



# Security Council

Seventy-seventh year

**9110**<sup>th</sup> meeting  
Monday, 15 August 2022, 10 a.m.  
New York

*Provisional*

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<i>President:</i>	Mr. Zhang Jun . . . . .	(China)
<i>Members:</i>	Albania . . . . .	Mr. Hoxha
	Brazil . . . . .	Mr. Meirelles Reis Sotero de Menezes
	France . . . . .	Mrs. Broadhurst Estival
	Gabon . . . . .	Mr. Biang
	Ghana . . . . .	Ms. Oppong-Ntiri
	India . . . . .	Mrs. Kamboj
	Ireland . . . . .	Ms. Moran
	Kenya . . . . .	Mr. Kiboino
	Mexico . . . . .	Mr. De la Fuente Ramírez
	Norway . . . . .	Mr. Kvalheim
	Russian Federation . . . . .	Mr. Polyanskiy
	United Arab Emirates . . . . .	Mrs. Alhefeiti
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . . . . .	Mr. Kariuki
	United States of America . . . . .	Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield

## 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** (*spoke in Chinese*): 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. Ghada Mudawi, Acting Director, Operations and Advocacy Division, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

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

I give the floor to Mr. Grundberg.

**Mr. Grundberg:** Two weeks ago, the parties agreed to extend the truce in Yemen under the same terms for another two months, until 2 October. I commend the parties for taking that step, which allows for the longest pause in fighting since the war began to continue. It also allows for the benefits of the humanitarian and economic measures in the truce agreement to unfold.

Along with the truce extension, the parties committed themselves to using the next two months to continue negotiations to reach an expanded truce agreement by 2 October. An expanded agreement would include additional elements that have the potential of further improving the daily lives of Yemeni men and women. It would also allow for further steps towards ending the conflict. As I work with the parties to achieve that goal, we all need to remind ourselves that a failure to reach an agreement to extend the truce would lead to renewed cycles of escalation and violence, with predictable and devastating consequences for Yemen's population. Yemen urgently needs to avoid that scenario. I call on the parties to make the choice to build the necessary confidence to avoid a return to war and to begin to build lasting peace.

Before I delve into the elements of the expanded truce proposal and explain the tangible impact it would have for Yemeni men and women, allow me to first

recapitulate where we stand to date in terms of the implementation of the current truce.

Four and a half months in, the truce continues to broadly hold in military terms. No major military operations or changes to front lines have occurred, and there have been neither confirmed airstrikes inside Yemen nor cross-border attacks emanating from Yemen. We continue to see a significant decline in civilian casualties, with the first week of August seeing the lowest civilian casualty count since the start of the truce and since the beginning of the war. Most civilian casualties continue to be a result of explosive remnants of warfare, including landmines and unexploded ordnance. A worrisome development is the increase in child casualties, which now constitute about 40 per cent of reported civilian casualties. One particularly horrific incident occurred in Taiz on 23 July, when a mortar was fired into the residential Zaid Al-Mushki district, killing one child and injuring 10 others. I condemn all such acts of violence. Civilians must be protected at all costs.

My Office continues to receive reports from both sides regarding the same types of alleged incidents as reported in the last months. As the truce does not include an independent monitoring mechanism, I encourage the parties to make use of the channels established under the truce, such as the Military Coordination Committee (MCC), to manage those alleged incidents.

The Military Coordination Committee is an important outcome of the truce. Maintaining that channel is of the utmost importance. The fourth meeting of the MCC is expected to take place during the last week of August in Amman. The parties have also agreed to meet as part of a technical working group to establish a joint coordination room, which would support the MCC by managing incidents through de-escalation at the operational level. The Chair of the MCC, my principal military adviser, just concluded a two-week visit to Aden, Sana'a and Taiz, where he held constructive discussions with MCC representatives as well as other security, political and civil society representatives.

Road openings in Taiz and other governorates continue to be at the forefront of my efforts. Members of my Office recently spent time on both sides of the front line in Taiz, where they engaged with local authorities as well as with local mediators and civil society organizations. Several proposals, with different sets of roads and sequencing options, have

been presented to the parties. It is regrettable that, despite those efforts, there has not been more progress achieved on road openings to date. For the sake of the people of Taiz, the wider population and the economy, the parties need to agree on opening roads as soon as possible. Road openings are mainly a humanitarian issue, and the truce provides a conducive environment for the parties to swiftly deliver on this issue, as they have done with other elements of the truce that are improving the humanitarian situation. The people of Taiz and across Yemen deserve to see the truce deliver for them in all its aspects. One of those elements is the flow of fuel imports to the port of Al-Hudaydah, which is continuing with the extension of the truce. A total of 33 ships have been cleared to enter Al-Hudaydah port since the start of the truce, bringing in almost 1 million metric tons of various fuel products. I would once again like to register my appreciation for the pivotal role played by the United Nations Verification and Inspection Mechanism in facilitating those imports of fuel products, and I reiterate my concern that funding shortages could result in its closure.

Another key element of the current truce agreement serving to improve the lives of Yemeni men and women is the opening of Sana'a's international airport to commercial flights. To date, 31 round-trip flights have operated to and from Sana'a, transporting more than 15,000 passengers, and my Office continues to work with the Egyptian authorities to facilitate regular flights to and from Cairo. Since my last briefing to the Security Council (see S/PV.9088), and as a result of the extraordinary support provided by the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, there has been an increase in the frequency of commercial flights to three flights a week operating between Sana'a and Amman. I hope to see the number and frequency of flights increase even further to enable Yemeni men and women to reunite with their families and seek medical treatment and educational opportunities abroad.

From the beginning, I have made it clear that the truce is an interim measure that aims to halt the hostilities and address urgent humanitarian and economic needs. Ms. Ghada Mudawi, Acting Director of Operations and Advocacy of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, will speak in more detail about these humanitarian and economic needs in her briefing. In my discussions with the parties, they continue to emphasize the need to build on the existing truce to achieve a wide array of economic

and security priorities and move towards more durable solutions for issues with political implications.

For that reason, I have been seeking to mediate an expanded truce agreement in the past few weeks. My proposal for it includes, first, an agreement on a transparent and effective disbursement mechanism for the regular payment of civil servants' salaries and civilian pensions; secondly, the opening of additional roads in Taiz and other governorates; thirdly, additional destinations to and from Sana'a airport; and fourthly, a regular flow of fuel into Al-Hudaydah port. An expanded agreement would provide for movement along a multitrack process to address additional humanitarian and economic issues and create an environment more conducive to starting discussions on a durable ceasefire and preparing for a resumption of a Yemeni-led political process under United Nations auspices.

Both parties have provided substantive feedback on my proposal. While a zone of potential agreement was discernible, more time was needed for them to discuss the details of an expanded truce agreement. The latest truce extension therefore allows us to continue to work expeditiously towards an expanded truce agreement, and I am intensifying my efforts to support the parties in resolving the outstanding issues. Given the complexities of the issues being addressed and the time constraints we face, I urge the parties to demonstrate flexibility and respond positively if I ask them to convene to reach an agreement.

During the next few weeks I will continue to count on the support of the international community for the implementation, extension and expansion of the truce. I am particularly thankful for the concerted support of the Council, as well as that of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Sultanate of Oman. We have a joint responsibility in helping Yemen and its population to take the necessary and decisive steps towards peace. We need to end the conflict, not merely manage it.

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

I now give the floor to Ms. Mudawi.

**Ms. Mudawi:** Like the Special Envoy, we welcome the recent extension of Yemen's truce. We hope it will lead to an expanded truce agreement along the lines of what Mr. Grundberg has just described. We also hope the extension will see rapid progress in reopening major roads in and around Taiz, where civilians, commercial

traffic and aid agencies have faced intolerable movement constraints for years, and we hope to see a more comprehensive end to the violence in Yemen. Although the fighting and civilian casualties have decreased sharply since April, they have never stopped entirely. On 23 July, for example, shelling in Taiz city killed one child and injured 10 more. According to open-source reports, more than 150 civilians have been killed since the truce began in April, so while we welcome the truce and its extension, we must also be clear-eyed about its limitations. The ongoing violence and civilian casualties inside the country are one such limitation. Yemen's massive humanitarian crisis is another. The truce alone cannot be expected to resolve that crisis, including the risk of famine that is threatening some areas. As we have said recently, three major issues are shaping Yemen's humanitarian outlook — the economy, the operating environment for aid agencies and humanitarian funding. Let me review where that stands.

First, with regard to the economy, where alarming conditions persist, the exchange rate is now worse than it was before the truce. All the immediate post-truce gains were short-lived, and now fewer people can afford to buy food or other shared essentials, nearly all of which must be imported. Food supplies inside the country are currently fairly stable, but the food supply chain, which depends on commercial imports, remains precarious. In July, commercial food imports fell for the fourth month in a row, coming in at 30 per cent below the 12-month average. Serious concerns are looming for commercial imports bound for Al-Hudaydah and Saleef, all of which are inspected by the United Nations Verification and Inspection Mechanism (UNVIM) prior to arrival. In July, Al-Hudaydah and Saleef brought in about 60 per cent of all food imports to Yemen and about 50 per cent of all fuel imports. Commercial imports are an essential lifeline, and the Security Council has often stated its commitment to facilitating them through all ports, most recently in resolution 2624 (2022). But UNVIM will likely have to stop its work in just a few weeks. It needs \$3.5 million to pay for operations through December. That is a modest sum compared to the enormous impact of enabling Yemen's private sector to continue bringing in the food, fuel and other goods that millions of people need to survive. If Member States choose to let UNVIM lapse, it is difficult to predict the consequence for commercial imports. We hope there are clear plans in place to ensure that those

imports continue without disruption, recalling the Security Council's commitment on the issue.

Aid agencies continue to deliver assistance across the country, reaching an average of more than 11 million people every month. The agencies often face serious constraints in doing so, which is my second point. We appreciate the efforts of the Government of Yemen to work with aid agencies to address insecurity. In recent weeks, the incitements against aid agencies on social media and in other forums have also decreased somewhat. In Houthi-held areas, there may now be a way forward to resolve the challenges we reported last month regarding the travel abroad of Yemeni aid workers. The discussion surrounding women's full participation in humanitarian action is also continuing. We will keep the Council informed as the discussion progresses.

Despite those positive steps, aid work remains more difficult and more dangerous than it should be. Aid agencies reported 532 access incidents in the second quarter of this year, which is an improvement over the first quarter but still equivalent to about six incidents every day, a majority of them due to movement restrictions. Insecurity is still a problem. In Lahij, agencies have faced at least three carjacking attempts in the past two weeks. In Sana'a, Houthi authorities are still detaining the two United Nations staff members they promised to release last November, and five United Nations staff members abducted in Abyan in February are still missing. We repeat our urgent call for all detained aid workers to be released right now. We would also appreciate direct engagement and support on the issue from Member States.

My last point is about funding for aid operations, where there is some good news. Last month, the United States allocated an additional \$431 million to the United Nations response plan in Yemen, bringing its total funding this year to more than \$1 billion and making it by far the largest humanitarian donor to Yemen this year. The new contribution from the United States is expected to help the World Food Programme increase rations for millions of hungry people whose food aid was cut in recent months. It will also provide support for other key sectors. With that contribution, the humanitarian response plan is now 41 per cent funded, a 14 per cent jump since last month. We thank all donors for their support and urge others to consider increases that will help keep aid programmes running through the end of the year. Funding gaps, particularly

in chronically underfunded sectors such as water, sanitation and shelter, are still a challenge. Over the past month, unprecedented flooding has affected more than 200,000 people but so far agencies have been able to help only about 30,000 people, mainly due to the lack of funds.

On a related note, the United Nations is also still working to raise money for the *FSO SAFER* tanker project. Members are all deeply familiar with the risks and urgency of that work. Several contributions, totalling \$5.4 million, were announced in the past month, bringing the total pledges to approximately \$63 million. The United Nations needs \$144 million to implement the fuel operation plan for the tanker, including \$80 million to start the emergency work of transferring the oil from the tanker as soon as possible.

We remain deeply concerned about the humanitarian outlook for Yemen. By taking action on all the issues I have just outlined, strengthening the economy, supporting the United Nations Verification and Inspection Mechanism, advocating for humanitarian access and closing the funding gaps for the response plan and the *FSO SAFER*, Member States can prevent further disaster, reduce suffering and strengthen the resilience of millions of Yemenis.

**The President** (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Ms. Mudawi for her briefing.

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

**Mr. Kariuki** (United Kingdom): I thank Special Envoy Grundberg and Ms. Mudawi for their briefings. On behalf of the United Kingdom, I would like to pay tribute in particular to Mr. Grundberg's continued leadership, which has been critical in securing the two-month extension to the truce. That is a significant achievement by the United Nations and the parties. For the Yemeni people, it means an additional two months of relative peace and a chance to keep benefiting from the confidence-building measures. Fuel prices for ordinary Yemenis have eased thanks to the delivery of 720,000 metric tons of oil into Al-Hudaydah port during the past four months. Yemenis have been accorded renewed freedom of movement, thanks to the commercial round-trip flights out of Sana'a.

While the extension of the treaty is welcome, we recognize and today have heard about the challenge of the two months ahead. We urge the parties to

continue their constructive engagement with the Special Envoy and to abide by their commitments. Continued cooperation and an expansion of the truce are in the interests of all the parties and the Yemeni people. Only peace can resolve the severe humanitarian crisis. Despite the truce's tangible benefits for Yemeni civilians, rising global commodity prices and a dearth of humanitarian funding have meant that their suffering continues. Analysis by the World Food Programme in June showed some of the highest levels of inadequate food consumption ever recorded in Yemen. In this cycle, the shortage of funding will lead to 3 million fewer Yemenis receiving the rations they need. The funding deficit is undermining the humanitarian response. Without a further disbursement of funds from donors, the crisis will only deepen and undermine the benefits of the truce. Indeed, without humanitarian access, no amount of funding can serve those in need. The people of Yemen deserve to live peacefully without the looming threat of famine.

While we welcome the progress associated with the truce, the threat of a spill from the *FSO SAFER* tanker continues to loom over Yemen and the region. Action must be immediate as a failure to intervene will result in an environmental and humanitarian catastrophe. The United Kingdom was pleased to announce on 18 July a further £2 million pledge to the United Nations operation, but we urge our colleagues to bridge the funding gap and commit immediately before it is too late.

**Ms. Oppong-Ntiri** (Ghana): At the outset, let me thank Special Envoy Hans Grundberg and Ms. Ghada Mudawi for their briefings.

As Ghana reiterates its endorsement of the parties' renewal of the truce for two months beginning on 2 August, we are encouraged by their resolve to deepen their negotiations to reach an expanded truce and believe that such an expansion, if carried through, will mark a turning point in the history of the seven-year conflict. We therefore reiterate our call to the parties to seize this favourable moment and give peace a chance by considering the proposals for Special Envoy's expanded truce, which has the potential to be transformed into a nationwide ceasefire and to create the environment needed for a resumption of the Yemeni-led political process under the auspices of the United Nations. We commend the Special Envoy and his entire United Nations team for their admirable persistence, as well as all the other stakeholders involved in the negotiating

process, and encourage the further work required to bring peace, security and development to Yemen. In that regard, we urge the Special Envoy and his team not to relax their efforts but to continue to be resolute in their pursuit of peace and to focus on the requirements of peace to the benefit of all Yemenis. We stress the importance of the full, effective and meaningful participation of Yemeni women in all stages of the peace process and applaud their long-demonstrated willingness and capacity to engage in communal and national efforts aimed at resolving the conflict.

The benefits of the truce are manifestly visible for all to see. Thanks to it, 26 fuel ships carrying approximately 720,027 metric tons of fuel derivatives entered Al-Hudaydah port in the space of less than four months, compared to 470,000 metric tons for the whole of 2021. In addition, thanks to the truce, flights have been resumed between Sana'a and Amman as of 21 July, and the flights between Sana'a and Cairo have transported more than 8,000 passengers. Above all, the truce has resulted in a decrease in civilian casualties of as much as 60 per cent. Those statistics are worth highlighting to remind the parties of the enormous opportunities that await the people of Yemen if they can maintain their choice to engage constructively and in good faith in the United Nations-facilitated negotiations towards a resolution of the conflict.

Nevertheless, in that context, we remain concerned about the fact that people in Taiz and other governorates are unable to enjoy the full benefits of the truce because their right to free movement continues to be curtailed by the continued blocking of roads to the city. That unfortunate development has brought immense suffering and hardship to the people of Taiz and the governorates affected. It is incumbent on the parties to follow through on their commitments under the terms of the truce in order to meet, without further delay and under the auspices of the United Nations, on the modalities for the reopening of all the blocked routes. We also know that notwithstanding the general lull in military activities by the warring factions inside Yemen and across its borders, there was a reported attack in Taiz that left 11 children injured on 24 July. We condemn those attacks in no uncertain terms and call on the perpetrators to desist from such action, which tends to undermine the truce and reverse the marginal progress that has been made.

Even as we have been seeing significant reductions in civilian casualties since the beginning

of the truce, the humanitarian situation in Yemen has remained severe. According to the World Food Programme, approximately 17.4 million Yemenis are food insecure — a number that is projected to rise to 19 million by the end of the year. Sadly, the plight of the population affected is exacerbated by the current global rise in food prices. We call for sustained support from donors to help bridge the funding gap in the Yemen humanitarian response plan to ensure continued assistance in the amounts necessary for the people in need.

Furthermore, the high risk of a catastrophic oil spill from the *FSO SAFER* in the Red Sea, and the likelihood of a major humanitarian and ecological disaster resulting from such a spill, remains a matter of grave concern to us. We acknowledge the ongoing international efforts that have mobilized about \$65 million for the first phase of the operation, whose cost is estimated at approximately \$80 million. We call on the international community to support the United Nations fundraising campaign aimed at addressing this threat, in order to avert a major ecological and environmental disaster with global consequences. As has been pointed out, a failure to do so in good time will require more funds to do the clean-up than the amount that is currently being sought, in addition to the environmental damage that a spill from the tanker would cause.

In conclusion, we call on the conflicting parties in Yemen to fully honour their obligations under the terms of the truce and to redouble their efforts towards an agreement on the expanded truce proposal of the United Nations Special Envoy for the benefit of the Yemeni people.

**Mrs. Alhefeiti** (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Mr. Grundberg and Ms. Mudawi for their comprehensive briefings on the political and humanitarian developments in Yemen.

The United Arab Emirates welcomes the extension of the humanitarian truce for an additional two months in accordance with the terms of the initial agreement and the initiative of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, announced in March 2021, to end the crisis in Yemen. We appreciate the Special Envoy's efforts, as well as the regional and international endeavours, accompanied by visits and contacts, during the last few days preceding the extension of the truce, especially those of the Sultanate of Oman.

Despite the continued obstacles that the Houthi militias have put in the way of the extension and expansion of the truce, the determination of our brothers in Yemen and the Presidential Leadership Council to prioritize Yemen's national interests, along with the strong desire of regional and international stakeholders to preserve the calm and gains achieved by the truce, has effectively contributed to reducing the violence and alleviating the human suffering. With the extension of the truce, there is still an opportunity for the Houthis to cooperate with the international efforts to reach a permanent solution to the crisis and to end their daily violations of the truce in the governorates of Al-Hudaydah, Taiz, Dhale, Hajjah, Saada, Al-Jawf and Ma'rib, including the indiscriminate bombing of the Al-Rawdah neighbourhood in the city of Taiz, which resulted in casualties among children. Additionally, the Houthi militias' siege of Taiz must end, as well as their recruitment of soldiers, mobilization and holding of military parades. That behaviour clearly shows their disregard for the suffering of the Yemeni people and the absence of sincere intentions on their part to choose peace. We reaffirm that the security and stability of Yemen is integral to the security and stability of the region. From that perspective, it is important to ensure that the latest extension of the truce does not end without progress being made on the outstanding issues, especially those of a humanitarian nature, such as the opening of the roads leading to Taiz and an exchange of detainees in accordance with the all-for-all principle.

Despite the importance of the truce and its positive impact on the situation in Yemen, we must remember that it is not an end in itself but rather a means to achieve the ultimate and most important goal, which is a comprehensive and sustainable peace across Yemen. We therefore call for intensifying the efforts to reach a comprehensive ceasefire and create conditions conducive to launching political consultations between the Yemeni parties, based on a set time frame.

We note the difficult humanitarian situation in Yemen, especially with regard to food security. Along with our partners, in particular Saudi Arabia, we have continued to address the situation through the provision of economic and humanitarian support to Yemen in various areas, including by stabilizing exchange rates, given that Yemen is reliant on imports to cover 90 per cent of its food needs. We stress in that regard the importance of ensuring that the Houthis deposit revenues in the Central Bank of Yemen to enable civil

servants' salaries to be paid. We also note the need to unify all the national efforts to restore security and stability in Yemen. We appreciate the role played by the Presidential Leadership Council in promoting consensus and ending internal divisions.

In conclusion, the United Arab Emirates renews its commitment to standing by our brother people of Yemen and their legitimate aspirations for security, development and prosperity. We also support Yemen's restoration of its natural role within its Arab environment.

**Mr. Kiboino (Kenya):** I would like to thank Special Envoy Grundberg and Acting Director Mudawi for their briefings, and I welcome the participation of the representative of Yemen in this meeting.

Kenya joins others in welcoming the extension of the truce for a further two months, and we commend the efforts of the Special Envoy and other stakeholders in that regard. The truce has certainly brought some reprieve to millions of Yemenis, and we therefore urge for intensified efforts by all parties to implement their commitments, in particular by opening the roads in Taiz. We caution against the truce being used as an opportunity to reconfigure or strengthen military postures to influence any future negotiations. In that regard, genuine efforts must be made to create a foundation for lasting peace, including a comprehensive ceasefire.

We condemn the attacks in Taiz on 24 July, which resulted in the death of a child and injured several others. We are also concerned about the recent reports of fighting in Shabwa governorate, which resulted in at least 35 fatalities. We urge for maximum restraint on the part of the parties concerned to avoid any further escalation of tensions. Most importantly, we remind the warring parties of their obligation under international humanitarian law to protect civilians, particularly the vulnerable, including women, children, the elderly and people living with disabilities.

As we heard during our last briefing (S/PV.9088), the truce alone is not enough to address the humanitarian crisis, which was recently exacerbated by heavy rains that resulted in flooding affecting many. As we have said before, there is an urgent need for pragmatic approaches that can adequately and sustainably equip humanitarian action programmes with necessary resources.

Meanwhile, national and local actors in Yemen must allow unhindered access to humanitarian workers

and aid in line with international humanitarian law. The reported cases of intimidation and incitement against aid agencies must come to a stop. Progress on political, military and economic cooperation under the Presidential Leadership Council and the extension of the truce create an opportunity to enhance investments in development projects that will improve the economy and reduce reliance on external support.

In that regard, we welcome United Nations Development Programme projects such as the Qat-to-Coffee for Climate Resilience and Human Security in Yemen initiative, which aim to promote sustainable coffee value chains as a high-value alternative crop so as to reduce groundwater exploitation, enhance livelihood opportunities and empower women. If this project is successfully implemented, it can serve as a good model for similar development projects.

As time passes, the risks emanating from the deteriorating *FSO SAFER* tanker continue to increase. We appreciate the generous contributions made to date and once again urge the international community to redouble its efforts to enable the project to commence without further delay.

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

**Mr. Polyanskiy** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I would like to start with an expression of condolences to our brotherly Armenian people on the deaths that resulted from the fire at the Surmalu shopping centre in Yerevan and to the brotherly people of Egypt following the terrible fire at the Abu Sefein church in Giza. We would like to express our condolences to all the friends and the family of those who were lost, and we wish all those who have been injured a swift recovery from these tragic events.

We would like to thank the Special Envoy for the Secretary-General Hans Grundberg, and the Acting Director, Operations and Advocacy Division of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Ms. Ghada Mudawi, for their briefings on developments on the political and humanitarian situation in Yemen.

We welcome the decision by the official authorities of the Republic of Yemen and the Ansar Allah movement to extend the truce in the country for a

further two months with the same terms. This provides real opportunities for further stabilization. We trust that it will facilitate the transition to direct full-format negotiations between the parties, including in the area of security and the economy. We hope that the remaining disagreements between them will be overcome.

In that regard, we highly commend the efforts of Mr. Grundberg, as well as Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Oman, which have played a key role in establishing intra-Yemeni contacts in order to extend the truce. From our side, we will continue to provide all possible comprehensive assistance to international mediation work in Yemen. We maintain contacts with all leading political parties and forces, and we actively urge them to adopt a constructive approach and find compromises.

We see no alternative but to hammer out necessary political decisions as part of the broad intra-Yemeni dialogue with the involvement of all parties to the conflict. We trust that a lasting and long-term ceasefire will help to shore up the positive steps taken to find solutions to the protracted Yemeni conflict. This will depend first and foremost on the Yemeni protagonists supporting constructive cooperation with the United Nations in order to implement the current provisions of the truce. It will also depend on the potential expansion of the truce's contours with a focus on achieving a comprehensive settlement in long-suffering Yemen. Unfortunately, one of the main sticking points — the parameters for reopening roads around Taiz — has still not been resolved. In this regard, we urge the parties to show additional flexibility, continue substantive discussions on this important issue and find mutually acceptable solutions.

We are pleased to note that the truce, in force since April, is being broadly observed, with an insignificant number of violations. This gives ordinary Yemenis long-awaited breathing space and is grounds for hope that life will return to normal. The leading Yemeni political forces are well aware of the danger of slipping back into armed confrontation, and they are trying to prevent such a scenario. We welcome the ongoing work of the Military Coordination Committee in monitoring the conditions of the truce.

For the first time over the four months of the truce, there has been a significant improvement in the humanitarian situation for civilians in Yemen. We note the joint steps to ensure fuel deliveries through



the ports of Al-Hudaydah and to support commercial flights from Sana'a.

Nonetheless, the socioeconomic situation in the country is still extremely serious. There is a need to normalize and get the provision of basic goods — primarily of foodstuffs, medications and basic necessities — to Yemenis up and running regularly and on a non-discriminatory basis. Any restrictions on the delivery of basic goods and any obstacles in the path of humanitarian workers are unacceptable.

In conclusion, we would like once again to draw the Security Council's attention to resolution 598 (1987) and other initiatives focusing on regional stability, including the renewed Russian collective security concept.

**Mrs. Kamboj** (India): I thank Special Envoy Hans Grundberg for his briefing and commend him for his efforts in securing the renewal of the truce for an additional two months. I also thank Ms. Ghada Mudawi for her briefing on the humanitarian situation in Yemen.

India welcomes the renewal of the truce, which indeed comes as a relief to the people of Yemen, whose lives have been devastated by the seven-year-old conflict. The most tangible benefit of the truce is the significant reduction in the loss of precious human lives owing to an overall reduction in violence.

The extended truce notwithstanding, recent months have witnessed some serious violations of the truce agreement, including the 24 July attack in Taiz that resulted in deaths and injuries to children. We condemn such attacks and urge all parties to adhere to the truce agreement.

We are also concerned by the limited progress on opening roads in Taiz and other governorates. An understanding on opening roads through Taiz, which was also part of the Stockholm Agreement, remains largely the unimplemented provision of the truce agreement. The people of Taiz have suffered immensely from the blockade of roads, and they deserve to benefit from the current truce. Progress in the opening of roads is an urgent humanitarian imperative. In addition, the lopsided implementation of the truce agreement does not augur well for its long-term sustainability.

Further, continued progress on the other provisions of the truce agreement is important. This should be further expanded as it benefits the people of Yemen. Mutually acceptable solutions to issues related to their implementation, such as travel documents and the

proper use of fuel-shipment revenues should be arrived at quickly.

It is indeed unfortunate that the current truce has not brought the expected humanitarian relief to many Yemenis who are in dire need of such support. Actual delivery of aid had to be scaled down, owing to a lack of funds for aid operations and global inflation in commodity prices. We hope that the situation will soon be reversed with the increased funding received in recent weeks.

As far as India, a long-standing friend of Yemen, is concerned, we have always prioritized the humanitarian needs of Yemen. India has extended humanitarian assistance to Yemen through the supply of medicines and food commodities in the past. Our hospitals have received thousands of Yemenis for medical treatment, even during the coronavirus disease pandemic. India has also exported more than 250,000 tons of wheat to Yemen since April to mitigate the adverse impact of supply changes in the global commodity markets on Yemen. We remain committed to doing so in the future as well.

However, humanitarian aid alone will not solve the current crisis in Yemen. Urgent international support is also required to stabilize Yemen's economy and prevent the deterioration of basic services.

So far, the truce has provided the longest period of relative calm in Yemen since the eruption of the conflict. That must be prolonged, consolidated and further expanded into a durable and lasting ceasefire. Such a ceasefire would build more confidence among the parties and provide a favourable environment for the political track.

We have no doubt that only a robust and inclusive political solution that meets the legitimate aspirations of all Yemenis can end the conflict in Yemen. We urge the Yemeni parties to work towards such a solution and engage with the Special Envoy constructively in that regard.

**Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield** (United States of America): Let me thank Special Envoy Grundberg and Acting Director Mudawi. I want to express my gratitude to them both for their unwavering commitment to bringing peace and humanitarian relief to Yemen. Thankfully, we now have an opening for a sustained peace due to the recent truce extension. We appreciate the central role played by regional partners to make

that possible, including Saudi Arabia's leadership and Oman's efforts to promote dialogue between the parties.

Thanks to the leadership of the Presidential Leadership Council, Yemenis continue to tangibly benefit from the truce. Fifteen thousand Yemenis have flown from Sana'a airport for the first time since 2016, and five times more fuel is entering Al-Hudaydah per month as compared to 2021. Such a truce extension also provides an important opportunity to transition to a stronger, more comprehensive agreement that meaningfully expands benefits for Yemenis and allows for a durable resolution to a conflict that has gone on for far too long.

We therefore call on the parties to intensify and expedite negotiations to finalize an expanded agreement based on the proposal shared by the Special Envoy. An expanded agreement would allow for discussions to secure a comprehensive nation-wide ceasefire and pave the way for resuming a Yemeni-Yemeni political process. Let us be clear: such a political process must include meaningful input from women, civil society leaders and members of other marginalized communities.

The first step to securing an expanded agreement is Houthi action with regard to Taiz — a long overdue humanitarian imperative. We call on the Houthis to accept the Special Envoy's proposal and open roads to Taiz without delay. In addition, the parties must make progress on salary payments for civil servants.

We also demand that the Houthis unconditionally and immediately release the current and former United States and United Nations locally employed Yemeni staff whom they detained in Sana'a. I have to repeat this: we demand their unconditional and immediate release. Holding those individuals, as well as other humanitarian workers, is unacceptable, and it is long past time that the Houthis end such outrageous behaviour. We are closely tracking the recent instability in Shabwah and urge Yemenis to work through their differences peacefully in order to focus on building on the United Nations-mediated truce.

Before I conclude, I want to talk about efforts to support humanitarian needs and recovery on the ground. For our part, we have provided more than \$1 billion in humanitarian aid for Yemen in 2022 and nearly \$5 billion since 2014, making us the largest donor to those efforts. We call on the international community to join us and the rest of the world in addressing the world's worst humanitarian crisis. But Yemen needs

more than just humanitarian assistance. We also call on donors, particularly regional donors, to increase and expedite economic support, which will help to bolster the efforts of the Republic of Yemen's Government to stabilize the economy and strengthen basic services.

Other urgent needs include funding for the United Nations emergency project to prevent a spill from the *FSO SAFER* oil tanker. Such a spill would cause an economic, humanitarian and environmental disaster in the Red Sea and would cost tens of billions of dollars in clean-up costs and lost revenue. Again, we therefore call on donors, including from the private sector, to step forward now.

Finally, the United Nations Verification and Inspection Mechanism also faces a funding gap of \$3.5 million this year, and it will suffer a lapse in operations next month if donors do not step up now. The Mechanism's efforts are essential to continuing the flow of commercial goods into Yemen, preventing further deterioration of the humanitarian situation and sustaining the truce.

This is a critical moment for Yemen. The United States and the international community stand ready to support Yemen's peace and recovery process, but, first, the Yemeni parties themselves must choose peace. The fact that the truce in Yemen continues to hold is cause for hope. It has significantly reduced violence; it has saved lives and improved freedom of movement; and it has created momentum towards peace. We must now take the next step forward.

**Mr. Meirelles Reis Sotero de Menezes (Brazil):** Our delegation would like to begin by thanking Special Envoy Grundberg and Acting Director Mudawi for their comprehensive and informative briefings. We also welcome the representative of Yemen to this meeting.

I would like to start by commending the parties' commitment earlier this month to extending, for a second time, the nation-wide truce initiated in April. We also thank Special Envoy Grundberg and his Office for their sustained efforts in that regard.

As was repeatedly highlighted, the truce is a significant achievement, and each of its provisions delivers real benefits to common Yemenis, including easier access to fuel, medical treatment and family reunions. The cessation of major military operations means that thousands of Yemenis are alive today who would not be otherwise.

However, the terms agreed to in April must be fully implemented, including the reopening of roads in Taiz and other governorates. The Special Envoy has presented a number of proposals on that issue, and the Security Council has repeatedly called for flexibility on that matter. We expect those calls to be heeded.

As we heard, the truce must also be expanded. There are a number of issues currently outside the truce's provisions that are essential in ensuring stability in the short term, such as the regular payment of Government salaries. The expansion proposal presented by the Special Envoy addresses that and other issues, and it will hopefully form the basis for an enhanced agreement at the end of the current extension.

An expanded truce is also a necessary step towards the ultimate goal of reaching a comprehensive and sustainable political settlement, with the meaningful participation of all groups in Yemen's diverse society, including people with disabilities, youth and women.

If the parties do not build upon the foundation provided by the truce, episodes of violence and escalation will be increasingly common and will eventually reignite the spiral of violence in Yemen.

Incidents such as the 24 July attack on Taiz, which killed one child and injured another 10, are completely unacceptable. Reports of clashes in Shabwah are also very concerning.

As highlighted by the briefers, children have paid a terrible price in this war. More than 10,000 children were killed or injured, and children have also been victims of recruitment, abduction, sexual violence and the denial of humanitarian access by different parties to the conflict.

Last April, Ansar Allah signed an action plan on the protection of children. We are dismayed about reports that the recruitment and indoctrination of children is still ongoing in Ansar Allah-controlled areas, and we call on them to urgently comply with the plan of action.

We have just heard from Ms. Mudawi with regard to the humanitarian situation, which remains desperate. We are, however, encouraged to hear that after months of financial strain, new and significant contributions have been announced. Brazil has sought to do its part, including by making consistent contributions during pledging events over the past few years. We hope that new contributions will also be forthcoming with regard to other urgent matters, such as the financing of the

United Nations Verification and Inspection Mechanism and the response plan for the *FSO SAFER* tanker. The delivery of foreign financial aid packages announced in April would also contribute significantly to stabilizing exchange rates and fighting food insecurity in Yemen. We should once again emphasize that while humanitarian assistance is fundamental, it is unsustainable in the absence of progress towards economic stability. We urge the parties to refrain from measures that might deepen economic fragmentation and to work to re-establish national economic institutions and structures.

In conclusion, we reiterate that after seven years of conflict, the truce represents Yemen's best chance of achieving peace. We encourage the parties not to waste the opportunity, to put the needs of Yemenis first and engage productively over the next few weeks. There is no shortage of challenges to overcome, and the Yemeni people have suffered far too much for far too long.

**Mr. Hoxha** (Albania): Let me thank Special Envoy Grundberg and Acting Director Mudawi for their updated information on the current situation in Yemen. I would like to join other members of the Security Council in welcoming the truce extension of 2 August for another two months, as well as the commitment of the parties to working on an extended truce agreement. That continues to be the right path towards a sustained solution for Yemen, as we all agree that despite the ongoing serious challenges detailed earlier by both briefers, the Yemeni people are benefiting from such a positive development after years of war.

We commend the work of the Special Envoy and his team on the new extension, as well as his efforts to expand and deepen the arrangement. We call on the parties to continue to constructively engage with him in that regard. We want to believe that the parties are fully aware of the importance of this crucial moment in the ongoing peace efforts and that they will acknowledge that only through a nationwide comprehensive ceasefire can they create the conditions necessary and pave the way for resuming a dialogue for a Yemeni-led and Yemeni-owned political solution under United Nations auspices. Albania commends the outstanding role played by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Sultanate of Oman, as well as the other regional actors, in the recent truce extension.

When agreements are signed, they must be implemented. We commend the leadership of the Government of Yemen in continuing to fulfil its

commitments, with the opening of Al-Hudaydah port to fuel ships and Sana'a airport for commercial flights, as part of the truce. We call on the Houthis to engage in good faith and adopt a reasonable approach to opening the roads to Taiz and exchanging detainees. The citizens of Taiz should not be deprived of the benefits of the truce and the prospects of a peace path for all Yemenis. In that context, we express our deep regret for the attack of 23 July in a residential neighbourhood in Taiz. The protection of civilians is an obligation under international law for all parties to conflicts.

With regard to the security track, we welcome the meetings of the United Nations-facilitated Military Coordination Committee to promote dialogue and continue discussions on de-escalation, and we hope for a positive outcome from the fourth meeting of the Committee in Amman. We join the Special Envoy in urging the parties to continue the process leading to the release of all detainees in accordance with the agreement in March. We also reiterate our condemnation of the continued incarceration of the local former and current staff members of the United States Embassy in Yemen, and we call for their immediate release and that of the United Nations staff members abducted in Abyan. All the staff of international organizations and of local and international non-governmental organizations must feel safe, and their security must be guaranteed. The increase in security incidents targeting humanitarian workers should be properly addressed, and the intimidation of aid agencies on social media must stop. The delivery of humanitarian assistance must be carried out freely and securely so that it can reach everyone in need.

Let me conclude by reiterating Albania's support for the work of the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Yemen, Mr. Gressly, and his efforts to find innovative solutions to the *FSO SAFER* oil tanker and to secure the operational needs of the United Nations Verification and Inspection Mechanism for Yemen. The past few months have made a clear difference between the past and present in Yemen — between the conflict and the truce. We call on the parties to renew their efforts to achieve a nationwide ceasefire and a meaningful political dialogue leading to a lasting settlement, with the full participation of women and civil society.

**Mr. De La Fuente Ramírez** (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Special Envoy Grundberg and Acting Director Mudawi for their briefings. We welcome the presence of the Permanent Representative of Yemen in this Security Council meeting.

The renewal of the truce that began at the beginning of this month is very welcome. The cessation of hostilities, together with its supportive measures, has provided Yemenis with temporary relief. The number of casualties has been reduced, while at the same time the importation of essential commodities and fuel has been expedited. Clearly, however, a longer-term truce with broader scope would have been a better option. We urge for the lifting the blockade of Taiz and for reaching agreement on resolving the issue of paying civil servants' salaries. We also hope for an increase in the number of flights to and from Sana'a. We urge the parties to respect the truce so that progress can be made to re-establish a dialogue with a view to achieving lasting peace. We therefore call on regional actors to continue to support efforts to that end. My delegation acknowledges and supports all the efforts of the Special Envoy.

Although there has been a reduction in the level of violence, tragic incidents continue to occur. My country condemns the attack in the residential neighbourhood of Zaid Al-Mushki in Taiz, which led to the death of a child and injured 10 others. We hope that the work of the Military Coordination Committee and the joint forces command will enable the prevention of such incidents.

My delegation takes note of the sixth meeting of the Supervisory Committee on the Implementation of the Prisoners and Detainees Exchange Agreement. We commend the progress made in facilitating the verification of the identity of prisoners and call on the parties to ensure the prompt release of all the detainees, particularly those in vulnerable situations. The economic crisis, the global increase in food and energy prices and the adverse effects of climate change have had a serious impact on the food security of the Yemeni population, particularly on internally displaced persons. In that regard, Mexico acknowledges the recent contributions of the United States to funding the 2022 humanitarian response plan. All actors on the ground must respect international humanitarian law and guarantee full access for humanitarian assistance. We condemn all forms of threats or intimidation against humanitarian personnel, and we call once again for the release of and details on the location of detained or missing United Nations personnel.

We also once again express our concern about the threat posed by mines to the civilian population. We acknowledge the efforts of humanitarian agencies working on mine clearance and awareness campaigns.

Besides that, we are concerned about violations of the arms embargo and echo the recommendation of the Panel of Experts to strengthen border controls so that the embargo can be implemented.

In conclusion, I urge for the need for funding the United Nations Verification and Inspection Mechanism for Yemen. Should it fail to materialize, the Mechanism's operations risk ending in September.

We also call urgently for contributions to be made so that the fuel of the *FSO SAFER* oil tanker can be transferred to another vessel in order to avert an environmental and humanitarian disaster.

**Mr. Biang** (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): I thank the Special Envoy, Mr. Hans Grundberg, and Ms. Ghada Mudawi, the Acting Director of Operations and Advocacy of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, for their informative briefings. I also welcome the Permanent Representative of Yemen to this meeting.

We welcome the renewal of the truce in force until 2 October, which gives us a glimmer of hope and the Yemeni people a rare respite in a crisis that has lasted too long. We hope fervently that during the two months of the new ceasefire the parties will indeed step up their negotiations to reach an expanded truce without delay so as to build on the opportunity to pave the way for lasting peace. We have already been pleased to see a significant drop in the number of civilian casualties on the ground, the reopening of Sana'a airport to civilian flights and an improvement in the fuel crisis.

The gains made through the renewal of the truce are still mixed. Despite the international pressure for a lasting peace in Yemen, sporadic ceasefire violations persist, and there are new reports of fighting in Shabwa province. If nothing is done to sustainably stabilize the situation, the risk of further escalation cannot be ruled out. In addition, the humanitarian situation in Yemen remains worrisome, with a theatre of operations that is seemingly one of the world's worst humanitarian disasters. Since the beginning of this devastating war, a heavy toll has been exacted on Yemeni civilians, including children, who have been killed or maimed by landmines or forcibly recruited into armed groups. But the high number of civilian deaths is also the result of indirect consequences of the fighting, such as starvation, disease and a lack of potable water. In that regard, funding the humanitarian response plan for Yemen is crucial and urgent. We therefore commend

the United States commitment of \$431 million in additional funding.

The economic outlook remains bleak. The exchange rate is worse than it was before the truce. Household purchasing power is extremely low, and energy and food prices have increased, leading to food insecurity. The operating environment remains difficult for humanitarian agencies, despite the progress that has been made. The incidence of negative messages and disinformation has decreased slightly since the most recent Security Council meeting (see S/PV.9088). Work with the Yemeni authorities is under way to address other restrictions on United Nations staff, including humanitarian personnel.

With regard to the *FSO SAFER* oil taker, we note that the emergency operation to transfer and remove the fuel from the vessel has still not started, owing to insufficient funding. We call for the international community to mobilize more funding in order to avert a large-scale environmental and humanitarian disaster.

The expansion and consolidation of the truce in Yemen is a major issue in the resolution of the crisis. One party's rejection of several United Nations proposals to reopen roads in Taiz and other governorates and the stalemate in the talks are undermining the initial positive momentum of the truce. We call on the parties to show flexibility. There is also an urgent need to revive a political process, based on a multidimensional framework addressing political, security and economic issues, for a comprehensive negotiated settlement of the conflict, within an inclusive dialogue that ensures the participation of women. We urge all the parties to cease hostilities, exercise maximum restraint and implement all the elements of the truce negotiated by the United Nations.

In conclusion, we reiterate our support for Mr. Grundberg in his tireless efforts to maintain a dialogue between the parties in order to reach a comprehensive peace agreement in Yemen.

**Mrs. Broadhurst Estival** (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. Hans Grundberg and Ms. Ghada Mudawi for their briefings.

France welcomed the renewal of the truce in Yemen on 2 August, for a period of two months. That important step should help alleviate the suffering of the Yemeni people, and the extension of the truce should serve to commit all the parties to peace. We

would like to take this opportunity to commend the continued efforts of Mr. Hans Grundberg to maintain the truce, and we call on all the parties to the conflict to cooperate fully with him. We also commend the efforts of the Yemeni Government undertaken since the beginning of the truce and call on the Houthis to implement their commitments. We reiterate our call for a lasting nationwide ceasefire and call on the parties to hold comprehensive discussions under the auspices of the United Nations. Such discussions are essential to reaching a political agreement, which we know is the only way to end the conflict. We also reiterate that the participation of Yemeni women in the peace process is crucial to achieving a lasting peace in accordance with the provisions of resolution 2624 (2022). I would like to welcome the recent discussions on the release and exchange of detainees, which were presided over by the International Committee of the Red Cross together with the Office of the Special Envoy, in accordance with the commitments made by the parties in March.

Despite the truce, the security and humanitarian situations remain very worrisome in some areas. Yemen continues to deal with a particularly serious humanitarian crisis, and the working conditions of humanitarian personnel remain very worrying. We reiterate the importance of ensuring full humanitarian access for all people in need. We also call for the immediate and unconditional release of the United Nations staff and humanitarian personnel held by the Houthis.

The rapid reopening of roads serving the city of Taiz is vital. Its citizens are living in unbearable conditions in the absence of access. France calls on the Houthis to make the necessary concessions and to agree to work constructively with the Special Envoy on this matter. We are also concerned about the recent incidents in Shabwa governorate. We call for calm and peaceful coexistence in the interests of the Yemeni people.

With regard to the situation of the *FSO SAFER* oil tanker, France reiterates the urgency of averting a new environmental and humanitarian disaster. We once again call for financial contributions from States and the private sector in order to enable the launch of the rescue operation, in line with our efforts with other donors, under the coordination of the Netherlands.

**Ms. Moran** (Ireland): I thank our briefers this morning, Special Envoy Grundberg and Acting Director Mudawi. We warmly welcome the renewal of the

United Nations-mediated nationwide truce for a further two months. We express our appreciation to Special Envoy Grundberg and his team for their continued efforts in that respect. The extension offers the parties the opportunity to fully implement the truce and allows Yemenis to continue benefiting from reduced civilian casualties and displacement, increased access to fuel and regular flights to and from Sana'a. We call on the parties to heed the Special Envoy's call and to come to an agreement on the expanded truce proposal.

It remains regrettable that the Houthis have not yet agreed to the Special Envoy's various proposals on the reopening of roads in Taiz. All actors must prioritize Taiz residents and endeavour to make progress on that critical point — which is an integral element in an expanded truce — as soon as possible.

As we have said before, we would like to see an expanded truce lead to a durable nationwide ceasefire and an inclusive, Yemeni-led and Yemeni-owned political settlement under United Nations auspices. As been discussed by the many Yemeni women who have briefed the Council, the persistent exclusion of women from national-level peace talks significantly damages the prospects for realizing that peace. Women's indispensable role in peacebuilding across the country must be matched by their full, equal and meaningful participation in all stages of the peace process and at all levels of political representation.

We welcome the recent meetings of the Military Coordination Committee, as well as the conclusion of the sixth meeting on the exchange agreement for detainees. We strongly urge the parties to finalize their lists and move swiftly to release detainees. That could be a powerful exercise in trust-building. We remain concerned about the reports, including at last month's meeting (see S/PV.9088), of both sides sending military reinforcements to front lines. It is particularly alarming to hear that the Houthis continue to use summer camps to recruit and indoctrinate children. We strongly urge them to implement their action plan to end grave violations against children, and we call on all the parties to abide by their commitments in that regard. Far too many Yemeni children have paid the price of a conflict waged by those who should be protecting them. The 23 July attack on Taiz, which injured 10 children and killed one, was deplorable. We are also concerned about the recent clashes in Shabwa. We strongly condemn those violent outbreaks and remind parties of their obligations under international law, including

international humanitarian law and international human rights law, to protect the life and health of civilians.

As we have heard from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, regrettably, the humanitarian situation is getting worse. Yemenis are facing unprecedented levels of hunger, and while fuel imports have increased, the reality is that it is still far too expensive for many ordinary Yemenis. Over the past month, catastrophic flooding resulting from torrential rains has affected hundreds of thousands of Yemenis, many of them internally displaced, and we express our deepest condolences to those who have lost loved ones. We encourage the Government to redouble its efforts to stabilize the economy, and especially to engage with the United Nations economic framework. We also call for the immediate release of all United Nations and non-governmental-organization personnel who have been detained.

In conclusion, reports by the Yemen Panel of Experts find that serious violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law continue to be committed across Yemen. We must pursue justice and accountability in our ongoing efforts to bring peace to Yemen. Evidence-based monitoring and reporting are crucial. We also implore all actors to ensure that accountability is a central element of peace discussions going forward. Without that, lasting peace will remain out of reach.

**Mr. Kvalheim** (Norway): I thank Special Envoy Grundberg and Acting Director Mudawi for their informative briefings. Let me begin by welcoming the most recent two-month extension of the truce agreement and the tireless efforts of the Special Envoy. We appreciate the fact that the parties have agreed to intensify negotiations on an expanded agreement. It is now also important to intensify discussions on the opening of roads in Taiz and other pressing issues that the Yemeni people have demanded progress on. Since April, the truce has brought meaningful humanitarian gains and much-needed relief. We have seen a reduction in the number of civilian casualties, decreased displacement, more fuel ships coming into Al-Hudaydah port and the opening of Sana'a airport. However, more must still be done to end the suffering of the people of Yemen.

We condemn the recent attack in Taiz and are concerned about the reports of clashes in Shabwa. In both places, civilians, including children, were

affected. We call on both sides to de-escalate, respect the truce, cooperate more intensively with the Special Envoy and commit to regular negotiations, coordination and confidence-building measures. We also call for the continued inclusion of women in all United Nations processes, including the prisoners' exchange committee, the military and security committee, and the Taiz committee. More women in all aspects of Yemeni politics are needed. We were therefore disappointed that no women were appointed among the new ministers in Yemen.

As a new school year begins this August, special attention must be given to the protection of Yemen's future — its children. We call on the parties to comply with the commitments they have made to ending and preventing the recruitment and use of children in armed conflict.

We welcome the recent sixth meeting of the Supervisory Committee on the implementation of the Detainees' Exchange Agreement, held in Jordan, and urge parties to finalize the list of detainees with a focus on prioritizing the unconditional release of all sick, wounded and child detainees, as well as arbitrarily detained persons, political detainees and journalists. We are also deeply saddened to hear that recent flash floods have killed dozens, damaged public infrastructure and disproportionately affected internally displaced people. The floodwaters have also reportedly dislodged landmines and shifted them to new areas. Urgent and expanded demining efforts are therefore needed to protect civilians and enable freedom of movement.

Finally, I would again like to mention the need for more donor funding to prevent the ecological, environmental and humanitarian disaster that could be caused by the *FSO SAFER* oil tanker. We all have a responsibility to support the United Nations plan for *FSO SAFER*.

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

At the outset, I thank Special Envoy Hans Grundberg and Acting Director Ghada Mudawi for their briefings and welcome the Permanent Representative of Yemen to today's meeting.

China welcomed the further extension of the truce by the parties in Yemen on 2 August. The truce, which has lasted for more than four months, has brought

considerable positive change to the situation in the country. The de-escalation of military clashes, the resumption of flights at Sana'a airport, the regular entry of oil tankers into Al-Hudaydah port and regular communication among the parties to the conflict through the Military Coordination Committee are all the result of the joint efforts of the Yemeni parties, the countries of the region and the United Nations. We highly commend the good offices of Special Envoy Grundberg and the active role played by Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Oman and other countries of the region.

After more than seven years of conflict in Yemen, the Yemeni people long for a swift restoration of peace. The situation in the country is at a critical stage of transition from chaos to order. All the parties in Yemen should stick to the general path towards a political settlement. The international community should play an active and constructive role in facilitating the peace talks and steadily consolidate and expand the truce to create the conditions for long-term peace and stability.

First, the truce should be fully implemented. There has been a marked drop in the number of civilian casualties caused by military operations since the truce began. However, in areas such as Taiz, Ma'rib and Shabwa, peace has not prevailed, and the security situation remains fragile. The parties concerned should fully honour their commitment to the truce, avoid all attacks on civilians and civilian facilities, make full use of the Military Coordination Committee mechanism to maintain regular communication and address issues through dialogue and consultation.

Secondly, the gains of the truce should be expanded. We call on all the Yemeni parties to seize the opportunity presented by the extension of the truce and work with one another to bring about progress in opening roads in Taiz and other governorates, paying the salaries of civil servants, increasing the number of international flights at Sana'a airport and dealing with other issues that have a bearing on people's livelihoods and well-being. We welcome the progress made by the Yemeni Government and the Houthis on the exchange of prisoners. We hope that the parties to the conflict will fully demonstrate their political will and flexibility and, through Special Envoy Grundberg's mediation efforts, step up consultations in order to reach an early agreement on expanding the truce agreement.

Thirdly, there must be greater focus placed on improving the humanitarian situation. As a result of shrinking international assistance and resource input, United Nations aid projects in Yemen are facing the pressure of funding shortfalls. Since the beginning of the summer, many places in Yemen have been hit by floods, leaving tens of thousands of people homeless. The situation in refugee camps in Ma'rib governorate is particularly acute. China calls on the international community to take immediate action so as to provide basic daily necessities and medical supplies to the people affected and prevent a large-scale humanitarian catastrophe. All Yemeni parties should also facilitate and coordinate with humanitarian operations.

Fourthly, efforts should be made to create a favourable regional environment. The situation in Yemen bears on peace and stability in the Gulf region, and the key to security and stability in the Gulf region lies in the hands of the Gulf countries themselves. China encourages the countries of the region to work together in the same direction, step by step and on the basis of mutual respect, to address their respective concerns through consultations on an equal footing. Countries outside the region should provide useful support for a peaceful settlement of the Yemeni issue.

China has always advocated for respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries and abiding by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. We will always stand by the people of Yemen and continue to work with the countries of the Gulf region and the international community to make greater contributions to the Yemen peace process.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Yemen.

**Mr. Al-Saadi (Yemen)** (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, allow me, Mr. President, to congratulate you on presiding over the Security Council and to wish you and your friendly delegation every success. I also thank Mr. Grundberg and Ms. Mudawi for their briefings. I welcome the new Permanent Representative of India and congratulate her on her country's national holiday.

The Yemeni Government renews its commitment to a comprehensive and sustainable peace based on the terms of reference of the agreed political solution, namely, the Gulf Cooperation Council Initiative and its Implementation Mechanism, the outcomes of the



comprehensive National Dialogue Conference and the relevant Security Council resolutions, in particular resolution 2216 (2015). My country's Government reaffirms its full commitment to ensure that the humanitarian truce is successful. We will continue to implement all of its provisions and build upon it to ensure a comprehensive ceasefire, end the conflict, alleviate human suffering and facilitate the lives of the Yemeni people, who are suffering under the authority of the Houthi militias.

Those militias have proven that they are not serious or willing to achieve peace, while at the same time thwarting every effort to achieve that goal. They renege on their commitments in line with the truce and continue to perpetrate acts of aggression and violations. There have been more than 50 violations every day, resulting in 187 martyrs and leaving 910 others wounded. Those developments since the truce prove that the Houthi militias are undermining de-escalation and peace, instead laying siege to civilians, looting revenues and using the humanitarian dossier as a bargaining chip to mislead and blackmail.

Our patient Yemeni people have fallen victim to the pressures of the destructive war, the repercussions of which have been grave at all levels. Today we reaffirm — as we have reaffirmed before — that dialogue remains the best way to end the conflict. The Houthis must seize the opportunity for peace, embark upon dialogue and avoid further war and escalation against the Yemenis and their neighbours in the region so as to save our Yemeni people from further humanitarian suffering.

The Yemeni Government had facilitated 33 round-trip flights from and to Sana'a airport by 10 August. Those flights have transported more than 15,000 travellers, despite the numerous stumbling blocks imposed by the Houthi militias. Thirty-four oil tankers had passed through the port of Al-Hudaydah by 10 August, carrying over 1 million tons of fuel products. The taxes and customs fees from those products exceeded 130 billion Yemeni rials, which is enough to cover the largest share of the salaries and pensions of civil servants in the areas controlled by the Houthi militias. However, those militias continued to collect those revenues and deprive employees of their salaries. They are using those revenues to fund their war against the Yemeni people and prolong the conflict.

The Presidential Leadership Council is working on a set of financial and administrative reforms to manage, monitor and follow up on resources while facilitating and receiving support provided by our brothers from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. We are implementing a package of projects to improve services for our citizens and to promote State law enforcement institutions to alleviate the human suffering caused by the war launched by the Houthi militias. The Government looks forward to receiving further support from the international community for its programmes and plans to ensure stability and economic recovery and reintegrate development priorities and needs, while seeking to achieve early recovery. The Yemeni Government also appreciates the generous support provided by sisterly and friendly countries, especially our brothers in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, whether directly or through the humanitarian response plan, to alleviate the human suffering of the Yemeni people.

However, despite the support received, humanitarian operations remain unable to reach all those in need, whether due to funding shortages threatening to halt relief projects or further stumbling blocks imposed by the Houthi militias, which are diverting assistance away from those in need. Once again, we call upon the international community to continue to keep Yemen at the top of its priorities and provide further support in order to alleviate human suffering in the country, especially in the light of current international circumstances and the increase in fuel and food prices.

The siege on Taiz by the Iran-supported Houthi militias has entered its eighth year. That constitutes a war crime and a crime against humanity that needs to be lifted immediately without delay. Those militias are circumventing the truce as they continue to practice all kinds of stubbornness and procrastination on the humanitarian dossier. They refuse to open main roads while Yemenis, including women and children, are losing their lives at crossing points. That proves that those militias disregard the Council's efforts and calls to end the suffering of more than 4 million civilians in Taiz. Instead, they are restricting their movement, forcing them to take dangerous mountain routes, causing the death of dozens of them and exorbitant financial losses. Those militias are also preventing the delivery of relief and humanitarian assistance and goods.

The Houthi militias continue to escalate their crimes and the deliberate killing of children in Taiz,

which is under siege. They did so just hours before the extension of the truce, in blatant disdain for Yemeni lives and non-commitment to the truce provisions, in flagrant violation of the efforts and will of the international community and the Security Council. The militias continue to target civilians with snipers, drones and missiles, even during the truce, which has led to the deaths of dozens of civilians. Houthi militias recently shelled a neighbourhood in Taiz, where 11 children fell victim while the Special Envoy's military adviser was there to monitor the truce. That is yet another crime committed by the Houthi militias. Sending wrong messages about perpetrating such crimes would encourage the Houthis to perpetrate more violations with impunity. That crime is to be added to the list of violations that the militias have been perpetrating over the past seven years. We wonder before the Council how many civilians, including women and children, need to be killed before ceasing this war, putting an end to the Houthi crimes, their violations in Taiz and other parts of Yemen and holding perpetrators accountable.

We call upon the Security Council and the international community to review how they deal with the Houthi militias. They need to bring genuine pressure to bear on the Houthis so that they engage with goodwill in de-escalation efforts and achieving peace, and so that they not use the truce for further military mobilization or to launch the next round of escalation. Efforts need to be redoubled to urge the Houthi militias

to meet their commitments, foremost of which is opening crossings and main roads in Taiz and other cities during the current truce extension, while releasing hostages and detainees pursuant to the principle of all for all and addressing other important issues.

Currents intensify in the southern Red Sea at this time of the year. There are also threats of deployment of naval mines around the *FSO SAFER* oil tanker, which exacerbates the threat of an explosion or an oil spill from the tanker. Once again, the Yemeni Government warns against the environmental, economic and humanitarian situation that could be caused by the tanker, which would affect Yemen, the region and the world. The Government has expressed its support for the United Nations-led efforts to address the situation. However, to date, those efforts have not led to tangible results because the Houthis continue to blackmail the international community through this crisis. Time is not on our side. We need to prevent this catastrophe. The Security Council and the international community need to work on this issue. Once again, we call for bridging the funding gap in the United Nations plan so as to avoid this unfortunate catastrophe.

**The President** (*spoke in Chinese*): 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 11.40 a.m.*