



Security Council

Seventy-seventh year

8966th meeting

Tuesday, 15 February 2022, 3 p.m.

New York

Provisional

President: Mr. Polyanskiy/Mr. Kirpichenko (Russian Federation)

Members:

Albania	Mr. Hoxha
Brazil	Mr. Costa Filho
China	Mr. Dai Bing
France	Mrs. Gasri
Gabon	Ms. Bongo
Ghana	Ms. Oppong-Ntiri
India	Mr. Tirumurti
Ireland	Ms. Byrne Nason
Kenya	Mrs. Toroitich
Mexico	Mrs. Buenrostro Massieu
Norway	Ms. Heimerback
United Arab Emirates	Mrs. Nusseibeh
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Dame Barbara Woodward
United States of America	Mr. Mills

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East

Letter dated 25 January 2022 from the Panel of Experts on Yemen addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2022/50)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East

Letter dated 25 January 2022 from the Panel of Experts on Yemen addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2022/50)

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

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Mr. Hans Grundberg, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen, and Mr. Martin Griffiths, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator.

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

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2022/50, which contains the text of a letter dated 25 January 2022 from the Panel of Experts on Yemen addressed to the President of the Security Council.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear briefings by Mr. Grundberg, Mr. Griffiths and Ambassador Ferit Hoxha, Permanent Representative of Albania, in his capacity as Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2140 (2014).

I now give the floor to Mr. Grundberg.

Mr. Grundberg: The continued military escalation of the conflict in Yemen has escaped no one. I am here today to discuss those worrisome developments and to share with Security Council members my efforts to try and reverse that trajectory and initiate a long-delayed political process.

The recent months of escalation have put the spotlight on the regional dimension of the conflict in Yemen. I have always seen a peaceful and prosperous Yemen as the key to stability on the Arabian peninsula. That was already true before the current war. Following the attacks last month by Ansar Allah on the United

Arab Emirates, including attacks on a civilian airport and nearby industrial areas in which three civilians were killed, it should be obvious to everyone just how high the stakes have been raised.

The Secretary-General has condemned those attacks and I echo that condemnation. Furthermore, the attacks on the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia indicate how this conflict risks spiralling out of control unless serious efforts are urgently made by the Yemeni parties, the region and the international community to end it.

For Yemenis, the past month was marked by a multiplication of front lines and an appallingly high record number of civilian casualties. The coalition air strike on a detention facility in Sa'ada, which killed or injured more than 300 detainees, was among the worst civilian casualty incident in three years. The sharp increase in air strikes in Yemen, including on residential areas and civilian infrastructure in Sana'a and Al-Hudaydah, is alarming. Once again, I am compelled to remind all parties of their obligations under international humanitarian law. I repeat my condemnation of any indiscriminate attack against civilians and civilian infrastructure inside Yemen and outside its borders.

As Martin Griffiths will elaborate upon, Yemen's war continues to be fought in the economic arena as well, with warring sides battling over resources, trade flows and monetary policy. The impact of that aspect of the war continues to irrefutably hit Yemen's population as a whole. The past month has seen particularly severe shortages of fuel and oil derivatives, notably in areas controlled by Ansar Allah, which has put unprecedented strain on people's everyday lives. After a long delay, four fuel ships were granted clearance to enter Al-Hudaydah this month. Only one was for the general market. That is not enough to meet the needs of the population. I once again call on the parties to remove all obstacles to the import and domestic distribution of fuel and other basic commodities.

The war is also being fought in the public domain, where media rhetoric has become increasingly hostile and has been combined with intimidation and the detention and harassment of media professionals and activists in Yemen. That contributes to a toxic environment in which there is a need for dialogue. I urge all sides to protect press freedom and to immediately

and unconditionally release detained journalists and political activists.

Despite all those challenges, there is a way out of the war. Allowing the war to continue is a choice and so is ending it. We all know that ending it will not be easy, but I firmly believe that it is possible. To that end, I am developing a framework that will set out my plan to move towards an inclusive political settlement, including the establishment of a multitrack process. Through that process, the warring sides' interests can be addressed within the context of a broader Yemeni agenda along the three tracks of political, security and economic matters.

As part of that effort, next week I will begin a series of structured bilateral consultations aimed at informing and refining the framework. I will engage with multiple Yemeni stakeholders, including the warring parties, political parties, representatives of civil society and Yemeni experts in the political, security and economic arenas. The consultations will explore Yemenis' priorities for the immediate and longer-term for the three tracks, as well as their aspirations and broader vision for ending the conflict.

Ensuring inclusivity and including women will be an important aspect of the consultations. I count on the support of the Council to encourage all actors to participate constructively without delay. This is a real opportunity for Yemeni parties to shift gears and charter a peaceful way forward.

The framework will be the operationalization of my core mandate of laying the foundation for an inclusive political process that can sustainably end the war. For every year that the war is allowed to continue, that task becomes more challenging but no less necessary. For too long, Yemenis have been without a political process and without hope that the conflict can end. By initiating a structured process that seeks to address the key elements of the conflict, hope for an end to the devastating military, political and economic battles can be restored. I look forward to presenting my framework later this spring.

In parallel, I am continuing to explore every possibility of fast-tracking de-escalation. I have continuously engaged with the warring parties on possible mutually agreeable compromises. At recent meetings held in Riyadh and Muscat, I urged the conflict parties to engage in de-escalation talks and presented options for moving forward. Until now, my calls and

the calls of the Council for restraint and de-escalation remain unanswered.

As we have seen over the past two years, positions are mutually exclusive, with demands on sequencing and guarantees unable to be met by either side. Nevertheless, my efforts in that regard will continue. I remain actively engaged with the warring sides in pursuit of any opening and will report back to the Council on any progress.

On that note, allow me to welcome Major General Michael Beary to the Council in his new role as Head of the United Nations Mission to Support the Hodeidah Agreement. Major General Beary assumed his duties on 19 January and has commenced his own important engagements with parties in Aden, Sana'a and Al-Hudaydah in order to assess their positions and explore openings for de-escalation of violence in Al-Hudaydah.

I will continue working on the two lines of effort that I have laid out to the Council: establishing a multitrack process that can produce durable solutions to the conflict, while seeking any opportunity for immediate de-escalation. My conviction is that a structured and focused approach that does not shy away from the fundamental and complex challenges is needed. However, trust is low and ending the war will require uncomfortable compromises that no warring party is currently willing to make.

It is therefore incumbent upon all of us, including the Council, to exert every possible effort to impress upon the parties to the conflict that there is no sustainable military solution and that their quest for a perfect moment of balance on the battlefield when the other side is sufficiently weakened to accept its fate is futile. Dialogue and compromise are required if Yemenis are not to be left suffering until the parties are tired of fighting. A political process under United Nations auspices, supported by the Council, is our best way forward.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Mr. Grundberg for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Griffiths.

Mr. Griffiths: You will understand, Sir, if I start by saying what a privilege and pleasure it is to be sitting next to Hans Grundberg in this Chamber. I know that, like all of us, you wish him all the best. Much of what I will say will echo and mirror his own remarks.

The war in Yemen and the wider crisis that it has unleashed, as we have heard, continue to threaten millions of lives across the country and for now that crisis shows no sign of abating. As Hans Grundberg has so aptly described, we have seen over the past six weeks a sharp and dangerous escalation of the conflict, with devastating consequences for civilians and civilian infrastructure. More than 650 civilian casualties were reported in January, which means that on average 21 civilians were killed or injured every day by air strikes, shelling, small-arms fire and other violence — by far the highest toll in at least three years.

The war is finding people in their homes, schools, mosques, hospitals and other places where civilians should be protected. On 21 January, an air strike hit a detention facility in Sa'ada, killing or injuring more than 300 detainees. Cross-border attacks have also intensified, killing, injuring and threatening civilians in the region. As Hans Grundberg has said, international humanitarian law very clearly requires all parties to respect the principles of distinction and proportionality and take all feasible precautions to avoid harm to civilians and civilian infrastructure. As he did, I urge the parties to uphold those obligations and I call for accountability for any serious violation.

The recent escalation is the latest turn in a conflict that has dragged on for seven years. Yemen has become a protracted crisis. A generation of children is growing up with no thought other than war. Throughout the crisis, humanitarian partners have done everything they can to reduce people's suffering. In 2021, nearly 200 organizations worked together through the United Nations response plan to assist more than 11 million people every month and those programmes are reaching every one of Yemen's 330 districts — the entire country.

On a separate note, I am also pleased to report recent progress in efforts to resolve the *FSO SAFER* tanker issue, including an agreement in principle to a United Nations-coordinated proposal to shift the oil to another ship.

However, as we have said before, working in Yemen is often much harder than it should be. Access impediments remain one major problem. Aid workers face far too many restrictions, including a lack of facilitation of their presence, movements and activities. Visas, notifications and other routine processes have all created challenges recently. International humanitarian

law requires all parties to facilitate access and ensure freedom of movement for humanitarian workers.

Security challenges have also persisted. Last week, armed men abducted five United Nations staff on official mission in Abyan governorate. We are all working urgently to secure their immediate release, with support from the Government of Yemen. Those kinds of incidents are, of course, utterly unacceptable. The three United Nations workers who were arrested several months ago — two in Sana'a in November and one in Ma'rib in December — also remain in detention. I believe the one in Ma'rib may have just recently been released, which I very much appreciate.

However, by far the biggest challenge for aid agencies right now is funding. The humanitarian operation, which has been a lifeline for millions of people across Yemen over so many years, is about to start doing a lot less. Aid agencies are quickly running out of money, forcing them to slash life-saving programmes. By the end of January, nearly two thirds of major United Nations aid programmes had already scaled back or closed altogether.

In December, the World Food Programme (WFP) reduced food rations for 8 million people. Starting next month, those 8 million people may get no food at all, if not a reduced ration. In March, we may also have to cancel most United Nations humanitarian flights in Yemen, which would cause enormous problems for the aid operation and the movement of our staff.

There is, it seems, no money. Looming disruptions to water and sanitation services — again, for want of funds — could soon deprive 3.6 million people of safe drinking water, which would put them, and especially children under the age of 5, at greater risk of deadly diseases. Programmes to combat gender-based violence and promote reproductive health are also on the chopping block, as are a range of critical activities in the health, shelter and other sectors.

The Council has heard aid agencies warn about funding shortages in the past. I have listened to my predecessor speak in the Council along those lines. But the scale of the current gaps is unprecedented in Yemen. We have never before contemplated giving millions of hungry people no food at all or suspending the flights we need to get aid workers and supplies into, around and out of the country. If those gaps are not addressed, it will simply be a death sentence for people whose

coping mechanisms are in some cases completely exhausted and who rely on assistance for their survival.

Agencies are doing what they can. Last week, I released another \$20 million from the Central Emergency Response Fund to shore up operations around Ma'rib — the second time we have done so this year. The WFP, meanwhile, has exhausted its internal loan mechanisms to keep its programmes going a bit longer. None of those are sustainable solutions.

We obviously cannot let the aid operation in Yemen fall apart, so I am very grateful to the Governments of Sweden and Switzerland for co-hosting, with the United Nations, a high-level pledging event for Yemen to be held on 16 March. The Secretary-General has made it clear to me and to all of us how willing, open and wanting he is to intervene to remove that funding gap. I implore all donors to use that opportunity to demonstrate their commitment to the people of Yemen.

We are also keenly aware that people's survival cannot rely only on the ebbs and flows of humanitarian funding cycles. A more sustainable approach, as Special Envoy Grundberg mentioned, is both necessary and achievable.

As we have said before, the international community must come together to address the underlying drivers of need in Yemen, especially the collapsing economy. The United Nations economic framework offers a path forward in that regard. It brings together initiatives that could make an immediate difference in boosting incomes, reducing prices and enhancing macroeconomic stability.

That includes foreign-exchange injections, which the Government of Yemen is working hard with its partners to secure, as well as policy changes, such as resuming civilian flights through Sana'a airport, lifting restrictions on commercial imports and using import revenues to pay public sector salaries. It pains me to refer once again to those measures, which we have needed for so long and for which we are still waiting. Paying those salaries will also help preserve basic services. Finding one's way out of a crisis and making one's way in the world is nearly impossible if one is too sick, too hungry or undereducated. Like economic support, preserving basic services is key to reducing humanitarian needs.

Finally — and the Council will not find this surprising — I want to stress that the best thing anyone

could do for the people of Yemen would be to find a just, lasting end to the war. That is no small feat, as I know well. Therefore, I want to offer my unqualified support for everything Special Envoy Grundberg has just said and for all the work he is doing under exceptionally difficult circumstances, as I should know well.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Mr. Griffiths for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ambassador Hoxha.

Mr. Hoxha (Albania): I have the honour to report to the Security Council on the work of the Committee pursuant to resolution 2140 (2014), pursuant to paragraph 19 (e) thereof. The last such briefing took place one year ago, on 18 February 2021 (see S/2021/167, annex III). As such, this briefing will cover the period from 19 February 2021 to date.

Since my predecessor's briefing to the Council, the members of the Committee have met four times in informal in-person consultations and three times virtually in the "informal informals" format via closed video-conference (VTC).

During the closed VTC held on 26 March 2021, the Committee heard a presentation by the Panel of Experts on an interim update related to the 30 December 2020 attack on the airport in Aden.

In the closed VTC held on 21 May, the Panel of Experts on Yemen presented its programme of work for the renewed mandate, which had begun on 29 March 2021.

During the informal consultations held on 16 July, the Committee heard a presentation by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict.

On 13 August, in informal consultations, the Committee heard a presentation by the Panel of Experts on its mid-term update, which was submitted to the Committee on 27 July. Of the eight recommendations contained in that update, the Committee acted on three.

During the informal consultations held on 10 November, the Committee held a discussion related to Committee practices and procedures.

On 17 December, in informal consultations, the Committee heard a presentation by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, which was the first time that the

Special Representative had briefed the Committee. The Committee heard a further presentation on other matters from the Panel of Experts, updating the Committee on its review of the finance section of the Panel's previous final report (see S/2021/79).

During the closed VTC held on 21 January 2022, the Committee heard a presentation by the Panel of Experts of its final report, which was submitted to the Committee on 23 December 2021. The report was transmitted to the Security Council on 26 January and has been issued as document S/2022/50. Discussions on the six recommendations addressed to the Committee are ongoing. They relate to the implementation of the targeted arms embargo, compliance with international humanitarian law and related issues, the preservation of Yemen's economy and increasing support for demining activities. The remaining 13 recommendations are addressed to the Council.

During the reporting period, on 25 February 2021, through resolution 2564 (2021), one individual was designated on the resolution 2140 (2014) sanctions list. Further, on 9 November 2021, the Committee approved the designation of the 2140 sanctions list of three individuals. The Committee also concluded the process of consideration of a delisting request submitted by an individual who remains on the list through the delisting focal point, pursuant to resolution 1730 (2006).

Also, during the reporting period, the Committee expressed support for one exemption request under paragraph 3 of resolution 2511 (2020). No negative decision was taken by the Committee on the exemption notification under sub-paragraph (a) of paragraph 12 of resolution 2140 (2014).

Lastly, during the reporting period, the Committee received eight implementation reports from Belgium, Lebanon, Mauritius, the Philippines, Romania, Spain, Thailand and Ukraine, respectively. The Committee also continued to receive vessel inspection reports from the United Nations Verification and Inspection Mechanism for Yemen.

Dame Barbara Woodward (United Kingdom): I would like to start by thanking the Special Envoy, the Under-Secretary-General and the Permanent Representative of Yemen for their briefings.

We heard today that since the most recent Security Council meeting (see S/PV.8946), there has been a notable escalation in the conflict, including reprehensible

Houthi cross-border attacks on the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. The latest attack on Abha International Airport wounded 12 civilians, while the 17 January attack on the United Arab Emirates killed three civilians. The United Kingdom condemns in the strongest terms the Houthis' repeated terror attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure and against Yemenis and Yemen's neighbours.

There remains no military solution to this conflict. As the Special Envoy said, such a hope is futile. We call upon all parties to de-escalate urgently and to engage with the new United Nations-led peace process. We welcome and fully endorse the Special Envoy's proposals to begin wide-ranging consultations with the parties to the conflict, as well as the principles for the United Nations plan. I commend the Special Envoy's inclusive approach, which will ensure that a wide range of Yemenis have the opportunity to participate. The United Kingdom encourages all parties to participate and to engage constructively in the upcoming consultations.

We are also keen to ensure that regional partners are part of the solution. The presence of the United Arab Emirates on the Council is very welcome in that regard. The United Kingdom also hosted a Quint meeting on Yemen in late January, where Oman, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and the United States came together to coordinate our approach to the conflict in Yemen. During that meeting, we reaffirmed our mutual support for the Organization's efforts to find an urgent and comprehensive political solution.

As Mr. Griffiths flagged, the humanitarian response faces dire funding shortages. As we approach the seventh anniversary of the conflict, the humanitarian picture is bleak — a "death sentence" in the words of Mr. Griffiths. The World Food Programme has warned that without funding now, only 3 million people will receive full food rations in February and only 2 million in March. With the annual high-level pledging event set for next month, the United Kingdom encourages the Under-Secretary-General's call to encourage existing and new donors to pledge as generously as possible.

Finally, we welcome David Gressly's leadership and update on the progress towards finding a solution to mitigating the risks posed by the *FSO SAFER* oil tanker. It remains an urgent environmental concern, and the United Kingdom stands ready to help.

Mrs. Buenrostro Massieu (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank Special Envoy Grundberg, Under-Secretary-General Griffiths and the Permanent Representative of Albania, in his capacity as Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2140 (2014), for their briefings. We also recognize the work of the delegation of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines in leading the 2140 Committee for the 2020-2021 biennium. We welcome the delegation of Yemen to this meeting.

Mexico expresses great alarm about the increase in the spiral of violence and civilian deaths in Yemen in recent weeks. My country reiterates its condemnation of the numerous attacks by Houthi militias against Emirati and Saudi targets, including most recently against Abha International Airport in Saudi Arabia. We also condemn the indiscriminate attacks against the population and civilian structures, such as the Sa'ada prison, where 90 people were killed, and the water reservoir in Sahar, which interrupted the supply of drinking water to 130,000 residents. Attacks against essential civilian infrastructure, in addition to being unjustifiable, constitute a violation of international humanitarian law, aggravate human suffering and increase the demands on humanitarian operations. Mexico echoes the Secretary-General's call for the parties to exercise maximum restraint, promote de-escalation and respect the principles of proportionality, distinction and precaution.

A nationwide ceasefire and the advancement of the political process, facilitated by the Special Envoy, is the road map for a solution to the Yemeni conflict and the formula for advancing towards lasting peace in the Arabian Peninsula. We insist on the need to respect the arms embargo, in accordance with the resolutions of the Council, including resolution 2616 (2021).

Finally, Mexico welcomes the recent talks held by the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator with the parties, aimed at reaching an agreement to transfer the oil on the *FSO SAFER* oil tanker to another vessel and thus address the environmental, economic and humanitarian threat that the tanker represents — a threat we have denounced time after time in the Chamber.

Mr. Mills (United States of America): I would like to thank our briefers — Special Envoy Grundberg and Under-Secretary-General Griffiths for their continued efforts. I thank our Albanian colleague, Ambassador Hoxha, for his report on the Security Council Committee

established pursuant to resolution 2140 (2014). We also welcome Major General Beary as he takes up his duties as the Head of the United Nations Mission to Support the Hodeidah Agreement.

The United States joins others in strongly condemning Houthi attacks striking civilian sites across the region over the past month, including multiple attacks on both the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia that killed innocent civilians. We stand united with our Saudi and Emirati partners and remain committed to helping them defend their territory and residents, which include tens of thousands of United States citizens. We are also concerned about the tragic loss of life following a Saudi-led coalition air strike that hit a migrant detention centre in Sa'ada in January, killing nearly 100 civilians.

Despite the Council's condemnation, the Houthis continue to detain our current and former Yemeni local staff, some of whom are now United Nations employees, and to control the compound formerly used by our Embassy. Further, the Houthis have barred detained United States staff from any contact with their families. We call for the immediate release of our Yemeni employees unharmed and for the Houthis to cease all threats against our employees and their families.

The inescapable conclusion is that we have failed to demonstrate to the Houthis that there are consequences for that behaviour. The Houthis have made it clear that they seek to disrupt regional security, target civilian sites and disrupt maritime commerce. We must do more to counter such attacks with a unified voice, including by imposing tangible costs.

The Houthis' Ma'rib offensive, including repeated attacks that have killed and wounded civilians, has represented the most significant impediment to peace efforts. It is clear that the Houthi military offensive will only bring further suffering and worsen the humanitarian plight of the Yemeni people. It must end.

We are witnessing a dangerous escalation in Yemen, and we call on all parties to de-escalate, to abide by their obligations under international humanitarian law, including those related to the protection of all civilians, and to participate fully in an inclusive United Nations-led peace process. We applaud the attempts made by Special Envoy Grundberg to develop a framework for peace, and we welcome his consultations with the parties and civil society on that framework. A return to talks is urgent, and we look to the United Nations to

provide the parties with a path forward to peace on an urgent basis.

Furthermore, we welcome the Special Envoy's engagement with the parties and critically needed de-escalation proposals. We call on all parties to facilitate the Special Envoy's timely and meaningful engagement with all relevant Yemeni groups and parties, including women, civil-society leaders and other marginalized groups. The Council should support the Special Envoy's efforts and press the parties for full cooperation.

We are concerned that the Houthis are refusing to receive the Special Envoy in Sana'a. We should all be clear: imposing preconditions on meetings with the Special Envoy is completely unacceptable. An inclusive Yemeni-led political solution is the only way out of this tragic war and its resulting humanitarian catastrophe.

Accountability for human rights violations and abuses and violations of international humanitarian law are also key to ensuring a durable peace for all Yemenis. As we all are aware, more than 20 million Yemenis need urgent humanitarian assistance. We discuss this conflict as 16 million Yemenis, including 7 million children, go without life's basic necessities. We call on donors to provide urgently needed funding.

We are cautiously encouraged by the ongoing discussions that we have heard about to address the SAFER oil tanker, and we reiterate our calls for the Houthis to allow a credible solution to proceed urgently in order to prevent an unimaginable and entirely avoidable humanitarian and environmental disaster.

Finally, we thank the Panel of Experts on Yemen for its work shining a light on the darkest elements of this conflict. The panel's findings are invaluable in helping the Council carry out its responsibilities.

Ms. Bongo (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): I welcome the presence among us of Mr. Hans Grundberg, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen, and Mr. Martin Griffiths, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, and I thank them for the high quality of their respective briefings. I thank Ambassador Hoxha, the Permanent Representative of Albania, for the information he provided us in his capacity of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2140 (2014). I also welcome the participation of the representative of Yemen in this meeting.

What we have heard just now makes us reflect on the impasse in the conflict in Yemen. That multidimensional political, security, socioeconomic and humanitarian crisis, compounded by the coronavirus disease pandemic, is far from nearing its end because of the persistence of fighting, with the parties trying to consolidate their control over the territory and the people, all of that in flagrant violation of existing ceasefire agreements.

The escalation of violence is deeply alarming, with continued fighting spilling over into neighbouring States, which threatens to further destabilize the region as a whole. The issue of access to weapons, including small arms and light weapons, remains at the heart of the war, and the implosion of the Yemeni economy is a consequence thereof. The destruction of infrastructure, as well as the fight for control over trade and natural resources, is aggravating the situation, with basic services not being provided and the unemployment rate and poverty increasing.

We call for a truce in the fighting and for respect for the arms embargo imposed by the Security Council. There is no military solution to the Yemeni crisis. The civilian population should not continue to be the target of deadly attacks or the victims of the impunity that is ravaging the country. That impunity is a source of the violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law, in particular arbitrary arrests, forced disappearances, torture and other inhuman treatment.

Similarly, the Council must ensure that violence against and violations of the basic rights of women are unequivocally condemned and the perpetrators of such horrors brought to justice. The international community must show solidarity with Yemeni women.

Above and beyond the necessary ceasefire, the exit from the Yemeni crisis requires an inclusive dialogue in which all of the disparate parts of the country participate in good faith. We call for a greater mobilization of the international community commensurate with the plight of the population. We encourage initiatives similar to those of the countries that support the United Arab Emirates to secure the air space against terrorist attacks. It is clear that the Yemeni people are hoping for the restoration of State authority throughout the territory and for a return to stability and to the country's key role at the heart of the subregion.

In conclusion, we welcome the advances made with respect to the *FSO SAFER* tanker, and we

would underscore the scope of the threat that it represents in terms of the potential environmental and humanitarian consequences.

Mr. Tirumurti (India): I thank Special Envoy Hans Grundberg and Under-Secretary General Martin Griffiths for their briefings. I also thank Ambassador Ferit Hoxha, the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2140 (2014), for his briefing on the activities of the Committee. India attaches great importance to the work of the Committee and to the work of the Panel of Experts supporting it, and we look forward to the renewal of the mandate of the Committee and the Panel.

India has been closely following the fast-paced developments in Yemen with deep concern. The number of fatalities is mounting, and the escalation of the conflict is jeopardizing the chances of a ceasefire. I reiterate India's consistent call for an immediate de-escalation of the conflict, followed by a nationwide ceasefire. It is our considered view that the conflict can be resolved only through dialogue and not on the battlefield.

It is also of serious concern to us that Yemen's conflict is creating ripple effects on security and stability in the entire Gulf region. Approximately 9 million Indians live and work in the Gulf region, and their well-being and safety is of paramount importance to us. We strongly condemn the continued cross-border missile and drone attacks into the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia, which have resulted in the deaths of and injuries to innocent civilians, including Indian nationals. Two Indian nationals died in the attack on the United Arab Emirates on 17 January, while on 10 February one Indian was injured in the attack on Abha airport in Saudi Arabia. The deliberate escalation of the conflict outside of Yemen's borders and the heightened provocative rhetoric by Ansar Allah is deplorable. Instead of moving towards a solution to the conflict, such actions by Ansar Allah only exacerbate it.

The conflict has also spilled over to the maritime domain. The recent report of the 2140 Panel of Experts documents various attacks and dangerous approaches towards shipping and commercial vessels in the Red Sea, the Gulf of Aden and the Gulf of Oman emanating from Yemen. We are also witnessing arbitrary seizures and the detention of shipping vessels. India is deeply worried by that trend, which threatens not only the safe passage of commercial vessels but also maritime security

in the region. I reiterate the Council's unanimous call for the urgent release of the crew members of the vessel *Rwabee*, whose onboard crew includes seven Indians. They continue to be detained unlawfully. Regular access to them, as well as updates on their condition, must be ensured by Ansar Allah, until their release.

The assumption of duties by Major General Michael Beary as the Head of the United Nations Mission to Support the Hodeidah Agreement is timely. We hope that his extensive engagement with all parties in recent weeks will result in the reactivation of the Redeployment Coordination Committee and its joint mechanisms to implement the Hodeidah Agreement.

The disruption of key pillars of Yemen's economy has also contributed to the worsening of the economic and humanitarian crises in the country.

In the absence of a political solution to the conflict, the humanitarian aid operations have been a lifeline for millions of Yemenis. We are worried that those aid operations are now at risk due to severe funding shortfalls. Yemeni women and children are bearing the brunt of the closure or scaling down of major United Nations aid programmes. We hope that donor funding will be enhanced to support the 2022 United Nations humanitarian response plan for Yemen.

A sustainable solution to the unfolding humanitarian crisis lies in concrete short-term and long-term economic measures that benefit the people of Yemen. The economic framework for Yemen of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs identifies such measures, and it needs immediate implementation. International support — political and financial — is essential for their implementation.

We once again call on all parties to renounce military confrontation and make concrete efforts towards establishing enduring peace in Yemen. The aspirations of the Yemeni people and their hopes for peace, stability and prosperity should be the focus of those efforts. I reaffirm India's steadfast commitment to a Yemeni-led and Yemeni-owned political process with the goal of achieving an inclusive and peacefully negotiated settlement to the conflict.

Quiet and constructive diplomacy is the need of the hour. Actions that fuel tensions and further intensify the conflict must be eschewed by all sides in the greater interest of establishing conducive conditions

for a political dialogue. In that context, we appreciate the efforts of Special Envoy Grundberg in reaching out to all the parties to the conflict to get them to the negotiating table to restart the political process. Parties should engage with the Special Envoy unconditionally and constructively.

We also encourage the Special Envoy to continue his coordination with countries of the region, as their cooperation is critical in reaching a long-lasting sustainable solution to the Yemeni conflict. Countries in the region with influence on Yemeni parties must also exert sincere efforts to restore peace and order in Yemen, as that is in the shared interests of everyone.

Let me conclude by reiterating India's call for an immediate and comprehensive ceasefire across Yemen, followed by a robust and inclusive political process. Such a process should fully respect Yemen's unity, sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity. We believe that, with effective Yemeni, regional, international and United Nations leadership, a lasting and inclusive political settlement in Yemen is achievable.

Mr. Dai Bing (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Special Envoy Grundberg, Under-Secretary-General Griffiths and Ambassador Hoxha for their briefings.

In the past month, the situation in Yemen has continued to deteriorate, with conflicts and confrontation between the parties intensifying and cross-border attacks and air strikes escalating in turn. China is deeply concerned about that, and we urge all parties to immediately uphold a ceasefire and stop the violence. We note that the Permanent Representatives of the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia wrote to the President of the Security Council several times recently concerning the cross-border attacks on civilian facilities in their territories by the Houthis. Those attacks resulted in civilian casualties and threatened regional and international peace and security. China condemns them and expresses its condolences and sympathy to the victims and their bereaved families. We support the efforts of the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia to safeguard their own security and stability. All the parties to the conflict should strictly abide by international humanitarian law, protect civilians and civilian facilities and refrain from any action that could exacerbate tensions. The Security Council has an obligation to remain attentive to the situation in Yemen

and the region and play its due role in de-escalating the conflict.

No matter how great the challenges facing it, the international community must adhere to the general direction of a political settlement of the Yemeni issue. The Special Envoy said just now that he will consult with all parties on launching multi-track negotiations. China welcomes that and hopes that he will help all parties to the conflict to enhance mutual trust and restart dialogue. The road map for peace in Yemen should be operational and reflect the way forward towards a political settlement based on the actual situation on the ground. All parties to the conflict should demonstrate political will and cooperate with the Special Envoy without preconditions. The conflict in Yemen has prolonged to this day. No one side can emerge as a winner that takes all. Insisting on military means will only lead to a lose-lose situation. We hope that all parties to the conflict will make wise choices. Countries in the region concerned should also play an active role in encouraging peace and promoting talks.

Yemen is facing multiple challenges, such as food security, the pandemic, an oil supply shortage and unemployment. Alleviating the humanitarian crisis in Yemen and saving the Yemeni economy are urgent tasks for the international community. Recently, the seventh shipment of Saudi aid to Yemen arrived in Aden, providing strong support for Yemen's power supply. Under the coordination of the Yemeni Government, a number of oil tankers entered the port of Al-Hudaydah, easing the pressure on the oil supply. The Yemeni Government is also actively coordinating various departments to set up an emergency distribution mechanism for petroleum products to ensure basic social services. China welcomes those developments. At the same time, the crisis in Yemen continues to worsen, and the international community should provide assistance to Yemen in a more effective and sustainable manner. The United Nations recently launched an economic framework for Yemen to implement a phased approach to short-, medium- and long-term relief. China supports that action. We hope that the international community, including donor countries, will strengthen coordination with the United Nations system, increase support for Yemen and sustain the humanitarian projects in Yemen.

China has been actively participating in the work of the Yemen Sanctions Committee and supports the Committee, including the Panel of Experts, in performing its duties in accordance with its mandate

and playing its due role in promoting peace and stability in Yemen. At the end of this month, the sanctions measures against Yemen and the mandate of the Yemen Sanctions Committee's Panel of Experts will expire. China will earnestly participate in the consultations on the draft resolution on the extension. We hope that the draft resolution will focus on the key issues of the conflict in Yemen and take into account the reasonable views of all parties.

Mrs. Gasri (France) (*spoke in French*): I too thank Hans Grundberg, Martin Griffiths and the Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2140 (2014) for their briefings.

We are also concerned about the intensity of the fighting, with the various actors hoping to be in a better position to negotiate. That strategy is a dead end, as many said before me. France also reiterates its call for a nation-wide ceasefire. In that regard, we look forward to hearing from Major General Beary about his initial discussions on the future of the Redeployment Coordination Committee.

The current conflict now extends well beyond Yemen's borders. That is a very worrisome development and a destabilizing factor for the region. In that regard, France strongly condemns the Houthi attacks on the territories of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Such missile attacks are unacceptable and must stop.

The human toll of the escalating violence is extremely worrisome. The protection of civilians, including humanitarian and medical personnel, as well as civilian infrastructure, including detention centres, must be an absolute priority.

Every effort must also be made to ensure full humanitarian access to all those in need. We therefore call for the removal of all bureaucratic obstacles that limit humanitarian access.

It is also essential that the Yemeni Government allow the replacement of equipment at Sana'a airport to allow humanitarian flights to operate safely.

The donor conference scheduled for 16 March should help to meet humanitarian needs. France, like others, will be there.

Lastly, on the political front, France supports the efforts of the Special Envoy to organize and maintain a political dialogue with all parties despite a very

deteriorated security context. France recalls the need for all actors to fully cooperate with the Special Envoy without preconditions.

We welcome and support the consultations that the Special Envoy intends to organize shortly with the Yemeni stakeholders. We call on our Council partners to facilitate the Special Envoy's efforts to resolve the conflict in Yemen on the basis of the international parameters, including the resolutions of by the Council. We reiterate the importance of a dialogue that includes all Yemeni stakeholders and ensures the effective participation of women in the peace process.

Finally, we welcome the encouraging efforts led by David Gressly on the issue of the *FSO SAFER* tanker and call on the Houthis to cooperate as soon as possible with the United Nations to avoid an ecological disaster.

Mr. Hoxha (Albania): Today's detailed briefings by Special Envoy Grundberg and Under-Secretary-General Griffiths, whom I thank for their updated information, give once again a shocking account of the developments and the situation on the ground.

The people of Yemen continue to suffer in their hopelessness; women, men and children are starving, deliberately used as targets; their lives and livelihood are destroyed; sexual violence is persisting and children are recruited as fighters. As we have heard, a never-ending dire humanitarian crisis is only worsening. Furthermore, fighting has intensified, infrastructure continues to be destroyed, and the number of civilian victims is the highest it has been in the past three years and countless more have been injured or displaced.

As in every conflict, women and children continue to bear the brunt of the conflict. Women's rights are violated and abused daily; their movement is restricted; violence against women human rights defenders, peacebuilders and journalists continues; and politically active women in particular are systematically attacked, detained, disappeared or killed. Every aspect of horrible crimes has found refuge in the daily life of Yemenis. And as if all this were not enough, every two hours a Yemeni woman dies in childbirth from benign and entirely preventable complications. This is simply unacceptable.

The practice of the recruitment of children continues. Countless children recruited by the Houthis have lost their lives on the battlefield. The appalling practice of training young children in camps as fighters

has to end. It represents a grave violation of the rights of the child and international humanitarian law. It must not be tolerated. The parties need to be reminded of their obligation to respect international humanitarian law and protect civilians.

The intensification of cross-border drone and missile attacks committed and claimed by the Houthis on the United Arab Emirates and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia are worrisome signs of the intention and persistence of the Houthis to further exacerbate and expand the conflict. This must not be allowed.

We remain deeply worried by the lack of progress in the political process. Albania believes that instead of endless fighting in a conflict in which there are no winners, the country needs a framework for a political resolution of the conflict as soon as possible.

We commend the Special Envoy for his efforts and we strongly encourage him to persist in working with the parties to end fighting and commit to a comprehensive and inclusive political process, which must include women and civil society. We look forward with utmost interest to the framework on a multitrack approach that he mentioned today. In this respect, as we have seen elsewhere, the full, equal and meaningful participation of women from all backgrounds and parts of the country is important and an irreplaceable added value.

A nationwide ceasefire at the earliest date should be the priority from a short-term perspective.

Let me conclude by mentioning three specific issues.

First, I praise the work of the Resident Coordinator for Yemen in finding a sustainable solution to the issue of the *FSO SAFER* oil tanker in the Red Sea.

Secondly, I reiterate that the detainment by the Houthis of Yemeni nationals affiliated with the United States and the United Nations must immediately cease.

Thirdly, I reiterate our condemnation of the seizure and detention of the United Arab Emirates-flagged merchant vessel, and the call on the Houthis to release the ship and crew, as the Security Council requested on 14 January (see SC/14765).

Mr. Costa Filho (Brazil): I would like to begin by thanking Special Representative Hans Grundberg and Under-Secretary-General Martin Griffiths for their sobering briefings. I would also like to thank our colleague, the Permanent Representative of Albania, for presenting the periodic report of the Security Council

Committee established pursuant to resolution 2140 (2014). And I welcome the Permanent Representative of Yemen to this meeting.

There is no shortage of worrisome trends in Yemen that merit the Council's attention, many of which have been addressed at today's meeting, from the deterioration and instrumentalization of the economy to the dramatic funding gap faced by humanitarian actors; from the lingering risk posed by the *FSO SAFER* oil tanker to the need to enhance female participation in resolving the conflict.

Today, however, I will focus on two issues: the new heights of violence against civilians in the conflict and the situation of Yemeni children.

First, we must condemn the horrific violence that has convulsed Yemen over the past few weeks. As we have heard from our briefers, January witnessed more than 600 civilian deaths and injuries, the highest monthly record of civilian casualties in more than three years. A single air strike against a detention facility in Sa'ada resulted in the death or injury of more than 300 civilians. We have also seen repeated attacks against civilian infrastructure, such as hospitals, schools, telecommunications equipment and water infrastructure, including reported attacks yesterday in Sana'a.

Drone and missile attacks conducted by the Houthis against the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia in January and February have also resulted in civilian casualties. Less than a week ago, the Houthis launched an attack aimed at a civilian airport in Abha, Saudi Arabia. Brazil thoroughly condemns these senseless attacks, which serve as tragic reminders that the war in Yemen poses a threat not only to Yemenis, but also to civilians in the wider region.

Attacks on civilians are unacceptable and must be met with unequivocal condemnation. Our foremost tool in combating such attacks is ensuring respect for international humanitarian law. The principles of distinction, proportionality and necessity are not optional, as stressed by our briefers today. The fact that civilians live in areas controlled by a non-State actor or in the territory of an opposing State does not make them legal targets, and their lives merit the same protection as ours.

This point was made repeatedly during the open debate on the protection of civilians in urban settings,

hosted by Norway last month (see S/PV.8953), and must be taken to heart by the parties on the ground and by all other relevant actors. While a nationwide ceasefire and sustainable peace are the ultimate goals pursued by the Security Council, we must defend compliance with international humanitarian law norms every step of the way. When violations occur, they must be investigated impartially and their perpetrators held accountable.

The second issue I would like to emphasize today is the condition of Yemeni children. In seven years of war, they have been deprived of their right to health, to education and to regular family lives. They have, indeed, lost friends and family. To our shame, more than 10,000 Yemeni children have lost their lives or been maimed in conflict, and tens of thousands more have died from the secondary effects of the war.

The direct involvement of children in the conflict is especially appalling in Houthi-controlled areas. While they are not the only ones to have committed grave violations against children, Houthi leaders have made the indoctrination and recruitment of children a systematic and unapologetic part of their rule.

Reportedly, the number of children who have died on the battlefield reaches into the thousands, including during the ongoing offensive against Ma'rib, the majority of them in the Houthi camp. The obstruction of humanitarian access has also been especially concerning in Houthi-controlled areas and has vast repercussions for children who require emergency aid. Civilians, including children, have borne the brunt of the violence inflicted by the warring parties in Yemen. We must do our utmost to ensure respect for international law and to safeguard what remains of the childhood of Yemeni children.

Ms. Heimerback (Norway): I thank Special Envoy Grundberg and Under-Secretary-General Griffiths for their briefings. I also thank Ambassador Hoxha for his briefing and for taking on the role as Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2140 (2014).

We are greatly concerned about the serious military escalation by all parties to the conflict in Yemen. We echo the Secretary-General's concern that January saw a record-shattering number of civilian casualties in Yemen, including in the Sa'ada attack.

We also continue to be alarmed by the increase in the number of cross-border attacks in the region,

including against the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia. Norway condemns those attacks, and we are concerned about the increased tension in the region, including the consequences for maritime security. Norway strongly calls on all parties to exercise restraint and rapidly de-escalate military activities. The civilian harm caused by the hostilities is shocking. It is deplorable that recent air strikes and missile attacks hit civilian infrastructure.

Norway welcomes the recent report of the Panel of Experts on Yemen (see S/2022/50) and thanks the Panel for calling attention to the widespread breaches of international humanitarian law, including indiscriminate attacks, the recruitment and use of children in armed conflict and sexual and gender-based violence. We remain deeply concerned about the widespread human rights violations and abuses. The Panel's documentation and investigation of those violations are instrumental to the Security Council's work. We urgently call on all parties to fully respect international humanitarian law and international human rights law and to ensure the protection of civilian lives and infrastructure.

There are no military solutions to the conflict in Yemen. A nationwide ceasefire and a turn towards political dialogue is the only path to bringing about peace and security for the people of Yemen. We call upon all parties to prioritize the needs and interests of the Yemeni people by fully cooperating with the Special Envoy, without preconditions or delay. We thank Special Envoy Grundberg for sharing his plans for his upcoming consultations on a negotiating framework with a broad number of parties. We fully support his approach.

Life-saving humanitarian efforts in Yemen remain crucial. We are especially concerned about the harmful coping mechanisms to which families and communities must resort to amid the steep increase in the price of basic goods and cooking gas. Fuel shortages also present serious challenges, and water scarcity, as a result of climate change, exacerbates existing vulnerabilities. We hope that the pledging conference in Geneva next month will garner the necessary support for the humanitarian response in Yemen.

Ms. Oppong-Ntiri (Ghana): At the outset, let me thank Special Envoy Hans Grundberg and Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator Martin Griffiths

for their briefings. We very much welcome their commitment and efforts to bring about an end to the conflict in Yemen and alleviate the deep suffering of the Yemeni people.

We are also grateful to the Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2140 (2014), Ambassador Hoxha, for his report on the work of the Committee.

We also welcome the participation of the representative of Yemen in today's meeting.

Ghana remains concerned about the deteriorating security situation, which has engulfed Ma'rib and Shabwah, and continues to impact negatively on the economic and humanitarian situations in the country. Having listened to the briefings, I wish to make the following remarks.

We have witnessed with grave concern the alarming rates of casualties in blatant disregard for civilian lives. We condemn in particular the attack on the Sa'ada detention centre, which killed many people, and the killing of children in Al-Hudaydah. All parties must prioritize the protection of civilians and civilian infrastructure and adhere to the principles of proportionality, distinction and precaution, in accordance with international humanitarian law. We call on the leaders of the parties, in the true interests of their people, to set aside their differences, commit to an immediate nationwide ceasefire and engage in a political process to find a lasting solution to the conflict.

In line with resolution 2564 (2021), the people of Yemen must chart their own path to peace through a Yemeni-led, Yemeni-owned political process, under the auspices of the United Nations. Ghana therefore supports the efforts of the Special Envoy to develop a framework for an inclusive political process, in concert with the parties and other actors, and looks forward to concrete steps in response to the urgent situation on the ground.

In pressing for an inclusive process, we reiterate the call for the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in all aspects of the political negotiations. Beyond the durability that the participation of women affords to peace processes, the parties must acknowledge the right of Yemeni women to be part of the solution.

Yemen continues to experience the worst humanitarian crisis, as 80 per cent of its population is in need of humanitarian assistance and faces the imminent

threat of widespread famine. We denounce the undue bureaucratic obstructions to humanitarian operations, by which the parties seek to advance their own political and military objectives, and urge immediate and unhindered humanitarian access to all areas where assistance is needed. In addition, international funding support is urgently required to bridge acute funding shortfalls for humanitarian operations.

We welcome the intention of the Governments of Switzerland and Sweden to co-host a pledging conference in March and encourage the international community and donors to support the United Nations in raising the estimated \$3.9 billion necessary to meet the rapidly growing needs.

With regard to the economic situation, the parties must be encouraged to deliver on their commitments in the Stockholm Agreement without further delay. Unless the Sana'a and Al-Hudaydah ports are reopened to commercial imports and humanitarian aid, the import-dependent economy of Yemen will continue to fail, and a famine will not be averted.

Lastly, allow me to echo the concerns about the *FSO SAFER* oil tanker and the danger it poses to the marine environment of the Red Sea and the safety of the Yemeni people. We thank Resident Coordinator David Gressly and his team for the ongoing progress in efforts to secure United Nations access to the tanker, and urge them to carry out all activities with transparency and in a manner that will sustain the assurances and guarantees of all concerned.

I conclude by emphasizing that the solution to the crisis in Yemen is political. In that regard, I urge the members of the Council to support efforts to end the armed conflict across all front lines. Only then can the humanitarian and economic issues be more effectively addressed.

Mrs. Toroitich (Kenya): I thank the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, the Under-Secretary-General and the Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2140 (2014) for their briefings and welcome the participation of the representative of Yemen at this meeting.

Kenya regrets the alarming escalation of hostilities in Yemen and their spread across the region. We strongly condemn the repeated launching of attacks targeting civilians and civilian infrastructure in Yemen, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Such acts violate

the basic principles of international humanitarian law, and we call on the Security Council to adopt relevant measures aimed at holding accountable all those responsible.

Last month, we witnessed some of the highest levels of civilian casualties since the war started. It is evident that there can be no military solution to the crisis in Yemen. Any use of terrorism or any form of violence to advance political or ideological interests must be condemned. We continue to remind all Yemeni stakeholders that the time has come for them to reconsider their hard-line positions to make necessary compromises to break the existing stalemate. It is important that they agree on a nationwide ceasefire within an agreed time frame and purposefully work towards a negotiated political solution.

We believe that that would usher in an environment of hope for sustained peace and economic recovery. We therefore support the Special Envoy's efforts towards producing a political framework. We further emphasize that the only sustainable solution has to be a Yemeni-led and Yemeni-owned inclusive peace process. The recent military escalation has greatly aggravated regional tensions and have increased opportunities for threats from terrorist groups, including Al-Qaida and Islamic State affiliates.

As we heard from Under-Secretary-General Griffiths with regard to the gravity of the humanitarian situation and funding challenges, we cannot overstate the need for effective, sufficient and sustainable humanitarian operations. The situation continues to deteriorate, and we call on all stakeholders, international donors and friends of Yemen to unite and generously contribute to the 2022 humanitarian response plan at the upcoming pledging conference in March. On that note, we warn all those perpetrating violence in Yemen that their actions are negatively impacting on continued international assistance.

I reiterate our deep concern about the status of the *FSO SAFER* oil tanker and the looming threat that it poses to the livelihoods of millions of people in the region. As deliberations continue, we urge all the parties and Governments in the region and elsewhere to redouble their efforts to avoid an environmental disaster.

In conclusion, I reaffirm Kenya's solidarity with the people of Yemen in their quest for lasting peace, security and prosperity.

Ms. Byrne Nason (Ireland): First, I would like to thank our briefers today — Special Envoy Grundberg, Under-Secretary-General Griffiths and Ambassador Hoxha. I very much look forward to hearing later from Major General Beary. We support their vital work in trying to forge pathways for peace and improve the lives of Yemenis.

As we heard in stark and horrifying terms today, January 2022 marks the deadliest month on record for civilians in Yemen in the bloody conflict. It is estimated that more than 650 civilians lost their lives or were injured over the past month alone, which is one every hour. From Ma'rib to Taiz, Shabwah to Al-Hudaydah, the people of Yemen continue to pay a dreadful price, while warring parties wreak havoc and destruction on their country.

We reiterate the Secretary-General's condemnation and share his deep concern about coalition air strikes across the country in recent weeks, including those in Sa'ada, which struck a detention centre where migrants were held and was among the worst civilian-casualty incidents in Yemen in three years. The victims included women and children. Vital civilian infrastructure was also disabled or destroyed, and essential services were disrupted. As Ms. Radhya Al-Mutawakel briefed the Security Council last month (see S/PV.8953), all aspects of life have been devastated by the ongoing conflict and military escalation.

We repeat that cross-border attacks claimed by the Houthis against the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates are totally unacceptable. Ireland strongly condemns all such attacks, including January's attack on Abu Dhabi's international airport and the Musaffah industrial area, which killed three civilians. All parties must fully comply with their obligations under international humanitarian law in relation to the protection of civilians and civilian objects and adhere to the principles of distinction, proportionality and precaution.

The path forward must also include an end to impunity and the pursuit of accountability for all violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law. The message that we have relayed time and time again at the Council still stands: there can be no military solution to the conflict. We call for an immediate de-escalation in violence and on all parties to engage in good faith with Special Envoy Grundberg towards an inclusive politically negotiated

solution, including on the framework outlined today. We call on women, youth and civil society to take their rightful places at the tables where those solutions will be shaped.

The current escalation seriously undermines peace efforts and worsens an already-dire humanitarian situation. As we heard today, more than two thirds of the population are now in need of urgent humanitarian assistance following seven years of war and economic collapse. The most vulnerable are increasingly unable to cope, and hunger remains alarmingly high.

We welcome the timely allocation via the Central Emergency Response Fund to support those who have been displaced and forced to flee their homes in recent months. However, the severe funding shortfalls faced by the aid operation, as described by Under-Secretary-General Griffiths this afternoon, are deeply concerning. It is clear that Yemenis need the strong support of the international donor community to allow aid agencies on the ground to continue their vital life-saving work. The need to strengthen and rebuild the fragile economy is also clear. In that regard, we look forward to further progress towards realizing the proposed United Nations economic framework.

To conclude on a vitally more hopeful note, we welcome recent progress on the *FSO SAFER* oil tanker. The United Nations-coordinated proposal to shift the oil on-board the vessel to another ship represents a potential first step towards mitigating the grave environmental and humanitarian threat posed by the vessel. We encourage all parties to continue to engage constructively with the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator on concrete action towards a sustainable solution.

Mrs. Nusseibeh (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank both Under-Secretary-General Martin Griffiths and Mr. Ferit Hoxha, in his capacity as Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2140 (2014), for their valuable briefings. We also listened to the briefing by Special Envoy Hans Grundberg.

What we have heard today confirms the continued failure of the political process under the leadership of the United Nations to deal realistically and firmly with the continuously intransigent position of the Houthi militias and their dangerous escalation, which makes it impossible to reach a political solution to the Yemeni crisis.

Over the past months, we have heard numerous briefings, including from Mr. Grundberg, calling on us to give him an opportunity for his efforts to bring the Houthis back to the negotiating table. However, after United Arab Emirates civilian infrastructure was subjected to terrorist attacks that claimed the lives of innocent civilians, we can only ask when the appeasement of that terrorist group will end?

On its part, the United Arab Emirate reaffirms its sovereign right to take all the measures necessary to protect the security and stability of its territories as well as the safety of its citizens and residents from any terrorist attacks, in accordance with its obligations under international law. We reiterate that the Houthi terrorist attacks are flagrant violations of all norms and international law and have persisted despite condemnation by the Security Council and by more than 120 countries and international organizations.

That escalation reflects the nature of the Houthis' aggressive behaviour in the region, which has reached unprecedented levels. They continue to target the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and threaten international navigation and the global economy. Therefore, stopping the Houthis' aggression requires the international community to take serious, decisive and tangible steps, all of which keep in mind the nature of the Houthis' extremist ideology and their true intentions.

As a priority, the international community should place significant pressure on the Houthis and their supporters to stop all their violations and attempts to impose control over Yemeni territory by force. Such pressure begins with imposing further sanctions on them and cutting off their funding sources, as well as enforcing the arms embargo imposed on Yemen by resolution 2216 (2015) and imposing a maritime ban and enhanced enforcement.

We refer to the recent report of the Panel of Experts (see S/2022/50), which unequivocally documented the continued violation of the arms embargo. We condemn the Houthis' continued violations of the Stockholm Agreement, as they have militarized Al-Hudaydah port to store weapons and launch attacks that threaten the navigation security and the countries of the region. Accordingly, we call for the presence of the United Nations in the port to monitor it and prevent its use for military purposes. The Houthis have committed terrorist acts and should be designated as such by the international community.

Moreover, we reaffirm our steadfast position in support of a political track that reflects the reality in Yemen and addresses its challenges in a tangible way that contributes to ending the crisis, as is embodied in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's initiative. We also support the resumption of political negotiations among the Yemeni parties. However, it must be noted that the Houthis have demonstrated that they will not commit to any agreement without clear international pressure. As we have seen with the issue of the *FSO SAFER* oil tanker, the Houthis continue to break their promises and block the United Nations team from making its necessary assessments.

Lastly, we express our deep concern over the deterioration of the humanitarian and economic situations in Yemen. We condemn all violations by the Houthis against humanitarian workers, as well as the continued diversion and obstruction of aid. We also condemn Houthi violations against women, including sexual aggression, and against children by recruiting them into their military ranks. In that connection, we reaffirm my country's continued solidarity with the Yemeni people while providing them with humanitarian and development assistance to alleviate their suffering.

In conclusion, we stress that a political solution is the only way to end the Yemeni crisis. We reiterate the importance of continued United Nations and international efforts to that end. It is time for the Security Council to put a stop to the Houthi militia's senseless actions so that Yemen can recover and build a secure and stable future.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of the Russian Federation.

We wish to thank the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, Mr. Grundberg, and the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Mr. Griffiths, for providing an overview of the political and humanitarian situations in Yemen.

We continue to closely monitor the escalation of hostilities in Yemen, including in Ma'rib and Shabwah governorates, which are becoming increasingly ferocious and resulting in a growing number of casualties among civilians, as well as refugees and internally displaced persons.

We are seriously concerned by the continuing attacks on civilian infrastructure, both in Yemen and

beyond its borders in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. We are convinced that such attempts to shift hostilities from Yemen to the territory of neighbouring States have the potential for a further escalation of violence. At the same time, we must acknowledge that the return of strikes and related violations of international humanitarian law are a direct consequence of an acute military and political crisis that has lasted for almost seven years. The new spiral of escalation poses a genuine threat to regional security.

In that regard, we urge the warring parties to strictly abide by international humanitarian law and to fully and immediately reject all operations that result in the destruction of civilian infrastructure and civilian casualties. We are extremely concerned by the growing number of such incidents that occurred recently.

On our part, we intend to continue to actively urge the official Yemeni authorities and the leadership of Ansar Allah to display a constructive approach and readiness to compromise when addressing their differences. We believe that our common goal is to ensure a comprehensive and lasting resolution of Yemen's numerous problems, which are also affecting neighbouring States.

Traditionally, the central role in that process is assigned to the United Nations and the Special Envoy for Yemen, Mr. Grundberg, who was hosted by the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 26 November 2021. We support the Special Envoy's activities as a mediator and trust that he will soon come up with specific modalities of a road map for a settlement. That settlement should be inclusive in nature and based on the principles of taking into account the opinions of all elements of Yemeni society, including representatives of all creeds, political forces and regions of the country. To that end, we support his plans to conduct consultations with all Yemeni stakeholders regarding the settlement's new framework parameters.

Against the backdrop of an impasse in the political process, we are particularly concerned by the dire socioeconomic and humanitarian situations in Yemen, which have long been teetering on the brink of disaster. As we heard today, that applies to the entire territory of Yemen, regardless of who is in control. Not a single area of Yemen can be called a safe place in terms of sustainable food and medical supplies. In that regard, we once again remind all parties to the conflict of the need to ensure unimpeded humanitarian access to all

those in need; to lift the land, air and sea blockades on the country; and rescind all restrictions on deliveries of foodstuffs, medicines and other basic goods to all areas of Yemen without exception.

In conclusion, we stress that the conflict in Yemen has a regionwide impact, given that it affects, inter alia, the safety of navigation. We also recall resolution 598 (1987) and other initiatives, including the Russian concept of collective security, designed to stabilize the situation in the Persian Gulf region.

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 Russian*): First of all, please allow me to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your country's Security Council presidency for the month of February. I wish you every success. I also wish to thank the Permanent Representative of Norway for her successful work last month during Norway's presidency.

(*spoke in Arabic*)

I would like to thank Mr. Martin Griffiths and Mr. Hans Grundberg for their valuable briefings. I also thank the Permanent Representative of Albania for his briefing.

The Iranian-backed Houthi militias continue to choose war over peace, undermining the security and stability of Yemen and the region. They continue to reject all peace proposals and initiatives and to waste all opportunities to advance the political process. They persist in their escalation and military aggression against the Yemeni people. Those actions prolong the conflict and make the road to peace more difficult and costly from an economic, political and humanitarian perspective. Peace is a product of strong will, not wishful thinking. Our will is strong to achieve peace for our people, who yearn for development, justice, equality and the rule of law.

The Yemeni Government once again emphasizes its support for all efforts aimed at achieving comprehensive and sustainable peace in Yemen that are in line with the agreed terms of reference — 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), which represents

the main and firm basis for the United Nations-led peace process. While the Yemeni Government has engaged positively with the efforts of Mr. Grundberg and has facilitated his job, the Houthi militias continue to obstruct his efforts and refuse to meet with him in Sana'a.

The Houthis would not have insisted on rejecting peace had it not been for the Iranian regime's interference in the internal affairs of my country, undermining the stability and security of Yemen and the region, prolonging the war and exacerbating the humanitarian crisis by violating the Council resolutions on the arms embargo. According to international evidence and reports, the Iranian regime continues to supply Houthi militias with weapons, military know-how and all types of missiles, which the militias use against the Yemeni people and threaten international navigation, as we have seen recently with the hijacking of the Emirati ship *Rawabi*, now under the control of the Houthi militias although the Council has called for releasing it with the crew.

The Houthi militias continue to use ballistic missiles and drones to attack civilians and civilian infrastructure in the United Arab Emirates and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, in flagrant violation of international law and international humanitarian law. They continue to threaten vital institutions and energy supplies, constituting a direct threat to international peace and security.

The most recent such terrorist attacks are those on Abu Dhabi and the Abha Airport, which the Yemeni Government condemns in the strongest terms. We call on the international community to confront the terrorist attacks by the Houthi militias, which threaten regional and international peace and stability. We call on the Council to assume its responsibilities and to act decisively to put an end to those Houthi acts of aggression and their repeated terrorist attacks in Yemen and the region. We urge the Council to place more pressure and sanctions on the militias in order to deter their terrorist behaviour and to cut off their financing. Issuing statements will never convince the Houthi militias to stop their war and terrorist attacks.

The war continues to exacerbate the suffering of the Yemeni people. The Houthi militias have continued their indiscriminate attacks on residential areas and camps for displaced persons in Ma'rib, launching three ballistic missiles today on the populous city, with total

disregard for the lives of civilians, including women and children. Those attacks force civilians to flee, some more than once, the crimes of the militias, who kill innocent people, plant mines and destroy houses, schools and religion sites. They obstruct, loot and divert humanitarian assistance — and even use that assistance to blackmail civilians. They have exacerbated the humanitarian and economic situation by imposing taxes and duties on traders and importers, leading to an increase in food prices and lower purchasing power and pushing more civilians into poverty.

The Houthi militias have obstructed Government efforts and measures aimed at reducing the suffering of the Yemeni people in areas under their control. The Houthi militias continue to take advantage of the humanitarian situation for political ends.

Nevertheless, the Yemeni Government remains committed to its responsibilities and to making every effort to alleviate the suffering of all the Yemeni people. We look to the international community to further support our plans and programmes to achieve economic recovery and stability and to support development and humanitarian projects. It is important to build the capacities of governmental institutions, including by channeling donor funds through the Central Bank of Yemen. That would help shore up the value of the national currency, improve living conditions, reduce suffering and incorporate development priorities and needs into all humanitarian interventions to achieve early recovery. Those are urgent issues that cannot wait until the war is over.

The Yemeni Government looks forward to the pledging conference on Yemen to be held in March. We call on the international community to keep

Yemen at the top of its priorities and to continue its generous support, including by announcing pledges and fulfilling commitments. That is necessary to bridge the funding gap and meet the increasing humanitarian needs while avoiding any disruption in life-saving assistance provided by partners at the humanitarian and relief levels.

Millions of children in areas under the control of the Houthi militias are being recruited and brainwashed. They are being taught extremism, hatred, rejection of others and a culture of death, which is one of the most dangerous consequences of this war, with disastrous effects for the present and future of Yemen and the region. We call on the international community and the Council to redouble their efforts to end those dangerous Houthi practices and violations against children in Yemen and to take the measures necessary to hold accountable those responsible for child recruitment into the ranks of the Houthi militias.

The Yemeni Government supports United Nations-led efforts to address the situation of the *FSO SAFER* oil tanker in order to avoid a catastrophe. We warn against the continued Houthi blackmail of the international community, exploiting the situation to buy more time. We call for decisive action to put pressure on the Houthis to address the situation in order to avoid an ominous disaster.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers.

I will now adjourn the meeting so that the Council can continue its discussion on the subject in closed consultations.

The meeting rose at 4.50 p.m.