



# Security Council

Seventy-fourth year

**8525**<sup>th</sup> meeting  
 Wednesday, 15 May 2019, 10 a.m.  
 New York

*Provisional*

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<i>President:</i>	Mr. Djani . . . . .	(Indonesia)
<i>Members:</i>	Belgium . . . . .	Mr. Pecsteen de Buytswerve
	China . . . . .	Mr. Ma Zhaoxu
	Côte d'Ivoire . . . . .	Mr. Ipo
	Dominican Republic . . . . .	Mr. Singer Weisinger
	Equatorial Guinea . . . . .	Mrs. Mele Colifa
	France . . . . .	Mr. Delattre
	Germany . . . . .	Mr. Schulz
	Kuwait . . . . .	Mr. Almunayekh
	Peru . . . . .	Mr. Meza-Cuadra
	Poland . . . . .	Ms. Wronecka
	Russian Federation . . . . .	Mr. Safronkov
	South Africa . . . . .	Mr. Ntsoane
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . . . . .	Ms. Pierce
	United States of America . . . . .	Mr. Cohen

## 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. Martin Griffiths, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen; Mr. Mark Lowcock, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator; and Ms. Henrietta Fore, Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund.

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

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear briefings by Mr. Griffiths, Mr. Lowcock and Ms. Fore and by Ambassador Gustavo Meza-Cuadra, Permanent Representative of Peru, in his capacity as Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2140 (2014).

I now give the floor to Mr. Griffiths.

**Mr. Griffiths:** I wish to thank you, Mr. President, for giving me this opportunity to brief the Security Council.

Today I am very pleased to report to the Council on progress in the implementation of the Al-Hudaydah agreement. Between 11 and 14 May, Ansar Allah undertook an initial redeployment of forces from the ports of Al-Hudaydah, Saleef and Ras Isa under United Nations monitoring. My colleague Lieutenant General Michael Lollesgaard and his team from the United Nations Mission to Support the Hodeidah Agreement (UNMHA) were there at each of the three ports to monitor and verify these redeployments. His Mission confirmed that Ansar Allah was fully compliant throughout the withdrawal and that they were very cooperative. The military forces of Ansar Allah have now left those three ports.

I would like to congratulate the Lieutenant General and his team for that achievement and express my gratitude to them for remaining steadfast in support

of the Al-Hudaydah agreement, reached in Sweden on 13 December. This progress will allow the United Nations to play "the leading role" in supporting the Yemen Red Sea Ports Corporation in management and inspections at the ports, including enhanced monitoring by the United Nations Verification and Inspection Mechanism, with inspectors ready to be deployed.

The United Nations is also ready to help improve the productivity and efficiency of Al-Hudaydah port. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is sending in teams to the port to install lights to help ships berth safely, repair facilities, upgrade the berths and help demine the outer perimeter of the port facility. In addition, starting this Saturday, UNDP will be supporting 4,000 people in Al-Hudaydah, who will be employed on public works schemes. So, there are signs of a new beginning in Al-Hudaydah. I would like to suggest that change in Al-Hudaydah is now a reality.

As I have said to the Council many times since December, when that agreement was made in Sweden, we never expected the implementation of this agreement to be easy, and it has not been. But with the continuous commitment of the parties and the coalition, the swift and decisive support of the Council and the stewardship of Lieutenant General Lollesgaard's Mission, UNMHA, we have finally seen that first concrete step towards the implementation of the agreement reached in Sweden in December.

I am grateful to Abdulmalik al-Houthi for his commitment and to Ansar Allah for following through on those promises. It shows their seriousness and commitment to implement what was agreed in Stockholm. I commend them for being the first to redeploy their forces, as originally agreed. This is most welcome.

I should also add, and I am sure that we will hear later, that the Government of Yemen has been consistent in affirming its commitment to redeploying, as negotiated and agreed in the first phase of redeployment. This is also most welcome. I had an opportunity to meet the Permanent Representative yesterday. We discussed that very commitment, which is clear and unequivocal. I am very grateful to President Hadi Mansour for his continued leadership. I know that he is personally committed to the full implementation of the Al-Hudaydah agreement and has often insisted, in particular, on the prime importance of the redeployments.

This moment is significant. It is worth cherishing such moments, which are not as frequent as we would hope. But this, of course, is only the beginning. The redeployments must — and I am sure, will — be followed by concrete actions by the parties to deliver on their obligations under the Stockholm Agreement. I know we will hear more on this later. We would like the parties to ensure that the momentum that we are now beginning to see is maintained by implementing subsequent steps of the mutual redeployments, verified and monitored by the parties, and ensuring the support that we need in the United Nations to increase our role in the ports. If there is no forward movement, the Al-Hudaydah agreement will remain in the precarious situation that we have seen this year.

I call on both parties to agree on the operational plan for the second phase, which Lieutenant General Løllesgaard is negotiating, so that we can continue to see movement in Al-Hudaydah. Once an agreement there has been finalized and the implementation of the rest of the first and second phases is under way, the parties will monitor, verify and report to us on all redeployments as agreed through the Redeployment Coordination Committee, in which they are represented. My Office is also pursuing an agreement with the parties on an approach to the issue of local security forces in parallel with negotiations on redeployments.

I hope that the progress we are witnessing and the subsequent steps the parties intend to take will allow additional areas in Al-Hudaydah, such as Ad Durayhimi district, to witness the immediate benefit of increased humanitarian assistance. Of course, we will hear a lot more on such matters from our colleagues, Mr. Lowcock and Ms. Fore. The purpose of the Al-Hudaydah agreement, what we and the parties had in mind all along, was to improve the humanitarian situation both there and in the rest of Yemen. That is its aim.

I am encouraged by the steps taken by the parties to address the issues related to the economic aspects of the Al-Hudaydah agreement, specifically looking at the revenue in the ports. Representatives of the two parties came together in Amman yesterday, and today with my Office, to discuss those issues. I must stress the importance of those discussions, as the objective is that they will ensure that the revenues from the ports are used for the benefit of the people of Yemen and the salaries are paid across the front lines. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Government of

Jordan for allowing that meeting to take place and for hosting it.

Despite the significance of the last few days, Yemen remains at the crossroads between war and peace. While the ceasefire in Al-Hudaydah is generally holding — those being carefully chosen words — the intensification of the conflict in other parts of the country, as I am sure we will hear, continues to be alarming. That intensification in all of its different aspects is a reminder that hard-won achievements of the sort that I have been describing can be easily wiped away. We cannot ignore how the war affects the political process and the move towards peace. Finding our way through to a political solution is always a delicate exercise, a fragile vessel.

Tangible progress on Al-Hudaydah, however, will and should allow us to look ahead to the negotiations to end the conflict and enable the resumption of the political negotiation and the finding of a political solution to the conflict. As many Yemenis have made clear to me, only a comprehensive solution will be able to provide Yemen with sustainable peace.

It has been three years since the parties discussed politics, three years since they had the privilege of meeting in Kuwait in 2016. It is about time we gave them the opportunity to do so again. I hope that the parties can start those negotiations on the political solution as soon as possible. They have laid much of the groundwork for those discussions, and the key tenets of that solution are well known, not least because of those three months in Kuwait, three years ago. Those discussions will be guided by the relevant resolutions of the Council, including resolution 2216 (2015). The negotiations, which is the principal focus of my mission, will require patience, good faith and — of course — concessions that go beyond what we have seen before.

The resolution to this conflict will also be possible only if we include the voices of a broad range of Yemenis. The inclusion of women in particular in the peace process will shape the future of their involvement during the transition. I recommit my Office to be dedicated to that proposition. The contribution of the Yemeni women's technical advisory group, which has been with us in the talks and between the talks, was already valuable during the Stockholm consultations, and it should provide a basis to reach out much more

broadly to Yemeni women who remain in their homes, in the front lines, looking after their families.

Last month, I met with eight representatives of the technical advisory group in Scotland, where we generated ideas for the comprehensive implementation of the peace agreement and on how to maintain stability in Yemen during the post-peace agreement phase. They came with great difficulty to the United Kingdom. Traveling from Yemen is neither a simple nor a safe matter. I would like to record my gratitude to them for the risks they take and for the advice they give. Again, we will depend on that relationship as we move into reviewing the political options to resolve this conflict.

I would like to emphasize again, if I may, the importance of enhancing southern participation in the peace process. I have met with several southern groups during the past year. We have an office in Aden now that is led by a very distinguished and experienced political officer of the United Nations. I am grateful for the commitment that these groups show us to ensuring that their concerns about their future should be resolved in dialogue with all Yemeni groups and within the context of Yemeni politics and Yemeni rule. That is the commitment that they give us, but we must maintain a very close relationship with them to make sure that we hear them and that we listen to their aspirations.

There are signs of hope. Nothing can or should remove or reduce our welcome of the redeployments made in recent days in Al-Hudaydah and of the prospect of more to come. But there have also been alarming signs in recent days. War has a habit of trumping peace — its impact more corrosive than the positive effect of hard-won gains towards ending war. The ease with which progress can be reduced or removed is indeed frightening. I think that is also a lesson of recent days. Progress can be made; progress can be threatened.

Finally, what I would like to ask Members of the Council is first to welcome the redeployments we have seen in Al-Hudaydah in the past few days. We should also welcome the commitment of both parties to those redeployments, urge them to work quickly with Lieutenant General Lollesgaard to implement the remaining redeployments and, on that basis and through the Council, to work with us urgently on a political solution. These beginnings must be protected from the threat of war. We must not allow war to take peace off the table.

**The President:** I thank Mr. Griffiths for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Lowcock.

**Mr. Lowcock:** In complement to but without repeating what Mr. Griffiths has just said, I will first update the Security Council on the overall humanitarian situation. Secondly, I will summarize the current challenges we face in the response. Thirdly, I will briefly review what the world's largest humanitarian operation — which is what we have in Yemen — has achieved and is achieving. And fourthly, I will set out what help we are seeking from the Council at this stage.

First, on the current humanitarian situation, the spectre of famine still looms. Ten million Yemenis are still reliant on emergency food assistance to survive. A resurgent cholera outbreak has already affected 300,000 people this year, compared to 370,000 cases in the whole of 2018. Fortunately, the number of new cases seems in recent days to be on a declining trend; but it is too soon to know if that will continue.

Secondly, with regard to current challenges, violence rages still, as Mr. Griffiths has just said. In the first quarter of the year, more than 900 civilian casualties were reported, and it is a sobering fact of the war in Yemen that civilians are more likely to die in their own homes than anywhere else as a result of the war. The fighting also affects the aid operation. Because many main routes are not usable, travellers, humanitarian agencies and traders now rely on a patchwork of back roads and mountain passes, often going through insecure areas with numerous checkpoints. Heavier trucks, including those carrying food aid, now take more than 60 hours to travel between Sana'a and Aden — about four times longer than used to be the case. Recently, one of the major Aden-Sana'a routes effectively closed, and without it humanitarian operations will become even slower and more expensive.

Severe access restrictions imposed by the parties continue to be a major problem. In February and March, more than 900,000 people were affected by delays or interruptions in assistance. Restrictions on movement of goods or staff are by far the biggest cause of delay. A large majority of those incidents occurred in areas controlled by Ansar Allah-affiliated authorities, but there are too many problems arising from decisions by others as well. Over the past few weeks, we have had intensive discussions with Ansar Allah-affiliated authorities on the steps required to ensure that all assistance in Yemen is delivered in line with humanitarian principles. Those

discussions are progressing, and I hope that previously agreed measures — including biometric registration of beneficiaries — will soon be fully implemented.

We are making progress on some issues. On 5 May, a joint United Nations mission reached the Red Sea Mills again, for only the second time since September 2018. I want to acknowledge the support we received for that mission, including security assurances from all parties. The assessment team travelled from Aden to Al-Hudaydah through Government-controlled areas, and the coalition was especially helpful in facilitating those movements. That is an example of how deconfliction with the coalition continues to be a key enabler of the response across Yemen. Technicians are working now at the Red Sea Mills to assess damage, repair equipment and process whatever grain can be salvaged. That will probably take several weeks.

Last month, I flagged our concerns over the *FSO SAFER* oil tanker (see S/PV.8512). The tanker, which the Council will recall is moored off the coast of Al-Hudaydah, has had no maintenance since 2015 and is at risk of rupturing or exploding, potentially spilling 1.1 million barrels of oil into the Red Sea. Just to give a sense of the scale of the problem, that is four times as much as was spilled in the *Exxon Valdez* disaster 30 years ago. All parties have now assured us that a technical assessment can proceed for the *FSO SAFER* oil tanker. A United Nations assessment team plans to deploy to the site very soon so that we can work out the best way forward to minimize the risks.

Thirdly, I want to address what, despite all the problems, we are able to deliver in what, as I have said, remains the world's largest humanitarian operation. In January and February, 130 agencies worked together to provide 9.8 million people with food, water, health care and other assistance. In March, the World Food Programme fed 10.6 million people; that is more than in any previous month. In April, a cholera vaccination campaign reached 1.1 million people in Sana'a.

We now have additional, independent confirmation that help is reaching people. With funding from our largest donors, my Office has commissioned an independent third-party monitoring exercise covering the entire response. Data was collected from 108 districts across the country, using a mix of beneficiary surveys and key informant interviews. Thousands of people were contacted and asked what humanitarian assistance they had received. The results tell a clear

story. Some 94 per cent of randomly selected intended beneficiaries of food aid confirmed that they had received food baskets, and 96 per cent of them said they were satisfied with the distribution process. Health services that humanitarian agencies said they had delivered were confirmed at 95 per cent of facilities. Beneficiaries confirmed that water systems supported by agencies were functional 84 per cent of the time.

One of the questions I am often asked is whether we are seeing a reduction in suffering and famine risk as a result of the huge relief operation. Our first goal, to be clear, has been simply to keep people alive and I hope it is obvious that we have been reasonably successful at that. There has been no widespread famine, at least up to now. But we are also now starting to see the beginning of more positive, sustained outcomes. A year ago, agencies estimated that 107 districts were at risk of famine. Based on the new data available to us today, the food and nutrition situation has improved in more than half of those districts and one-fifth of them are, as of today, no longer at risk of famine. Again, one-fifth of districts that were at risk of famine last year are not currently at risk. That has been possible only because last year our operation was relatively well funded.

That brings me to my fourth and final point, which is the help we seek from the Council. The most immediate issue is funding. The slight improvements I have just described will not be sustained unless donors continue to fund the relief operation. Last month, the Council will recall that I said that the 2019 United Nations humanitarian response plan had received only 6 per cent of the required resources and that major cuts to core relief activities were imminent. As of today, 20 per cent of the required resources have now been provided. I want to thank in particular the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates for their funding since last month, which, as I understand it, came from the pledge that they announced last November.

But there is still a long way to go. We again call on all our donors to fully disburse the pledges they made in Geneva in February. I am looking forward to travelling to Riyadh again in the next several days to meet Saudi and Emirati officials and finalize the arrangements for the new joint pledge of \$1 billion they made in Geneva. Those two donors' block grant to the United Nations last year was absolutely instrumental in scaling up the aid operation, and I continue to view the approach they took as a global best practice in humanitarian support and donorship.

**The President:** I thank Mr. Lowcock for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ms. Fore.

**Ms. Fore:** May I add my thoughts to those of Mr. Griffiths and Mr. Lowcock.

Last month, a group of schoolchildren in Sana'a were doing what children around the world do every day — sitting in their classrooms, learning. Most were under the age of nine. It was almost lunchtime, when a sudden incident shattered the windows. Shrapnel and broken glass flew into the classrooms. Imagine the fear that those children experienced. Imagine the horror their parents felt for sending them to school that day, all so they could gain what every child deserves — an education. And imagine the pain endured by the families of the 14 children who never made it home at all, or the desperate worry felt by the families of the 16 others who were critically injured, left fighting for their lives in the hospital, or the other students who will live with the trauma of that day for the rest of their lives.

In any conflict, children suffer first and worst. Since the fighting in Yemen began four years ago, 7,300 children have been killed or seriously injured. Those are the verified numbers. The actual numbers are no doubt higher. The fighting still rages across 30 active conflict zones — home to nearly 1.2 million children. Each day, another eight children will be killed, injured or recruited to the fighting. Every 10 minutes, another child will die from a preventable cause, like the lack of food, with 360,000 children suffering from severe acute malnutrition. In fact, half the children under five years old in Yemen — 2.5 million — are stunted. And stunting, as the Council knows, is irreversible. They will die from the lack of a simple vaccination — 151 children have died of diphtheria since last August — or from cholera and severe acute watery diarrhoea. Despite the best efforts of the humanitarian community, including the more than 2 million doses of oral cholera vaccines delivered over the past year, there are 135,000 suspected cases reported so far this year among children. More than 3,300 people have died of cholera since 2017, including 153 children since January alone — a number that will increase as we head into the rainy season. And as always, the children die first.

The United Nations has verified the recruitment and use of more than 3,000 children by all parties to the conflict since the conflict began. That number is likely much higher — a flagrant and outrageous violation

of international humanitarian law. As children's lives are at risk, so too are their minds. More than 2 million children are out of school, and one in five schools has been damaged or destroyed in the fighting — a huge blow to their future potential. The situation has only gotten worse.

While the ceasefire has largely held in Al-Hudaydah, other areas are seeing a rise in violence, such as in Abs, Habbah, Taiz, Al-Dhale'e and elsewhere. Hospitals, clinics and water systems are in ruins, with half of the country's hospitals and clinics destroyed. In short, the systems that every child and family needs are failing.

At the same time, Yemen's economy is in free fall. A new report commissioned by the United Nations Development Programme shows that Yemen — already one of the least-developed countries before the war — has lost an additional two decades' worth of development gains since the war began.

We are at a tipping point. If the war continues any longer, the country may move past the point of no return. As a global community, we must ask ourselves: Can Yemen afford losing a generation of children? Can the region — and indeed, the world — afford the instability and crushing poverty that will result? What will happen if Yemen descends into a full-blown famine? What happens now that the water table is so low that the wells are dry and that the small aquifers are below the required well depth? In some ways, that can be worse than famine, as the lack of water can sicken and kill children quickly. Are we prepared to subject a generation of children — and perhaps their children — to a bleak future? How long will we continue allowing Yemen to slide into oblivion?

Our teams are working around the clock to prevent that from happening. As Mr. Lowcock said, last year UNICEF and our humanitarian partners treated 345,000 severely malnourished children — children whose mid-upper arm circumference is less than 11 centimetres or three adult fingers in circumference. We are delivering safe drinking water to more than 5 million people every day — including 1.7 million children — in the 15 main cities through municipal water systems. We are providing cash incentives to 7,000 health workers and 135,000 teachers and school staff, as many have not been paid in more than two years. And with key donors, we are helping to keep alive almost 9 million of the most vulnerable Yemeni people with emergency cash assistance.

But that work addresses only the symptoms of the catastrophe in Yemen. To truly shape a better future for Yemen and its children, we need the Council's engagement and influence to end the war on children now. Yemen is spiralling perilously close to the brink — to the tipping point. We call on the Council to speak with one voice to protect the children of Yemen and stop the grave violations against them. We urge all parties to the conflict to open doors to immediate, long-term humanitarian access and allow for days of tranquillity in order to vaccinate and help children. If we cannot reach them, we cannot keep them alive.

We must also redouble our support for the efforts of the United Nations Special Envoy to reach a negotiated political solution — one that puts children first — because the longer that this war continues, the more children will die on the world's watch. As we fail those children, we fail more than their basic rights; we fail humankind itself.

When I was in Sana'a and Aden, I visited hospitals and clinics shattered by the conflict. I witnessed heart-rending struggles to survive — a newborn baby struggling to breathe in an incubator after all power was lost in the emergency room, a distraught mother with a child, thin and malnourished, begging for food, and a father weeping, with so little money that he was forced to choose between keeping his wife alive or his children. Is that how we show our humanity to others?

Yemen is a test of our humanity, and right now, we are badly failing that test. Time is running out. We will not get another chance. Fifteen million children in Yemen are asking the Council to save their lives. Please help them. They need peace.

**The President:** I thank Ms. Fore for her briefing.

I now give the floor to Ambassador Meza-Cuadra.

**Mr. Meza-Cuadra** (Peru): I have the honour to report to the Security Council on the work of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2140 (2014), pursuant to paragraph 19 (e) thereof. The last such briefing took place on 31 January in informal consultations of the Council; this briefing will therefore cover the period from 1 February to date. I would like to focus my remarks on my visit to Amman, Riyadh, Muscat and Tehran from 30 March to 5 April, together with most Committee members. Two members of the Panel of Experts also accompanied the delegation. It was the first such visit by a Chair of the 2140 Committee. My

written report on the visit was shared with Committee members on 25 April, and we had an opportunity to discuss the report in a Committee meeting on 10 May. I will therefore present only some highlights of the visit.

Generally, I believe that the visit was an important exercise in raising awareness of the purpose and scope of the sanctions measures concerning Yemen and obtaining first-hand information on their implementation. It was also helpful to encourage further interaction, dialogue and cooperation among the 2140 Committee, its Panel of Experts and countries in the region, and to become acquainted with the latest political, security and humanitarian developments in Yemen, as related to the mandate of the Committee.

We received general briefings in Amman on the political process and the implementation of the Al-Hudaydah agreement from Mr. Griffiths and Lieutenant General Michael Lollesgaard, respectively. We also held a discussion with international non-governmental organizations on ways to advance the formal participation of women in the political process. Concerning the targeted arms embargo, in a field visit to the Al-Kharj military base, on the outskirts of Riyadh, we viewed the remnants of arms and related materials, including unmanned aerial vehicles. As described by the coalition authorities, those were either seized in Yemen or used in attacks launched against the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia by the Houthis. The field visit was followed by an oral and visual presentation in Riyadh. The Government authorities in Muscat described the efforts they made to prevent the transfer of illicit items from their borders into Yemen. The Government authorities in Tehran stated that they were implementing resolution 2216 (2015).

Concerning the humanitarian situation in Yemen, the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, Ms. Lise Grande, and representatives of the United Nations country team in Amman provided a general overview. Humanitarian access and respect for international humanitarian law were also key components of the discussions held in Riyadh with coalition authorities and President Hadi Mansour. During discussions in Amman and Riyadh, the issue of strengthening the capacity of the United Nations Verification and Inspection Mechanism also arose.

In all the meetings with interlocutors and Government authorities, I emphasized the importance of continuing the dialogue and engagement with the

Committee, as well as extending full cooperation to the Panel of Experts, which was affirmed by all parties at each meeting. Information-sharing between United Nations actors and the Panel, as deemed relevant and in accordance with the respective mandates, was also encouraged.

In Muscat, Government authorities noted that the outreach by the Committee to Ansar Allah was very important. Unfortunately, the Committee was unable to meet, or otherwise directly communicate, with Ansar Allah representatives, despite all the efforts made by the Committee to set up the requested meeting.

My overarching observation is that the engagement we initiated, as a Committee delegation, with the various Government interlocutors in the region on sanctions issues should not be a one-off event, but should continue through their representatives in New York.

The visit was also useful to convey a strong political message that the Security Council and its respective subsidiary organ prioritize the situation in Yemen and follow closely the events on the ground. I appreciate the level of engagement of our interlocutors, the depth of the discussions and the wide support for the political solution promoted by the United Nations.

Moving on to other Committee activities during the reporting period, I would like to note that, to date, the Committee has taken action on three of the six recommendations addressed to it in the final report (see S/2019/83) of the Panel of Experts under resolution 2402 (2018). The remaining three recommendations were agreed to by the Committee, and I will be undertaking follow-up accordingly.

Finally, following the adoption of resolution 2456 (2019), by which the Security Council extended the mandate of the Panel of Experts until 28 March 2020, the Committee met on 10 May to hear a briefing by the Panel on its programme of work for the present mandate. The Panel's midterm update is due to the Committee no later than 28 July, and I envisage convening a meeting of the Committee to discuss the update in the following month.

**The President:** I thank Ambassador Meza-Cuadra for his briefing.

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

**Ms. Pierce** (United Kingdom): I would like to thank all the briefers, beginning with the Special Envoy. What we heard today is both uplifting and frightening. The British Foreign Secretary spoke about that this morning and asked me to pass on his thanks to the United Nations and its relevant agencies for all the heroic efforts, patience and painstaking diplomacy that have brought us to this point. He was able to see for himself the work in hand when he visited Aden in March. I will later address what that means for the dire humanitarian situation about which Mr. Lowcock and Ms. Fore told us; but, for the moment, I would like to concentrate on what we heard from Mr. Griffiths.

I believe that we all have to welcome the initial redeployments by the Houthis from the three ports. They are significant steps, but they are part of the broader redeployments in Al-Hudaydah. It was very good that Mr. Griffiths was able to pass on the Government of Yemen's commitment in that it would be discharging its commitments on redeployment. That is a very important part of where we are, and I completely agree that we also owe Lieutenant General Lollesgaard our deep thanks for what he has been able to achieve. I believe that the next stage with regard to that is obviously that the parties need to engage constructively with the General to finalize the outstanding negotiations to allow for the implementation of the first and second phases of the Al-Hudaydah agreement.

It is very good news that a meeting should take place on 14 June among the parties in Amman to discuss the economic aspects of the Al-Hudaydah agreement. I think that what we heard from Mr. Lowcock and Ms. Fore underscores that this is not just about humanitarian concerns, but that is also about the ability of the Yemeni economy as a whole to revive and work properly. The Council has been concerned about that before.

With regard to a political solution to the conflict, we all want to see these recent developments open up the path to the broader political solution that Mr. Griffiths and his team have been working so hard on, which is necessary in itself, but it is obviously even more urgent given what we have heard from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and UNICEF today.

I want to move on, if I may, to the drone strike on oil-pumping stations in Riyadh province in Saudi Arabia. We condemn that drone strike by the Houthis. As my Foreign Secretary has also said, the risks

remain real in connection with the stability of the peace agreement and to its ability to succeed and bring the sort of security and safety to the people and the children of Yemen that we all want to see. The attack is not just wrong, it undermines the trust needed to get to a resolution of the conflict. This is not the time for provocation, when we are so close to being able to make significant progress on the ground and unlock some of the economic, humanitarian and medical things that we all need to see. I think we need to bear that very strongly in mind.

I also think that we all were horrified by the briefings and statistics provided by Mr. Lowcock and Ms. Fore. I will not repeat those statistics. Some of the individual human stories are absolutely heart-tugging. For me, it was the scale of what the people of Yemen are facing that remains shocking. I therefore believe that we really owe it to Mr. Lowcock and Ms. Fore to make sure that the United Nations presence on the ground can do its job effectively. Whether it is the monitors or the humanitarian agencies, all the parties need to help ensure that the United Nations can do its job. That includes letting the United Nations in, in the numbers that Lieutenant General Lollesgaard mentioned. It includes getting rid of the access constraints. It includes approving travel permissions and operating agreements swiftly, including allowing access to the large number of Yemenis recently displaced in Hajjah and Al-Dhale'e, and it includes making sure that the onward road access from Al-Hudaydah and Saleef ports and infrastructure remain protected.

I think that the other shocking statistic was that only 20 per cent of the response plan is funded. I believe that it is incumbent on all Members of the United Nations to help OCHA with that and ensure that new pledges are made and that the pledges that have been made are dispersed as fast as possible. That must be a priority for all of us. As Ms. Fore said, we are very close to the point of no return. There is therefore urgency concerning taking action, which we should all reflect upon and report back to our capitals.

The last thing that I wanted to say here concerns the stability of the Yemeni rial. I mentioned the economy earlier. We must have economic measures working properly so that that, in turn, facilitates the commercial imports of food and fuel, on which Yemen depends heavily. I thank the Ambassador of Peru in his capacity as Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2140 (2014) for his briefing on

sanctions and what the Committee has achieved. It was a very interesting visit, but a pity not being able to meet with Ansar Allah. I hope that that can be corrected next time.

I will conclude by saying that I think that the Council is united on Yemen. I hope that we can find some way of concretely expressing the urgency behind the needed measures on the humanitarian and economic side, while giving our full support to Mr. Griffiths and Lieutenant General Lollesgaard to move ahead on first and second phases of the agreement, as well as the longer-term political solution, which is now extremely pressing.

**Mr. Cohen** (United States of America): I thank the briefers for their presentations today and the tireless effort of their teams. I also thank the Ambassador of Peru, in his capacity as Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2140 (2014), for his work and for leading a very successful Committee trip to the region.

The Security Council acknowledges the tragedy of the man-made crisis in Yemen every time we meet. For the fifth year in a row, that tragedy is being compounded as the crisis continues into the holy month of Ramadan. Like other members of the Council, we worry that the world has grown numb to that suffering. If it has, let us hope that today's alarming briefings by Executive Director Fore and Under-Secretary-General Lowcock rekindle broad attention to the humanitarian crisis in Yemen. They certainly have done so for the members of the Council.

We appreciate the first signs of progress on the Stockholm Agreement since December 2018, and we commend the parties and thank the United Nations for doing everything possible to press for the redeployments. Houthi withdrawals from the ports of Saleef, Ras Isa and Al-Hudaydah are a significant first step. Today's good news must not break our focus on how much remains to be done. The parties must keep working in good faith to reach an agreement on local security forces in order to fully redeploy. They must exercise restraint so that fighting does not threaten the ceasefire, and they must enable the United Nations efforts on the ground. Whatever other actions it takes, any party failing to allow United Nations monitors entry into Yemen is failing the Yemeni people.

Obstruction of the United Nations process cannot be tolerated. For months, apparent breakthroughs have happened just in time for Security Council briefings;

then progress stalls once we leave this Chamber. We have seen enough of that pattern, and we should insist that it end today. Council members must consider how to hold parties responsible if they do not implement the Stockholm Agreement. Fighting around the country, not just in Al-Hudaydah, needs to stop. The Houthis must cease unmanned aircraft (UAV) attacks against their fellow citizens and neighbours. Iran needs to stop supplying the Houthis with weapons to do so. Attacks this week against Saudi infrastructure are just the latest example of how destabilizing that is. Such attacks threaten to expand the conflict and undermine the United Nations-led process and the work of Special Envoy Griffiths.

During its trip last month, the 2140 Committee reiterated the need for all Member States to adhere to the arms embargo contained in resolution 2216 (2015). We cannot ignore the fact that, since the war began and the Council imposed its arms embargo, the Houthis have used more sophisticated weapons to threaten Yemen's neighbours. The Houthis did not develop long-range ballistic missiles and UAVs on their own. They did not develop them, and the Council's own Panel of Experts for Yemen has repeatedly said that those weapons have Iranian design characteristics. When asked about how its weapons keep ending up in Yemen, Iran has never presented a credible explanation. Iran's violations of the Yemen arms embargo not only flout the Council's resolutions, but they are also prolonging the war.

As we heard from Mr. Lowcock and Ms. Fore, limited progress on a political and military settlement has meant even less progress in addressing the dire humanitarian crisis. Huge amounts of critical grain supplies at the Red Sea Mills have been lost. As the toll of hunger and cholera rises, we once again call on all parties to safeguard humanitarian infrastructure and allow for unfettered humanitarian access. That includes access to food and medical care for migrants and displaced people throughout the country. Our support for Special Envoy Griffiths and Lieutenant General Lollesgaard remains steadfast. They, their staffs and the international humanitarian community are working to help the parties reach a resolution to the conflict and save Yemeni lives. The Council must use all means to help.

**Mr. Delattre** (France) (*spoke in French*): I would like to begin by warmly thanking Special Envoy Martin Griffiths, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Mark Lowcock and Executive Director of

UNICEF Henrietta Fore for their very enlightening interventions. I also thank the Peruvian Chair of the relevant Committee for his briefing. Today I would like to focus on three points in particular.

First, I would like to strongly reaffirm France's full and complete support for the tireless efforts of Special Envoy Martin Griffiths, as well as Lieutenant General Lollesgaard, with whom we will have a discussion later.

We welcome the announcement by the United Nations of the commitment to redeploying forces from the ports of Al-Hudaydah, Saleef and Ras Isa. Lieutenant General Lollesgaard was on the ground to verify that redeployment. Such developments are an encouraging signal for the full implementation of the agreements concluded between the Yemeni parties. We have every confidence in the United Nations teams that will monitor the redeployment, which is part of the first phase of the plan agreed by the parties in Stockholm. We call on both sides to respect their commitments without seeking to exploit the initial redeployments.

At the same time, we strongly condemn yesterday's drone attacks on Saudi oil facilities, claimed by the Houthis. Such attacks are unacceptable. We call on all parties to refrain from any escalation that could jeopardize the implementation of a political solution to the Yemeni conflict and remain concerned about the ongoing threat of arms transfers.

While encouraging the efforts under way, we must remain particularly vigilant and mobilized. Much remains to be done. In that regard, we reiterate our support for the United Nations Mission in Support of the Al-Hudaydah agreement, deployed in January. Its presence on the ground is crucial to monitoring and facilitating the redeployment, as provided for in resolution 2452 (2019). That is to say, it is essential to strengthen the United Nations presence on the ground. In that context, it is important that the remaining observers provided for in the Mission's mandate be able to arrive quickly. It is up to the parties to ensure the security and free movement of United Nations personnel.

However, the relative holding of the ceasefire in Al-Hudaydah must not allow us to lose sight of the seriousness of the situation in the rest of the country. This will be my second point. We remain seriously concerned about the continuing deterioration of the humanitarian and security situations. The intensity of hostilities has increased throughout the rest of the country. I am thinking in particular of Al-Dhale'e

governorate, which is facing a worrisome military escalation. At the same time, as Mark Lowcock and Henrietta Fore recalled, the already tragic humanitarian situation is worsening, in particular with an increased number of displaced persons.

I would like to reiterate our full support for humanitarian workers, United Nations personnel and civil society, who are working tirelessly with exemplary courage to alleviate the suffering of the Yemeni population and who themselves must be protected. It is crucial and urgent that humanitarian access and the delivery of commercial goods be guaranteed by the parties. More than 24 million Yemenis need that assistance and the risk of famine as well as a resurgence of the cholera epidemic is increasing. It is essential to overcome all obstacles to such access, in particular bureaucratic ones.

The World Food Programme at last has access to the Red Sea Mills, which is good news and proves that it is possible for the parties to act responsibly to meet humanitarian needs. We also hear Mark Lowcock's appeal, which is essential: pledges must be honoured in a timely way in order to respond to the humanitarian emergency.

I would like to emphasize our particular concern about the situation of children in Yemen. Children not only are among the first victims of the conflict but also continue to be recruited and used on a large scale. We must therefore step up our efforts to protect children in the Yemeni conflict. To that end it is imperative to protect schools and to encourage teachers and educational staff to continue or to resume their work under good conditions. In that regard, I would like to commend the essential work done by UNICEF, under the leadership of the Executive Director, which has for example made it possible to rehabilitate six schools in Lahj and to pay more than 100,000 teachers and educational staff in 11 governorates in a few months. I would like to echo the appeal made by Ms. Fore.

Finally, and I will conclude with this point, let us be well aware that resuming the political process as soon as possible is inseparable from the ongoing efforts and remains the priority objective. It is therefore crucial that the parties maintain their engagement with the Special Envoy and Lieutenant General Løllegaard and play a responsible and constructive role.

The initial results in Al-Hudaydah should make it possible to recreate a positive momentum towards a

political solution and to establish, or re-establish, bonds of trust between the parties. In that context, a military solution is, more than ever, not an option.

The resumption of a dialogue on a comprehensive and inclusive political agreement that takes into account the diversity of Yemeni political and civil society actors is the only real prospect for ending the conflict and the resulting humanitarian crisis. After having unanimously adopted resolutions 2451 (2018) and 2452 (2019), the Council must do its utmost to promote the momentum initiated in Stockholm. Our collective mobilization and the genuine unity of the Council in supporting the efforts of the Special Envoy are our greatest asset on that path. Let us use that unity as a driver for peace.

**Mr. Almunayekh** (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to thank Mr. Martin Griffiths, Mr. Mark Lowcock and Ms. Henrietta Fore for their valuable and comprehensive briefings. I also thank the Ambassador of Peru in his capacity as Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2140 (2014). I will focus on two topics: the political and security developments and the humanitarian situation.

First, on the political and security developments, resolutions 2451 (2018) and 2452 (2019) established a mechanism for monitoring and verifying the implementation of the Stockholm Agreement, namely, the Redeployment Coordination Committee (RCC). The Committee held a number of meetings that led to a phased redeployment outside Al-Hudaydah, supervised and approved by the RCC and its three parties.

We took note of the unilateral withdrawal from Al-Hudaydah, Saleef and Ras Isa seaports last Saturday. That is part of the first phase of the concept of operations. I would like to point out that the tripartite supervisory Committee must play a pivotal role and that the Yemeni Government should perform its sovereign role in monitoring the redeployment in Al-Hudaydah.

Over the past five months, the political developments in the Yemeni crisis have been characterized by monitoring the implementation of the Stockholm Agreement. Despite that, no measures were taken and the desired outcome was not achieved. Taiz is still suffering from a blockade. The blockade has been making civilians, including women and children, suffer for four years. No tangible action has been taken to implement the memorandum of understanding on Taiz.

In addition to the agreement on exchange of prisoners and detainees, and despite the meetings of the supervisory committee on the implementation of the prisoner-exchange agreement, there have been a number of challenges in the implementation of the agreement pertaining to the release of all detainees, prisoners and abductees. We affirm our full support to the work of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen and Head of the United Nations Mission to Support the Hodeidah Agreement and the Redeployment Coordination Committee. We recognize that there can be no military solution to this crisis. In that regard, we reiterate how crucial it is for all three components of the Stockholm Agreement to be fully implemented, because that is the best path towards a resumption of the consultations, whose next round will focus on the overarching aspects of ending the crisis, based on the relevant Security Council resolutions, in particular resolution 2216 (2015), the Gulf Cooperation Council Initiative and its Implementation Mechanism, and the outcome of the National Dialogue Conference.

With regard to the developments on the security front, Kuwait condemns in the strongest terms the attacks on Saudi Arabia's oil installations by seven drones. We support the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in taking action to maintain its security. The continued aggression by the Houthis against Saudi territory is a flagrant and direct threat to regional security and stability and a reason to impose the arms-embargo provisions in accordance with Security Council resolutions.

Secondly, concerning the humanitarian situation, we stress once again the ultimate goal of the humanitarian dimensions of the Stockholm Agreement in seeking to alleviate the critical humanitarian consequences that our brother people of Yemen are facing, by opening safe corridors for the delivery of humanitarian assistance to meet the growing needs of the people in all the areas affected. The United Nations and its agencies must be allowed access to the Red Sea Mills, which contain vast amounts of grain that could feed 3.7 million people for 30 days. From the start the Government of Yemen has said that it will facilitate safe access to the Mills and open routes for humanitarian assistance, despite the serious security challenges involved. In that regard, we commend the role of the Government's Economic Committee in providing permits at the beginning of April to 16 tankers to transport 275,000 tons of oil products to Al-Hudaydah seaport, after the tankers met the necessary conditions. That should meet the needs

for this vital commodity so that it is not subject to speculation on the black market, which has a negative impact on the economy and is helping to depreciate the Yemeni rial.

In conclusion, we once again call on the parties in Yemen to fully implement the Stockholm Agreement on Al-Hudaydah and its three seaports, the prisoner-exchange agreement and the memorandum of understanding on Taiz in order to complement the Special Envoy's efforts to bring about a political solution underpinned by the three agreed terms of reference — the Gulf Cooperation Council Initiative and its Implementation Mechanism, the outcome of the comprehensive National Dialogue Conference and the relevant Security Council resolutions, particularly resolution 2216 (2015). That would end the crisis and ensure Yemen's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as preventing any interference in its domestic affairs.

**Mr. Safronkov** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We thank our briefers, Special Envoy Martin Griffiths and Under-Secretary-General Mark Lowcock. We are grateful to UNICEF Executive Director Henrietta Fore for her worrisome assessment and to the Permanent Representative of Peru for organizing the important visit by the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2140 (2014). We welcome the progress made by the United Nations team under Mr. Griffiths in inducing the Yemeni parties to implement the agreements reached in Stockholm. We have also noted the professionalism of Lieutenant General Lollesgaard's efforts.

The launch of the first phase of the redeployment of armed forces from the ports of Al-Hudaydah, Saleef and Ras Isa is a crucial step in implementing the broader plan for disengaging the opposing parties. We understand that this is only a beginning. The bulk of the work still lies ahead. However, it is now already clear that those initial results were made possible only thanks to the delicate diplomatic efforts of the United Nations and the help of external actors, based on a respectful attitude to all the parties and focused on compromise and a professional understanding of the concerns of all involved. The strategic goal — launching a fully fledged political process in order to discuss all the political parameters of a comprehensive solution — is unchanged. We believe that a window of opportunity is opening for implementing other aspects of the

Stockholm Agreement, including the exchange of prisoners and de-escalation in Taiz and other regions.

We believe that the further deployment of the United Nations Mission to Support the Hodeidah Agreement will help to normalize the city and stabilize the situation in Yemen as a whole, and we urge all the parties to work together to achieve that. The impartial mediation of the United Nations is crucial, but it can succeed only if it is founded on the good faith of the parties and their desire to stabilize the situation in their own country. What is absolutely essential is ensuring that everything possible is done to avoid any provocative steps that could threaten the prospects for a peaceful settlement and that certainly would not advance the United Nations efforts. The task of consolidating the efforts of the external actors and the parties to the conflict based on a platform of achieving a lasting solution has never been as urgent as it is today.

We call on the members of the Security Council to continue their collective efforts to put the conflict back on the political track, establish a comprehensive ceasefire and provide the Yemeni people with the help they need. It will be crucial to work consistently with all the parties and influential stakeholders. Russia will continue to provide support to the United Nations mediation efforts to resolve the differences in Yemen.

As Mr. Lowcock and Ms. Fore's reports showed — and, by the way, we greatly appreciate the courageous and selfless work of the United Nations humanitarian actors in Yemen and other crisis areas — the humanitarian situation in the country is still harrowing. We have been sadly forced to conclude that the country is in the grip of a serious humanitarian crisis that has brought the civilian population incalculable suffering. The country's infrastructure has been destroyed. It is difficult to grasp the fact that in the twenty-first century, as a result of this senseless war, the people of Yemen, including women and children, are starving, without essential medicines or social services and in need of one kind of basic assistance or another.

It is only thanks to the selfless efforts of humanitarian workers that a humanitarian collapse has been averted in the country. The priority job right now is providing Yemenis with emergency humanitarian assistance, and Russia will continue to contribute to helping them. We do that consistently. We want to emphasize that humanitarian assistance coming to Yemen from abroad must be provided to the country's entire population,

without discrimination and regardless of who controls which territory. That is crucial not only to solving the humanitarian problems but also with regard to future national reconciliation issues. But we can all see clearly that resolving the humanitarian crisis is no panacea. The solution lies exclusively in the political arena. And, needless to say, we place great hopes in the United Nations mediation and diplomatic efforts and those of Mr. Griffiths, to whom we will extend active help in that regard.

We call on the parties to the conflict in Yemen to show restraint and ensure unhindered humanitarian access to every area of the country. The main thing is cooperating actively with the United Nations mediation efforts and supporting them rather than making them harder. We urge everyone to immediately refrain from the indiscriminate use of force and from damaging the country's oil infrastructure. But before assigning blame there must be a professional and objective investigation.

In the circumstances, Russia's proposal for launching a process in the Persian Gulf for developing a package of security and confidence-building measures has become especially relevant and could help not only to stabilize that part of the world but also to resolve various new as well as protracted crisis situations, including the conflict in Yemen. We believe it is essential to ensure that all the countries of the region participate in this, including the Persian Gulf States and Iran. Positive assistance in advancing this process and an immediate, urgent de-escalation of the situation in this part of the world are needed. Only joint efforts aimed at cooperation rather than confrontation can lead to the establishment of comprehensive and indivisible security in the Middle East.

**Mr. Meza-Cuadra** (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): We are grateful for the convening of this meeting and for the comprehensive briefings by Mr. Griffiths, Mr. Lowcock and Ms. Fore, in which they described a complex scenario that requires the Security Council's urgent and sustained attention. Peru recognizes the important work that they are doing in their respective fields to bring the devastating conflict in Yemen to an end and alleviate the terrible human suffering there.

We believe it is crucial that we discuss this matter transparently, taking account of the efforts under way to prevent escalation and put an end to a conflict for which there can be no military solution and that has led to the worst humanitarian crisis in the world today. We

first want to welcome the encouraging developments in the past few days aimed at ensuring the relocation of the forces present in the ports of Al-Hudaydah, Saleef and Ras Isa, and we thank Lieutenant General Lollesgaard for his important contribution. We acknowledge the concrete commitments that Ansar Allah has made to this critical part of the political process promoted by the United Nations. We also hope that the other side will soon redeploy, bearing in mind the positive attitude that it has maintained throughout the process, that these developments will translate into new and sustained progress towards the inclusive political solution promoted by the United Nations, particularly on such sensitive issues as the composition of local security forces in Al-Hudaydah, the administration of revenues from commercial activity and the implementation of the second phase of redeployment, and that all of this will lead to the holding of a new round of consultations as soon as possible.

We also want to point to the importance of approaching the recent events with caution, since the path towards sustainable peace in Yemen is not without its difficulties. The reality is that violence is worsening in various parts of the country and mistrust is growing. It is from that perspective that we encourage the parties to continue their efforts in critical areas such as the exchange of detainees and the cessation of violence in Taiz, and to refrain from confrontational rhetoric and mutual accusations.

We must underscore the importance of continuing to address the humanitarian situation on the ground, which is worsening, as we heard this morning. We are particularly concerned about the alarming levels of food insecurity and the deterioration of economic indicators, which are intensifying the suffering of the people of Yemen. In the circumstances, we emphasize that ports, airports and land routes must remain open and operational, in accordance with the Security Council's presidential statement of March 2018 (S/PRST/2018/5). Furthermore, humanitarian aid and people's access to it cannot and must not be conditional on any military objective. We also consider it essential to continue mobilizing financial support from the international community with a view to controlling inflation, stabilizing the local currency, facilitating imports of essential goods and reactivating the deteriorating Yemeni economy. We also point to the urgency of containing the new and worrying outbreak of cholera before the onset of the rainy season.

Peru hopes that new and greater progress in the matters that bring us together today will contribute in the coming weeks and months to promoting the easing of hostilities required to put an end to the conflict and achieve reconciliation in Yemen. In that regard, we support the next steps that Mr. Griffiths has announced. The Security Council has a fundamental role to play in requiring the parties' strict compliance with their obligations in the areas of international humanitarian law and the protection of civilians, and that they commit in good faith and without preconditions to the inclusive political solution being promoted by the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General.

**Mr. Ntsoane** (South Africa): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting on Yemen. We thank Special Envoy Martin Griffiths, Under-Secretary-General Mark Lowcock, UNICEF Executive Director Henrietta Fore and the Ambassador of Peru, Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution (2014), for their briefings. My delegation would like to address three points today — the implementation of the Stockholm Agreement, the humanitarian situation and the impact of the conflict in Yemen on women, and especially on children.

South Africa reiterates the call for all parties to implement the Hodeidah Agreement in a timely manner and to resolve the current differences in interpreting the text of the Agreement, especially with regard to the local security force in and around the city of Al-Hudaydah. We welcome the latest redeployment by the parties from the three ports of Al-Hudaydah, Saleef and Ras Isa. The decision to withdraw from Al-Hudaydah as a first step in order to allow humanitarian assistance is a positive one and should be commended. We call for the finalization of the redeployment process and for a nationwide cessation of hostilities. We also encourage the parties to work with the International Committee of the Red Cross in the implementation of the Stockholm Agreement in order to restore security and stability in Yemen.

We also note with concern that many Yemeni people are not receiving the aid that they so desperately need, as it remains very difficult for aid organizations and actors to get permission to provide humanitarian assistance in some areas. South Africa calls for the full implementation of resolution 2451 (2018), which deals with the issue of ensuring that humanitarian supplies and personnel flow unhindered into and across the

country, as well as with ensuring that all the parties to the conflict comply with applicable international law and fulfil their obligations under international humanitarian law, including respecting and protecting medical facilities and personnel and allowing and facilitating humanitarian and medical personnel's safe, rapid and unhindered access to all those in need.

South Africa calls on the international community to pledge adequate funding for the United Nations Yemen humanitarian response programme. We also call for the pledges made in Geneva to be disbursed and for humanitarian assistance to reach all those affected by the conflict. We note from the reports of the Panel of Experts that, regrettably, there have been attempts by some parties to use social media to divert humanitarian assistance. We strongly condemn this and call on those engaging in such activities to desist therefrom.

The Panel of Experts also reported continued violence directed at women, which South Africa strongly condemns. South Africa calls on those committing such atrocious violations against women and children to be held accountable. The conflict is already taking an enormous toll on women and children, as they continue to pay the highest price. Furthermore, we call on all parties to engage with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict in negotiating, signing and implementing an action plan to end and prevent violations of children's rights.

In conclusion, South Africa also urges all countries and groups involved in the conflict in Yemen to cease hostilities. The conflict in that country cannot be solved militarily and will only be further exacerbated each day of this continued, avoidable war. The current talks are hampered by the continued fighting, which is not conducive to trust-building as the first step towards creating a negotiated settlement. If the status quo remains, the international community will have failed the people of Yemen.

**Mr. Ma Zhaoxu** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I should like at the outset to thank Special Envoy Martin Griffiths, Under-Secretary-General Mark Lowcock, Ambassador Gustavo Meza-Cuadra and UNICEF Executive Director Henrietta Fore for their briefings.

China commends the tireless efforts of the United Nations and other humanitarian actors in advancing the political process in Yemen and alleviating the country's humanitarian situation. China welcomes the recent positive progress made in the redeployment of

troops, commends the Yemeni parties for recommitting themselves to the Stockholm Agreement and supports the parties in their bid to agree, through consultations, on the next steps in the continued implementation of the redeployment plan.

China supports the continued mediation and good offices of the United Nations on the Yemeni issue aimed at facilitating the implementation of the Stockholm Agreement and finding a political solution.

In our view, the Yemeni parties should put the interests of the country and the people first, work towards the greater good that is regional peace and stability and push ahead with political dialogue and negotiation in a sustained and effective manner. The priority now is to carry on with the consultations and agree on the implementation of the Al-Hudaydah agreement and other concrete arrangements, including prisoner exchanges and the memorandum of understanding on Taiz.

In the longer term, it is imperative to relaunch political talks in order to find a durable, holistic solution to the issue of Yemen. The international community should respect and preserve the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of Yemen and support efforts to achieve a broadly inclusive political solution on the basis of the relevant Council resolutions, the Gulf Cooperation Council Initiative and its Implementation Mechanisms, and the outcome of the National Dialogue Conference.

Since the Stockholm Agreement was signed five months ago, the Council adopted a resolution endorsing it, decided to deploy to Yemen the United Nations Mission to Support the Hodeidah Agreement and issued a number of press statements urging such implementation. The Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2140 (2014) recently visited the countries of the region and held a useful dialogue with the parties concerned.

The Council must remain united, push for the implementation of the Stockholm Agreement, respect the positions of the country concerned and other countries in the region, and lend political support to the intra-Yemeni dialogue and play a constructive role therein.

The escalation of conflict in some parts of Yemen has led to the displacement of civilians. This is compounded by outbreaks of cholera, the threat of

famine and the dire economic situation, which have brought the people of Yemen abysmal suffering. We are deeply concerned about by the dire situation in Yemen. The international community must step up its humanitarian assistance to Yemen, and the aid pledged must be disbursed so as to provide the support needed on the ground, both financial and in-kind, including food and medicine. It must also pay particular attention to the humanitarian needs of vulnerable groups such as women and children.

China has kept up its food aid to Yemen. Since mid-March this year, China has shipped 1,200 metric tons of rice to Yemen. Another shipment of 1,200 tons of rice will be arriving in Aden by the end of May.

Last but not least, I would like to reiterate China's readiness to maintain, along with the rest of international community, its support for a political solution to the Yemeni issue and to continue to help the Yemeni people to the best of its ability.

**Mr. Ipo** (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): My delegation would like to congratulate Special Envoy Martin Griffiths, Under-Secretary-General Mark Lowcock and Ms. Henrietta Fore, Executive Director of UNICEF, on their comprehensive briefings on the peace process, the humanitarian situation and the fate of children in Yemen. We also thank Ambassador Gustavo Meza-Cuadra, Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2140 (2014), for his high-quality briefing on the Panel of Experts mission he led in March 2019 to Amman, Riyadh, Tehran and Muscat.

Regarding the peace process, my delegation believes that resolution 2451 (2018), endorsing the Stockholm Agreement; resolution 2452 (2019), establishing the United Nations Mission to Support the Hodeidah Agreement (UNMHA); and resolution 2456 (2019), renewing the sanctions regime and extending the mandate of the Panel of Experts, remain the principal tools for a lasting exit process from the crisis in Yemen. Côte d'Ivoire welcomes once again the adoption of these important resolutions and welcomes the initial withdrawal of Houthi rebels from the ports of Al-Hudaydah, Saleef and Ras Isa, in accordance with the first phase of the ceasefire agreement signed in Stockholm. The effective implementation of this phase can be attributed to the work of the Redeployment Coordination Committee, which held constructive

discussions with the protagonists on the ceasefire and the mutual redeployment of military forces.

Against that backdrop, my delegation once again urges the parties to the conflict to comply with their commitments and calls on them to refrain from any unilateral action that could provoke a resumption of hostilities, which would jeopardize the gains achieved. We urge them to pursue cooperation in good faith with the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General and the Head of UNMHA.

My country wishes to stress the need for the Council and other stakeholders to undertake further initiatives so as to ensure that the parties to the conflict fully implement the other provisions of the Stockholm Agreement, particularly those concerning the exchange of 15,000 prisoners and the memorandum of understanding on the city of Taiz for the opening of humanitarian corridors.

Côte d'Ivoire remains concerned by the humanitarian crisis, which is affecting approximately 22 million people, 14 million of whom are facing acute food insecurity and are at risk of the resurgence of endemic disease. My delegation would also like to express its concern regarding the use of child soldiers in the Yemeni conflict, which, according to the United Nations, is facilitated by the fact that 2 million of the 7 million school-age children there are not attending school. This high level of school absenteeism is, according to human rights non-governmental organizations, primarily the result of the destruction of schools during clashes, in violation of international law, and also to due to the repeated failure to pay teachers' salaries.

My country calls compliance with international law by all parties to the conflict, particularly the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which, inter alia, prohibits the use of minors in armed conflict. My delegation commends UNICEF in that connection for its significant and ongoing support of education in Yemen and encourages it to continue its assistance programme for teaching staff, in particular by paying their salary arrears. We also welcome the fact that a World Food Programme mission was finally able to access the warehouses of the Red Sea Mills, where approximately 51,000 tons of cereals intended for the Yemeni population had been stored for several months. In order to build on that momentum, my country urges the belligerents to fully observe the ceasefire, which

is an essential condition for the safe and unhindered delivery of food aid and basic necessities to the populations ravaged by several years of war.

Côte d'Ivoire expresses its appreciation for the outstanding work recently carried out by the 2140 Committee, in liaison with the Panel of Experts on Yemen, to assist the parties to the Yemeni conflict in fulfilling their obligations, in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions and the decisions of the Gulf Cooperation Council Initiative and the inclusive National Dialogue Conference. My country reiterates its full support for the work of the Committee and urges it to strengthen its cooperation with the United Nations country team and the countries of the region in order to promote the exchange of information and good practices.

My delegation is also pleased that the visit by the Chair of the 2140 Committee to the Arabian peninsula made it possible to raise awareness among individuals and entities of the scope of the sanctions measures concerning Yemen and to gather first-hand information on their implementation.

In conclusion, my country reaffirms its support for Mr. Griffiths in his tireless efforts to find a political solution to the Yemeni conflict, as well as Mr. Lowcock for his commitment to mobilizing all the necessary resources to address the humanitarian crisis in Yemen. My country also takes this opportunity to commend the observation teams of the Redeployment Coordination Committee and UNMHA, led by Lieutenant General Michael Lollesgaard, for their determination to give real impetus to a definitive and lasting resolution of the crisis in Yemen.

**Mr. Peesteen de Buytsverve** (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I would like to thank all the briefers.

We welcome the start of the redeployment of Houthi troops from the ports of Al-Hudaydah, Saleef and Ras Isa and call on all parties to fully implement the agreement on withdrawal and resolve the remaining points of disagreement. It is now essential that the United Nations Mission to Support the Hodeidah Agreement be reinforced with more monitors and that the United Nations Verification and Inspection Mechanism be able to set up in the port. We continue to call on all parties to implement the Stockholm Agreement in its entirety.

We welcome the new discussions under the auspices of the United Nations that were held earlier this week between the official Government and the Houthis on the redistribution of revenues from the three ports of Al-Hudaydah, in line with the provisions of the Stockholm Agreement. Although we are only witnessing the beginning of the implementation of the Al-Hudaydah agreement, Belgium believes that the Special Envoy should continue to prepare the next steps in the political process. The Al-Hudaydah agreement is particularly important for the humanitarian situation, but the core of the conflict requires a sustainable and inclusive political solution.

Violence in the rest of the country continues and aggravates the lack of trust between the parties. In addition, such violence adversely affects access to humanitarian assistance. We therefore call on all parties to exercise restraint.

Efforts to improve the ongoing catastrophic humanitarian situation remain essential, as we heard this morning from Mr. Lowcock and Ms. Fore. I would like to congratulate the humanitarian agencies for the outstanding work they are carrying out despite the difficulties.

It is essential that all parties facilitate access for humanitarian assistance and respect international humanitarian law. UNICEF Executive Director Fore's briefing shows that children are the primary victims of the conflict. As Chair of the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict, we eagerly await the report on Yemen and will facilitate the negotiation of the conclusions on the basis of the report. We call on Special Envoy Griffiths to ensure that measures to protect children are at the heart of any peace process.

Similarly, we would like to urge all parties to the armed conflict to respect their obligations and commitments under international human rights law and to provide the Group of Eminent Experts on Yemen, established by the Human Rights Council, with their full cooperation and all the necessary access to enable an effective and independent investigation.

**Ms. Wronecka** (Poland): At the outset, I would like to thank all the briefers — Special Envoy Martin Griffiths, Under-Secretary-General Mark Lowcock, UNICEF Executive Director Henrietta Fore and Ambassador Gustavo Meza-Cuadra, Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant

to resolution 2140 (2014) — for their informative interventions. I would also like to take this opportunity to reiterate our full support for the efforts of Special Envoy Griffiths, Lieutenant General Lollesgaard and Under-Secretary-General Lowcock and to express our appreciation for the tireless work of all United Nations personnel in Yemen.

I would first like to address the situation in Al-Hudaydah. We welcome the initial redeployment from the ports of Al-Hudaydah, Saleef and Ras Isa, which is the first step towards the implementation of the Al-Hudaydah agreement. We encourage the parties to seize this opportunity to build trust and ensure the swift implementation of all agreed phases of the redeployment. The parties must deliver on their obligations under the Stockholm Agreement without further delay, in full cooperation with the United Nations Mission to Support the Hodeidah Agreement. We expect them to enable the Mission to perform its tasks, as mandated by resolution 2452 (2019), without impediments, and to guarantee its freedom of movement in Al-Hudaydah. We also welcome the opening of the road leading to the Red Sea Mills, which is critical for humanitarian efforts.

We commend the fact that, since the signing of the Stockholm Agreement, the levels of violence in Al-Hudaydah governorate have decreased. However, we are greatly alarmed about the surge of violence across other Yemeni governorates, causing mass displacement, a high number of casualties among civilians and severe impediments to humanitarian access. All parties must first and foremost ensure the protection of civilians, including the most vulnerable groups, such as children and persons with disabilities, and must fully comply with international humanitarian and human rights law. All violations should be investigated and those responsible must be held accountable. We also strongly condemn the attacks carried out by the Houthis against Saudi Arabia.

Poland is also greatly concerned about the deepening humanitarian crisis that has just been described to us, which recently has been exacerbated by the resurgence of the cholera epidemic and the outbreak of diphtheria. We are particularly disturbed that children under the age of 15 account for nearly half of all the new cases of cholera and that about a quarter of the reported cases involve children under the age of five.

That is why the humanitarian response in Yemen is so vital to the survival of millions of Yemeni citizens. The parties must immediately allow and facilitate the flow of humanitarian and commercial imports, including in-country shipments of fuel. We urge them to lift all bureaucratic restrictions, ensure the timely issuance of visas, speed up customs clearances and enable the swift and unhindered movement of humanitarian convoys. Any form of denial of humanitarian access, diversion of resources or interference in humanitarian operations is unacceptable. We would also like to emphasize the need for humanitarian assistance to be gender- and age-sensitive and to ensure that the particular needs of persons with disabilities are addressed in the humanitarian response.

The developments on the ground show how pressing it is to find a comprehensive political solution to the conflict in Yemen and to restore stability throughout all its governorates. The resumption of consultations with the participation of all segments of Yemeni society, including women and youth, is the only way to bring about an end to the crisis and alleviate the suffering of the Yemeni people.

We reiterate the importance of the swift and full implementation of the Stockholm Agreement, which was designed to build confidence and to prepare the road for a comprehensive political process. The progress of the implementation of the Al-Hudaydah agreement must now be followed by the parties' engagement in political dialogue. We strongly support the Special Envoy's tireless efforts to find an inclusive political solution, and we call on the parties to participate in future talks in good faith and without preconditions.

**Mr. Schulz** (Germany): At the outset, let me thank our briefers for the very insightful picture that they have painted for us. I extend my gratitude to Martin Griffiths, Mark Lowcock, Henrietta Fore and, of course, the Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2140 (2014). Let me also express our deep appreciation to Martin Griffiths and Lieutenant General Lollesgaard for their tireless efforts on the political front, and to all the many humanitarian actors. We know how difficult but also how important their job is, and we give them thanks for that.

I would like to focus on three important issues. First of all, I would like to express our support for the steps taken to implement the Stockholm Agreement and to once again underline our support for the Special

Envoy and for the United Nations Mission to Support the Hodeidah Agreement (UNMHA). The start of the unilateral redeployment of Houthi forces from the three ports of Al-Hudaydah, Saleef and Ras Isa, as verified by UNMHA, is a first positive step on the road to making progress on the implementation of the Stockholm Agreement. We feel it is necessary to seize that opportunity and that the parties continue with broader redeployments in Al-Hudaydah in a transparent and sustained manner.

Al-Hudaydah is only one part of the larger puzzle that we are facing, but it is a particularly important part. We continue to hope, of course, that success in Al-Hudaydah could serve as a confidence-building measure that would then serve as a blueprint for the many other conflict zones in Yemen. For that reason, all parties should refrain from any action that could endanger the resumption of a political process. We are therefore deeply worried about the deplorable and unacceptable drone attacks in Saudi Arabia.

We also find it essential to finalize the pending negotiations, including on economic provisions of the Hodeidah agreement, and to allow for a full implementation of the first and second phases of the agreement. The Special Envoy and Lieutenant General Lollensaard have our full support in that regard as well.

As the monitoring has started, it has become more important than ever that UNMHA have the means, the personnel and the access to fulfil its task. Germany is supporting UNMHA with personnel and strongly encourages others to also consider providing concrete support to that important Mission. We call on the parties to give the Mission full access and support, in particular by issuing visas in a timely manner. As soon as redeployment is complete, it is of critical importance to upgrade port facilities, as the port of Al-Hudaydah is the lifeline for the north of Yemen. Germany stands ready to offer the United Nations any support needed in that regard.

My second point — and here I can be brief — is to stress the need to return to the political process in Yemen, as the Special Envoy and others have said very strongly. We are very ready to support that. The implementation of the Stockholm Agreement is obviously of utmost priority, but we must not lose sight of the overall situation in the region and in Yemen. The Special Envoy talked about that in his briefing today, and we are very concerned about other current

developments. With the exception of Al-Hudaydah, violence has flared up throughout the country, and we have heard about the 30 or so active conflicts that he referred to. Despite being a long and difficult road, the political process must resume in order to pave the way for a comprehensive and inclusive political solution. Germany is prepared to support that. We reiterate our readiness to host a next round of talks, if they happen.

Thirdly and lastly, I have a word to say concerning the humanitarian situation. A very bleak picture has been painted, and it is very alarming. Unfortunately, it is not the first time. We have taken note of some of the positive developments referred to, but of course those developments need to be seen in the broader context of a still very frightening and alarming situation. The humanitarian situation remains catastrophic and for that reason has to continue to be on the priority list of the Council. I think it is very important to remind the parties of their obligations — as was mentioned in the briefings — under international humanitarian law and human rights law to protect civilians, in particular the most vulnerable groups, namely, women and children, and to respect civilian infrastructure, in particular hospitals.

We also call on parties to disburse pledges made in Geneva without further delay in order to avert so-called pipeline breaks of major United Nations programmes. We strongly encourage the disbursement of those pledges through the humanitarian response plan of the United Nations.

The people in Yemen need a strong and coordinated response that is in accordance with humanitarian principles. In that regard, we call on all parties to refrain from politicizing humanitarian aid or diverting aid for other purposes. Moreover, the Security Council, its members and the international community should step up action to support humanitarian access and the unrestricted delivery of humanitarian aid. I think we have to think even more creatively about concrete steps to achieve that and about how to achieve real and lasting improvements in that vein.

In conclusion, I also want to emphasize the worrisome increase in cholera cases since the beginning of this year, which Ms. Fore also pointed out. Priority must be given to providing funding for cholera preparedness interventions.

**Mrs. Mele Colifa** (Equatorial Guinea) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, my delegation would like to

express its gratitude for the valuable briefings just provided by Mr. Martin Griffiths, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen; Mr. Mark Lowcock, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator; Ms. Henrietta Fore, Executive Director of UNICEF; and Ambassador Gustavo Meza-Cuadra, Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2140 (2014). Their complementary input provides us with a general overview of the current circumstances of the conflict.

Like other Council members, the Republic of Equatorial Guinea is closely following events in Yemen. My country has always been very concerned about the ceaseless suffering inflicted on millions as a result of the war that has been raging in the country since March 2015.

When Mr. Griffiths informed us last month (see S/PV.8512) that both the Government and Houthi opposition forces had finally accepted the first phase of the Stockholm Agreement — pertaining to the withdrawal of forces from the city of Al-Hudaydah and its port, as well as those of Saleef and Ras Isa — it was difficult to believe that the withdrawal would have been possible so soon. However, it made us all the more keen to see it come to pass. Indeed, as Mr. Griffiths said previously and reiterated today, United Nations teams were able to conduct monitoring patrols on the first day of the withdrawal of Houthi troops from those areas, whose security then became the responsibility of the coast guard.

The delegation of Equatorial Guinea welcomes the implementation of the first phase as regards the concept of broader redeployment in Al-Hudaydah, in line with the Stockholm Agreement. We encourage the Government of Yemen to respond accordingly to such action by the Houthis by upholding its commitment under the first phase, when requested by the United Nations. Similarly, we implore the parties to continue their collaboration in the next steps in order to make progress on the remaining aspects of the Stockholm Agreement.

With regard to the humanitarian issue, we are concerned about the challenging situation faced by millions of people who lack food, access to drinking water and the necessary medical care, and by children exposed to the threat of cholera and other diseases. Similarly, we regret the difficulties faced by

humanitarian agencies, which cannot gain access to all in need. We hope that the Government of Yemen and the Houthi leaders will provide the necessary coverage for such personnel and their humanitarian services.

A discouraging statistic we received at the beginning of the month can be found in the report commissioned by the United Nations from a professor at the University of Denver, who is an expert at its Josef Korbel School of International Studies. The report states that by the end of the year approximately 233,000 people will have lost their lives in the conflict in Yemen — 140,000 of them will be children under the age of 5. From our perspective, it illustrates the high level of crime to which Yemen's civilians are being or have been subjected. Ms. Fore's briefing today highlights the catastrophic situation on the ground. My delegation condemns and denounces any action that could prolong that calamitous situation.

Before concluding, my delegation commends the Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2140 (2014) for organizing and conducting the important visit to the countries of the region in order to obtain first-hand information on the status of implementation of the sanctions. We believe that it demonstrates the commitment and desire to use accurate information in order to avoid taking decisions that do not reflect the reality of the conflicts we deal with.

Lastly, the Republic of Equatorial Guinea commends and acknowledges the efforts of Special Envoy Griffiths, Lieutenant General Lollesgaard, Chair of the Redeployment Coordination Committee, humanitarian agencies and international contributors. We encourage everyone to continue to support the people of Yemen at this difficult time.

**Mr. Singer Weisinger** (Dominican Republic) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank today's briefers for their briefings. First of all, we thank Mr. Griffiths for his leadership in this very delicate stage in the implementation of the Stockholm Agreement; and, through Mr. Lowcock, all members of his agency and humanitarian partners in the field, who make every effort to meet the needs of the most vulnerable in Yemen. We also thank the Ambassador of Peru for his excellent briefing.

We welcome the redeployment by Ansar Allah over the weekend from the ports of Al-Hudaydah, Saleef and Ras Isa, which was verified by the United Nations yesterday. We understand that to be a positive

development in the implementation of the first phase of the Agreement. In that regard, the meeting held in Amman laid the groundwork for future management of the port. We are therefore convinced that, with the assistance of the relevant agencies of the United Nations, the effective and efficient functioning of the port of Al-Hudaydah, which is a lifeline for the north of Yemen, will be restored.

We call on the parties to the conflict to participate constructively and in good faith to agree on the modalities of the implementation of the agreements for the benefit of the people of Yemen in general and so that it can lay the foundation for a new political dialogue that would lead to a definitive cessation of hostilities. In line with the spirit of the Al-Hudaydah agreement, the parties must facilitate the free movement of civilians and goods to and from the city of Al-Hudaydah and its port, as well as the ports of Saleef and Ras Isa, and the delivery of humanitarian aid through those ports. In addition, in his briefing Mr. Lowcock alluded to the most worrisome part of the conflict: the terrible humanitarian situation that affects millions of people after so many years of war and economic and institutional decline. That must be the point of reference that guides all our actions.

Given the many humanitarian needs, ranging from protection to food security, we are concerned in particular about the increase in the number of cholera cases in the country, which have claimed the lives of hundreds of children. We commend the work of the relevant organizations on the ground and hope they manage to control the current outbreak. For those reasons, the international community must continue to put pressure on all parties to the conflict to allow timely, safe and unhindered humanitarian access. Hand in hand with such efforts, the financial resources pledged to ensure compliance with the United Nations Yemen humanitarian response plan should be made available in an accelerated, predictable and timely manner and be flexible to ensure that a comprehensive response aimed at saving the lives of millions of people can be guaranteed without any further delay.

The ultimate goal of all diplomatic efforts in the context of the conflict is to achieve a solution to the problem and promote a lasting ceasefire throughout the country. While we understand that all attention has been focused on the implementation of the Al-Hudaydah agreement, it is important that we do not lose sight of other parts of the country, where those affected have not been granted respite from the war.

In that context, we would like to draw the Council's attention to the plight of those who have been internally displaced by the war — many of them women and children who long to return to their homes — and to the extraordinary work being done by United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations to provide assistance to all Yemenis in need. As we have said on previous occasions, protecting civilians and civilian infrastructure are basic principles of international humanitarian law. That is why we are concerned about the attacks around the country. We see that civilians continue to be denied the protection to which they are entitled. They are once again paying the highest price for the conflict in Yemen. We urge the parties and the States that support them to do more to protect civilians during the planning and execution of military actions.

We would like to thank UNICEF for its work in Yemen and for informing us about the situation of children in the country. As the Executive Director pointed out, the impact of the conflict on children in Yemen has been devastating. Yemeni children continue to pay the highest price of conflict and are subject to constant abuse. Children make up 40 per cent of the direct victims of attacks, but they also die from preventable diseases, cholera or famine. Millions of children are reported to be struggling to stay alive. An undermining element is the 2 million children who remain out of school, and the more than 2,000 schools left without the conditions to function due to the attacks.

That paints a very worrisome picture that should compel the parties to take the necessary measures to ensure the protection of children in Yemen, while also not forgetting about the need to ensure the release of children associated with parties to the conflict and those deprived of liberty because they are part of those groups. We hope that the memorandum of understanding signed last month between the Special Representative and the coalition, along with the endorsement of the road map by the Government of Yemen to revitalize the 2014 action plan and the Safe Schools Declaration, will provide more than just hope for the children in Yemen and their families.

Lastly, after the signing of the agreement, the Council stands united in the face of the situation that is afflicting the people of Yemen, knowing that only through the express political will of the parties will we be able to put an end to this scourge. We must do everything in our power, including leveraging the

fragile progress made in Stockholm, put an end to the conflict and help lift up a people who have been severely battered.

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

I would like to thank all the briefers for their comprehensive briefings and the work that they have done thus far, despite difficult circumstances. The briefings reported both positive developments, some of which the Security Council ought to have heard and expected several months ago, and news on the persistent gloomy humanitarian situation.

We would like to underscore three points. Before that, I would like to pay tribute to the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2140 (2014) for his work, as well as his visit.

First, regarding the implementation of the Al-Hudaydah agreement, Indonesia takes note of the redeployment of troops by the Houthis from the three ports, as well as the report from the Special Envoy on the meeting in Amman to discuss the revenue from those ports. That exercise should continue with the demining operations in the ports and the removal of heavy weaponry, under the monitoring of the United Nations Mission to Support the Al-Hudaydah agreement, with a view to ensuring a valid, verifiable, genuine and faithful implementation of the agreement.

It is hoped that this long-delayed step could soon be followed by the other steps that are necessary to remove any military manifestations from the city, as stipulated in the Stockholm Agreement. In addition to that, and as set out in the Al-Hudaydah agreement, we also expect that the revenues from the three ports will be settled and channelled to the Central Bank of Yemen through its branch in Al-Hudaydah. We need to revive the economy in support of humanitarian efforts. It is our expectation that the humanitarian corridors will be established.

Secondly, Indonesia supports the continuation of consultations between the Government of Yemen and the Houthis to pursue the bigger goal of a political settlement and resolve the conflict. We support the work of the Special Envoy, as well as Lieutenant General Løllesgaard. Constant engagement among the parties, in our opinion, is an investment in the peaceful resolution of the long-standing conflict in Yemen. We also share

Mr. Griffiths' view on the involvement of women in the peace process and on a comprehensive solution.

The Stockholm Agreement calls for all parties to be fully committed to continuing the consultations unconditionally; that is an important point. Indonesia would like to once again reiterate its call for the parties to release or exchange all detainees. There should also be some progress related to the city of Taiz, as the situation there is not improving. Indonesia also calls on all sides to exercise restraint from provocative actions, such as drone attacks, that could further escalate tensions and derail the fragile efforts that are currently being undertaken by the United Nations. Military action is not the solution.

Thirdly, Indonesia remains concerned about the constantly bleak humanitarian picture in Yemen. Not only is starvation lingering, but the people are also facing a cholera outbreak, as Ms. Fore described. I believe that the picture that she painted in the Council is a very bleak one; the Council must do something in that regard. There are many cholera cases, as Mr. Fore reported: 153 children have died since January, and, just in one week, there were 13 associated deaths, from 29 April to 5 May. It is a dire warning to us all that the humanitarian situation in Yemen is reaching its lowest point. That should be addressed immediately. We should all heed the call of the Executive Director of UNICEF to be united to help the children of Yemen.

Indonesia supports the work of UNICEF, the World Health Organization and other actors to cure and stop the cholera outbreak. All parties in Yemen should cooperate to facilitate their efforts. We also support the work of the World Food Programme in delivering assistance.

We have also noted the point Under-Secretary-General Lowcock made that humanitarian support has started to reach people in need, but the situation remains dire. We should continue to preserve the momentum gained and ensure more robust humanitarian delivery on the ground. Moreover, we heard Under-Secretary-General stress the need for funding, which is very important.

Once again, Indonesia would like to reiterate the importance of unity within the Security Council to take measures to ease the suffering of the Yemeni people and support any action that could advance the peace process. We must never forget that our job is to save the people of Yemen.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Yemen.

**Mr. Al-Saadi** (Yemen) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, allow me to congratulate you, Mr. President, on presiding over the Security Council this month. I wish you and your delegation every success. I also thank Mr. Martin Griffiths, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen; Mr. Mark Lowcock, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs; Ms. Henrietta Fore, Executive Director of UNICEF; and the representative of Peru, Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2140 (2014), for their briefings.

Five months have gone by since the Stockholm Agreement was reached between the Yemeni Government and the Houthi militias. Our patient people yearned for that Agreement to mark the beginning of the end of the tragedy, which has hit that great people hard, as the Houthi militias led a coup d'état and destroyed the economic, social and cultural foundations of the country. Unfortunately, the Houthi militias used those agreements and other initiatives aimed at achieving peace and a political solution to gain some time to reinforce their military positions so as to commit crimes against the Yemeni people and violations of their rights in the areas under the control of those militias, in flagrant breach of all humanitarian rules and values, including international law and human rights law.

Those militias have opened up new war fronts and pushed their followers into their barbaric war against the Yemeni people, without realizing that the illusions which they are trying to create will vanish and explode in the faces of those who believe that they, with Iran's assistance, can make our people yield and break their determination. The Yemeni people continue to reject foreign agendas that do not belong to their culture and genuine Arab identity.

The Yemeni Government welcomes the efforts of the Secretary-General and recalls that the Stockholm Agreement is an initiative designed to build trust in moving towards a comprehensive solution to the Yemen crisis. The failure of the Houthis to work with the international community and the Yemeni Government in order to establish the necessary trust will make them untrustworthy and puppets in the hands of terrorist Iran.

With respect to resolutions 2451 (2018) and 2452 (2019), under which the United Nations Verification and Inspection Mechanism ensures the implementation of the Stockholm Agreement, represented by the Redeployment Coordination Committee, the Yemeni Government emphasizes its right to verify any step taken as part of Stockholm Agreement and to check reports issued by coastguard forces that will assume responsibility for security in the ports that the Houthis have withdrawn from.

Before beginning any discussion on any upcoming steps, the Government also reaffirms its right to monitor withdrawals, pursuant to the relevant Security Council resolutions and through the Redeployment Coordination Committee. It is not enough for the Chair of the Committee to provide a summary report of what is happening. We underscore the fact that any attempt by the Houthi militias to withdraw from the ports without any supervision, monitoring and approval by the Committee and its three parties would be a violation of agreements reached in recent months and would undermine the efforts of the international community. This would be a free service offered to the militias, which will not hesitate to repeat their masquerade of unilateral withdrawal, as happened on 30 December 2018 in the port of Al-Hudaydah.

The Yemeni Government reaffirms its clear position of adhering to resolutions 2216 (2015), 2451 (2018) and 2452 (2019), as well as to the spirit and letter of the Stockholm Agreement. In that regard, we reject any measure that is not subject to the criteria provided for in the relevant Security Council resolutions and that does not abide by the concept of operations. We reaffirm our full willingness to work seriously for the implementation of the Stockholm Agreement and all its provisions concerning Al-Hudaydah, as well as the Taiz understandings and the freeing of all prisoners, detainees, abductees, disappeared persons and those under house arrest.

The Houthi militias have tried to avoid implementing first phase of the concept of operations presented by Lieutenant General Lollesgaard, the Chair of the Redeployment Coordination Committee, which was approved by the Yemeni Government and the Houthi militias. It defines the redeployment mechanisms, distances, zones and maps, as well as the roles of the joint control monitoring committees and the verification mechanisms, along with every logistical and technical detail. The Houthi militias try

to implement the Agreement in a way that deviates from the concept of operations and through unilateral action that departs from all previous agreements in an attempt to implement the Agreement according to their own vision, which is not based on any terms of reference and understandings. The United Nations has to implement agreements and to refute such fallacious arguments. The Yemeni Government calls for a return to the process provided for in the Agreement, in accordance with the agreed concepts.

The Houthi militias reject peace opportunities and want to prolong the war and increase the suffering of the Yemeni people. That would confirm what the Yemeni Government has said many times — that the militias are not serious in their acceptance of peace and the efforts of the United Nations and the Security Council. The decisions they take are no longer their own. Those militias have become puppets in the hands of the Iranian mullahs and regime, which are trying to promote their own sectarian interests in Yemen and the region while blackmailing the international community in order to evade the sanctions imposed on them.

The Yemeni Government has tried to end the war by various means. We have shown the greatest flexibility in implementing Stockholm Agreement by following the directives of President of the Republic Mansour Hadi. We have fully supported the efforts of the Special Envoy and accepted all proposals and plans put forward by Lieutenant General Lollesgaard to achieve peace and bring an end to the humanitarian suffering of our people. However, this desire on the part of our Government has been met with stubbornness and prevarication. The militias have pursued their escalation and refuse to join the peace process. They continue to ignore the Security Council resolutions and signed agreements so as to gain more time to continue their own war and to increase the suffering of the Yemeni people. The preferred environment of those militias is that of war and instability.

Two oil-pumping stations in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia were the targets of terrorist attacks yesterday carried out by drones associated with the Houthi militias, supported and encouraged directly by Iran. The Republic of Yemen strongly condemns such terrorist attacks, which threaten regional security and stability as well as international peace and security. They are part of a terrorist act to destabilize and sow chaos in the region.

The Yemeni Government is making every effort to alleviate the economic and humanitarian suffering of our people. In that regard, we are paying the salaries of all civil servants in all governorates of the Republic. In order to save the education sector and those who seek to expand their knowledge even while they remain in the destructive grasp of the militias, the Government recently paid 50 per cent of the salaries of university teachers in the zones controlled by the Houthis.

The Houthi militias are spreading extremism and sectarianism while the fighting financial institutions that are cooperating with the Central Bank in Aden to make it seem as if the legitimate Government is responsible for the crumbling of the economic and humanitarian situation in Yemen. They also continue to politicize humanitarian action so as to expand the financing of their own war and build their economic networks by collapsing the value of the national currency, obstructing trade movement, transferring goods and money, and carrying out terrorist acts and arrests. The militias also monitor the private sector and use it to serve their narrow interests and fund their war efforts. Those militias have also fomented an oil crisis in the areas under their control in order to promote black market activities and increase oil prices, despite the fact that nine tankers transporting such products have transited through Al-Hudaydah port since the second half of April.

We call upon the Council to exert pressure on the Houthi coup militias in order to implement the agreement to exchange prisoners, detainees, the disappeared and those under house arrest, in accordance with the principle of all-for-all that we agreed upon before Stockholm discussions. This is a humanitarian issue that should not be subject to any kind of political gains and calculations. It is an issue that has a great impact on alleviating the suffering of the Yemeni people, particularly during the sacred month of Ramadan. It will also provide relief to thousands of Yemeni families in which the parents have been separated from their children, as asserted by the President of the Republic in his recent letter to the Secretary-General.

The Yemeni Government calls on the United Nations and the international community to exert serious and great pressure on the Houthi militias to lift the restrictions and obstacles they have put in the way of food and medical assistance so that such aid can reach those in need in zones under the control of the militias. The Houthi militias must also stop

confiscating and looting humanitarian aid, targeting humanitarian workers and forcing international organizations to pay customs duties on products that are exempt from such duties by law. Since the signing of the Stockholm agreements, the Ministry of Human Rights has documented the confiscation and looting of 415 trucks containing humanitarian aid, medicines and oil products. In addition, those militias carry out attacks against World Food Programme supplies and the Red Sea Mills, shelling them on 9 May, at a time when millions of Yemenis are suffering from severe malnutrition.

The World Health Organization report of 7 May mentions the cholera epidemic, particularly in Houthi-controlled areas. The Yemeni Government has warned the militias over continuing their abhorrent policies, which prevent targeted people from having access to medicines and medical convoys. The Human Rights Watch report of 9 May also states that the Houthi militias were responsible for horrible explosions in the residential areas of Sawan in Sana'a governorate on 7 April, taking the lives of 15 pupils in neighbourhood schools and injuring more than 100 people, including 45 children.

The Yemeni Government is extremely keen to ensure lasting peace based on the agreed terms of reference, namely, the Gulf Cooperation Council Initiative and its Implementation Mechanism, the

outcome of the comprehensive National Dialogue Conference and relevant Security Council resolutions, in particular resolution 2216 (2015). However, it will not be possible to make progress towards peace or to alleviate the suffering of the Yemeni people without a decisive position of the Security Council and exerting maximum genuine and serious pressure while sending a clear message to the Houthi militias that they must implement the Stockholm Agreement and prevent the possibility of failure. All necessary measures must be taken against those who obstruct the Agreement, which, if it is implemented, will be a glimmer of hope and a confidence-building step towards achieving a comprehensive political solution.

I would like to note that the Yemeni Government has appealed to the Secretary-General regarding the bad situation of the floating oil tanker *FSO SAFER* in Ras Isa port, which contains 1.14 million barrels of crude oil and could cause a terrible environmental disaster in the Red Sea. The Yemeni Government asked the United Nations to help it in assessing the situation of that oil tanker and to do the necessary maintenance work on it in order to prevent any oil leak.

**The President:** I now invite Council Members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

*The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.*