life-saving support. Women are agents of change and experts in the needs of their communities. They mediate disputes and build bridges. Through community-based protection groups facilitated by the Center, women bring communities together to discuss the protection threats they face; women sit with armed actors to demand better protection. As just one example, in one of those groups, women successfully engaged with security forces to limit night raids, which had terrorized the small communities in their district. One member of a local initiative supported by the Center has mediated between conflict parties for many years and led negotiations to exchange the bodies of fighters across the front lines. She told the Center that

“I physically carried the bodies up and down mountainous areas. I don’t know how I do it, but I think of the mothers and the families in the affected communities”.

Maha Awad, Chair of the Wogood Foundation for Human Security, said that

“As a diverse group, women have proven themselves to be peacebuilders who understand the importance of authentic dialogues from their local and national contexts.”

Yet they face daily risks. In recent years, there has been a disturbing rise in threats, harassment and detention of women human rights defenders, humanitarian workers and peacebuilders. Some have been held for more than a year without charge. The message is clear: dissent will be silenced, and women’s participation in peace initiatives will be suppressed. A climate of fear prevails. That is not only a protection concern; it is a direct threat to peace.

Despite the extraordinary work that women across Yemen carry out, they continue to be excluded from meaningful participation in formal peace negotiations and discussions. That results in the marginalization of their unique perspectives and needs and undermines prospects for sustainable peace. Let us be clear: we cannot continue to celebrate women’s resilience while ignoring the root causes of the insecurity and protection risks that they face.

I urge the Council to act on three fronts.

First, it should demand that all parties to the conflict abide by their obligations under international law to protect civilians, including women and girls, from direct and indirect harm. There must be accountability, including for gender-based violence, and redress for harm caused.

Secondly, direct, flexible funding and political support for women human rights defenders and peacebuilders in Yemen must be increased. They need legal aid, physical security, capacity-building and funding for their self-protection efforts on the ground, and above all, they need the political backing of the Council.

Thirdly, the full, equal and meaningful participation of women must be ensured at all stages of the political process. That means no less than 30 per cent representation in all peace negotiations and in post-conflict governance. That is a prerequisite for success. Diplomatic and financial support for Yemen’s peace process must be made conditional on that standard being met.

Twenty-five years ago, the international community, with the leadership of the Council, promised to make women central to peace and security, based on a shared understanding of the importance of women’s protection, empowerment and participation. Today that promise is being broken. The women of Yemen continue to show us what courage looks like. It is time that we matched that courage with the political resources that they deserve. The future of Yemen depends on it.

The President: I thank Ms. El-Mamoun for her briefing.

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements.

Mr. Kariuki (United Kingdom): I thank Special Envoy Grundberg, Under-Secretary-General Fletcher and Ms. El-Mamoun for their briefings today, and I also welcome the participation of the Permanent Representative of Yemen in our briefing.

I will make four points.

First, the United Kingdom remains committed to restoring the freedom of navigation and maritime security in the Red Sea. We welcome recent efforts to de-escalate tensions in the region, and we hope that those efforts can help provide the pathway to sustainable peace in Yemen, in line with the Special Envoy’s efforts. As we have seen with continued threats against neighbouring countries and worrisome posturing on the front lines in Yemen, the risk of escalation remains. Through a coordinated international approach, the United Kingdom will continue to work

towards effectively containing Houthi capabilities. Maritime security is essential in upholding stability in the region. The United Kingdom continues to support the Yemen coast guard in protecting their maritime borders, and we look forward to launching the Yemen maritime security partnership alongside the Government of Yemen and international partners in June.

Secondly, as highlighted by Ms. El-Mamoun, women face a disproportionate impact from the conflict in Yemen. In 2023, Yemen ranked second-to-last in the Georgetown Institute's Women, Peace and Security Index, and we have not seen progress since then. According to the humanitarian needs and response plan, most of the 4.8 million internally displaced people are women, and 6.2 million women and girls are at risk of gender-based violence. Last year, United Kingdom funding supported nearly 1.5 million women and children with essential life-saving services and enabled 15,000 to receive protection and gender-based violence response services.

The United Kingdom continues to champion the important role that women can play in both ending the conflict in Yemen and upholding sustainable peace. In November 2024, the United Kingdom hosted a group of Yemeni women leaders and experts on the women and peace and security agenda to provide a vital platform for those important voices. The United Kingdom also remains committed to supporting the Special Envoy's work to meaningfully engage women activists and women-led organizations in order to deliver inclusive and sustainable peace in Yemen.

Thirdly, as Under-Secretary-General Fletcher said, the humanitarian situation is severe. The United Kingdom continues to condemn the ongoing detentions of aid workers by the Houthis, and we reiterate our clear call for the immediate and unconditional release of all those detained. The Houthis' unjustified detention of aid workers continues to shrink the humanitarian operating environment, in a context in which nearly 20 million people are in dire need of humanitarian assistance.

And finally, we are grateful for the efforts of Mr. Ahmad Bin Mubarak, former Prime Minister of Yemen, and we welcome the new Prime Minister, Mr. Salim Saleh Salim Bin Buriek. We look forward to working together with the new Prime Minister and continuing our support for the Government of Yemen's ambitious reform programme.

Mr. Alfaro de Alba (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): Panama expresses its gratitude to the presidency of the Council for convening this meeting; to the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen, Mr. Hans Grundberg, and to the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Mr. Tom Fletcher, for their valuable contributions today and for their tireless and important work. We also acknowledge the significant contributions of Ms. Dina El-Mamoun and extend a warm welcome to the representative of Yemen, who is with us at this meeting.

We note with concern the resurgence and escalation of tensions in Yemen, a situation that threatens to cause the country's already fragile stability to deteriorate further and puts the civilian population at grave risk, while also undermining and complicating regional and international mediation efforts. The intensification of the conflict not only constitutes a serious obstacle to peace efforts, but also aggravates humanitarian suffering, especially among the most vulnerable populations, such as women and children, and increases the number of displaced persons. More than 9.6 million people are in need of urgent humanitarian assistance, including pregnant women and mothers of newborns. In Yemen, women face the constant threat of sexual violence, early unions and forced marriages, in addition to the risk of becoming victims of trafficking in persons. We condemn restrictions that limit

women's freedom of movement and curtail their access to basic services, including the *mahram* requirement in Houthi-controlled areas.

Panama recognizes and values the efforts of Special Envoy Grundberg, whose work has been key to promoting a peaceful solution through dialogue, as well as those of Mr. Fletcher, whose work is key to providing humanitarian assistance to the suffering population in Yemen.

We reaffirm our conviction that dialogue is the only way to achieve a sustainable and inclusive political solution, led by Yemenis themselves, that will guarantee lasting security and stability in the Republic of Yemen. In that context, we will continue to promote an inclusive peace process that places the participation, dignity, security and leadership of Yemeni women and girls at the centre. To move in that direction, mediation efforts remain critical to prevent further escalation of the conflict and pave the way for sustainable peace. Those steps are key to containing violence.

We also strongly reiterate our urgent call for the immediate and unconditional release of all arbitrarily detained personnel, including representatives of the United Nations, national and international non-governmental organizations and members of civil society and the diplomatic corps. We urge all parties to fully respect international law and international humanitarian law, while taking all the measures necessary to safeguard the civilian population and protect civilian infrastructure.

Panama reiterates its condemnation of the attacks against civilian vessels, which jeopardize international maritime security, interrupt global supply chains and hinder the delivery of humanitarian assistance. We also strongly condemn the air strikes carried out by the Houthis against Ben Gurion Airport in Israel. Those attacks pose a serious threat to regional security and constitute a clear violation of international law.

It is crucial that all parties exercise maximum restraint and refrain from provocations or unilateral actions that may undermine regional stability, aggravate the conflict or impede efforts to guarantee the security and well-being of the population. For that reason, we must not allow the unilateral actions of Ansar Allah to jeopardize Yemen's security and stability. We reiterate our strong support for all efforts and actions aimed at restoring peace, security and dignity to the Yemeni people.

Mr. Ahmad (Pakistan): We would like to thank Special Envoy Hans Grundberg and Under-Secretary-General Tom Fletcher for their comprehensive briefings. We also value the insights shared by Ms. Dina El-Mamoun.

We are deeply conscious that Yemen remains gripped by the consequences of more than a decade of conflict. Millions continue to endure severe hardship, as regional developments — particularly in the Red Sea and the wider Middle East — further escalate tensions and undermine mediation efforts. What began as a domestic crisis has evolved into a deeply entangled regional and international conflict marked by grave humanitarian, political, economic, and environmental challenges. Persistent political divisions, economic collapse and environmental degradation are exacting a heavy toll on the civilian population. Those intersecting crises require urgent, coordinated and sustained international action. A reinvigorated political process is essential to laying the foundation for a comprehensive and durable resolution. It is not the military path but the political one that is the only viable way forward, as noted by the Special Envoy. We commend Mr. Grundberg for his continued diplomatic efforts, including his recent engagements in Saudi Arabia and meetings with a broad range of stakeholders, including the Yemeni Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Secretary-General of the Gulf Cooperation Council. We echo his calls for de-escalation, restraint and renewed commitment to a Yemeni-owned political process that offers credible assurances to Yemen, the region and the broader international community.

Allow me to underscore a few key points.

First, Pakistan fully supports a United Nations-facilitated, Yemeni-owned and Yemeni-led peace process as the only viable path to lasting peace. We welcome the ongoing diplomatic efforts by Saudi Arabia and Oman and urge all parties to build on the December 2023 road map, which provides a credible framework for sustainable peace. All sides must honour their commitments, exercise maximum restraint and prioritize diplomacy above all else.

Secondly, the humanitarian crisis in Yemen remains dire. More than 19.5 million people need assistance, with 17.1 million facing acute food insecurity and 12 million children deprived of essential services. The widening funding gap is deeply concerning, as emphasized by Under-Secretary-General Fletcher. We urge all donors to respond swiftly and generously to the urgent appeal of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

Thirdly, Pakistan unequivocally condemns attacks on commercial shipping, which jeopardize global maritime security. We note the Secretary-General's latest report under resolution 2722 (2024) (see S/2025/302), confirming that there have been no recent Houthi attacks on merchant vessels in the Red Sea. Pakistan sees the ceasefire between the Houthis and the United States as a positive development and a testament to the power of diplomacy. This opportunity must not be squandered or exploited — it should be used to advance an inclusive intra-Yemeni political process.

Fourthly, we strongly condemn the continued detention of United Nations and humanitarian personnel — a clear violation of international law. We call for their immediate and unconditional release and stress the urgent need for safe, unimpeded humanitarian access throughout Yemen.

Fifthly, regional peace and security cannot be separated from the situation in Gaza. The ongoing Israeli aggression not only prolongs the suffering of the Palestinian people but also exacerbates the risk of broader regional escalation, as seen in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden. A sustained and immediate ceasefire in Gaza is a humanitarian imperative and a prerequisite for regional stability.

Pakistan reaffirms its unwavering solidarity with the resilient and brotherly people of Yemen in their pursuit of peace, stability and prosperity. The international community and the Security Council must remain engaged and act in concert to prevent further deterioration and to help to chart a path towards a peaceful and more hopeful future for Yemen.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are grateful to Mr. Hans Grundberg, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen, and Mr. Tom Fletcher, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, for their briefings. We also listened very carefully to the representative of civil society, Ms. Dina El-Mamoun.

The Security Council has followed closely the almost two-month-long stand-off between the United States and the Yemeni movement Ansar Allah. According to media reports, the number of those who have died during that period has surpassed 200 people and several hundred have been wounded. Almost every night, the United States has carried out missile strikes and bombing on the territory of sovereign Yemen. The strikes have targeted not only military facilities but also civilian infrastructure. The confrontation has also affected Russia. As a result of the United States strike on the port of Ras Issa on 25 April, three Russian sailors were injured, and one of them subsequently had to undergo a serious medical operation.

However, we cannot say that such actions by Washington have been effective in suppressing the military capabilities of Ansar Allah, nor have they forced the movement to abandon its course of action. In that regard, we cannot but recall the

failure of the team of the previous United States President, Joe Biden, who also waged war against the Houthis for more than a year, which proved to be unsuccessful. The sole outcome of the lengthy bombardment of Yemen was an even more precipitous degradation of the already dire humanitarian situation in the country. The situation is almost back to the 2022 level, which was the acute phase of the Yemeni conflict. Against that backdrop, many relevant non-governmental organizations have been forced to cease their activities and leave Yemen, which is especially tangible given that the United Nations has suspended its humanitarian operations in some regions of the country. A catastrophic blow has been dealt to the infrastructure that was used for humanitarian purposes, including the Al-Hudaydah port, which served as a conduit for the lion's share of humanitarian shipments. Those developments, along with the hitherto unresolved issue of United Nations and other organizations' personnel detained by the Houthis, could become another factor seriously complicating humanitarian work in the country. However, the effectiveness of that work is what the lives and well-being of ordinary Yemenis directly hinge on.

Nevertheless, better late than never, as the saying goes. Washington appears to have finally acknowledged the futility of a military approach, which we have pointed out time and again. That is evidenced by the agreement to end the confrontation, which was reached by the United States and the Houthis just the other day through the mediation of the Omani authorities. That could have been the first step towards a general de-escalation of the situation surrounding Yemen. However, regrettably, that is not yet the case, because as things stand, Israel has taken up the relay in bombing Yemen. We understand that actions by West Jerusalem are largely a response to the strikes on its territory by the Houthis. However, the reaction should be commensurate. We call on Israel to exercise restraint and to refrain from taking aggressive steps against Yemen in order to avoid heightened tensions and the risk of a large-scale conflict in the region. The vicious cycle of violence must finally be broken, and that must be done at the scale of the entire Middle East region.

Although we do not justify the actions of Ansar Allah, we should bear in mind that it, in turn, is a response to the continued suffering of civilians in the Gaza Strip, primarily owing to the resumed humanitarian blockade of the Strip by the Israeli authorities and the ongoing hostilities there. Through their actions, the Houthis have gained the support of Arabs on the street, since the people, like the overwhelming majority of Council members, understand perfectly well that the only way to end the suffering of peaceful Palestinians is through an unconditional, sustainable and long-term ceasefire in the Gaza Strip. We should all focus on precisely that primary goal, which we discussed in great detail yesterday at a briefing on the humanitarian situation in Gaza (see S/PV.9914). Resolving that issue would make Israel safe from further strikes by the Houthis.

We remain troubled by the gradually intensifying internal conflict in Yemen. The warring parties are reportedly escalating armed incidents along the line of contact. Despite the efforts of the official Yemeni authorities, the domestic economic situation remains difficult. We call on all Yemeni parties to immediately halt the use of force and to abandon the bellicose rhetoric and unilateral actions that contribute nothing to the achievement of a lasting normalization of the situation in the country. Instead, they would be well-advised to pursue dialogue in order to reach a solution that would rule out any further bloodshed.

In the current volatile environment, external actors should redouble their efforts to swiftly resume an inclusive negotiation process with the participation of all Yemeni political forces. They must engage with them on the most pressing issues, including an exchange of prisoners of war. We see no alternative to a comprehensive political process, under United Nations auspices, on the basis of prior agreements and as

set forth in the relevant road map. That is the only way for us to get inter-Yemeni normalization back on track.

Therefore, we call on Special Envoy Grundberg to be more active. Possible common ground among the parties must be sought, in order to guide them towards mutually acceptable solutions. For our part, we will continue to provide the Special Envoy with all possible assistance, and we call on all responsible members of the international community to do the same.

Ms. Shea (United States of America): I thank Special Envoy Hans Grundberg, Under-Secretary-General Tom Fletcher and Ms. Dina El-Mamoun for their briefings. I also welcome the Permanent Representative of Yemen.

On 6 May, President Trump announced that the United States had stopped military strikes against the Houthis. Contrary to the characterizations and disinformation of some, the United States had been conducting precision strike operations against Houthi assets, such as terrorist compounds. Our objective has been to restore freedom of navigation in the Red Sea and surrounding waterways after years of Houthi terrorist attacks. It is on that topic that I will focus my remarks today.

The Houthis' capitulation marks a success for the United States approach. Whether strikes continue is up to the Houthis. As President Trump said, the Houthis do not want to fight anymore. They are exhausted. The strikes killed hundreds of Houthi fighters and numerous Houthi leaders. United States military operations disabled infrastructure that facilitated fuel imports – fuel that supported the terrorist objectives of the Houthis.

The United States will not accept illicit smuggling of fuel and war materiel to a terrorist organization. We remain committed to disrupting the Houthis' illicit revenue generation, financial facilitators and suppliers. We remind Member States that providing material support or resources to a United States-designated foreign terrorist organization is a potential violation of United States law. The United States will pursue all possible sanctions against relevant individuals and entities.

All Member States have an obligation to enforce resolution 2216 (2015). Iran has enabled Houthi attacks with military, logistical and intelligence support. The Council must not tolerate Iranian defiance of its resolutions and should impose consequences on sanctions violators using the tools at its disposal.

The most recent Houthi attacks against Israel serve as a stark reminder of the threat that they pose to regional stability. We recognize Israel's legitimate security concerns and support its right to self-defence against Iranian-backed terrorist groups like the Houthis. The United States condemns all attacks by the Houthis, especially on civilians.

The United Nations Verification and Inspection Mechanism (UNVIM) has the potential to be a critical tool in preventing arms from reaching the Houthis. UNVIM operations and enforcement must be improved. We urge Member States to provide financial support for the Mechanism to increase its effectiveness by donating directly to UNVIM operations, which need only \$11 million per year. Member States should also provide the naval assets necessary to ensure interdiction of ships not verified by UNVIM. A fully operational UNVIM can allow a focus of limited collective resources also on other means of smuggling, such as dhows and overland routes.

Mr. Osman (Somalia): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the three African members of the Security Council (A3+), namely, Algeria, Guyana, Sierra Leone and my own country, Somalia.

We thank today's briefers, Special Envoy Hans Grundberg, Under-Secretary-General, Tom Fletcher and Ms. Dina El-Mamoun from the Center for Civilians in

Conflict, for their valuable insights and briefings. We also welcome the participation of the Permanent Representative of Yemen in today's meeting.

The A3+ welcomes the recent ceasefire deal reached between the Houthis and the United States of America, giving new hope to the possibility of achieving progress on the political track in Yemen. We commend the Sultanate of Oman for its mediation and express our appreciation to His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik for Oman's continued commitment to peace in the region.

We urge all parties to build on that promising and positive development and to reengage in a Yemeni-owned political process under United Nations auspices. Only a negotiated and inclusive political settlement can bring lasting peace in Yemen.

We also demand the immediate release of all aid workers and former staff of diplomatic missions who have been detained by the Houthis and insist on full respect for their human rights, and on the special protections granted to humanitarian workers under international humanitarian law. With over half of the population of Yemen dependent on aid and many people facing food insecurity, displacement and lack of access to essential services, such detentions can exacerbate the already catastrophic humanitarian crisis, thereby putting the lives of millions of Yemenis at risk. We insist that aid operations must never be politicized nor obstructed and continue to demand that all humanitarian workers be protected and unimpeded access be granted to those in need.

We are encouraged that there have been no recent attacks in the Red Sea, as reported by the Secretary-General, and we hope that that trend will continue.

We commend the Special Envoy, Hans Grundberg, for his valuable updates on the latest developments in Yemen and for his continued efforts to facilitate the political process aimed at de-escalating tensions and ending the conflict.

The A3+ recognizes and commends the critical role played by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in addressing the needs of those in need, despite the growing challenges. We also support the call for increased flexible and predictable funding for the 2025 humanitarian response plan, especially in the light of the severe malnutrition crisis, and therefore urge the international community to intensify support for early recovery.

We appreciate Ms. El-Mamoun's briefing, which highlighted the impact of the conflict on women and girls in Yemen. We remain concerned about the reports of violations of their human rights, including restrictions on their movement, their arbitrary detention and other discriminatory practices. Such measures are inconsistent with international humanitarian law and international human rights law. We welcome the Government of Yemen's support for women's participation in political processes and encourage continued efforts to promote their protection and leadership in peacebuilding.

The A3+ reaffirms the importance of Yemen's unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity. We remain fully supportive of the efforts of Special Envoy Grundberg and recognize the continued contributions of regional actors — particularly Saudi Arabia and Oman — in facilitating constructive engagement. In that context, the A3+ firmly maintains that securing an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Gaza is critical to lasting peace throughout the region. The group is concerned about the Israeli air strikes and the wider ramifications of the Gaza conflict. Those actions undermine peace efforts and further destabilize an already fragile situation. We urge all external actors to respect Yemen's sovereignty and to refrain from military escalations. We also stress the need to halt any actions that risk fuelling the conflict in Yemen, which threatens to reverse the hard-won gains and deepen the humanitarian crisis.

In conclusion, the A3+ stands firmly behind a peaceful, inclusive and sustainable resolution to the conflict in Yemen. We urge all parties to act with responsibility and the Council to remain united in support of Yemen's path towards stability and recovery.

Mr. Bonnafont (France) (*spoke in French*): First of all, I thank the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, Mr. Hans Grundberg, the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Mr. Tom Fletcher, and the Yemen Country Director of the Center for Civilians in Conflict, Ms. Dina El-Mamoun, all of whom shared with us the reality of the situation. I also welcome the presence of the Permanent Representative of Yemen in the meeting.

France strongly condemns the recent attacks by the Houthis against Israel. They are unacceptable, and they threaten regional security. Ansar Allah, supported by Iran, must cease its destabilizing actions in Yemen, the Red Sea and the Middle East. The Security Council must be able to condemn those actions with a single, unambiguous voice. Nothing justifies Ansar Allah's external or internal methods. In that regard, France welcomes the ceasefire agreement reached by the United States and the Houthis thanks to the mediation efforts of Oman. We will continue our commitment within the framework of the European Union's security and defence policy Operation Aspides to protect maritime security and freedom of navigation, in accordance with international law and together with our partners.

The Houthis must cease their unacceptable obstruction of humanitarian action. We express our deep concern about the humanitarian situation in Yemen, in which the most vulnerable — especially women and children — are the first victims. In that respect, I refer to the statement made by our women and peace and security group this morning. The Houthis must guarantee safe and unhindered humanitarian access to all areas and populations under their control. In particular, France calls on the Houthis to allow the resumption of United Nations activities in the governorate of Sa'ada, which were interrupted three months ago. France reiterates its condemnation of the arbitrary detention by the Houthis of dozens of local and international United Nations and humanitarian personnel, members of Yemeni civil society and diplomatic missions. It takes note of the recent releases, and it calls for the immediate and unconditional release of all those still being held completely illegally. The Council must continue to demand that the Houthis allow humanitarian workers to carry out their work in complete safety.

This situation must not make us forget that only an inclusive political solution will put an end to the conflict. France reiterates its support for the legitimate Government of Yemen, which must continue its efforts to meet the expectations of the Yemeni population as a whole. It expresses its full support for the Special Envoy's efforts to reach a genuine ceasefire agreement in Yemen, which will pave the way for a negotiated and inclusive political solution for a united and sovereign Yemen. We reaffirm our commitment to the stability of Yemen and regional security. We reiterate the need to avoid further escalation in the region, and we call on Iran to cease its support for destabilizing actions in the Middle East.

Ms. Lassen (Denmark): I thank Special Envoy Grundberg, Under-Secretary-General Fletcher and Director El-Mamoun for their informative briefings.

Over the past month, the security landscape in the Middle East has seen an alarming deterioration. Unfortunately, Yemen has not been spared. Denmark strongly condemns the Houthis' attacks against vessels in the Red Sea and against Israel, including the attack near the Ben Gurion Airport on 4 May. We urge all parties to comply with international humanitarian law. Humanitarian personnel must also be protected. The announced ceasefire deal between the United States and the Houthis gives hope for a path towards de-escalation and dialogue. We thank Oman for its

efforts in mediating the deal and for its continuous support for efforts to achieve peace in Yemen. Maritime security and freedom of navigation in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden must be fully restored.

Regarding the humanitarian situation, we remain gravely concerned about the conflict's disproportionate impact on women and children, as also highlighted by Under-Secretary-General Fletcher. As we heard, a staggering 9.6 million women and girls in Yemen are in need of life-saving humanitarian aid. At the same time, 1.4 million pregnant and/or breastfeeding women are facing acute malnutrition. Food insecurity has forced many parents to make the choice not to eat in order to be able to feed their children. Despite that, nearly one in every two children under 5 is malnourished — a tragic record almost unparalleled globally. That will not only affect the current generation — it will have health implications for generations to come. In this dire situation, we reiterate that all parties must respect international humanitarian law and allow the rapid, safe and unimpeded provision of humanitarian assistance. That also means an immediate end to the arbitrary detentions of United Nations staff, civil society representatives and others. Since the beginning of the conflict, Denmark has contributed more than \$200 million to humanitarian operations in Yemen. We call on the international community to recommit to assisting the people, in particular the country's women and children.

At a time when the humanitarian situation has reached a new breaking point, the courage and resilience of Yemeni women give hope for a better future. Restrictions and the targeting of women-led civil society organizations, in particular by the Houthis, have for too long made it difficult for Yemeni women to participate in Yemeni society. Yet, as we heard from Ms. El-Mamoun, despite immense challenges compounded by years of conflict, Yemeni women are playing a constructive and important role in efforts for peace, development and the provision of humanitarian assistance. They are shaping their own futures by stepping into university classrooms in increasing numbers and claiming their right to education and by launching businesses and generating job opportunities and livelihoods. And they are founding grass-roots organizations, promoting human rights and serving the most vulnerable communities on the front line of the humanitarian response. Their contributions and perspectives must be recognized, included and nurtured. We call for the full and meaningful inclusion of women in all United Nations-led peace efforts, including intra-Yemeni talks, as well as other diplomatic efforts to settle the conflict, in line with the minimum 30 per cent quota established by the National Dialogue Conference.

Growing security challenges and humanitarian suffering unfortunately have no quick fix. As Under-Secretary-General Fletcher stated, the people of Yemen need aid, but they also need peace. Ensuring women's meaningful political participation is central to advancing a United Nations-led political process to find a lasting solution to the conflict in Yemen, and we offer our full support to Special Envoy Grundberg's efforts in that regard.

Mr. Sun Lei (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Special Envoy Grundberg and Under-Secretary-General Fletcher for their briefings. I also listened carefully to the briefing by civil society representative Ms. El-Mamoun. I welcome the Permanent Representative of Yemen to today's meeting.

I will make three points.

First, we must remain committed to easing the situation in the Red Sea as soon as possible. The situation in the Red Sea continues to be volatile, which is concerning. Over the past two months, the United States and the United Kingdom have carried out air strikes against Yemen, and the Houthis and Israel have launched attacks against each other, causing heavy casualties and infrastructure damage. Recently, the United States and the Houthis reached a ceasefire agreement. China welcomes

that and commends the efforts by Oman in that regard. We hope that all parties will take that as an opportunity to promptly de-escalate the situation. China reiterates its call on all parties to exercise calm and restraint and to refrain from any action that exacerbates tension. We call on the Houthis to stop attacking commercial vessels and to maintain the safety of Red Sea shipping lanes. The sovereignty, security and territorial integrity of Yemen should be respected, and the ceasefire agreement that has been reached must be implemented.

Secondly, we must remain committed to dialogue and negotiation. The Yemeni issue is complex and ultimately requires a political solution. We call on all parties in Yemen to show determination and willingness, resume contact and communication, resolve differences through dialogue and negotiation and promote a comprehensive political process that is Yemeni-led and Yemeni-owned, so as to achieve reconciliation and economic reconstruction without delay. China supports countries of the region playing a greater role in that regard and supports the continued efforts by Special Envoy Grundberg to that end.

Thirdly, we must increase humanitarian assistance to Yemen. Humanitarian work in Yemen faces multiple challenges, such as insufficient funding, security risks and the spillover effects of the policies of a major country. That urgently requires greater support from the international community. Under no circumstances should civilians and civilian infrastructure be targeted. China calls on the Houthis to immediately and unconditionally release all detained personnel.

The tension in the Red Sea is closely linked to the situation in Gaza. Recently, disregarding the strong opposition of the international community, Israel has resumed fighting in Gaza and imposed a siege and blockade on the Strip, posing additional challenges to the security and stability of the region. That is deeply concerning and worrisome. The international community should make the achievement of a lasting ceasefire in Gaza an overriding priority in order to de-escalate the overall situation in the region and restore peace and stability in Yemen and the Red Sea.

Mrs. Blokar Drobič (Slovenia): I wish to thank Special Envoy Grundberg, Under-Secretary-General Fletcher and Ms. El-Mamoun for their briefings. I also welcome the Permanent Representative of Yemen to the meeting.

A decade of conflict in Yemen has devastated the country and the Yemeni people. Moments of respite over the years, including the United Nations-brokered truce and diplomatic progress on the road map, sparked hope for Yemenis and the international community. However, having reached the grim 10-year milestone of conflict, the recent trajectory has been deeply worrisome.

Slovenia deplores the most recent military escalation in Yemen and in the Red Sea. Accounts of civilian casualties, including of children, are deeply troubling. We were alarmed by the air strikes on a migrant centre in Sa'ada and on the port of Ras Isa, reported last month.

Condemnable Houthi attacks against Israel, including recently against Ben Gurion Airport, as well as retaliatory strikes by Israel on Yemeni soil, including on Sana'a Airport, only lead us down a path of further destruction and should cease immediately.

There is an urgent need for restraint by all. We take note of the announcement last week of a United States-Houthi agreement, and acknowledge the role played by Oman. Any de-escalation is a step in the right direction. All parties have a duty to uphold international humanitarian law. Civilians and civilian infrastructure must be protected at all times.

We also call for reinvigorated discussions on a nationwide ceasefire and an inclusive United Nations-led peace process, focusing on the needs and aspirations

of the Yemeni people. In particular, we urge the Houthis to return to the negotiating table.

We reiterate our full support for the Special Envoy and the work of his Office and stress the importance of a united international community on the path forward for Yemen. That path has to meaningfully include Yemeni women at every stage of the process, as highlighted powerfully by Ms. El-Mamoun. Women's rights should not be negotiable in any future peace and political process. They should not be an afterthought.

The already limited humanitarian space in Yemen continues to shrink, and the system is under strain. We should have no illusions regarding the long-term impact of the protracted crisis. They include food insecurity leading to child stunting, outbreaks of epidemics overwhelming the fragile healthcare system and land mines and explosive remnants of war, as well as climate change, which is hindering business and agricultural life. Ordinary Yemenis should not be punished for the Houthis' actions. We, therefore, welcome any moves aimed at facilitating principled humanitarian action to reach those most in need, and any increase in humanitarian funding, including from the region. We look forward to the outcome of the seventh Senior Officials Meeting on Yemen in Brussels later this month.

Slovenia continues to call for the immediate and unconditional release of the United Nations, humanitarian and non-governmental organization workers cruelly detained by the Houthis. Recent releases are welcome but not enough.

We commend the United Nations system and all humanitarians for their commitment to staying and delivering for the vulnerable in Yemen, even though the challenges are immense, especially for women humanitarians, whose work is shamefully restricted.

We should reflect on the lessons learned from the 10 years of unsuccessful military campaigns. There is no military solution to the conflict.

In conclusion, a brighter future has to lie ahead for Yemen, and that future cannot include a return to all-out war.

Mr. Hwang (Republic of Korea): I would like to thank Special Envoy Hans Grundberg, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator Tom Fletcher and Ms. El-Mamoun for their briefings. I also welcome the Permanent Representative of Yemen to today's meeting.

We wish to share the following points today.

First, regarding the fragile situation on the ground, while we welcome the United States-Houthi agreement to cease attacks, we are gravely alarmed by the Houthi strike near Ben Gurion Airport in Tel Aviv, which was followed by Israel's subsequent counter air strikes. They underscore the ongoing volatility in the region. Also, even after the Houthis' commitment to halt attacks against commercial vessels in the Red Sea, the continued reluctance of the shipping industry to resume passage there is significantly hampering the global supply chain. Nevertheless, we hope that that United States-Houthi agreement may serve as a foundation for building peace and stability in and around Yemen. To achieve that, the Houthis must refrain from all escalatory actions under the pretext of the Gaza crisis. In addition, we express concern over damage to vital civilian infrastructure, including the port of Al-Hudaydah, which serves as a lifeline for the Yemeni people, accounting for 80 per cent of Yemen's food imports. Such damage exacerbates food insecurity and the daily hardships faced by civilians. In that context, we echo the Secretary-General's call for full respect for international humanitarian law, under all circumstances, and emphasize the urgent need to protect civilians and civilian infrastructure.

Secondly, on the arms embargo, the recent Houthi ballistic missile attack targeting Israel, using advanced weapons systems, once again exemplifies the systematic violations of the Security Council's arms embargo, as documented in last year's final report by the panel of experts (S/2024/731). In that light, we stress the importance of appointing the Panel's arms expert without further delay. While we welcome the recent appointment of four members of the Panel of Experts of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2140 (2014), the absence of the arms expert, whose role is central to monitoring arms flows and sanctions implementation, significantly undermines the Panel's effectiveness as a whole. We also recognize the critical role of the United Nations Verification and Inspection Mechanism in implementing the arms embargo and alleviating the humanitarian crisis in Yemen. Korea will actively pursue ways to support its effective activities.

Thirdly, regarding the dire humanitarian and human rights situation, as today's briefers highlighted, women and children in particular continue to bear the brunt of a worsening humanitarian crisis. As part of our efforts to help to ease the malnutrition and food insecurity, as emphasized by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Republic of Korea will continue our support, including the provision of 23,000 tons of rice this year, in partnership with the World Food Programme. We emphasize that a brighter future for Yemen can be assured only when the human rights and fundamental freedoms of women and girls are fully protected and respected. Their participation in public life, including access to education, is essential for sustainable and lasting peace in Yemen. In addition, we once again strongly demand that the Houthis immediately release all individuals arbitrarily detained, including humanitarian workers and United Nations personnel, and that they guarantee unimpeded access for humanitarian operations.

Fourthly, regarding the importance of diplomatic efforts, in the light of the volatile regional context, the diplomatic efforts of all relevant actors, particularly key countries of the region, are more imperative than ever. We recognize the constructive role recently played by Oman in mediating between the United States and the Houthis, and we take note of the Special Envoy's continued diplomatic outreach, including his recent visit to Saudi Arabia.

In conclusion, the Republic of Korea reaffirms its support for the long-stalled Yemeni-led political transition process.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Greece.

I would like to thank Special Envoy Hans Grundberg and Under-Secretary-General Tom Fletcher for their informative briefings and continued engagement in promoting peace and stability in the region. I would also like to thank Ms. Dina El-Mamoun for her insightful remarks and to welcome the presence here today of the Permanent Representative of Yemen.

The deteriorating humanitarian situation in Yemen is highly alarming. We are witnessing unprecedented levels of food insecurity, malnutrition and cholera, which affect the most vulnerable groups, especially women and children. The situation is unsustainable, with detrimental effects for the stability in Yemen and the region. Unhindered humanitarian assistance and protection must be sustained and intensified in all feasible manners.

I would like to make the following points.

First, women continue to bear the brunt of the crisis to a great extent. Extensive violations of human rights and international humanitarian law in the Houthi-controlled areas, including sexual and gender-based violence, lead to a growing number of women being deprived even of their core freedoms and human rights.

Women humanitarian workers, journalists and human rights defenders continue to be the targets of violence and arbitrary detentions. We deem women's effective participation in the peace process to be essential for a sustainable political solution, and it is vital to empower women and combat the marginalization of such an important part of the Yemeni society.

Secondly, we strongly condemn the continuous unlawful and unjustifiable detention of diplomatic staff, personnel of the United Nations and non-governmental organizations and humanitarian workers by the Houthis. We welcome the recent release of two personnel members, and we call for the immediate and unconditional release of all of them. It is imperative that all diplomatic and humanitarian personnel operate in a secure environment indiscriminately, and their safety must be guaranteed at all times.

Thirdly, we remain deeply concerned about the assistance received by the Houthis, including through a collaborative network of terrorist groups, such as Al-Qaida and Al-Shabaab. We call on all Member States to respect the arms embargo established with resolution 2216 (2015) and to refrain from any form of support or transfer of weaponry and advanced technology, in violation of the relevant international obligations. We believe that the United Nations Verification and Inspection Mechanism has an important role in the verification and inspection of merchant vessels, by upholding the arms embargo. It must therefore be provided with adequate funding and additional means in order to further enhance its operational capabilities.

Fourthly, we must not lose sight of the continuing precarious situation in the Red Sea region. The threat of Houthi attacks against transiting vessels remains a constant deterring factor for maritime shipping. We call for the practice of the indiscriminate and arbitrary detention of commercial and merchant vessels and their crews by the Houthis to be halted and for the safety of seafarers to be upheld.

Greece remains dedicated to safeguarding maritime security and freedom of navigation through the European Union (EU) naval Operation Aspides in the Red Sea, with full respect for the Operation's defensive posture. We commend the outstanding results of the EU Operation, which has escorted more than 440 ships over the first year of its mandate. We welcome the recent ceasefire agreement reached by the United States and the Houthis and facilitated by Oman, as well as any initiatives that can prevent and deter Houthi attacks and sustainably protect the safety of international maritime routes. Support by regional and international stakeholders will be instrumental in that respect. But let us not forget that we are witnessing ongoing escalatory actions by the Houthis, who continue to launch unjustified attacks against Israel, with the systematic use of advanced weaponry, even against civilian infrastructure. We strongly condemn those attacks and repeat that international humanitarian law must be fully and unconditionally respected by all, especially regarding the need to protect the civilian population and civilian infrastructure.

Finally, I want to reiterate our full and wholehearted support for Special Envoy of the Secretary-General Hans Grundberg and his dedicated efforts to revitalize the peace dialogue in Yemen, through an inclusive Yemeni-led and Yemeni-owned political process under United Nations auspices, with full respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and unity of Yemen. We commend the Special Envoy's continuous endeavours to bring the Yemeni parties back to a negotiation path, aiming for de-escalation and a sustainable and durable political settlement. Peace and a durable political settlement in Yemen are ultimately the keys for addressing the suffering of the Yemeni people and enhancing regional stability and security, including maritime security and the freedom of navigation.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the Permanent Representative of Yemen.

Mr. Al-Saadi (Yemen) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, allow me to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month and to wish you success in your duties. I would also like to congratulate your predecessor, the Permanent Representative of the friendly country of France, on his successful presidency of the Council last month. I also thank Mr. Hans Grundberg, Mr. Tom Fletcher and our dear sister Ms. Dina El-Mamoun for their briefings.

The Presidential Leadership Council and the Yemeni Government affirm their keenness to end this conflict and to achieve comprehensive and sustainable peace in Yemen based on the terms of reference of the agreed political solution, foremost among which is resolution 2216 (2015). We regret having to say today that all that keenness and the regional and international efforts and those of the United Nations through its Special Envoy to Yemen aimed at ending the crisis have been met with the intransigence and rejection of the Houthi terrorist militias supported by the Iranian regime.

The militias have sought to thwart all endeavours and initiatives over the past few years. Experience shows that the militias do not believe in peace or dialogue. They do not abide by agreements or respect all those efforts and endeavours to stop their war, and they refuse to engage credibly and in good faith on the political track. Instead, the militias are trying to prolong their war against the Yemeni people, destroying their resources and deepening their suffering. They bring more violence and escalation and expand repression and violations in the areas under their control. They threaten regional and international interests, international maritime routes and vessels in the Red Sea, the Bab Al-Mandab Strait and the Gulf of Aden. The militias sustain a policy of starving and impoverishing Yemenis, destroying all their means of making a living and their hopes for a normal and dignified life.

The Houthi militias see the Yemeni people as nothing more than fuel for their wars, which serve their interests and destructive projects and the interests of their supporters. They have turned Yemenis into tools to implement agendas that have nothing to do with the history, culture or civilization of that ancient people and its interests. Instead, they are trading in the blood of Yemenis to achieve military, political and media gains. They have plunged Yemeni citizens into a state of poverty and hunger, destroying Yemen's economic and cultural resources, as well as its national fabric.

They have also imposed a systematic economic blockade on the Yemeni Government and people through their terrorist acts, targeting oil facilities and oil export terminals. They are impeding the delivery of humanitarian aid to those in need and looting public servants' salaries to use them in the war against the people.

The Presidential Leadership Council and the Yemeni Government hold the Houthi militias fully responsible for destroying the Yemeni people's resources and infrastructure, harming their interests and national security, endangering lives and livelihoods and dragging the country into endless wars. They have provoked the international community into conducting strikes against Yemeni targets, thereby militarizing regional waters in what is a predictable response intended to deter their threats and attacks on the international shipping routes that are the backbone of the global economy.

We renew our appeal for peace to those militias, to end their aggressive posture and prioritize national interests over their own interests and those of their supporters. We call on them to lay down their arms, embrace peace, abandon the subversive Iranian scheme in Yemen and the region and turn the page on the conflict. That

would start to build a bright future that would restore Yemen's freedom, glory, dignity and sovereignty.

We commend the efforts of the international community to secure and protect the international maritime routes in the Red Sea and Bab El-Mandab Strait. However, we reaffirm once again that ending the threat of the Houthi militias on those waterways and cargo ships is contingent on support for the Yemeni Government that would allow it to exercise its authority over all Yemeni territory. We need to create an effective strategic partnership with the international community at all levels, building a collective approach to put an end to the threat and ensure the security and stability of Yemen and the region. That would ensure regional and international security and stability, strengthen the capability of the Yemeni Government as a close partner in fighting terrorism and organized crime and allow us to secure regional waters and international maritime corridors and to address common challenges.

We reaffirm that the success of any political approach to achieve stability and peace in Yemen requires recognizing the root causes of the nature of the conflict. We must identify the reality and position of the Houthi militias, without condoning their practices, and thwart their efforts and conduct so that we can end the devastating war. That would put an end to the influence and interference of the Iranian regime in the affairs of Yemen and the region, which disrupts regional and international security and stability.

We need collective action to mitigate the danger and the threat of the Houthi militias and designate them as a foreign terrorist organization. In that regard, we call on the international community and all partners to join efforts to classify the militias as a foreign terrorist organization, given the threat they pose to the security and stability of Yemen, the region and the world.

We must take substantive measures to block their sources of financing. If we tolerate the threats and do not stop the terrorist acts, we will only face more blackmail, chaos and destruction in Yemen and the region.

The Yemeni Government is making a huge effort to continue implementing comprehensive reforms to face the enormous challenges in the economic, financial, monetary, administrative and humanitarian areas, while fulfilling its obligations and activating mechanisms of governance. We are also working to promote the principles of transparency, to dry up the sources of corruption and to ensure standards of efficiency and integrity in order to achieve economic stability and improve economic and humanitarian conditions, simultaneously ensuring a corresponding improvement in the level of basic services and living conditions of our citizens.

However, the Yemeni Government's current major challenge is an acute shortage of the principal public revenues on which our State budget depends. The targeting by the Houthi militias of oil terminals and the complete suspension of oil and gas exports have led to the disruption of the most important economic sector in Yemen. Oil exports account for nearly 90 per cent of our total commodity exports and 80 per cent of the total revenues in the State's general budget.

The halt to the production and export of oil and gas meant that the State lost its most important source of hard currency, which maintains foreign exchange reserves, finances imports of food and non-food goods and supports exchange rate stability. The decline in public resources threatens the Government's ability to fulfil its financial obligations to invest in public services, such as electricity, while paying employees' salaries.

The impact of the halt to oil exports is not limited to the Government's loss of financial resources — estimated at approximately \$7.5 billion since October 2022. It has also led to the fall in value of the national currency and weakened the

Government's ability to intervene in exchange markets or provide sufficient funding to import goods, provide basic services or pay salaries to employees on a regular basis. As a result, there has been a decline in economic and social indicators and development indicators.

The Yemeni Government once again calls on the international community and the Council to contribute to finding ways and means to resume the export of oil and gas, as a key step towards achieving stability and economic recovery. That would enable the Yemeni people to benefit from their natural resources and reduce dependence on external economic and humanitarian assistance.

The ongoing Houthi threat and the suspension of oil and gas exports are exacerbating the disastrous impacts felt by society, worsening economic and humanitarian conditions, disrupting all services, including those in the health and education sectors, and harming the livelihoods of Yemenis. In that connection, we express our deep gratitude for the support shown in various circumstances by the brotherly Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and brotherly United Arab Emirates to the Yemeni people and their Government. They have provided support to face our exceptional challenges, alleviating the suffering of the Yemeni people through development and humanitarian projects in various fields. That has been an important factor in the Yemeni Government's ability to continue to meet its vital obligations.

For nearly a year, we have been witnesses to an unprecedented wave of kidnappings and arbitrary arrests by the Houthi terrorist militias of employees of the United Nations, international organizations operating in Yemen and diplomatic missions. The United Nations and the Council has not taken effective or concrete measures to have them released unconditionally. A year has passed and the humanitarian and relief community in areas controlled by the Houthi militias is feeling let down. Personnel are suffering from heightened anxiety while United Nations agencies continue to conduct business as usual. The impunity and lack of a serious response to the Houthi militias' disregard for the safety of the staff of the United Nations, international organizations and civil society emboldens the militias to continue committing further violations. We reiterate the Yemeni Government's warning that the militias will not stop blackmailing the international and humanitarian community. They will carry out further detentions and violations against civilians and humanitarian workers. They will not stop mistreating those forcibly detained in their prisons. In that context, the Yemeni Government once again calls for United Nations agencies and international organizations operating in Yemen to be relocated to the temporary capital of Aden in order to ensure a safe and stable environment in which to conduct humanitarian and relief work without obstacles. That would also put an end to the looting of aid by the Houthi militias to serve their so-called war effort and expand the war against the Yemeni people.

In the light of the worsening economic and humanitarian situation caused by the Houthi militias, as well as the internal displacement crisis, climate-related disasters and the resulting epidemics and diseases, the lack of funding meant to meet the increasing humanitarian needs threatens to deprive millions of people of life-saving assistance. They are not being provided with food, healthcare or protection services. That shortfall also threatens to increase levels of acute food insecurity and malnutrition, especially among women, children and older persons, particularly in the light of the obstacles faced by humanitarian organizations in areas controlled by the Houthi militias.

There is no doubt that women, girls and children are the groups most affected by the conflict. In areas under the control of the Houthi militias, Yemeni women are subjected to unprecedented crimes and violations. The Houthi militias commit crimes of abduction and enforced disappearance against them. They are also subjected to violence and extortion, in addition to harassment, sexual assault, psychological and

physical torture. They are subject to strict measures and restrictions, limiting their movement and depriving them of their most basic rights to obtain a quality education, engage in work outside the home, participate in political and social life or contribute towards building their society.

We appreciate the effort made to alleviate the humanitarian suffering in Yemen. Nevertheless, we call on the international community and the United Nations to strengthen their support for the humanitarian response plan in Yemen and fill the existing funding gap, especially in the light of increasing humanitarian needs.

The President: There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers.

I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 11.40 a.m.