



# Security Council

Seventy-seventh year

**9088**<sup>th</sup> meeting  
Monday, 11 July 2022, 10 a.m.  
New York

*Provisional*

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<i>President:</i>	Mrs. Aguiar Barboza . . . . .	(Brazil)
<i>Members:</i>	Albania . . . . .	Mr. Hoxha
	China . . . . .	Mr. Dai Bing
	France . . . . .	Mr. De Rivière
	Gabon . . . . .	Ms. Bongo
	Ghana . . . . .	Mr. Agyeman
	India . . . . .	Mr. Gupta
	Ireland . . . . .	Ms. Moran
	Kenya . . . . .	Mr. Kiboino
	Mexico . . . . .	Mrs. Buenrostro Massieu
	Norway . . . . .	Ms. Juul
	Russian Federation . . . . .	Mr. Polyanskiy
	United Arab Emirates . . . . .	Mr. Abushahab
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Dame Barbara Woodward
	United States of America . . . . .	Mr. Mills

## Agenda

The situation in the Middle East

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*The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.*

### **Adoption of the agenda**

*The agenda was adopted.*

### **The situation in the Middle East**

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

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

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

I give the floor to Mr. Grundberg.

**Mr. Grundberg:** Allow me to start by extending my warmest wishes to Yemenis and Muslims around the world on the occasion of Eid Al-Adha — a time to celebrate and reflect on the values of selflessness and compassion, principles that should guide us as we work towards a more peaceful and prosperous future for Yemen.

With a deadline for the truce extension a mere three weeks away, I want to take this opportunity, first, to highlight what has been achieved in the three and a half months of the truce; secondly, discuss some of the obstacles we have faced in its implementation and how we are working to overcome them and; thirdly, outline a way forward that includes extending, consolidating and expanding the truce so as to increase the benefits to the people of Yemen and move towards a political settlement.

To date, the truce has been holding for over three months. It has resulted in a significant two-thirds reduction in civilian casualties, as compared to the three months before the truce began. Due to the sharp decline in hostilities, conflict-related civilian casualties are now mostly due to landmines and unexploded ordnance, which continue to pose a threat to civilians, including children, as they return to areas where hostilities have decreased.

We continue to receive reports from both sides about alleged incidents inside Yemen, including direct and indirect fire, drone attacks, reconnaissance overflights and the establishment of new fortifications and trenches. The parties are also allegedly sending reinforcements to the main front lines, including in Ma'rib, Al-Hudaydah and Taiz. As the Council is aware, my Office is supporting the parties in establishing channels of communication in order to help them manage such incidents in a peaceful manner.

I am pleased to report that last week my Office convened the third meeting of the Military Coordination Committee, comprised of representatives of the parties, in addition to the coalition's joint forces command. During the meeting, the sides discussed the formation of the joint coordination room that will be tasked with the escalating incidents at the operational level and appointed a working group that commenced detailed, technical discussions to consolidate proposals in that regard.

The renewal of the truce on 2 June has allowed the continued flow of fuel into Al-Hudaydah port. Since the truce renewal, seven fuel ships, carrying nearly 200,000 metric tons of various fuel products, have been cleared to enter Al-Hudaydah port. High fuel prices have chipped away at the benefit for Yemeni citizens. But there is no doubt that, without the imports facilitated by the truce, the situation would be far worse. The flow of fuel imports has helped avoid disruptions to essential public services that depend partly on fuel — such as clean water, health care, electricity and transportation — and has made a valuable difference to the daily lives and well-being of Yemenis. The United Nations Verification and Inspection Mechanism for Yemen (UNVIM) has played a pivotal role in facilitating the smooth import of fuel ships into Al-Hudaydah, as mandated by the Council. I am deeply concerned that a shortage of funds could result in the closure of UNVIM in September.

Efforts to enhance the freedom of movement for men and women inside Yemen, as well as into and outside of Yemen, must continue. Since the start of the truce, 15 commercial round-trip flights have transported almost 7,000 passengers between Sana'a and Amman. We continue to work closely with the Egyptian authorities to facilitate regular flights to and from Cairo. I greatly appreciate the continued engagement of both countries. While much has been accomplished in facilitating flights to and from Sana'a airport, we are working to

ensure that a regular schedule of flights can fully meet the promise of the truce and the expectations on the Yemeni people.

Let me now turn to Taiz and the issue of the freedom of movement inside the country. It was my sincere belief that, by this time in the truce, the parties would have reached an agreement to open roads in Taiz and other governorates. It is regrettable for all of us, but mostly for the men and women of Taiz, that many of the roads there remain closed for the seventh year in a row. Opening roads is not only about easing humanitarian suffering and removing restrictions, but it is also about beginning to normalize the conditions of everyday life for Yemenis, including education, work, health services and the overall economy.

Since my previous briefing (see S/PV.9063), I have continued to engage the parties, including in Amman and during my recent visits to Riyadh and Muscat, on viable proposals to immediately open roads in Taiz and other governorates. I also continue to draw on the expertise of local mediators and civil society representatives. Following discussions with the parties, my Office shared an updated proposal on the phased opening of roads. Ansar Allah has since communicated that it does not accept the latest proposal. Still, my efforts to reach a negotiated solution will continue.

I would like to take this opportunity to revisit the terms of the truce in which the parties committed to meet in order to agree on road openings. In the days preceding Eid Al-Adha, we saw different sides announce unilateral actions to open roads. While unilateral action could be a step in the right direction, agreement from both sides is important because road openings require coordination and ongoing communication to ensure that roads are opened safely and sustainably for civilian passage.

The United Nations-facilitated process provides a platform to come to a sustainable negotiated agreement on road openings. I therefore encourage the parties to engage constructively with United Nations efforts to reach an agreement on road openings so that all Yemenis can begin to feel the tangible benefits of the truce in their everyday lives. An agreement on road openings in Taiz and other governorates would be momentous, and its benefits would reverberate across Yemen.

In recent weeks, we have seen worrisome escalatory rhetoric by the parties questioning the benefits of the truce — a dangerous move from which I have asked

both sides to refrain. Let us be clear: the alternative to the truce is a return to hostilities and likely an intensified phase of conflict, with all of its predictable consequences for Yemeni civilians and regional security. I have already outlined the many tangible benefits of the truce for Yemeni men and women. The relative calm that it has afforded has also allowed for the resumption of some public works and encouraged international investment.

In the light of the increasing fuel prices and the global economic situation, even more needs to be done to ensure that electricity and consumer goods are available and affordable for civilians across the country. The Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Ms. Joyce Msuya, will speak in more detail about the humanitarian situation in Yemen.

That brings me to the way forward. Three and a half months into the truce, we still find ourselves immersed in the details of the truce's implementation. That is important, but it has meant that we have not been able to invest as much in the task of consolidating and expanding the truce in order to deliver more benefits to the population and set Yemen on the path towards a durable political settlement.

In my discussions with the parties, it has been made clear that the aim is to achieve a wider array of economic and security priorities and not lose the opportunity for peace that the truce provides. Many of those priorities that the parties raised have also been highlighted by the diverse groups of Yemeni men and women that my Office has been consulting since March to inform a multi-track process.

In the coming weeks, I will continue to explore with the parties the possibility of a longer extension and an expanded truce agreement. That would provide time and the opportunity to start serious discussions on the economy and security tracks in order to start addressing priority issues, such as revenues and the payment of salaries, and begin the process of moving towards a ceasefire. I asked the parties to engage with me on those issues with a sense of urgency and flexibility.

The participation of a broad array of Yemeni stakeholders, including women, young people and civil society, remains a priority of mine to ensure that the political settlement is sustainable and meets the legitimate aspirations and demands of Yemeni men and women.

I would like to reiterate my gratitude for the continued support of the Council, as well as the Sultanate of Oman, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the broader international community. The concern and support of Council members for the full implementation and extension of the truce, as well as for the way forward, will be vital in the weeks to come. The truce represents the best opportunity for peace in Yemen that we have had in years, and we should encourage and support the parties to make the most of that opportunity for the benefit of Yemen as a whole.

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

I now give the floor to Ms. Msuya.

**Ms. Msuya:** Yemen's humanitarian catastrophe is about to get much worse. The truce represents a landmark step forward, and we hope that a solution can be found quickly to reopen the roads around Taiz, as the Special Envoy just outlined. But the truce alone will not be enough to stop what we fear is coming.

Humanitarian needs across the country, including the risk of famine in some areas, could rise sharply in the coming weeks and months. The international community must act quickly and decisively to stop that.

In our briefing a few weeks ago (see S/PV.9063), we warned about the rising needs due to economic problems, a worsening environment for aid workers and a collapse in humanitarian funding. Let us review where those issues stand.

First, with regard to the economy and rising needs, last month we called for action to protect Yemen's economy from domestic challenges and the impact of the war in Ukraine. That remains urgent. The exchange rate, which is a key factor in how much food people can afford to eat, is still collapsing. It is now trading at approximately 1,120 rial to the dollar in Aden. Most of the currency's gains since the truce have now been wiped out, meaning that many more families are going hungry again.

The Ukraine war is also threatening the supply chains that bring in Yemen's food, nearly 90 per cent of which must be imported. Last year, just under half of all wheat came from Russia and Ukraine. When those supplies were cut off in February, Yemeni importers moved quickly to find other sources. But rising global prices, diminished access to capital and other challenges are making it much harder for importers to keep those

supply chains working. Given the acute emergency, quick action is needed to address those challenges.

In April, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates announced a \$3 billion economic support package for Yemen. We are encouraged by recent discussions between those donors and Yemen on the way forward for that package. Once disbursed, it has the potential to stabilize the economic freefall that is fuelling a rise in hunger and other needs. That is urgently needed.

We are also encouraged by recent positive exchanges between the Governments of Yemen and India on facilitating wheat exports from India. Commercial wheat imports from India have emerged as a key supply line for Yemen in the wake of the Ukraine war.

Beyond those efforts, we also reiterate our call to strengthen Yemen's economy more broadly, including through the United Nations economic framework. Addressing the economic drivers of Yemen's crisis could quickly and dramatically decrease humanitarian needs across sectors.

My second point is that aid work is becoming more difficult and more dangerous, as we also warned last month. Unfortunately, providing life-saving assistance remains challenging. Intimidation and incitement against aid agencies have continued across Yemen. That is being fuelled by misinformation, which is amplified through social media and messaging apps and in some public forums.

In Houthi-held areas, staff movements have also become more difficult in recent weeks due to the bureaucratic impediments facing Yemeni aid workers who travel abroad for professional reasons. The Houthi authorities are also increasingly enforcing restrictions that curb women's full participation in humanitarian action, both as aid workers and as aid recipients. Moreover, eight months after repeatedly promising their quick release, security officials in Sana'a continue to detain two United Nations staff members — a violation of United Nations privileges and immunities.

Meanwhile, the insecurity we warned about in Government-held areas has also persisted. Since our previous briefing, there have been five more carjackings of aid agency vehicles, or more than one a week. That brings the total to 18 carjackings since the beginning of the year. Nor has there been any progress in the efforts to free the five United Nations staff members who were kidnapped five months ago in Abyan. We call

for the immediate release of all kidnapped aid workers in Yemen. We are also working with all stakeholders to address those issues, and we especially want to recognize the positive engagement we have had with the Government with regard to security concerns. We welcome support from Member States, including through direct engagement with the relevant parties where feasible.

But the biggest problem that we have right now is funding, which is my third point. The Yemen humanitarian response plan has so far received just over \$1.1 billion, or 27 per cent of what it needs, the sharpest year-on-year drop in any United Nations-coordinated plan in the world. We know that budgets are tight, and we deeply appreciate everyone's contributions, but we also have a responsibility to say clearly that the aid agencies are dangerously underresourced for what we fear is coming. Hunger is worse than ever, and yet several weeks ago the World Food Programme was forced to cut rations for millions of people because of funding gaps. That was the second major food cut in just six months. Similar cuts are sadly costing lives across every sector. Raisa, a 32-year-old pregnant woman from Amran, sought care at a health centre supported by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) when she went into labour in May. However, UNFPA has had to slash its humanitarian operations by 25 per cent this year, so when Raisa arrived at the clinic, she found the doors locked. She died before she could reach a working hospital. Raisa is just one human example of the vast hardships that the cuts are creating. We urge donors to increase support for the humanitarian response plan as much and as quickly as possible.

Beyond the response plan, funds for other urgent priorities are also lacking. The United Nations plan to resolve the threat posed by the *FSO SAFER* oil tanker, for example, is still struggling to make up the immediate \$20 million shortfall. Given the imminent danger the tanker poses, the fundraising challenges have come as a surprise. That immediate \$20 million is needed to secure the oil now, a key step in a larger plan to replace the ageing tanker. The cost of the full plan, which is about \$144 million, should be weighed against the billions it could cost when the *FSO SAFER* eventually leaks or explodes.

The United Nations Verification and Inspection Mechanism for Yemen, created in 2016 to facilitate commercial imports to Yemen, is also running out of money. In its current state, it will shut down in

September, making already-battered supply chains for food, fuel and other essential goods even more uncertain. It needs \$3.5 million to cover operations from September until the end of the year. The Mechanism is a key partner in the Security Council's commitment to facilitating commercial imports to Yemen. It has also been essential to the successful resumption of fuel imports through Al-Hudaydah under the current truce.

Discussions are under way on many of the concerns I have just outlined. Several weeks ago, senior donor and agency officials met in Brussels to take stock of the challenges facing the Yemen response. The participants called for better access, more demining, better programme quality, closer monitoring of famine risks, more development support and stronger advocacy, among other key objectives. We could not agree more. We too hope that the political and financial resources will be available to deliver what we all agree is urgently needed. Aid agencies have also just completed an independent evaluation of the humanitarian response in Yemen from 2015 to 2021. The evaluation confirms that the response helped save lives and prevent the total collapse of basic services, but it also identifies serious shortcomings, including programme quality, data problems and others. We are already working to address many of the issues and are eager to collaborate with all our Yemeni and international partners in doing so. That will be a major focus during the coming months.

Lastly, I want to end on a hopeful note. The truce offers a rare opportunity to end the crisis in Yemen for good. Efforts to address and ultimately reduce the humanitarian needs should be part and parcel of seizing this opportunity. We should have been there for Raisa. Let us not fail anyone again.

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

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

**Dame Barbara Woodward** (United Kingdom): I would like to start by thanking the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General and the Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs for their briefings. I am grateful to them and the United Nations in general for their continued efforts to secure long-term and lasting peace in Yemen.

We welcome the positive impact on the lives of the Yemeni people of the continued reduction in violence resulting from the truce and the progress on the confidence-building measures. We welcome the multitrack process that the Special Envoy has outlined and Ms. Msuya's proposals for economic recovery. The truce and the confidence-building measures are important first steps, but as we have discussed before, securing sustainable peace will require ambition and progress on a wide range of issues, including the economic and military tracks and the unblocking of roads across Yemen. We also welcome the news that the Military Coordination Committee intends to establish monthly meetings to address the key events of concern. I would like to highlight three concerns in particular.

First, the United Kingdom remains concerned about the humanitarian and wider social and economic impact of the continued road closures around Taiz. We echo the Special Envoy's calls for all sides to coordinate in reaching an agreement as soon as possible on opening the main roads and reaping the benefits of that.

Secondly, with regard to demining, we have welcomed the reduction in reported civilian casualties since the truce began. But as the Special Envoy said, landmines and unexploded ordnance are claiming an increasing number of civilian lives, including of children. Increasing humanitarian access would enable the United Nations Mission to Support the Hodeidah Agreement to protect some of the most vulnerable Yemenis. We therefore continue to call on all parties to support demining efforts across Yemen.

Thirdly, with regard to food insecurity, the global growth in commodity prices that both the Special Envoy and Assistant Secretary-General referred to means increased food insecurity, hunger and even famine in Yemen. And food prices have hit record highs. We therefore echo Ms. Msuya's call to all donors to ensure that funding is made immediately available for speedy disbursement in order to reduce the suffering.

The United Kingdom also remains concerned about the threat posed by the *FSO SAFER* oil tanker and the shortfall in funding for the United Nations emergency operation. Inaction will come at a high price. The United Kingdom has pledged \$5 million towards the United Nations plan, and we urge others to commit funding to bridge the remaining \$20 million gap so that the emergency operation can begin to address the risk of profound humanitarian and environmental damage.

In conclusion, we urge the parties to continue to show courageous leadership to build on the positive momentum to ensure progress and prioritize the peace and stability of Yemen. As the Special Envoy said, this is the best opportunity for peace in years.

**Mr. Dai Bing** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Special Envoy Grundberg and Assistant Secretary-General Msuya for their briefings.

I also welcome the Permanent Representative of Yemen to today's meeting.

The truce in Yemen has continued to hold for some time, while the security and humanitarian situations have continued to improve. The Government of Yemen, the Houthis and the coalition forces reaffirmed their commitment to the truce at the third meeting of the Military Coordination Committee, held in Amman. China welcomes those developments. China appreciates the extraordinary efforts of Special Envoy Grundberg in that regard and hopes that the parties to the conflict in Yemen will continue to cooperate with him in his efforts to safeguard and implement the truce agreement.

Opening the roads in Taiz as soon as possible is a matter of urgency. To that end, Special Envoy Grundberg has proposed several options, on the basis of which the parties concerned should intensify consultations, meet each other halfway and strive to expeditiously reach a common understanding in order to alleviate the humanitarian plight of the hundreds of thousands of people in Taiz.

The truce in Yemen will expire on 2 August. Extending it is the shared aspiration of the Yemeni people and the international community. It is in the interests of all parties in Yemen. China hopes that they will strengthen their political will, stay the course towards a political settlement, actively push for an extension of the truce and work together to seek a lasting solution to the situation in Yemen.

Yemen is experiencing its worst food crisis in recent years. More than 19 million people face famine, and the humanitarian situation is extremely dire. Furthermore, only 27 per cent of the Yemen humanitarian response plan has been funded. The United Nations Verification and Inspection Mechanism and multiple aid projects of the United Nations system will soon be suspended or scaled down due to insufficient funding.

China welcomes the tireless efforts of the United Nations and relevant agencies to improve

the humanitarian situation in Yemen and calls on the international community to continue its investment in Yemen, honour its commitment to provide assistance and increase its funding to ensure the simultaneous improvement of the humanitarian and security situations. All parties in Yemen should actively cooperate in humanitarian operations and facilitate humanitarian access. A few days ago, Saudi Arabia announced an investment of \$400 million for development projects in Yemen, which I believe will help the Presidential Leadership Council to start its economic recovery efforts.

An open, demilitarized port of Al-Hudaydah is crucial to improving the humanitarian situation in Yemen. The mandate of the United Nations Mission to Support the Hodeidah Agreement will expire on 15 July. China supports the Mission in continuing its active role in maintaining the civilian status of the port of Al-Hudaydah and conducting mine action activities. The Mission is an important mechanism of the United Nations in Yemen and should play a corresponding role in the light of the changes in the situation on the ground.

**Mr. Mills** (United States of America): I thank Special Envoy Grundberg and Assistant Secretary-General Msuya. We are grateful for their commitment and that of their teams to improving the lives of the Yemeni people.

We welcome the fact that the truce in Yemen continues to hold. It has significantly reduced violence and improved the freedom of movement. It has created momentum towards peace. However, we must sustain and build on that progress as the Special Envoy noted. Doing so requires compromise by all parties.

Our message today is clear. The Security Council must urge the parties to the conflict to continue to choose peace over violence and to fully implement the terms of the truce. We recognize the considerable leadership and flexibility demonstrated by the Government of the Republic of Yemen in facilitating flights from Sana'a and fuel imports to northern Yemen.

Unfortunately, as we have heard, we have not seen the same action from the Houthis with regard to Taiz — a city that has been under siege-like conditions for seven years. We join others in calling on the Houthis to demonstrate their commitment to the United Nations-led peace process and reciprocate those gestures by meaningfully improving access to Taiz. Doing so would alleviate human suffering and allow

tens of thousands of civilians to access basic goods and see their loved ones.

Immediate action to unblock the roads to Taiz is essential for maintaining the current truce. It will also help pave the way for a more comprehensive and durable agreement that can do more to bring resources, stability and opportunity to people across Yemen. Such an agreement can more durably halt fighting and begin to bring Yemenis together to decide on a brighter future for their country.

In addition to action on Taiz, all parties must be prepared to engage fully and meaningfully in United Nations-led political talks. Only a Yemeni-Yemeni political settlement can provide durable peace in Yemen. Such a political process must be inclusive and consider the voices of women, civil society and members of marginalized groups and their calls for justice and accountability.

The United States fully supports Special Envoy Grundberg's efforts. We thank Saudi Arabia for its leadership in endorsing and implementing the terms of the truce, and we remain grateful for Oman's important role. We also recognize the constructive role that Jordan and Egypt have played by opening their airports to flights from Sana'a. Those regional and international efforts towards peace are significant and should continue.

We demand that the Houthis unconditionally and immediately release the current and former United States and United Nations locally employed Yemeni staff they have imprisoned in Sana'a. It is long past time that the Houthis end such outrageous behaviour. Similarly, we remind all parties of their obligations under international humanitarian law, and we call on them to respect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all in Yemen.

We welcome the news that the Government of the Republic of Yemen and Saudi Arabia are accelerating the implementation of development projects and the disbursement of economic and electricity support. That support will bolster the important work of the Presidential Leadership Council to improve basic services and economic stability. We call on others in the international community and regional partners to support the efforts of the Presidential Leadership Council.

We agree with others who have spoken before me — donors must take action now to avert an economic, humanitarian and environmental disaster in the Red Sea. Only an additional \$20 million is needed to prevent a catastrophic spill from the *FSO SAFER* oil tanker, which would cost the region and beyond tens of billions in clean-up costs and lost revenue. This is our best opportunity for action, as the risk of a spill will increase greatly this fall.

Donors, including private sector actors, need to step forward now and fund the United Nations emergency project. We also urge immediate financial support to help the United Nations Verification and Inspection Mechanism (UNVIM) for Yemen to close the funding gap of \$3.5 million this year, which is urgently needed to facilitate the unimpeded free flow of commercial goods into Yemen. The United States contributed \$1 million earlier this year to keep UNVIM operational, and we call on other donors to contribute. Today we also express our support for the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Mission to support the Hudaydah Agreement.

In conclusion, recent months have witnessed some of the most significant progress towards peace in Yemen in years. But forging a lasting peace will require all the parties to take concrete action to demonstrate their commitment to this goal. The international community must be ready to support these efforts, while also holding all parties accountable for their actions.

**Mr. Gupta** (India): I thank the Special Envoy Hans Grundberg and Assistant Secretary General Joyce Msuya for their briefings.

The renewal of the nationwide truce has helped to considerably reduce hostilities at the front lines. It is the responsibility of the relevant parties to ensure that the truce is upheld and converted into a durable and long-lasting ceasefire. The truce has also helped shift the focus away from the military arena and brought much needed attention to the political and economic aspects of the conflict. We appreciate the efforts of the United Nations Special Envoy to engage with the parties in the implementation and consolidation of all measures agreed as part of the truce agreement and move towards a political dialogue.

The full and meaningful implementation of all elements of the truce is critical for sustaining the truce. While progress has been achieved in the delivery of fuel at Al-Hudaydah port and in the opening of the

Sana'a airport, the opening of roads in Taiz remains deadlocked. Yemenis have suffered for far too long from the impact of road closures. Immediate progress in the opening of arterial roads to these governorates is an urgent humanitarian imperative. We call on Ansar Allah to negotiate in good faith to urgently reach an agreement on this issue.

The truce is also an opportunity to step up humanitarian aid to Yemen's needy population. Instead, we are witnessing a scaling down of aid operations owing to critical funding gaps whose impact is further exacerbated by global inflation in commodity prices. The low level of funding, unless reversed quickly, could lead to further cuts to humanitarian aid in Yemen, including food aid. This would leave millions of Yemenis, especially children, without adequate food and nutrition.

In order to mitigate the supply changes in the global commodity markets and their adverse impact on food security, and in keeping with our long-standing commitment to the global South, India has been providing financial assistance and supplying food grains to countries in need. We have exported more than 250,000 tons of wheat to Yemen in the last three months. In this regard, I would like to thank Assistant Secretary-General Msuya for acknowledging this contribution of ours in her briefing today.

It is also important to ensure the civilian nature of the ports in the Al-Hudaydah governorate from the food-security perspective, as these ports remain the main gateway for the flow of food and other essential commodities into Yemen. In this regard, India supports a more effective mandate for the United Nations Mission to support the Hudaydah Agreement, which will enable the Mission to undertake monitoring missions to these ports and report on their possible use for military purposes.

A sustainable solution to the humanitarian crisis lies in concrete economic measures that benefit the people of Yemen. We have underscored the need to address the disruption in key segments of Yemen's economy and its fragmentation. We recognize the efforts of the Presidential Leadership Council to address these challenges. The international community must support the Government of Yemen to help it overcome these challenges.

We are also concerned by the increasing number of attacks reportedly attributed to Al-Qaida in the Arabian

Peninsula (AQAP). The AQAP is actively exploiting the conflict in Yemen, notwithstanding the truce and the changed military dynamics, and poses a significant threat to peace and stability in the country, across the region and beyond. The Council must not lose focus on this specific threat.

The only sustainable solution to the conflict is a peacefully negotiated, Yemeni-led and Yemeni-owned political settlement that prioritizes the well-being of all Yemenis and meets their legitimate aspirations. We encourage all parties to work actively with the United Nations Special Envoy in his efforts to find a sustainable political solution.

The nationwide truce and other recent developments in Yemen have raised the hopes of the people of Yemen that the conflict, which has devastated their lives during the last seven years, could possibly end soon. We need to ensure that the Council does not let them down this time around.

**Ms. Bongo** (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): I thank Special Envoy Hans Grundberg and Assistant Secretary-General Joyce Msuya for their inspiring briefings.

I welcome the presence among us of the Permanent Representative of Yemen.

The truce, which was extended on 2 June for a further two months, is a good step towards the ceasefire desired by the international community and waited for by the Yemeni civilian population. It is indeed important to recall that peace in Yemen lies in the search for a political settlement through an inclusive and sustainable dialogue in which all the scattered fragments of this country would constructively participate.

With regard to freedom of movement in the country, we urge the parties to work towards an agreement on the opening of roads, especially in Taiz province.

We deplore the continuing violence that undermines the truce and the security situation on the ground. Since 2 April, many civilians and soldiers have been killed and wounded as a result of missile and drone attacks, improvised explosive devices and the deployment of armed forces. These continued violations of the truce threaten the peace process in Yemen. We urge all parties to cease hostilities, exercise maximum restraint and implement all aspects of the United Nations-brokered truce.

We remain concerned about the devastation caused by landmines and other explosive remnants of war on civilian populations, particularly children, during the truce period. The multiple impacts of landmines cause lasting injuries, as well as severe psychological trauma.

Attacks and attempted kidnappings of humanitarian workers working for the well-being of the population in different parts of the country are also a cause for concern for my delegation. We call for respect for international humanitarian law and the release of all United Nations and other humanitarian workers abducted in Yemen.

The humanitarian situation in Yemen remains alarming. A combination of security, economic and social factors, including currency depreciation, commodity-price inflation, lack of services and jobs, water scarcity and declining aid are contributing to food insecurity in the country. Millions of women and children are in need of nutritional assistance to combat the severe hunger and malnutrition that is growing in Yemen. While the correlation between armed conflict and food insecurity is well established, the former being an aggravating factor of the latter, hunger is also a source of security destabilization. In this context, a resolute involvement of the international community is essential to putting an end to this spiral.

With regard to the condition of Yemeni women, who are increasingly discriminated against, we condemn the restrictions to which they are subjected. Similarly, female humanitarian workers must be able to travel without a male escort, especially as such a measure considerably hinders the distribution of aid in the country.

On the issue of the oil tanker *FSO SAFER*, we note that the emergency transfer operation and the removal of the oil from the vessel has still not begun, owing to insufficient funding. We call for greater mobilization of the international community in order to avoid a large-scale environmental and humanitarian disaster.

Finally, we reiterate our support for Special Envoy Hans Grundberg and Assistant Secretary-General Joyce Msuya in their tireless efforts to maintain dialogue between the parties and provide humanitarian assistance to the civilian population in Yemen.

**Mr. Polyanskiy** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We thank Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen, Hans Grundberg and Assistant Secretary-General Joyce Msuya for their briefings on

the developments in the political and humanitarian situation in Yemen.

We have to note that the political situation in the country is now in a period of stagnation. The pace of the Yemeni settlement, as we have recently witnessed, is slowing down. It has been a month since the June extension of the truce between the Presidential Leadership Council and the Ansar Allah movement, but there has been no significant progress since then. Previous experience has clearly shown that, in principle, the parties are capable of reaching an agreement. We hope that they will overcome their differences and strengthen their mutual trust in each other.

Unfortunately, the issue regarding the opening of transport links with the city of Taiz is still at an impasse. In that regard, we would like to note that the lack of flexibility on the part of the parties may result in another round of mutual accusations. On the other hand, any additional concessions, however small, would demonstrate their desire for a long-term political settlement.

However, it is encouraging that the inter-Yemeni dialogue is continuing and that the parties have refrained from engaging in hostilities. There has not yet been sliding into a new confrontation. However, the balance is extremely fragile. One wrong move could undo all the progress made and roll the country back to the chaos of war. We welcome the ongoing work of the Military Coordination Committee in Amman on upholding the terms of the ceasefire, with the participation of representatives of all parties to the conflict.

We support the efforts of Mr. Grundberg, who, even in the current circumstances, has not abandoned attempts to help the parties to reach an agreement and find the beginnings of a positive spirit. We call on all parties to actively engage in the Special Envoy's mediation efforts. As we have repeatedly said, Mr. Grundberg can count on our help.

We continue to provide the maximum possible assistance to the United Nations mediation in Yemen, including through contacts with all political forces in the country and the parties concerned. We actively encourage them to be constructive and willing to compromise in addressing their differences. We reiterate that, in order to achieve those goals, there is no alternative other than a comprehensive, inclusive intra-Yemeni dialogue.

The extremely difficult socioeconomic situation in Yemen remains a matter of particular concern. The deteriorating situation in the country has been described as the greatest humanitarian catastrophe. We reiterate the urgent need to remove all restrictions on the delivery of essential goods to Yemen. Food, medicines and other items needed by the Yemenis should be available to them on a non-discriminatory basis.

The mandate of the United Nations Mission to Support the Hodeidah Agreement expires this month. We support its technical extension. We consider the work of the Mission to be extremely important in the context of international efforts for a settlement in Yemen. At the same time, the current highly sensitive situation is hardly conducive to a readjustment of the Mission's tasks. A calmer time can be found for that.

In conclusion, we would like to note that the situation in Yemen directly affects the region of the Middle East, the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea. In the interests of regional de-escalation, we call on the international community to engage constructively in the interests of promoting peace and stability throughout the Middle East region, including on the basis of resolution 598 (1987). The Russian concept of collective security in the Persian Gulf, which advocates an inclusive and collective approach to resolving problems, remains relevant.

**Mr. Abushahab** (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Mr. Hans Grundberg for his briefing and for his efforts to reach a political solution to the Yemeni crisis. I also thank Ms. Joyce Msuya for her thorough briefing.

We would like, at the outset, to welcome the continuation of the truce and the agreement to consolidate it over Eid Al-Adha Al-Mubarak. We hope to build on that progress to make the truce a permanent and comprehensive ceasefire.

At this stage, it is also essential to focus on moving forward with consultations on the security and economic dossiers to maintain calm and build confidence while simultaneously removing all obstacles hindering the launch of comprehensive consultations on a political solution to end the Yemeni crisis.

Despite the continuation of the truce, we condemn the continued collective punishment imposed on Taiz, which has been besieged for over seven years as the Houthis continue to block the main roads leading to the

city. That has forced civilians and cargo trucks to take longer and more dangerous paths.

We had hoped that the Special Envoy's briefing would include positive news for the more than 4 million residents of that besieged city. We deplore the Houthis' rejection of United Nations proposals so far despite several rounds of consultations in Amman, as well as the visit of the Special Envoy to Sana'a and Muscat to meet with the negotiators of the Houthi militias. The Houthi intransigence is a cause for real concern, as it undermines the prospects for sustainable peace and pushes us back to square one. We therefore demand that the Houthi militias immediately lift restrictions on the movement in Taiz, while demonstrating flexibility in all United Nations-led consultations.

We look forward to the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Mission to Support the Hodeidah Agreement. We hope that the legitimate concerns of the Yemeni Government regarding the provisions of the resolution and the numerous reports of the militarization of ports are taken into account. In that context, we stress that the Houthis must stop their escalation, including launching drones and missiles at civilian areas. The Houthi militias must realize that there is no military solution to the Yemeni crisis and that only a peaceful solution is the way forward.

Furthermore, there is a need to prioritize measures regarding the protection of civilians, including by stopping all violations of the truce while clearing Yemeni land of mines and their remnants. According to United Nations reports, mines unfortunately continue to cause a large number of those killed and injured since the beginning of the truce. In this vein, we commend the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre through MASAM project for removing nearly 350,000 explosive remnants of the war so far. Such important humanitarian efforts help save countless lives at a time when the Houthi militias are ignoring the safety of the population and causing damage and destruction throughout Yemen. We also stress the urgent need to address the situation of the *FSO SAFER* oil tanker to avoid a serious environmental catastrophe.

In the light of the challenges facing Yemen, we welcome the announcement by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia of a financial package for development projects valued at \$400 million, which is in addition to the \$200 million to support electricity plants. That announcement falls under more than \$3 billion support

from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, including \$2 billion as a Saudi-Emirati deposit in the Central Bank of Yemen in Aden.

In conclusion, we reiterate our support for the efforts aimed at alleviating the suffering of the brotherly Yemeni people and to establish security, peace and stability in Yemen.

**Mr. Kiboino (Kenya):** I thank Special Envoy Hans Grundberg and Assistant Secretary-General Joyce Msuya for their briefings. I also welcome the participation of the representative of Yemen in this meeting.

Kenya acknowledges the efforts made by the Special Envoy to engage with the parties concerned, including the latest proposal for the opening of the roads in Taiz. Our concern is that failure to reach an agreement could undermine the fragile truce and jeopardize any prospects for its renewal, as well as the opening of the roads in Taiz and other governorates. We therefore strongly urge the Houthis to engage constructively and demonstrate flexibility for the sake of the millions of affected Yemenis.

Kenya welcomes the continued engagement with the parties' focal points in the Military Coordination Committee. We underscore the need for the parties to utilize that dialogue to uphold their commitment to the current truce, including through a continued cessation of all offensive operations inside and outside of Yemen, as well as freezing current military positions on the ground.

The rising use of explosive devices in the wake of increased movement into formerly militarized zones is deeply worrisome. The victims of those indiscriminate weapons include the most vulnerable, such as women and children. The mine-coordination role of United Nations Mission to Support the Hodeidah Agreement with the parties and United Nations agencies in Al-Hudaydah in order to address this challenge remains essential.

Despite some progress on the political track, we have yet to see tangible improvements on the economic, humanitarian and security fronts. Indeed, the situation, as highlighted by Assistant Secretary-General Msuya this morning, is deeply concerning, all the more so as the World Food Programme is reducing food assistance programmes during this period of increased hardship.

It is clear that urgent humanitarian assistance is critical in the immediate term. But there is also need

for more pragmatic approaches to humanitarian action programmes for sustainability and resilience. To that end, consideration should be given to intensifying efforts to, first, support the promotion of agricultural production, agrolivelihoods and food security in order to reduce dependence on food imports; secondly, support the transition from humanitarian to development assistance in order to mitigate the effects of humanitarian funding shortfalls; and, thirdly, increase peacebuilding efforts to achieve sustainable peace that will foster an environment conducive for Yemenis to engage in legitimate enterprises and contribute to national development.

As Yemen is heavily dependent on imports, the work of the United Nations Verification and Inspection Mechanism for Yemen in facilitating the unimpeded flow of commercial items and vessels sailing into Al-Hudaydah and Saleef ports is crucial to supporting the implementation of resolution 2216 (2015). It is unfortunate that the Mission is facing funding challenges. We therefore call on the international community to generously contribute to the Mission.

On the *FSO SAFER* oil tanker, we commend the contributions made to date, as well as the tireless efforts of the United Nations in rallying donors, and we encourage more generous donations to make the emergency operation possible while the window of opportunity exists.

In conclusion, Kenya reaffirms its commitment to supporting the ongoing United Nations efforts to facilitate Yemeni-led and -owned comprehensive and lasting peace and stability.

**Mrs. Buenrostro Massieu** (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Special Envoy Hans Grundberg and Assistant Secretary-General Joyce Msuya for their briefings. I also welcome the representative of Yemen to this Security Council meeting.

I would like to begin by acknowledging the efforts led by the Special Envoy and the commitment made during the third meeting of the Military Coordination Committee, held in Amman, to maintain the truce in Yemen and to take confidence-building measures and reduce incidents at the operational level.

Of concern, however, are the limited developments regarding the lifting of the blockade in Taiz, one of the main elements of the truce. We regret the Houthi rejection of the updated proposal presented by the

Special Envoy. We urge the parties to work with him and to make the necessary concessions in the interest of the welfare of the Yemeni people. We also call on the parties to refrain from using inflammatory rhetoric in their statements, which can only result in the deterioration of the negotiations.

We note with great concern that, since our most recent meeting (see S/PV.9063) on this issue, there has been no significant progress on funding for operations to avert an environmental, economic and humanitarian catastrophe resulting from the *FSO SAFER* oil tanker situation. Equally worrisome is the lack of funding for the United Nations Verification and Inspection Mechanism for Yemen. The Mechanism ensures compliance with the arms embargo established by the Council and guarantees the flow of goods for a country that imports 90 per cent of its food and in which 17.4 million people are in a situation of food insecurity.

Despite the relief provided by the truce, the humanitarian situation in the country continues to deteriorate. It is alarming that only 26 per cent of the humanitarian response plan has been funded, which is forcing agencies to reduce their operations. In addition, the rising cost of basic products and the depreciation of the rial have exacerbated the deterioration of socioeconomic conditions in the country. We recognize the efforts under way to improve economic governance. In that framework, we stress that women's socioeconomic empowerment is critical to reaching those goals. The country will be unable to progress if half of its labour force is left behind — it is that simple.

Meanwhile, access restrictions for, and smear campaigns against, the humanitarian community continue, resulting in escalating violence for its personnel. We therefore urge the parties to ensure the full, safe and unimpeded access of humanitarian personnel to people in need, in accordance with obligations under international humanitarian law, as well as to reaffirm its condemnation of any action taken to intimidate the humanitarian community. Mexico also calls for the immediate release of detained humanitarian personnel.

In conclusion, I reiterate Mexico's support for a 12-month renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Mission to Support the Hodeidah Agreement.

**Mr. De Rivièrè** (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. Grundberg and Ms. Msuya for their briefings.

The truce has now lasted for almost three months and is generally respected by the parties. It is essential that it be renewed next month and that we achieve a sustainable nationwide ceasefire.

The progress made by the Special Envoy since the beginning of the truce is commendable. I am referring in particular to access to Al-Hudaydah port and Sana'a airport. We also note the goodwill of the Yemeni Government. France calls on the parties to respond positively to the Special Envoy's balanced proposal on Taiz. The Houthis must lift the blockade and reopen the main road to the city. The parties must make the necessary compromises because the suffering of the people of Taiz has gone on for too long.

Despite the truce, the humanitarian situation remains very worrisome. International humanitarian law and human rights must be respected by all, and full humanitarian access must be guaranteed. It is essential that United Nations personnel be allowed to travel in safety. We reiterate our call for the immediate and unconditional release of all those detained by the Houthis. With regard to the *FSO SAFER* oil tanker, we call on States and the private sector to contribute financially to the appeal launched by the United Nations. There is no time to lose if we want to avoid a disaster.

The renewal of the truce is a precious opportunity to move forward on the security, political and economic tracks of the strategic framework proposed by the United Nations. Beyond the discussions about Taiz, it is essential that Yemenis engage in dialogue on the future of their country. It is time to bring this protracted conflict to an end. The relevant international parameters, including in resolutions adopted by the Council, are well known.

**Ms. Juul** (Norway): I would like to thank Special Envoy Grundberg and Assistant Secretary-General Msuya for their briefings and updates.

Let me start by welcoming the parties' continued commitment to the current truce, as well as the third meeting of the Military Coordination Committee. At such a fragile moment, it will be crucial to maintain the efforts to build trust. All the achievements made so far should be utilised to create further results for the Yemeni people, including on the question of reopening roads in and around the city of Taiz. We thank Mr. Grundberg for his update on those matters.

The Yemeni people and civil society have made their needs clear. We urge both sides to show flexibility and to turn their commitments into concrete action. We support all the Special Envoy's efforts on the multi-track process and commend his continued dialogue with the parties, as well as with diverse groups of Yemeni people, leaders and experts, including women. It will also be important to take advantage of the humanitarian gains from the truce to facilitate progress towards a comprehensive political settlement.

Today I want to focus on Yemen's most vulnerable people, its children. We have seen that the truce has had an immense positive impact on the everyday lives of civilians, with child casualties dropping significantly, creating a sense of hope for the future. However, we must not be complacent. We remain worried about the continuing humanitarian crisis, especially its impact on children. The World Food Programme reports that more than 2 million Yemeni children under the age of five require treatment for acute malnutrition, with more than half a million at risk of dying without treatment. Food insecurity continues to drive negative coping strategies that fuel conflict in Yemen, such as the recruitment of children into armed conflict and other forms of child labour. The action plan signed between Ansar Allah and the United Nations to end and prevent the recruitment or use of children in armed conflict, the killing or maiming of children and attacks on schools and hospitals was indeed an encouraging step. It must be implemented immediately. We also underline the importance of identifying and releasing children from within military ranks.

Children are also particularly vulnerable to mines and explosive remnants of war. Further efforts towards all aspects of mine action operations are needed. Dedicated attention to the unique needs of Yemeni children is an imperative if we are to reach sustainable solutions to the conflict. Norway therefore calls on all the parties to swiftly and fully implement the recommendations and conclusions of the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict.

Finally, Norway is increasingly alarmed by the reports of security incidents such as those described by Assistant Secretary-General Msuya. We are worried about the increasing attacks and harmful rhetoric aimed at humanitarian organizations and non-governmental organization workers. Safe and unhindered access for humanitarian aid is crucial. We also condemn the killing of the journalist Saber Al-Haidari in June. Such attacks

are unacceptable and prohibited under international humanitarian law. A safe, inclusive political space must be part of Yemen's future.

**Mr. Agyeman** (Ghana): My delegation is grateful to Special Envoy Grundberg and Assistant Secretary-General Msuya for their briefings. I also welcome the representative of Yemen to today's meeting.

We are pleased to see that the renewed two-month truce is still holding, despite reports of violations by some of the parties. We acknowledge the considerable efforts of the Special Envoy and the entire United Nations team, as well as all the other stakeholders involved in the negotiations process, in achieving such a feat. We note that since the truce began there has been a lull in military activities by the warring factions inside Yemen and across its borders, leading to a decline in civilian casualties — an indication that the restoration of peace and security in the country in the foreseeable future is possible and could be within the parties' grasp. We therefore call on the parties to seize this moment, not only to fully commit to the terms of the truce and to refraining from actions that have the potential to undermine the marginal progress being made, but to build on it to achieve an inclusive, comprehensive and durable solution that will enable the people of Yemen to chart their own political destiny.

We welcome the pledge by the military representatives of the Government of Yemen, Ansar Allah and the Joint Forces Command of the Coalition to build trust and fully commit to the terms of the truce, made at the third meeting of the Military Coordination Committee held in Amman last week under the auspices of the Office of the Special Envoy. The Committee's discussions on setting up a joint coordination room tasked with de-escalating incidents at the operational level are also a welcome development. Such confidence-building measures by the parties are essential and should be encouraged in order to create an opportunity for the peaceful resolution of differences between the factions and thereby help consolidate the truce.

However, it is regrettable that the right of civilians in Taiz and other governorates to move freely in a safe and secure manner is still being curtailed by the continued blockage of roads. That unfortunate development has brought immense suffering and hardship to the people of Taiz and the governorates in question. It is incumbent on the parties to follow through with their commitment

under the terms of the truce to meeting under the auspices of the United Nations, without further delay, in order to agree on modalities for the reopening of all roads to help ease the people's suffering. In that regard, we welcome the Special Envoy's proposal for a phased reopening of the roads and encourage the parties to consider it seriously.

Even though the three-month-old ceasefire has led to a significant reduction in civilian casualties, the humanitarian situation in Yemen remains severe, as we heard this morning. According to the World Food Programme (WFP), approximately 13 million needy people require emergency food assistance. Sadly, owing to funding gaps and rising global food prices, the WFP is being compelled to scale back its support for 5 million of those people to less than 50 per cent of their daily requirement, and to around 25 per cent of the daily requirements for the other 8 million. In addition, resilience and livelihood activities, as well as school feeding and nutrition programmes for approximately 4 million, are to cease, leaving assistance available for only 1.8 million people. We call on all donors to help bridge the WFP's funding shortfall to enable it to offer the assistance the people of Yemen need.

Furthermore, the high risk of a catastrophic oil spillage from the *FSO SAFER* in the Red Sea and the likelihood of a major humanitarian and ecological disaster resulting from the potential spillage remains a matter of grave concern to us. We acknowledge the ongoing international efforts that have mobilized more than \$64 million for the first phase of the operation's estimated cost of approximately \$80 million. We call on the international community to support the United Nations fundraising campaign, which aims to fill the \$20 million gap in order to avert a major global environmental disaster.

In view of the important role in the peace process in Yemen played by the United Nations Mission to Support the Hodeidah Agreement, we look forward to the renewal of its mandate, which will expire at the end of this week.

In conclusion, we call on all the conflicting parties in Yemen to honour their obligations under the terms of the truce in order to help consolidate it and take advantage of the opportunity offered by the ceasefire to work towards a comprehensive and durable political solution for the benefit of the Yemeni people.

**Ms. Moran** (Ireland): I thank our briefers, Special Envoy Grundberg and Assistant Secretary-General Msuya.

The benefits of the United Nations-mediated truce are being felt across Yemen and the region in the cessation of cross-border attacks and air strikes, the significant increase in fuel imports, the resumption of flights in and out of Sana'a and, as the Special Envoy said, the very welcome reduction in civilian casualties over the past three months. Now is the time to push forward and for all actors to strengthen their commitment to the truce. The convening of the third meeting of the Military Coordination Committee in Amman last week was a reason for optimism. The parties sitting together is undoubtedly the best way to build much-needed confidence.

The flexibility and constructive approach shown by the Government of Yemen on key issues has been very welcome. It is past time for the Houthis to step up and prove to the people of Yemen that they are serious about long-term peace by engaging with the United Nations and its current proposals to find agreement on reopening roads in Taiz and other governorates. In addition to dramatically alleviating the suffering of Taiz residents, that would be a meaningful step towards translating the truce into a durable ceasefire and an inclusive Yemeni-led, Yemeni-owned and United Nations-supported political settlement.

Although the truce has led to significantly decreased levels of violence, the security situation remains concerning. We are alarmed by the recent spate of attacks carried out in Aden and the insecurity in the south more broadly. We call on all parties to fully respect their commitments under the truce and avoid escalatory rhetoric. We utterly condemn the killing of journalist Saber Al-Haidari on 15 June, after an improvised explosive device was planted in his car. We express our deepest condolences to his family and loved ones. That follows the tragic killing of pregnant journalist Rasha Abdullah Al-Harazi in Aden in November 2021.

As we said at our Arria Formula meeting on the protection of journalists in May, we need journalists to shine a light on the truth, including in Yemen. They are integral to sustainable peace and must be protected. We call for an investigation into those brutal attacks and for those responsible to be held accountable. The concerning rise in physical and online attacks against

international non-governmental organizations and United Nations agencies is also very worrisome and hinders crucial humanitarian work. We reiterate that those attacks must cease immediately.

We recognize that instability in Yemen is also linked to the precarious economic situation and dire living conditions faced by many Yemenis, with the humanitarian crisis continuing to deteriorate even with the respite offered by the truce. In total, an estimated 19 million people are expected to face food insecurity in the next six months.

Against that backdrop, a critically underfunded humanitarian response plan and the additional cuts to food aid announced recently by the World Food Programme are deeply troubling and will impact millions of Yemenis. As we heard from Assistant Secretary-General Msuya today, considerable international assistance is required more than ever to save lives in Yemen.

In conclusion, only a political solution will end the conflict and durably resolve the humanitarian crisis. We call once again on the parties to show a genuine commitment to ending Yemenis' suffering. During this time of Eid Al-Adha, we ask the parties not to let this precious opportunity for peace pass them by. Lastly, we look forward to the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Mission to Support the Hodeidah Agreement later this week and express our appreciation to the Mission and to Major General Beary for his leadership.

**Mr. Hoxha** (Albania): I thank Special Envoy Grundberg and Ms. Msuya for their updates, information and respective efforts in addressing the multiple issues in Yemen.

We welcome the fact that truce is holding. We hope that, during the remaining time of its extension, the parties will continue to seek and find common ground to address and possibly resolve all the pending issues. The truce is also delivering. War casualties have drastically decreased, and the daily life of the Yemeni people has changed. We reiterate our call on the parties to fully embrace all the efforts of United Nations regional actors and the international community as a whole to ensure its extension.

Everyone knows by now what the seven years of violence have done to the country, and we hope that everyone notices what a few months of truce have brought and what such prospects promise for the future.

A clear choice of compromise and peace over war defines the future of the country.

The parties must build on the progress achieved and fully implement the truce in letter and spirit and lead the country towards a nationwide ceasefire and permanent peace. The guns must be completely silenced; talks should replace them and lead to sustainable peace. The people of Yemen are supported on this path by the unity of the United Nations and the Security Council, which encourage them to seize the critical momentum.

Albania commends the Government in Yemen for opening Sana'a airport and continuing to ease restrictions on the many Yemenis who travel to Jordan and Egypt. We have called on the Houthis to do the same thing with regard to reopening the roads to Taiz. We regret that has not happened. An agreement on road openings as part of the truce, as rightly highlighted by the Special Envoy, remains critical.

Building confidence remains crucial for the future of a political settlement. And if the Houthis believe in peace, they must concretely and genuinely do more. Resolving the outstanding issues will not be easy, but nothing can be done successfully without genuine engagement to pave the way towards meaningful Yemeni-Yemeni talks. We reiterate our call for an inclusive process in which the voices of women and young people are fully heard.

We welcome the convening of the third meeting of the Military Coordination Committee and the parties' commitment to build more trust and reinforce the truce, hopefully beyond the Eid Al-Adha celebrations. We welcome in particular their engagement in freezing their current military positions on the ground, moderating their rhetoric in public statements and media and adopting a focus on protecting civilian children, women and men, as well as civilian infrastructure. But as we heard, we must be and must remain vigilant.

We commend Saudi Arabia and Oman for their consistent engagement with Yemen and their endorsement of the truce, as well as the commitments for massive economic and financial support from Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates. That must be accompanied with sound, credible and inclusive reforms and policies.

Despite the progress made, as we heard, the dire humanitarian situation has not improved. We have expressed in the past the concern that Yemen was

becoming a forgotten conflict. The truce could and should help reverse that trend. As we heard from Ms. Msuya, the shortage of funds and the acute impact of the war in Ukraine stand in the way.

Let us not forget: if we do not feed the hungry, we fuel the conflict. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and humanitarian workers need to be able to carry out their mission freely and securely in providing help to all those in need. Any attack against them is indeed an attack against all Yemenis who are exposed to famine-like conditions and food shortages.

Albania firmly condemns the continued incarceration of the local staff members currently or formerly employed by the United States Embassy and the United Nations. We call on the Houthis to release all those detained immediately. We also call for the release of United Nations and NGO staff members and other civilians who have been abducted by armed groups or forcibly disappeared.

Let me conclude by reiterating Albania's full support for the successful mandate renewal of the United Nations Mission to Support the Hodeidah Agreement later this week, as well as for the work of the United Nations Verification and Inspection Mechanism for Yemen in facilitating the unimpeded flow of commercial items through the verification and inspection of commercial vessels sailing to Yemeni ports. Change is on the way for Yemenis. Everything must be done to make it lasting, and the Special Envoy has our full support in his efforts.

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

I would first like to thank Mr. Grundberg and Ms. Msuya for their informative briefings, and to welcome our Yemeni colleague to today's meeting.

We have now entered the third month of the nationwide truce initiated in April and renewed in June. Its first month coincided with the Yemeni people's first relatively peaceful Ramadan in more than seven years, and on Friday they were able to celebrate Eid Al-Adha without fear of becoming victims in military confrontations. It is the longest respite that ordinary Yemenis have had from the fighting since 2014, and the past few months have given them hope that the conflict will not rage on indefinitely and that a return to normality is possible. However, the truce will not hold if it is not fully implemented. We have seen

progress with regard to most of its provisions, including increased fuel imports and civilian flights in the north. As we have repeatedly heard today, reopening the roads in Taiz and elsewhere is now the missing link in the agreement announced in April. We urge the Houthis to reconsider and to commit fully to the Special Envoy's two-phase plan for reopening roads to civilian traffic. This is no time for brinkmanship or delaying tactics. On the eve of Eid Al-Adha, the parties renewed their commitment to the truce, which was a very positive signal, but it must be followed by action. The truce is the first building block in constructing a permanent ceasefire and a sustainable peace, and reopening the roads is an essential step towards that ultimate goal.

We have once again heard from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs that the humanitarian response in Yemen is facing extremely serious challenges. The truce has brought about a sharp decrease in civilian casualties, but we are still very far from meeting the basic needs of Yemenis. As Assistant Secretary-General Msuya just said, we are short of more than 50 per cent of the funds needed for humanitarian aid to Yemen. It is urgent that we work as an international community to close the funding gap. If we do not, we will continue to meet again in the Council, month after month, only to hear that the World Food Programme, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, UNICEF and other agencies have reduced or closed down yet another programme, while the needs of Yemenis have continued to increase. The Yemen crisis must not be forgotten or sidelined.

Humanitarian aid alone is not sustainable, and the Yemeni economy must be given the conditions to recover. That includes regular fuel imports, the increased mobility of people and goods, foreign financial aid and, especially, respect for the military truce. Throughout the conflict, Yemen has seen a vicious cycle of violence, economic crisis and humanitarian disaster combined. Peace and stability will not return unless each of those factors is addressed in turn.

Finally, as we prepare to renew the mandate of the United Nations Mission to support the Hodeidah Agreement on Wednesday, it is also appropriate to recognize the valuable work done by the Mission in stabilizing Yemen's vital Red Sea coast in spite of significant challenges. Al-Hudaydah is a lifeline for millions of Yemenis and has a major role to play in the country's economic recovery. We want to take this

opportunity to reiterate our call to the Houthis to allow the Mission full freedom of movement.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I would like to draw the attention of speakers to paragraph 22 of presidential note S/2017/507, which encourages all participants in Council meetings to deliver their statements in five minutes or less, in line with the Security Council's commitment to making more effective use of open meetings.

I now give the floor to the representative of Yemen.

**Mr. Al-Saadi** (Yemen) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to congratulate you, Madam President, on your country's assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month, and to thank Albania for presiding over it last month. I am also grateful to Mr. Grundberg and Ms. Msuya for their briefings.

The long-suffering Yemeni people have continued to endure the considerable, indeed almost immeasurable humanitarian and economic consequences as the Houthi militias have continued their war and their escalation of violence, which has resulted in a dreadful humanitarian crisis at an enormous economic cost. Millions of Yemenis have been displaced, forced to leave their homes after seeing their livelihoods seriously impacted. With the aim of ending the conflict and easing the people's suffering, the Presidential Leadership Council and the Yemeni Government have committed to supporting every possible regional and international effort to bring about comprehensive and lasting peace, based on the Gulf Cooperation Council Initiative and its implementation mechanism, the outcome of the National Dialogue Conference and the relevant Security Council resolutions, in particular resolution 2216 (2015).

We continue to fully support Special Envoy Grundberg's efforts. We have also accepted the extension of the truce, which represents the Yemeni people's hope for a comprehensive ceasefire and a resumption of negotiations on a political settlement of the conflict that would prevent further bloodshed, despite the daily violations of the truce perpetrated by the Iran-backed Houthi militias on all fronts. They are creating new military sites, mobilizing and repositioning forces, transferring equipment, smuggling weapons and continuing to shell civilian residential areas in Taiz, Ma'rib, Al-Hudaydah and elsewhere. As I speak, Houthi

militias are bombing Martyrs' Square in the city of Taiz, where Eid Al-Adha celebrations are taking place. And while the Yemeni Government has demonstrated flexibility and acted positively regarding all the humanitarian efforts, while making many concessions to ease people's suffering — such as reopening Sana'a airport and resuming commercial flights and regular fuel imports through the port of Al-Hudaydah — those efforts have been exploited by the Houthi militias for military and political gains. During the truce their earnings from those gains have reached more than 90 billion Yemeni rials, which they are using to finance their war on the Yemeni people and to enrich their own leaders rather than paying the salaries of civil servants in the areas they control in line with the agreement with the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General and the Stockholm Agreement.

The Yemeni Government reiterates the importance of implementing all provisions of the truce, including lifting the siege on Taiz and reopening the main roads to that city prior to discussing any other issues. I would like to point out that it took more than six weeks for the Houthi militias to appoint their negotiating team for the talks on Taiz, after which they refused to engage in discussions on reopening the main roads, although they have insisted on opening secondary roads. As the Special Envoy mentioned today, they then rejected his proposals even after he visited Sana'a in an attempt to convince them. Their behaviour shows that they are not serious and that they are determined to prolong the negotiations, circumvent the truce and blackmail the international community. What we are seeing now is once again a prolongation of the situation that has existed since the Stockholm Agreement was signed in 2018. We reiterate our call to the international community and the Security Council to act swiftly to pressure the Houthi militias to take advantage of the prospects for peace and meet their obligations under the truce. We call for an unconditional reopening of the roads to Taiz to ease its residents' humanitarian suffering, which would demonstrate that the militias are serious about accepting a political settlement. Peace requires genuine partnership, good faith and serious work, which have been lacking on the part of the Houthis so far.

We also reiterate the importance of resolving the humanitarian issue of captives and detainees, which is on the list of the priorities and concerns of the United Nations, the Special Envoy and the Council. The efforts to ensure their release and remove the obstacles

created by the Houthi militias with regard to the issue must continue.

The economy is a main priority for the Presidential Leadership Council. The Government is therefore committed to supporting economic and developmental stability and promoting humanitarian and relief work to establish development by adopting plans and programmes that can achieve economic recovery, support reconstruction and promote resilience. In that context, the Yemeni Government values the generous assistance given and the humanitarian approaches taken by our brothers in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, in particularly through the allocation of \$3.3 billion in support to the Yemeni Central Bank and other programmes and projects in the humanitarian and development areas, including the Saudi Programme for the Development and Reconstruction of Yemen. These efforts are welcomed by the Yemeni people and the Yemeni political leadership because of the tangible contribution they make in various areas of development and delivery of services. The Yemeni Government also commends the efforts made by the United Nations and other international partners aimed at alleviating humanitarian suffering in Yemen. We have demonstrated all kinds of support for these efforts and sought to address those obstacles that hinder such efforts. Nonetheless, the main challenge in the area of humanitarian work is access to those in need.

Many countries are experiencing food insecurity and a spike in prices. However, insufficient financing, in particular for the humanitarian response plan, is depriving millions of needy people of basic necessities. Humanitarian organizations in areas controlled by the Houthi militias are encountering obstruction and acts of diverting aid from those in need. The Panel of Experts, in its report to the sanctions committee established pursuant to 2140 (2014), stated that the Houthi militias are also preventing Yemeni families from getting humanitarian aid if their children do not join the Houthi ranks and fight on their side.

Indeed, the Houthi militias continue to recruit thousands of children. They use them in their war despite the fact that a truce is in place and efforts are being made to reach a political settlement and a ceasefire. Scenes from the so-called summer camps of those militias show their leaders luring children below the age of 15 and training and brainwashing them with extremist ideas and slogans of death, violence and hate. That confirms that the Houthi militias are preparing

for a new round of escalation. They are using children as fuel while the international community and the United Nations are silent vis-à-vis the broadest child-recruitment operation in the history of humankind. They ignore the dangers of such a crime against present and future generations of Yemeni children, their inherent right to life and the security and stability of the region and the world.

The Houthis signed an action plan with the United Nations. However, they are striving not to implement it. Rather, they continue to deceive the international community while the Houthis continue to recruit thousands of children and push them into their absurd war.

While I address the Security Council today, the *FSO SAFER* oil tanker situation is continuing to deteriorate. This is an imminent and unprecedented economic, environmental and humanitarian disaster in Yemen. It will affect the neighbouring countries, reach

the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean and undermine international maritime routes. Reports note that the Houthi militias are placing naval mines in large areas of the Red Sea, including near the oil tanker. This poses a serious threat to maritime security in the Red Sea, as well as to United Nations efforts to manage the oil tanker situation. We urge the Security Council and the international community to exert pressure on the Houthis to ensure that they are committed to the plan. We reiterate our call to complete the financing of the plan so that the effects of the imminent disaster can be avoided.

**The President:** 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 11.45 a.m.*