



## Security Council

Distr.: General  
25 November 2025

Original: English

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### Letter dated 25 November 2025 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to refer to Security Council resolution [2786 \(2025\)](#) of 14 July 2025, in which the Council requested that I present a further review of the United Nations Mission to support the Hudaydah Agreement (UNMHA) before 28 November 2025. The present review (see annex) was requested with a view to delivering further efficiencies and structural coherence and coordination across United Nations missions in Yemen, while bearing in mind challenges that have directly impeded the capacity of UNMHA to deliver on its mandate. Furthermore, the review is provided pursuant to the Council's intention to review the full range of options for the mandate of UNMHA. This includes assessing the future viability and sunseting of the Mission to enable the Council to make any necessary adjustments to gain efficiencies and reduce costs or otherwise as may be required to the United Nations operations in Hudaydah by developments on the ground, including, inter alia, a durable nationwide ceasefire.

The review presents three options for the consideration of the Council, which are predicated on ensuring the continued delivery of the key tasks for the United Nations specified by the Agreement on the City of Hudaydah and the Ports of Hudaydah, Salif, and Ra's Isa, as set out in the Stockholm Agreement ([S/2018/1134](#), annex) and as endorsed by the Security Council in its resolution [2451 \(2018\)](#). These options present the opportunity to maintain the critical functions of the United Nations while ensuring the most appropriate, cost-effective and efficient political presence of the Organization in Yemen. These options also follow broader initiatives aimed at achieving efficiencies and streamlining our work as part of the UN80 Initiative, including those that I proposed regarding UNMHA in my report entitled "Shifting paradigms: united to deliver" ([A/80/392](#)), released on 22 September 2025.

I remain deeply concerned by the continued political, security and humanitarian situation in Yemen and in the region. I have repeatedly called for restraint and de-escalation; however, Houthi attacks in the Red Sea and on Israel have continued, as have Israeli air strikes on the port facilities of Hudaydah. I urge all parties to abide by their obligations under international humanitarian law and to respect and protect civilians and civilian infrastructure. I also urge all parties to exercise the utmost restraint and to engage constructively with my Special Envoy for Yemen to reach a negotiated political settlement to end the conflict.

Lastly, I take this opportunity to reiterate my call for the immediate and unconditional release of 59 United Nations personnel arbitrarily detained by the Houthis, some of whom have been detained for several years, along with personnel of national and international non-governmental organizations, civil society and diplomatic missions. United Nations personnel and humanitarian workers risk their



lives while trying to save and support communities in dire need, committed to the principles of humanity, neutrality, independence and impartiality. I also reiterate my condemnation of the forcible entry and occupation of United Nations premises and seizure of assets by the Houthis.

I should be grateful if you would bring the present letter and its annex to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

*(Signed)* António **Guterres**

## Annex

### Review of the United Nations Mission to support the Hudaydah Agreement

As requested by the Security Council in its resolution [2451 \(2018\)](#), the Secretary-General submitted to the President of the Security Council on 9 January 2019 a letter ([S/2019/28](#)) containing a proposal on how the United Nations would support the implementation of the Stockholm Agreement and its related Agreement on the City of Hudaydah and the Ports of Hudaydah, Salif, and Ra's Isa (Hudaydah Agreement), as set out in the annex to the letter dated 20 December 2018 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council ([S/2018/1134](#)). Subsequently, the parties were expected to implement the ceasefire across the Governorate, along with the mutual redeployment of forces away from the city and ports, as well as the establishment of the joint Redeployment Coordination Committee comprising the parties and chaired by the United Nations. This Committee was tasked with overseeing the ceasefire and redeployments of forces, along with supervising related monitoring operations, while also overseeing demining.

The United Nations Mission to support the Hudaydah Agreement (UNMHA) was established pursuant to paragraph 1 of Security Council resolution [2452 \(2019\)](#) to support the implementation of the relevant provisions of the Hudaydah Agreement. The Mission was mandated to undertake the following:

- (a) To lead, and support the functioning of, the Redeployment Coordination Committee, assisted by a secretariat staffed by United Nations personnel, to oversee the governorate-wide ceasefire, redeployment of forces and mine action operations;
- (b) To monitor the compliance of the parties to the ceasefire in Hudaydah Governorate and the mutual redeployment of forces from the city of Hudaydah and the ports of Hudaydah, Salif and Ra's Isa;
- (c) To work with the parties so that the security of the city of Hudaydah and the ports of Hudaydah, Salif and 'Ras Isa is assured by local security forces in accordance with Yemeni law;
- (d) To facilitate and coordinate United Nations support to assist the parties to fully implement the Hudaydah Agreement.

#### Military and political context

Since the establishment of the Mission, the Secretary-General has submitted to the President of the Security Council regular reviews of its activities ([S/2019/485](#), [S/2019/823](#), [S/2020/524](#), [S/2021/528](#), [S/2022/484](#), [S/2023/432](#), [S/2024/460](#) and [S/2025/371](#)), while both the Head of Mission of UNMHA and the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen have provided regular briefings to the Council during its consultations. As previously outlined in these reviews, over the nearly seven years since the Hudaydah Agreement was reached and UNMHA was established, the political, military and security environment within Hudaydah and Yemen more broadly, which has always been largely non-permissive for the Mission, has continued to evolve.

Since the submission of the most recent review, on 10 June 2025 ([S/2025/371](#)), the Houthis have continued to insert themselves into regional hostilities, launching attacks on shipping in the Red Sea and against Israel. In response, Israel conducted air strikes on Houthi-controlled areas of Yemen. On 28 August, Israel struck multiple Houthi targets, killing senior members of the Houthi de facto cabinet. The Houthis subsequently arbitrarily detained dozens of United Nations national personnel, accusing the United Nations of espionage for Israel, allegations which the Organization

has categorically rejected. Since 2021, the total number of United Nations personnel arbitrarily detained by the Houthis is 59. These developments have seriously impacted how the United Nations operates in areas controlled by the Houthis.

While UNMHA has not been directly affected by the arbitrary detentions, the current situation has created new challenges for the Mission. The United Nations has significantly narrowed the operating environment for staff across Houthi-controlled areas as a mitigating measure to ensure staff safety and security. These developments have required the Mission to adjust its approach to mandate implementation while also responding to extremely challenging local political and security dynamics. In this regard, the Mission has focused its efforts on delivering on a range of core tasks that can be achieved within existing constraints.

### **Key functions and challenges**

With reference to the mandated tasks of the Mission, the present report considers only those tasks and related United Nations functions that remain relevant and achievable in the current political and security environment. This approach is consistent with the broader objective of the review of facilitating the delivery of further efficiencies and structural coherence and coordination across United Nations missions in Yemen.

Beyond the shifts within the operating environment, the political liaison functions of the Mission have faced challenges with respect to the task of leading and providing support to the Redeployment Coordination Committee. Consultations with the parties have largely been focused on the resumption of joint meetings of the Committee; the opening of roads and humanitarian and civilian crossing points across the front lines in Hudaydah; cooperation on management of mine action; conduct of local community engagement; implementation of quick-impact projects; and expansion of the monitoring of conflict-affected areas. While the Mission has been able to maintain a role in mine action and to achieve inroads with respect to community engagement and quick-impact projects, progress on other elements has unfortunately been more limited.

A full return to joint engagement and increased United Nations access to the wider Hudaydah Governorate remains challenging without a broader shift in intra-Yemen dynamics and a reduction in regional tensions. The United Nations presence in Hudaydah and the extensive outreach and engagement with the Redeployment Coordination Committee, however, have had an ongoing and direct de-escalatory and stabilizing impact in Hudaydah and the wider Red Sea coast of Yemen, actively contributing to preventing a return to conflict in and around Hudaydah.

At an operational level, the Mission has responded to the task of monitoring the ceasefire through both systematic patrols to the ports and their environs and ad hoc patrols to other areas of interest, largely conducted by the military component of the Mission, as well as analysis of ceasefire violation reports submitted by the parties and engagement with military counterparts. This has enabled the Mission to enhance accountability through its reporting to the Security Council; support early warning and preventive interventions with the parties; inform the decision-making of Mission leadership and the wider United Nations in Yemen; and serve as a basis for dialogue and mediation with the parties.

The unilateral withdrawal of Government forces from locations in and around Hudaydah city in 2021 meant that the task of overseeing the expected mutual redeployment of forces from Hudaydah City and the ports was no longer required, given the conditions on the ground. The Mission therefore adjusted its approach to focus on its engagement with Redeployment Coordination Committee members,

analysis of party reporting, and a revised approach to patrolling. The 2021 withdrawal also meant that the Houthi de facto authorities were acting as local security forces in and around the city and ports, rendering it unnecessary for the Mission to deliver on tasks related to policing and local security and thereby requiring additional adjustments to Mission posture and activities.

Patrols and other Mission movements in Houthi-controlled areas have been subject to consistent and severe restrictions on their freedom of movement, which has often been limited to pre-approved dates, times and routes. When patrols are undertaken, they take place under the close supervision of Houthi security personnel, and their access to facilities and individuals has regularly been limited. The visits, however, have provided the opportunity for systematic on-the-ground observation of the ports of Hudaydah, Salif and Ra's Isa, including after air strikes. Since early 2023, the Mission has also been able to return to conducting task-specific patrols to front-line areas and incident sites, when approved by the parties.

Since the renewal of engagement with the Government of Yemen in 2023, patrolling in areas under its control has been undertaken on a periodic basis, often in support of quick-impact projects and improving wider access for the United Nations to remote areas. Access to front-line areas, however, has been limited and subject to security-related restrictions and Government approval.

Due to the limitations placed on patrols, the ability to physically monitor ceasefire violations has been challenging. Accordingly, the Mission has used a range of alternate means to analyse reported ceasefire violations, including wider outreach to partners and communities and the integration of open-source information. The Mission maintains a comprehensive database of reported violations and related analysis that allows the development of trend assessment, which has enabled proactive engagement with the parties to address potential escalatory behaviour.

In terms of mine action tasks, the Mission has systematically engaged with both parties to the conflict and has emerged as a reliable resource for United Nations, national and international partners in Yemen on mine action-related data in Hudaydah. The Mission has collaborated with various United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, as well as with international non-governmental organizations, on risk awareness initiatives in Hudaydah and technical assistance to mine action bodies in both Sana'a and Aden, contributing to overall confidence-building measures within the Governorate.

The number of incidents and civilian casualties related to landmines and explosive remnants of war declined significantly following the Hudaydah Agreement and the deployment of UNMHA. However, after the withdrawal of Government forces from large parts of Hudaydah in 2021, incidents and fatalities rose again, likely linked to increased civilian movements, including returns to homes and farms and the reopening of schools as front lines shifted. While civilian casualties have declined since 2022, Yemen continues to face extensive contamination from landmines and explosive remnants of war, improvised explosive devices and cluster munitions. The efforts of UNMHA to address these threats have had a direct positive impact on the wider mine action efforts within the country through the sharing of information and technical advice and the improvement of coherence and coordination at the national level.

In terms of facilitating and coordinating United Nations support to assist the parties to fully implement the Hudaydah Agreement, the Mission has often played a central role in enabling other United Nations actors to deliver critical support and execute significant operations in Hudaydah and on the Red Sea coast of Yemen (e.g. by facilitating access to the Red Sea Mills complex and supporting the wider

United Nations response to the *FSO Safer*). This has been demonstrated through systematic coordination and cooperation with humanitarian actors, including by means of joint assessment and planning and the conduct of combined movements to areas with access challenges (see also [S/2019/485](#), [S/2020/524](#), [S/2021/528](#), [S/2022/484](#) and [S/2023/432](#)).

## Options

While accounting for the significant evolution of the situation within Yemen, and particularly in Hudaydah Governorate and in the Red Sea, as noted, a range of core tasks for the United Nations outlined within the Hudaydah Agreement and endorsed by the Security Council in its resolution [2451 \(2018\)](#) continue to remain critical to maintaining stability on the Red Sea coast of Yemen. In particular, the provision of support to the parties in terms of de-escalation, ceasefire incident report management and mine action support through the Redeployment Coordination Committee remain key tasks directly contributing to continued stability in and around Hudaydah. These support tasks contribute to efforts to secure a wider national political solution for the country, in which maritime security in the Red Sea has emerged as an element critical to the strategic importance of Hudaydah within Yemen. Other tasks envisaged in the Hudaydah Agreement have been overtaken by developments in the political, military and security situation. As a result, the current structure and scale of the Mission are no longer best configured to deliver on some of the relevant core tasks.

In order to enable the delivery of the required tasks, while taking into account the challenges facing the United Nations in Yemen, the Secretariat has identified the following options to ensure that the Organization continues to deliver on its obligations and accounts for the need to achieve efficiencies, cost reductions and structural coherence. Each of these options entails a different structural approach to achieving that result, with related implications for the approach to implementation.

### **Option 1: A reduced United Nations Mission to Support the Hudaydah Agreement delivers core tasks from Hudaydah Governorate**

As it is recognized in the present review that there is value in continuing a substantive United Nations political presence within Hudaydah Governorate to address core tasks stemming from the Hudaydah Agreement, a significantly reconfigured and streamlined UNMHA could successfully achieve this aim, while limiting the risk of undermining existing relationships and processes to deliver mandated tasks. In this regard, a distinct Mission structure, separate from the Office of the Special Envoy, would maintain a capacity for direct political engagement on issues pertaining to the Hudaydah Agreement and leadership of the Redeployment Coordination Committee and associated tasks.

Existing Mission structures would be streamlined, in particular by removing the physical patrolling capacity provided by the military observers and reducing the requirement for the related maintenance and support of a military or police component. This streamlined Mission would focus its activities on direct political liaison with the parties as part of wider support, oversight and stabilization efforts, particularly through the continued chairing of the Redeployment Coordination Committee and engagement with its representatives from both the Government of Yemen and the Houthi de facto authorities.

Efforts would be maintained to re-establish joint meetings of the Committee and related joint structures and approaches. In addition, with a presence on the ground, UNMHA would actively maintain direct communication with military counterparts of the parties to enable the receipt, analysis and reporting of violations-related

information as part of the Governorate-wide monitoring of party compliance with the ceasefire. While no physical patrolling would take place, remote monitoring, maximizing the use of available technology and all-source information analysis, could be coupled with direct engagement with Committee representatives to undertake necessary de-escalation activities.

The streamlined Mission would also maintain coordination and oversight of mine action activities with the parties, in coordination with wider efforts by the United Nations country team, to address the landmine and unexploded ordnance threat across the country. Capacity to maintain community-level engagement and delivery of quick-impact projects as part of wider efforts to ensure continued stability and confidence-building across Hudaydah Governorate could also be considered.

These activities would be delivered in Yemen from reduced and recalibrated presences in Hudaydah city, Sana'a and Aden, with other sub-offices closed. Periodic visits and support in Government-controlled areas, such as Khawkhah, Hays and other southern districts, would be maintained. This would entail a small substantive staff component working under the leadership of a Head of Mission to deliver on these functions in Hudaydah, along with smaller presences in Sana'a and Aden. Where possible, further economies of scale would be pursued with the wider United Nations in Yemen through co-location and sharing of infrastructure, where appropriate, and the removal of military or police capacities would entail a commensurate reduction in enabling and support elements across the Mission. Support from Amman would be refined based on the requirements of the reduced presence in Yemen. It should be recalled in that connection that support functions are not directly related to staffing levels.

**Option 2: An augmented Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen integrates elements of the United Nations Mission to Support the Hudaydah Agreement and delivers core tasks from Hudaydah Governorate**

In the event that the Security Council determines that UNMHA cannot continue as a special political mission, the retention of a United Nations political presence in Hudaydah Governorate through the presence of the Office of the Special Envoy will ensure delivery of core tasks of the Hudaydah Agreement that remain relevant. This could be achieved most effectively through the integration of some functions, components and assets of UNMHA into a consolidated Office of the Special Envoy and the execution of these tasks through a small presence in Hudaydah, supported by capacities in Aden and Sana'a, taking advantage of co-location and support from the existing locations of the Office of the Special Envoy and other United Nations presences, where possible and appropriate. This would enable direct engagement on issues pertaining to the Hudaydah Agreement and leadership of the Redeployment Coordination Committee and associated tasks at the local level in Hudaydah Governorate, while removing the stand-alone structure of the existing United Nations special political mission in Hudaydah. This would enable the Organization to consolidate operational efficiencies and economies of scale by eliminating separate leadership or mission structures, while also allowing greater flexibility in aligning field presence with the Envoy's mediation efforts by capitalizing on field-level engagement.

This option would entail substantive and support staff operating as part of the Office of the Special Envoy. Systematic physical patrolling is not envisaged, and, for that reason, no related military observers or police personnel would be required, as remote monitoring would be undertaken using technology and all-source information analysis. This option would require augmentation of the Office of the Special Envoy so that it could take on the additional direct political liaison tasks with the parties to support them in the implementation of their relevant obligations under the Hudaydah Agreement, including through the local in-country chairing of meetings of the

Redeployment Coordination Committee. Continued and sustained communication with military interlocutors to enable the monitoring of the compliance of the parties with the ceasefire would also be required.

This would be undertaken by dedicated political and liaison personnel in a manner that is linked directly to the wider, national-level de-escalation and ceasefire incident report management carried out by the Office of the Special Envoy in support of the Envoy's mediation efforts to deliver on a national political process.

This option would enable visits to the Red Sea ports and other locations within Hudaydah Governorate, including to Government-controlled areas, such as Khawkhah, and provide capacity to respond to requests from the parties to address specific incidents through technical visits. It would also allow the retention of ties with local political, security and local community actors, although at a more limited scale, while providing a basis for the establishment of potential satellite presences and confidence-building activities in proximity to front-line locations in the medium term. The retention of a presence on the Red Sea coast can also be expected to complement the wider regional engagement of the Special Envoy on maritime security issues in the Red Sea. The coordination and oversight of mine action activities with the parties would also be integrated into the functions of the Office of the Special Envoy and maintained to ensure coherence with national mine action efforts.

This option would likely best ensure the continued and unified provision of support to and oversight of the parties in their implementation of the Hudaydah Agreement while reducing the overall scale and scope of the United Nations political presence from a human resources, support and financial perspective. It would also demonstrate the continued commitment of the Organization to credibly carry out the core tasks envisaged for the United Nations, while achieving consolidation, efficiencies and cost savings where possible. Support from Amman would also be revised on the basis of the single-mission structure and reduced presence in Yemen.

**Option 3: An augmented Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen integrates elements of the United Nations Mission to Support the Hudaydah Agreement and delivers core tasks from existing locations**

A third option would be to close any full-time United Nations political presence in Hudaydah and make use of the existing locations of the Office of the Special Envoy to address the relevant core tasks under the Hudaydah Agreement. Tasks related to the collation and analysis of reported ceasefire violations would be transitioned to the Office of the Special Envoy using remote monitoring by means of available technology and all-source information analysis. Moreover, the existing locations of the Office of the Special Envoy in Aden and Sana'a would be augmented to integrate a range of capacities required to conduct a more limited direct engagement with representatives of both the Government and the Houthis to the Redeployment Coordination Committee and deliver on associated tasks while eliminating the permanent presence in Hudaydah. Any engagements required in Hudaydah would need to be carried out through periodic or ad hoc visits to the Governorate from existing locations of the Office of the Special Envoy.

In addition, short-term deployments would be required in order to maintain local liaison, coordination and coherence across the parties, other United Nations entities, local communities and others. A limited capacity to respond to ad hoc confidence-building, de-escalation or site visit tasks, on an as-needed basis, would also be necessary.

This option retains the ability to conduct some in-country engagement with representatives of the Redeployment Coordination Committee while maximizing the



use of the existing capacities and resources of the Office of the Special Envoy. Without a political presence in Hudaydah, it can be anticipated that there will be a decline in the deterrence effect of the United Nations, as well as an impact on the relationships and trust built on the ground with both parties. This option would require significantly more virtual communication modalities, including for communication with political and military interlocutors, along with an increased reliance on remote monitoring capacities. These approaches, however, have proved to be of limited effectiveness, particularly with Houthi interlocutors. The coordination and oversight of mine action activities with the parties would be maintained to the extent possible.

These limited activities would be delivered from existing locations of the Office of the Special Envoy in Aden, Sana'a and Amman, allowing for the co-location of functions and capacities where possible. This option would entail the closure of UNMHA facilities and related infrastructure and would require the identification and resourcing of short-term or ad hoc arrangements during any activities conducted within Hudaydah. It would not enable a systematic presence within the Red Sea ports nor engagement with local political, security and community actors within the Governorate.

### **Implications for the support of United Nations political activities within Yemen**

Since the establishment of UNMHA in 2019, the administrative and support model for both UNMHA and the Office of the Special Envoy has been based on a shared mission support structure. This approach is centred on optimizing the use of existing resources and assets on the ground and reducing the need for additional layers of staff to support the maintenance of a credible United Nations political presence in Yemen. The shared mission support structure currently provides capacities and delivery across all aspects of both the Office of the Special Envoy and UNMHA, with staff members supporting each mission based on their functional roles, irrespective of where the position has been assigned in the organigramme of each mission. In the concept of the shared mission support structure, a maximum efficiency approach is utilized through the sharing of all support capacities and components across the structure of both missions. In addition, a range of critical enabling assets and cost-sharing arrangements directly contribute to the core functions and activities of both missions across security, facilities and transportation components.

The Mission's aviation capability, through which regular flights are provided between Amman, Aden and Sana'a, has also provided much-needed operational reach and flexibility to the Office of the Special Envoy and the wider United Nations system and international community, addressing a critical enabling need in an environment of extremely limited movement options.

It is indicated in the review that all options presented here will require the retention and/or transition of an appropriate proportion of the current shared mission support capabilities and enablers to facilitate the continued minimum functioning of the United Nations political presence while delivering the highest level of efficiencies and maximum cost savings feasible.

### **Observations**

Since its establishment, UNMHA has been the sole political presence on the ground in Hudaydah and has built a productive relationship with both parties. The delegation of the Government of Yemen to the Redeployment Coordination Committee has acknowledged the constructive roles played by the Mission in maintaining stability in Hudaydah, despite the Government's generally critical stance on the Hudaydah Agreement, and has reinvested in the Hudaydah Agreement process in recent years. The Houthi delegation has regularly reaffirmed its commitment to the Hudaydah Agreement and has recently indicated that a withdrawal of the United

Nations political presence in Hudaydah would be considered a formal declaration of the cancellation of the Agreement.

The options presented in the present review for the Security Council's consideration have been carefully considered with a view to ensuring that the United Nations political presence in Yemen remains both viable and credible, with the core functions of the Office of the Special Envoy fully supported across all options. Each option also presents what are considered the maximum possible efficiencies and opportunities for structural coherence and integration across each configuration, in line with the intent of the UN80 Initiative. A detailed budget proposal outlining the resource requirements for the selected option would be submitted to the budgetary committees following a decision of the Security Council.

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