



# Security Council

Seventy-seventh year

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Thursday, 13 October 2022, 10 a.m.

New York

*Provisional*

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*President:* Mr. Biang. . . . . (Gabon)

*Members:*

Albania . . . . .	Mr. Hoxha
Brazil . . . . .	Mr. De Almeida Filho
China . . . . .	Mr. Geng Shuang
France . . . . .	Mr. De Rivière
Ghana . . . . .	Mr. Agyeman
India . . . . .	Mrs. Kamboj
Ireland . . . . .	Ms. Moran
Kenya . . . . .	Mr. Kiboino
Mexico . . . . .	Mr. Ochoa Martínez
Norway . . . . .	Ms. Juul
Russian Federation . . . . .	Mr. Kirpichenko
United Arab Emirates . . . . .	Mr. Abushahab
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . . . . .	Mr. Kariuki
United States of America . . . . .	Mr. Mills

## Agenda

The situation in the Middle East

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*The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.*

### **Adoption of the agenda**

*The agenda was adopted.*

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

**The President** (*spoke in French*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Saudi Arabia and 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:** Six and a half months ago, on 2 April, the nationwide truce in Yemen came into effect. Over the course of the past six and a half months, the truce has started to alleviate the suffering of Yemeni men and women and, after almost eight years of conflict, offered a truly historic opportunity to build trust and to work towards a peaceful settlement of the conflict. On 2 October, the day the second extension of the truce ended, the parties regrettably did not reach an agreement on the extension and expansion of the truce. That has caused new uncertainty for the country and a heightened risk of war. In this briefing I will provide an overview of what was put before the parties and outline the way forward.

Efforts to not only extend but also to expand and build on the elements of the truce have been ongoing since early July. On 18 September, I shared a proposal for a six-month extension and the expansion of the truce elements with the parties. And in the weeks leading up to 2 October, I intensified my discussions with them, conducting several rounds of negotiations in Aden, Sana'a, Riyadh and Muscat. I subsequently shared a revised proposal with them on 1 October.

My proposal addressed the key competing demands of both sides in a balanced manner. Allow me to outline the elements of the proposal and what the Yemeni

people — men, women and children — stand to lose: first, the continued halt of all offensive operations and an enhanced Military Coordination Committee as a robust de-escalation communication and coordination channel; secondly, a transparent and effective disbursement mechanism for the regular payment of civil servant salaries and pensions; thirdly, the phased opening of roads in Taiz and other governorates; fourthly, an increase in the number of flights and destinations to and from Sana'a International Airport; fifthly, the regular and unhindered flow of fuel to the ports of Al-Hudaydah; and sixthly, a commitment to urgently release detainees.

In addition, for long-term progress towards a settlement of the conflict, the proposal also includes the establishment of structures for the initiation of negotiations over economic issues, a durable ceasefire and, most important, the resumption of a Yemeni-led, inclusive political process to work towards a comprehensive resolution of the conflict.

In the light of that, it is deeply regrettable that, on 2 October, an agreement was not reached on the extension and expansion of the truce. I appreciate the position of the Government of Yemen on engaging positively with my proposal, and I regret that Ansar Allah came up with additional demands that could not be met. As I continue to work with both sides to find solutions, I urge them to demonstrate the leadership and flexibility required to reach an extended and expanded agreement.

I welcome that the parties have shown restraint since the expiration of the truce on 2 October, as we have fortunately not witnessed any major military escalation, only sporadic exchanges of artillery and small arms fire in front-line areas in Taiz, Ma'rib, Al-Hudaydah and Dhale. I urge the parties to continue to exercise maximum restraint.

Since 2 October, flights between Sana'a International Airport and Amman have continued to operate, and I want to once more express my deep appreciation to the Kingdom of Jordan for its unwavering support and facilitation. Similarly, fuel ships have continued to regularly enter the ports of Al-Hudaydah. I therefore I call on the parties to uphold and safeguard the arrangements that operated under the truce, which have brought vital benefits to the Yemeni people.

The achievement and benefits of the truce should not be underestimated. The truce came into effect

after almost eight years of conflict and brought about the longest period of calm yet. In six months, its benefits for the people of Yemen included: no major military operations and a 60 per cent decrease in casualties; the reopening of the Sana'a airport, with 56 commercial roundtrip flights to date, transporting almost 27,000 passengers who sought medical attention or educational or business opportunities abroad; over 1.4 million metric tons of fuel product delivered to Al-Hudaydah ports, more than three times the amount of fuel products entering in 2021; and face-to-face meetings of the parties under United Nations auspices on military de-escalation and road openings in Taiz and other governorates.

It is important to remember that the truce was never intended as an end in itself, but as a building block to enhance trust between the parties and establish a conducive environment to work towards a political solution to the conflict.

The parties now have a choice before them. They can choose to preserve and build on the truce and take the path towards peace, as the Yemeni people expect them to do. Otherwise, a return to war would mean renewed and increased suffering for the civilian population, as my colleague from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Assistant Secretary-General Joyce Msuya, will explain. Women, who represent over half of the Yemeni population, would — as always — be disproportionately affected and bear the brunt of the conflict. The choice to go back to war would also have destabilizing effects for the whole region. And should the cycles of violence and escalation start, it could be long before a window for peace will open again. Yemen urgently needs to avoid that scenario.

Allow me now to turn to the way forward. In the 11 days since the expiration of the truce, I have continued my relentless efforts to engage the parties, as well as regional and international partners, on options for the renewal of the truce. I have just returned from visits to Abu Dhabi and Muscat, where I held important discussions to explore ways forward, in close coordination with Yemen's neighbours. I personally believe that there is still a possibility for the parties to come to an agreement.

With the stakes this high, it is critical that we do not lose this opportunity. The parties need to demonstrate the leadership, compromise and flexibility required to urgently reach an agreement on the renewal and

expansion of the truce. The members of the Council and the international community are following the situation in Yemen with concern. Yet, ultimately, the parties' duty is to the men and women of Yemen — to find solutions that are in the best interest of the Yemeni population and to pursue every avenue for peace.

In that context, I would also like to reiterate my appreciation for the continued steadfast support of the Council, as well as the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Sultanate of Oman. The Council's united position on the renewal and expansion of the truce has made it clear that the international community expects the parties to reach an agreement with a sense of urgency.

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

I now give the floor to Ms. Msuya.

**Ms. Msuya**: I spent the past six days in Yemen, where I visited Aden, Ma'rib, Sana'a and Al-Hudaydah. During that time, I met dozens of people who told me about their lives — women who fear for their safety both inside and outside of their homes and displaced people whose biggest wish, to return home, remains unfulfilled year after year. Those same people also told me about their hopes for the future — not just for themselves, but for their communities and their country. I am honoured and privileged to relay those voices to the Security Council today.

As Mr. Grundberg mentioned just now, we have not seen any significant intensification of clashes since the expiry of the truce on 2 October. We know the havoc that this conflict has wreaked on civilians in Yemen. I saw it clearly during this trip. For their sake, I urge the parties to avoid any escalation in violence and to engage with the Special Envoy in order to agree on an extended and expanded truce.

Although the conflict has not resurged, civilians still face terrible dangers. Landmines and other explosive hazards have continued to be the main cause of civilian casualties. In September, 70 civilians were reportedly killed or injured by landmines, improvised explosive devices and unexploded ordnance. The impact of those hazards go far beyond killing and maiming. They convert simple everyday activities, like farming, fishing or walking to school, into possible life-or-death scenarios.

Al-Hudaydah — where I am briefing from today — is the governorate most impacted by landmines

and explosive hazards. Just this morning, I met Yousef, a 12-year-old boy who lost both of his legs after stepping on a landmine a few weeks ago. He had to travel two long hours to get to the hospital and now, like many other survivors, will need lifelong support and assistance. We need urgent action to reduce this threat, including increased support for demining projects and facilitated equipment importation.

Civilians in Yemen face many perils beyond the direct impact of conflict. As we have noted in the Council before, the country's deteriorating economy and collapsing basic services are the main drivers of people's needs. Over the past six days, I witnessed the impact of those trends first-hand. I saw markets with food and basic goods, but at prices that most people simply cannot afford. I visited hospitals and schools that lack basic equipment and met doctors and teachers who are not being paid enough, if at all.

In Ma'rib, I met Amal, a mother of four who lost her income and belongings when her family was forced to flee Sirwah district. She now relies wholly on humanitarian assistance, but wants the opportunity to work so that she can support her family and send her children to school. Similar stories were echoed in my interactions around the country, with people consistently raising the need for livelihoods and economic empowerment as well as functional and accessible basic services.

Humanitarians are doing their very best to address the most urgent needs, but we cannot do it alone and we cannot substitute the roles of others. Substantial support from donors, development actors and international financial institutions is needed to turn this tide and chart a path forward.

Preserving the continued flow of commercial imports is also crucial. During the previous Council meeting on Yemen (see S/PV.9110), we warned that the United Nations Verification and Inspection Mechanism for Yemen was at risk of closing due to lack of funds. I am pleased to report that additional contributions have been received from the European Union, the United States and the United Kingdom, preventing a shutdown of the Mechanism and ensuring its continued uninterrupted operation for the months ahead.

While long-term support is essential, millions of people continue to depend on humanitarian assistance. I have seen the impact of the aid operation myself over the past few days. Earlier today in Al-Hudaydah,

I visited a therapeutic feeding centre in Al-Thawra hospital, which has admitted more than 700 children suffering from severe acute malnutrition so far this year. In Ma'rib, I visited a school that provides education to almost 600 displaced children on a daily basis. Those are just two examples of the humanitarian interventions that are supporting more than 10 million people every month in Yemen.

As a result of those efforts, some gains have been made in preventing famine. According to new estimates that will be released tomorrow, 17 million people will be facing acute food insecurity during the last three months of this year. While that is still an alarmingly high number, it is 2 million people less than earlier projections.

Moreover, the number of people estimated to be in famine-like conditions is projected to decrease from 161,000 people to zero. That is a major achievement, but the global food security situation remains fragile, and we cannot let those and other gains go to waste.

To do that, we need continued donor support. The humanitarian appeal has received \$2 billion thus far — more than half of which has been provided by a single donor, the United States. Despite those generous contributions, we are still only 48 per cent funded, with less than three months left in the year. That is why we allocated \$20 million from the Central Emergency Response Fund just last month, which will be used to support underfunded sectors in the humanitarian response. That brings total CERF funding for Yemen to \$60 million for 2022.

We hope that further funding will be forthcoming. In the meantime, we continue to focus on making the aid operation as accountable, effective and transparent as possible. That includes ongoing work to strengthen our partnerships with local organizations, who are the ones closest to the needs and priorities of the communities we serve.

Humanitarians depend on a conducive operating environment to do their work. Unfortunately, that is becoming increasingly elusive in Yemen. Attempted interference, bureaucratic impediments, security incidents and other access constraints continue to affect humanitarian delivery to millions of people.

Two United Nations colleagues have been detained in Sana'a for almost a year, while five United Nations staff are still missing after having been abducted

in Abyan in February. We renew our call for their immediate release.

During my visit, I discussed those issues with the Government of Yemen, including the continued impact of security incidents on the humanitarian operation.

I also raised the issue of access constraints with the Houthi de facto authority, including movement restrictions that affect national humanitarian staff, particularly female staff, as well as the need to ensure adequate conditions for the principled, timely and effective delivery of humanitarian assistance.

As we stare down an uncertain road, the aid operation will be even more essential. Every single effort to address access constraints means that we can reach more people with the assistance they need. That is also what international humanitarian law requires: the facilitation of rapid and unimpeded passage of humanitarian relief and the protection of humanitarian personnel and assets.

I have seen for myself the destruction that conflict has brought on this country, but I have also witnessed the courage and resilience that have pulled people through it. The truce sparked hope that peace may finally be possible. We cannot let that be extinguished. That is what people such as Yousef and Amal want and so deserve, so that they can be empowered, rebuild their lives and dream of a better future.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I thank Ms. Msuya for her briefing.

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

**Mr. Kariuki** (United Kingdom): Let me thank Special Envoy of the Secretary-General Grundberg and Assistant Secretary-General Msuya for their powerful briefings and for the tireless work they and their teams are doing on behalf of the Yemeni people.

After six months of relative peace, it is deeply disappointing that the truce in Yemen has not been extended. The Houthi introduction of new maximalist demands in the final days of negotiations hindered the ability of the Special Envoy to broker agreement. As we have heard today, that seriously jeopardizes the tangible benefits that the truce has brought to the Yemeni people. In the past six months, Yemenis have been able to live more safely and travel more freely than at any time since the war began; four times more oil

has flowed into Al-Hudaydah than in the whole of last year; and tens of thousands of Yemenis have been able to fly out of Sana'a to visit loved ones and receive vital medical treatment. The protection of those measures must be a priority.

The United Kingdom calls on the parties to continue to implement those measures and to return to the negotiating table to expand those benefits, as outlined in the United Nations proposal. That includes paying nurses, teachers and other civil servants their hard-earned salaries for the first time in years; the opening of roads around the country, including in Taiz; more commercial flights to more destinations; and further easing the flow of fuel into Al-Hudaydah.

There is even more to lose. The refusal to extend the truce threatens to dismantle the foundation built for a negotiated peace settlement. A resolution to this terrible war depends on it.

However, the door for an extended truce remains open. It is clear from Special Envoy Grundberg's briefing that the United Nations is dedicated to achieving that outcome. The United Kingdom reiterates its full support for those efforts. I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome Assistant Secretary-General Msuya's visit to the region.

It is imperative that the international community learn lessons from the recent inter-agency humanitarian evaluation, not just in Yemen, but globally. We praise the continued work of humanitarians to deliver life-saving support, but only an end to the conflict will deliver the lasting relief the Yemeni people need.

At this fragile moment, it is encouraging that there has not yet been a return to war. We urge all parties to refrain from provocations. The cost of an end to the truce will be devastating. Now is the time for the parties to show leadership, to act on behalf of the Yemeni people and to continue on the path towards lasting peace.

**Mr. Mills** (United States of America): We thank Special Envoy Grundberg and Assistant Secretary-General Msuya for their briefings today on the situation in Yemen. Their dedication and efforts to help facilitate peace are truly commendable.

As we just heard from the Special Envoy, we are now at a pivotal moment where Yemen could continue on the path to a durable peace or descend into another destructive cycle of violence. It is our responsibility, as the Security Council, to be clear about why Yemen

has been diverted from the path to peace. It is because of the actions of the Houthis, who failed to accept the United Nations truce proposal and whose inflammatory threats to commercial enterprises are an offence to the entire international community.

It is the Houthis who must take action to prevent further suffering and enable even greater benefits for Yemenis under an expanded truce agreement. They have a moral responsibility not to deprive Yemenis of those benefits, including salary payments for nurses, teachers and tens of thousands of other civil servants who have not been paid in years. Other benefits would include, as the Special Envoy has just indicated, streamlined processes for imports through Al-Hudaydah port to ensure that the flow of fuel continues completely unimpeded; the opening of roads around Taiz and across the country in line with the previous truce terms; and expanded commercial flights from Sana'a so that Yemenis can reunite with loved ones and seek medical care.

The United States is encouraged that the parties largely continue to abide by the terms of the truce and that the United Nations-led negotiations are continuing. We appreciate the commitments of the Yemeni Government and Saudi Arabia to maintaining the terms of the truce and exercising restraint during this sensitive period. We implore the Houthis to do the same and seize the opportunity to do the right thing for the Yemeni people before it is too late. At a time of global turmoil and division, there is a remarkable international consensus in support of the United Nations truce. There can be no military solution to the conflict in Yemen. An inclusive, durable peace agreement remains the only option for preventing more suffering for Yemenis, a resurgence in civilian deaths and a deeper humanitarian crisis. We therefore hope that the Houthis do not reject the pleas of the Yemeni people for peace and ignore the international consensus on extending the truce. Rather, we urge them to engage in good-faith negotiations to ensure an inclusive, durable peace in Yemen.

We also appreciate the strong commitment of regional partners such as Oman, Saudi Arabia and others to ending the devastating cycle of destruction in Yemen and bringing the country new opportunities. We call on the Houthis to cease their rhetoric threatening commercial shipping and oil companies in the region. Such threats are unacceptable, and even a small incident or provocation could have an outsize impact on Yemen's future. We therefore urge all parties to exercise restraint during this sensitive time.

Even as we seek a way forward on the truce, the United States commends the significant progress made on the *FSO SAFER* oil tanker. Enough donations have been made to enable the emergency United Nations project to avert an environmental and economic catastrophe in the Red Sea. We thank the broad coalition of countries, organizations and individuals around the world who have come together to support that critical project. The United States has disbursed its \$10 million commitment, and we call on others to do the same so that the implementation of this important project can begin expeditiously before weather conditions make the operation even riskier.

In conclusion, the Houthis have a historic decision to make, one that will be remembered for generations to come. Given the chance, will they choose peace and prosperity for their people, or will they choose to continue the cycle of pointless destruction, relentless violence and economic deprivation that has plagued Yemen for the past eight years? We stand ready with the rest of the international community to support Yemen's path to an inclusive, durable peace settlement and subsequent recovery efforts, but it is up to the Yemeni parties — and specifically the Houthis — to choose peace.

**Mr. Abushahab** (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Mr. Grundberg and Ms. Msuya for their thorough briefings on the latest developments in Yemen. We also welcome the participation of Yemen and Saudi Arabia in this meeting.

We meet today when Yemen is at a critical juncture. After a truce was reached that would have paved the way for a resumption of negotiations, the Houthi militias unfortunately rejected the Special Envoy's proposals to extend it. However, their rejection is neither surprising nor unusual. It is not the first time they have tried to obstruct international efforts aimed at reaching a peaceful solution to the Yemeni crisis, a solution that we have never stopped supporting or calling for. For the past eight years, the Houthi militias have chosen a path of war and destruction in disregard of the suffering of Yemenis and their national interests. This time, not only have they refused to renew the truce, but they have also made threats indicating that they intend to attack civilian facilities in Yemen and neighbouring countries, as well as international maritime navigation and global oil supplies in transit through the Red Sea and the Bab Al-Mandab strait. According to their claims, those waterways are becoming more dangerous

since they have been able to acquire new and advanced naval weapons. These developments are clear evidence of the terrorist Houthi militias' intransigence and their insistence on continuing their aggressive approach, which is a threat to regional and international security.

Previous experience has shown the truth about the Houthi militias and their flimsy excuses for their refusal to abide by their commitments. If they want peace, as they claim, they should return to the truce and implement their obligations under previous agreements. If they want to alleviate the suffering of civilians, they must lift the siege imposed on Taiz city and release the detainees. If they truly seek to pay the salaries and pensions of public-sector employees, they should put the revenue from Al-Hudaydah port towards paying civil servants, in accordance with the Stockholm Agreement. If they truly care about the future of Yemen, they must stop systematically recruiting children and forcing them to fight on the front lines. If they want Yemenis to coexist as brothers, they must stop imposing their sectarian beliefs by force and delaying progress towards reaching a peaceful solution.

In the light of all of this, it is imperative that the Council prevent the Houthis from waging their brutal war and compel them to return to a path of de-escalation. That includes continued support for all the diplomatic efforts led by the Special Envoy to bring the Houthis back to the implementation of the truce, in line with the recent Security Council press statement (SC/15054). The truce, which has brought a sense of stability to the lives of Yemenis over the past six months, is a fundamental step towards resuming negotiations on a comprehensive solution to the crisis. That is the ultimate goal we all seek to achieve. It is our responsibility, as members of the Council, to identify who is hindering those efforts and take a firm stand against them, including by adopting deterrent and punitive measures. The Council must also take serious steps to stop systematic violations of the arms embargo imposed by its relevant resolutions.

In that connection, we commend the positive response of the Presidential Leadership Council to proposals by the United Nations to renew the truce and reaffirm our support for its efforts to bring stability to Yemen. We also commend the leading role played by Saudi Arabia and its efforts to end the crisis in Yemen, as well as Oman's mediation role.

In conclusion, the Houthis' persistence on resuming fighting will further exacerbate the economic and humanitarian crisis caused by the ongoing war and global inflation. The Houthi militias have put additional burdens on the Yemeni people, including by forcing them to pay illegal taxes, similar to those imposed by other terrorist groups, such as Da'esh. In addition, they continue harassing and bullying humanitarian organizations, limiting their ability to carry out their relief tasks and preventing the people who are in dire need of assistance from accessing it. The Yemeni people cannot bear any additional living burdens under those difficult circumstances. All that calls for concerted efforts to alleviate the humanitarian situation and provide them with humanitarian and economic assistance.

**Mrs. Kamboj** (India): I thank Mr. Hans Grundberg and Ms. Joyce Msuya for their updates on the latest developments in Yemen.

India is deeply disappointed to learn that the parties have not agreed to an extension and expansion of the truce. We saw the tangible benefits of the truce in the past six months: active military operations ceased; cross-border strikes into Yemen's neighbours halted; the number of civilian casualties significantly dropped; fuel imports through Al-Hudaydah port eased shortages; and international commercial flights out of Sana'a airport resumed. It is time for the warring parties to take a human-centric approach to the conflict, and not merely view it as a military or political game. We take note that negotiations on a truce renewal, facilitated by the Special Envoy, are under way, and we hope that a mutually satisfactory agreement will soon be reached.

We appreciate the flexibility shown by the Yemeni Government regarding the proposals made by the Special Envoy. We urge Ansar Allah to reciprocate that flexibility and engage with the Special Envoy constructively. In the meantime, we urge all parties to maintain the spirit of the truce and refrain from provocations or any military action that could lead to a resumption of active hostilities.

The conflict has already resulted in an unprecedented humanitarian tragedy in Yemen, with an enormous loss of lives, endangering millions of civilians with chronic food insecurity and exacerbating the miseries of the people, particularly women and children. As we said before, 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.

I conclude by reaffirming India's strong commitment to Yemen's unity, independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. The Government of India will remain steadfast and unwavering in its continued support to the people of Yemen in their endeavour to seek peace, stability and economic development.

**Mr. Geng Shuang** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Special Envoy Grundberg and Assistant Secretary-General Msuya for their briefings. China firmly supports their work. I also welcome the Permanent Representatives of Yemen and Saudi Arabia to today's meeting.

The six-month truce brought a glimmer of hope to Yemen. The people of Yemen and the international community in general expect that the truce will be extended and gradually expanded into a comprehensive political process. Regrettably, despite the intensive efforts of the Special Envoy, the Yemeni Government and countries of the region, such as Saudi Arabia and Oman, that goal has not yet been achieved. We do not want to see a restart of the war in Yemen, and we are deeply concerned about the evolving situation on the ground.

The top priority now is to maintain the current security situation, which is relatively stable. China calls on the parties concerned to put the interests of the Yemeni people first, exercise restraint, act prudently, refrain from any unilateral actions and provocative language that may escalate the situation and leave enough space for the political process. Any attack on civilians and civilian infrastructure should be condemned. At this critical moment, all parties in Yemen should maintain communication and avoid miscalculation.

Dialogue and consultation are the only way to resolve the Yemeni issue. The Special Envoy is working tirelessly and conducting good offices to help to restore the truce. The Yemeni Presidential Leadership Council has engaged positively with the Special Envoy, and it has kept Sana'a airport and Al-Hudaydah port open, fully demonstrating its sincerity and goodwill.

On 5 October, the President of the Security Council issued a press statement (SC/15054) that called on the Yemeni parties, in particular the Houthis, to return to constructive engagement in the negotiations under the auspices of the United Nations. We hope that that appeal

can be implemented and that the parties concerned can return to the negotiating table as soon as possible so as to properly resolve their differences through dialogue and consultation and strive to reach a new truce agreement at an early date. China supports the Gulf Cooperation Council's initiative on the issue of Yemen, and we encourage the countries with influence on the situation in Yemen to continue to provide constructive assistance towards de-escalating the situation, restoring the truce and achieving a political settlement.

The humanitarian crisis in Yemen persists, and the United Nations humanitarian operations are severely underfunded. Dozens of operations have been curtailed or terminated due to the lack of funding. Yemen cannot be forgotten by the international community. We call for the allocation of adequate funding to be guaranteed for United Nations assistance operations in Yemen. Fund-raising for the first phase of the action plan regarding the *FSO SAFER* oil tanker were completed. That is encouraging news. We hope that the relevant operation can be implemented as soon as possible to eliminate the potential risks posed by the oil tanker.

**Mr. Kirpichenko** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We thank Special Envoy Hans Grundberg and the Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Ms. Msuya, for their briefings on the political and humanitarian developments in Yemen.

The renewed truce between the Yemeni authorities and the Ansar Allah movement that had been in effect since April expired on 2 October. Unfortunately, the sides failed to agree on the further renewal of the agreement. Nevertheless, we commend the efforts of Mr. Grundberg and his team, who continue to try and find some common ground between the Presidential Leadership Council and the Houthis, even in that hopeless situation.

At this stage, our main task is to prevent a full-fledged military escalation. A resumption of hostilities would result in a political and humanitarian disaster. We believe that the members of the Security Council need to do their utmost to convince the sides in Yemen to pursue dialogue on the most urgent issues, even in the absence of a signed ceasefire agreement. At the same time, we emphasize that attempts to antagonize one of the parties to the conflict and make it solely responsible for the current situation will not help to bring about a settlement. We call on the Yemeni sides to

show maximum restraint, refrain from provocations and continue to work constructively with the Special Envoy.

For our part, we will continue to provide all possible assistance to the United Nations mediation. We maintain contacts with all leading political forces in Yemen and are actively encouraging them to make compromises. We call on all States that can influence the stakeholders in Yemen to take similar action. We see no alternative to finding the necessary political solutions through broad intra-Yemeni dialogue with the participation of all parties to the conflict. Only direct negotiations between the official Yemeni authorities and the Ansar Allah movement on the issues that have accumulated will break the deadlock.

We would note that even under current conditions, the leading Yemeni political forces clearly recognize the danger of sliding back into full-fledged military confrontation, and, for the moment, they have refrained from measures that would lead to further escalation. Hostilities that have resumed in a number of Yemeni provinces are sporadic in nature. In any event, at present, the situation on the ground is better than the circumstances that prevailed prior to the initial announcement of the ceasefire. That gives us reason to believe that the parties are not completely abandoning the idea of returning to the negotiating table and resolve mutual tensions through diplomatic channels. The Security Council should help them in this.

We view the extension of the ceasefire in Yemen for a longer duration and its eventual expansion, including into security and economic areas, as the only way out for this country. We hope that the parties will be able to overcome their differences and that conditions conducive to further stabilization and transition to a full-fledged political process will be created. We wish to recall the numerous benefits for ordinary Yemenis of the six-month truce, including the establishment of fuel deliveries through the Al-Hudaydah ports and the maintenance of commercial flights from Sana'a airport.

The truce provisions have on the whole been complied with, with an insignificant number of violations, and this has improved the day-to-day lives of Yemeni people. Nonetheless, the humanitarian situation in the country remains dire. The residents of many regions, including those in Taiz, are suffering a shortage of the most basic necessities. We firmly believe that despite the clear backsliding on the political track, the provision of food and medicine to the Yemeni

people should continue on a non-discriminatory basis. In this regard, we call for work to be continued with international financial organizations and for the relevant efforts of specialized United Nations bodies to be maintained. Any limitations on the provisions of humanitarian assistance or any obstacles for the work of humanitarian personnel are not acceptable.

**Mr. Ochoa Martínez (Mexico)** (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I would like to thank Special Envoy Grundberg and Assistant Secretary-General Msuya for their briefings. We also welcome the delegations of Yemen and Saudi Arabia to the Security Council.

Mexico regrets that it has not been possible to renew and expand the truce in Yemen. The benefits of the truce were evident during the six months it was in effect. The truce is an opportunity to make progress in the political transition, reactivate the economy and, in short, build the road to sustainable peace. We call on the parties, particularly the Houthis, to engage constructively in the negotiations for its renewal.

As the Special Envoy mentioned, during the months that the truce was in effect, the number of civilian casualties and internally displaced persons was substantially reduced. The regular inflow of fuel and basic necessities brought relief to millions of families. The resumption of commercial flights from Sana'a airport allowed for family reunification and the possibility of receiving medical care abroad.

We recognize the efforts of the Special Envoy and his team, as well as the support offered by Saudi Arabia and Oman, *inter alia*, to renew the truce. The commitment to peace expressed by President Al-Alimi during his participation in the high-level debate of the General Assembly (see A/77/PV.8) is also an encouraging sign, as is the decision to continue to enforce some provisions of the truce, in particular for the entry of fuel and the continuity of flights from Sana'a.

We urge those States with influence to persuade Ansar Allah to engage constructively in the negotiations under the auspices of the Special Envoy. We also reiterate the call for the immediate opening of access to Taiz, which has been under Houthi siege for more than seven years, as well as for an agreement on the payment of salaries and pensions of civil servants.

We call on the parties to refrain from provocations or threats or any actions that could lead to further

violence. The solution to the conflict in Yemen cannot be found by armed means, but through dialogue and consultation.

On the economic front, we welcome the recent agreement reached between the Government of Yemen and the International Monetary Fund. The implementation of structural reforms will contribute to economic recovery.

The humanitarian situation remains a matter of deep concern. The numbers of people facing food insecurity are simply unacceptable. Without a cessation of violence, it will be difficult to move from humanitarian assistance to development assistance. In this context, it is imperative to ensure unrestricted access for humanitarian operations, including, as mentioned by Assistant Secretary-General Msuya, for priority mine-clearance tasks. We urge the parties to remove all bureaucratic and administrative obstacles and to ensure the safety of humanitarian personnel.

On the other hand, we welcome the financial support received that will allow the United Nations Verification and Inspection Mechanism to continue operating until the end of the year. This mechanism has facilitated commercial imports through the Al-Hudaydah ports since 2016, and its work has been crucial during the truce for the entry of fuel and essential goods.

We welcome the additional contributions that will enable the first phase of the fuel transfer from the *FSO SAFER* tanker to be carried out and in so doing hope that an ecological and humanitarian catastrophe can be averted. We have taken note of the recently circulated operational plan and will be attentive to the start of the work.

Before concluding, let me stress the importance of building on the progress derived from the truce as the foundation for a sustainable and lasting peace agreement, as well as a platform for relaunching an inclusive political process led by the Yemenis themselves.

**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 representatives of Yemen and Saudi Arabia in this meeting.

Kenya shares in the disappointment over the lapse of the truce and the failure to reach a much-needed agreement to extend it. Despite the challenges, the truce had brought some reprieve and tangible benefits

to millions of Yemenis in the past six months. But now any gains made are in danger of being lost if the parties do not quickly re-engage to restore the truce and recommit to working together to achieve lasting peace.

Kenya commends and fully supports the efforts of the Special Envoy to mediate the conflict. But, ultimately, it will be up to the Yemeni people themselves to reason together and agree on a path to sustainable peace. We urge them to set aside their individual narrow interests, prioritize the wider interest of their country and people, and engage in a Yemeni-led and Yemeni-owned process facilitated by the Special Envoy, with a view to negotiating a sustainable political solution.

Now is not the time to escalate tensions or reactivate the frontlines. There is too much at stake, and an eruption of another cycle of violence would lead to further civilian casualties, internal displacement and disruption of the much-needed humanitarian assistance and access.

We are concerned over recent reports of fighting in Taiz, Shabwa, Abyan and Ma'rib. Such situations could easily be exploited by terrorist groups such as Al-Qaida that wish to conduct terrorist attacks. We call for maximum restraint by the parties concerned to avoid any further escalations.

As we have heard from Ms. Msuya, the humanitarian actors alone cannot address the worsening humanitarian crisis that has been exacerbated by increasingly scarce supplies and unaffordable food prices, insecurity and humanitarian-access challenges. The situation calls for an increased concerted response effort, including through investments in development projects aimed at enhancing the resilience of the population and gradually eliminating the dependence on humanitarian assistance. It also calls for the parties, the Houthis in particular, to demonstrate a commitment to making efforts to improve the livelihoods of the millions of Yemenis in areas under their control.

We are deeply concerned about the presence of landmines and explosive remnants and their destructive impact on civilians, including women and children. We call for increased de-mining action in all the affected areas and support to the victims.

We welcome the positive progress made on the *FSO SAFER* oil tanker and appreciate the generous contributions made to date. We now count on all donors

to fulfil their pledges and hope that the emergency operation can commence as soon as possible.

To conclude, Kenya reaffirms its solidarity with the people of Yemen in their desire and quest for a comprehensive and lasting peace and stability.

**Mr. De Almeida Filho** (Brazil): I thank Mr. Grundberg and Ms. Msuya for their informative briefings. I welcome the delegations of Yemen and Saudi Arabia to today's meeting.

A lot has changed in Yemen since our meeting last month (see S/PV.9110), and not for the better. The truce agreement has unfortunately expired, bringing to an end the most promising opportunity for a long-lasting ceasefire and an enduring political solution to the eight-year-long crisis in the country.

The Yemeni people have suffered for far too long the consequences of this devastating war, with hundreds of thousands of lives lost and millions of people facing extreme hunger. It is with distress that we have learned that 19 million people in Yemen are estimated to be suffering from acute food insecurity.

While we are relieved to learn that no major confrontation has taken place thus far, it is with concern that we take note of the outbreak of clashes between Houthi troops and pro-Government forces, resulting in multiple victims. As we have collectively affirmed in a recent Security Council press statement (SC/15054) on the matter, Brazil deeply regrets that outcome and calls on both sides to resume negotiations in good faith with the utmost urgency.

We urge the representatives of Ansar Allah, in particular, to choose compromise over conflict and cooperation over rivalry and thus open the way for a new chapter for Yemen — a chapter that will hopefully bring more tangible results in the day-to-day lives of all Yemenis than those we have seen over the past six months — including the reduction in civilian casualties, the increase in fuel deliveries and the resumption of international flights to and from Sana'a. An extension of the truce could provide, furthermore, the opportunity to ultimately reach a Yemeni-led inclusive and comprehensive political settlement under the auspices of the United Nations.

We face the risk of a no-truce scenario. We must not give in to pessimism or a sense of "business as usual" with regard to another cycle of violence, but rather persevere in pursuit of the ultimate goal of our

shared efforts: ensuring the welfare of Yemeni men, women and children.

For that reason, we feel encouraged by the latest news concerning the *FSO SAFER* supertanker. Funding targets have been met, and the crucial operation to salvage the *FSO SAFER* can now begin. We extend our sincere gratitude to all contributors for their selfless generosity.

On that positive note, we wish to reaffirm Brazil's steadfast commitment to implementing the mandate bestowed on the United Nations Mission to Support the Hudaydah Agreement, under the guidance of General Michael Beary. We also reiterate our unwavering support for the tireless efforts undertaken by Special Envoy Grundberg in engaging with and fostering dialogue among all parties to the conflict.

Brazil remains alert and ready to work alongside the Council to help create the necessary conditions for the future of peace, stability and development that the Yemeni people so rightly deserve.

**Mr. Agyeman** (Ghana): Let me begin by thanking Special Envoy Hans Grunberg and Assistant Secretary-General Joyce Msuya for their briefings. I also welcome the representatives of Yemen and Saudi Arabia to today's meeting.

As we consider the situation in Yemen, we deeply regret the inability of the parties to reach an agreement to extend the truce for six months as proposed by the Special Envoy. Rather than a historic step forward towards the consolidation and expansion of the truce, the people of Yemen now must dread the prospect of a return to the dark days of violence, and indiscriminate killings and the destruction of what is left of civilian infrastructure.

The international community must therefore do everything within its power to get the parties to extend the truce agreement in order to forestall any possible return to military hostilities and their attendant consequences for civilian lives. Particularly, regional stakeholders with influence over the parties must leverage their relationships with the parties to facilitate an agreement as soon as practicable.

We applaud the efforts of the Special Envoy, the entire United Nations team and all other stakeholders involved in the negotiation process. We know that change does not happen overnight, but with perseverance and dedication, a solution to the Yemeni

crisis will be found. We therefore want to encourage the Special Envoy not to be daunted by the current setback, but to continue to be focused in his pursuit of peace for the benefit of all Yemenis.

As we welcome the continuing engagement of the Government of Yemen with the Special Envoy in his quest to extend the truce, we note with regret the maximalist demands of the Houthis over the past days of the negotiations, which have unfortunately stalled efforts to renew the truce.

It is imperative that the interests of ordinary Yemenis, who have endured a lot of hardship and suffering over the past seven years, reign supreme as the parties engage in the negotiations. In that regard, we call on the parties to be flexible and engage constructively in the spirit of compromise as they return to the negotiating table, even in dealing with contentious issues, such as the reopening of roads in Taiz and the payments of salaries of civil servants in Houthi-held areas, among others.

Ahead of the renewal of the truce, any escalation of hostilities by the parties will not only reverse the marginal progress made in the past six months but will likely also exacerbate the humanitarian situation in the country and worsen the plight of many Yemenis. Even though there is currently no formal truce in place, we implore the parties to refrain from actions that may derail the relative calm and tranquillity that the people of Yemen have enjoyed in recent times.

On the humanitarian front, we call for continued international support to address the widespread food insecurity in Yemen, which puts part of the country's population at high risk for famine. We acknowledge the recent support from the international community, including some members of the Security Council, but as Assistant Secretary-General Msuya pointed out in her briefing, more still needs to be done to help to bridge the humanitarian funding gap and ensure that food and other essential supplies reach all those in desperate need, particularly women and children.

We also remain concerned about the fate of missing and detained humanitarian workers in the country and want to use this opportunity to call for information on their whereabouts and their immediate and unconditional release. Those who have chosen to take this illegal action are reminded that they will be held to account for targeting humanitarian workers and impeding the delivery of humanitarian assistance,

which runs counter to international human rights and humanitarian laws.

Equally concerning are the risks that misinformation and disinformation campaigns continue to pose to such workers in Yemen. We call for more discussions and exchanges within humanitarian organizations, as well as awareness-raising programmes among civilian populations on humanitarian and human rights laws in order to help bridge the knowledge gap so as to help deter such a menace.

As highlighted in today's briefing, the danger posed by explosive remnants of war in Yemen, particularly in Al-Hudaydah, remains high. We are deeply concerned that, notwithstanding the lull in hostilities, landmines continue to pose a serious threat — not only to the safety of civilians, but also to agricultural land, which unfortunately disrupts agricultural production and jeopardizes livelihoods and recovery efforts. We call for concerted global efforts to address the situation.

While the lull in hostilities may have marginally boosted the country's economy, the economic decline continues to afflict the people of Yemen. It is our hope that much of the country's population, who have been pushed into poverty, hunger and desperation over the past eight years, will be allowed to enjoy the dividends of the expired truce that was beginning to return dignity to them through the gradual restoration of some basic services and the steady return of economic activities, including increased fuel availability and the rise in the number and frequency of commercial flights into and out of Yemen, among other things.

It is regrettable that the continuing blockage of roads into and out of the city of Taiz remains one of the main sticking points of negotiations to extend the truce. The curtailment of the right of civilians to move freely in a safe and secure manner through the blockage of the main roads linking the city with other parts of Yemen is unacceptable. That unfortunate development continues to bring immense suffering and hardship to the people of Taiz and the affected governorates, whose access to essential supplies have been unfairly limited for years. We call on the parties, particularly the Houthis, to take immediate steps towards lifting the siege in order to help ease the suffering of the affected people.

In the midst of the current uncertainty in Yemen, we are pleased to note that there is a glimmer of light at the end of the tunnel, as the needed funding goal for the first phase of the controlled dismantling of the *FSO*

*SAFER* oil tanker has been reached. We commend all stakeholders that have made contributions to enable the first phase of the operation to commence and call for expedited action by the United Nations and all those involved in the process in order to avert a humanitarian and environmental disaster.

Another positive development is the generous contributions of the European Union, the United Kingdom and the United States of America in order to ensure the uninterrupted operation of the United Nations Verification and Inspection Mechanism for Yemen so as to enable it to continue its monitoring and inspection role with regard to commercial and bilateral assistance cargo destined to the Red Sea ports in Yemen.

In conclusion, we entreat the parties to be flexible and to make the necessary concessions in order to renew the truce agreement, in the interest of all Yemenis. For once, the parties need to prove to the international community that, notwithstanding their differences, they can prioritize the needs of the people they are seeking to govern. Their main preoccupation as they return to the negotiation table should therefore not only be limited to the extension of the truce, but should be geared towards a nationwide ceasefire as a prelude to negotiations towards a comprehensive and durable political solution spearheaded by Yemenis, with the support of the international community.

**Ms. Moran** (Ireland): I too would like to thank Special Envoy Grundberg and Assistant Secretary-General Msuya for their briefings and commend their work and continued focus on the Yemeni people in difficult circumstances. It is much appreciated.

We share in the deep disappointment that has been expressed around this table that the United Nations-mediated truce in Yemen was not extended or expanded before its expiration on the 2 October. The truce had brought significant relief to the Yemeni people. It represented the longest break in hostilities since the conflict began more than seven years ago.

In recent months we have witnessed a significant decrease in civilian casualties and in the displacement of vulnerable Yemenis. Steady flows of fuel into Al-Hudaydah port and commercial flights through Sana'a airport have brought tangible benefits and improved everyday lives. We fully support the continued efforts of the Special Envoy, including through the comprehensive proposal submitted to the parties on the 1 October. We know that this has not been

straightforward and that the context is challenging. It is deeply regrettable that this latest proposal by the Special Envoy was rejected by the Houthis. We call on all sides, in particular the Houthis, to immediately re-engage with the negotiation process in good faith. We reiterate that there can be no military solution to the conflict in Yemen. A commitment to genuine and inclusive dialogue and to compromise is required and is past due. We urge regional actors to use their influence to that end.

It is welcome that there has been no significant military escalation on the ground since the lapse in the truce. It is also positive to see the humanitarian elements of the truce mostly continue to hold. We implore all actors to avoid any escalatory or provocative words or actions at this sensitive juncture.

We welcome too that the United Nations Verification and Inspection Mechanism for Yemen, which plays a vital role in facilitating life-saving commercial imports, can continue to operate following receipt of additional funding, including €2.2 million from the European Union. In another positive development, the long-awaited salvage mission for the *FSO SAFER* oil tanker looks likely to begin next month. That will hopefully avert a serious environmental, humanitarian and maritime catastrophe for Yemen and for the region. We pay tribute to the leadership of the Netherlands on the matter. Donor assistance, which includes funding from the European Union, has been critical in enabling that work.

The recent white note on conflict and food insecurity issued by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, in accordance with resolution 2417 (2018), was unequivocal about the dire humanitarian situation facing Yemen. We welcome the Assistant Secretary-General's updates on improvements in the situation. We urge continued funding by the international community and the implementation of the urgent steps needed to tackle the country's economic crisis, as elaborated by the Assistant Secretary-General today. Wider economic issues, including basic public services, formed an important part of the Special Envoy's revised truce proposal. We support his efforts to tackle that issue as part of a comprehensive plan going forward.

In conclusion, Yemenis had been living without the possibility of peace for too many years. The truce represented a window of hope that an end to this conflict

was in sight. We continue to believe that the truce presents such an opportunity. The Council was clear and united in its press statement last week (SC/15054) that the truce should be reinstated and that the truce represents the best way to permanently end this war. We reiterate that message today.

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

France deeply regrets the non-renewal of the truce, which expired on 2 October. It was a missed opportunity for the parties and, above all, a missed opportunity for the Yemeni people, who have suffered this conflict for eight years. The Houthis have a clear responsibility, and the threat they pose to regional and maritime security is unacceptable. This is a time for the much-needed resumption of negotiations, not provocations.

It is not too late to reach an agreement. France reiterates its call for a lasting national ceasefire. It commends the efforts made by the Yemeni Government since April and calls on the Houthis to face up to their responsibility and to accept the renewal of the truce for six months. The Houthis must stop their uncompromising demands, which will get them nowhere.

Each day without agreement on a truce increases the risk of instability on the ground. France is very concerned about the ongoing clashes in some governorates and calls on all parties to show restraint. The instability on the ground and the deterioration of the economic and security situation render the Yemeni civilian population even more vulnerable. Millions of Yemenis are currently food insecure. The rates of malnutrition for women and children are among the highest in the world. We urge both the Houthis and the Government of Yemen to implement their commitments regarding the use of children in armed conflict, the killing of children and attacks on schools, in accordance with the action plan signed in April with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General.

Humanitarian actors still face numerous obstacles. France insists on the importance of ensuring full access to all those in need, as the humanitarian situation continues to deteriorate. We are concerned about the recent regulations regarding the *mahram*, the male guards imposed on all female humanitarian workers in Houthi-controlled areas. Finally, we call for the immediate release, without preconditions, of United Nations and humanitarian personnel detained by the Houthis.

Regarding the situation of the *FSO SAFER* oil tanker, France welcomes the announcement of financial contributions that should allow the rapid start of the first phase of the salvage operation.

France commends the efforts of the Special Envoy to relaunch the political process and notes that only an inclusive political solution, with the full participation of women and in accordance with Security Council resolutions, can bring an end to the conflict. The Council has a responsibility to speak with one voice on that issue in order to support the Organization's efforts to achieve a lasting cessation of hostilities as a first step towards the resumption of a political process.

**Ms. Juul** (Norway): I thank Special Envoy Grundberg and Assistant Secretary-General Msuya for their briefings, as well as for all their hard work and efforts in the past weeks and months to bring the parties together on a path towards peace.

Norway regrets that the parties have not yet succeeded in extending the truce. In this crucial moment, the Security Council has a responsibility to do its utmost to secure a return to the truce, and we urge the parties, especially the Houthis, to restrain from their maximalist demands and commit to the terms of the truce. We cannot risk the lack of a truce to create the conditions for incidents on the ground to spiral out of control and for the Yemeni-people to wake up to full-fledged conflict.

While we recognize that the truce has had its limitations, we must acknowledge the gains for the civilian population. During the six months of the truce, there has been a significant reduction of violence and civilian casualties. Non-governmental organizations report that child casualties decreased by 34 per cent. The truce has also allowed for direct dialogue between the parties for the first time in years. Only through dialogue can the parties build the necessary trust. And Norway encourages them to engage constructively in dialogue with the Special Envoy. It is vital that the parties now commit to an extension of the truce that can lead to an expanded ceasefire and the start of a political process. Only that will give the Yemeni people hope for a more peaceful future.

The humanitarian situation in Yemen remains dire. The calls for more funding are clear. And we continue to be concerned about all acts hindering full and safe humanitarian access, especially in the north,

as well as an increasing number of threats against humanitarian workers.

Before concluding, Norway would like to commend United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator David Gressly, the Netherlands and other donors for bringing in sufficient pledges to the United Nations plan for the *FSO SAFER* oil tanker. We are glad to hear that enough funding has been secured to begin the first phase of the operation to prevent an oil spill in the Red Sea. Norway supports those efforts, and we hope that the emergency operation will start as soon as possible.

**Mr. Hoxha** (Albania) (*spoke in French*): As I take the floor for the first time this month due to business travel, I cannot begin without congratulating you, Mr. President, on your presidency of the Security Council for the month of October and on the exemplary conduct of the work during these first two weeks.

(*spoke in English*)

I would like to thank Special Envoy Grundberg for the update and all his tireless efforts. It was also heartening and timely to listen to the account of Ms. Msuya from Yemen.

We believe it is paramount that the Council, the regional actors and the international community as a whole remain united and not let the country slide back into conflict. We should continue to show strong resolve to bring the parties closer together and keep the United Nations-led process on track. I would like to praise the efforts of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia — and welcome the presence of the Ambassador here — and the Sultanate of Oman for the truce renewal. It did not happen, although it should have. We continue to hope that reason will again prevail.

We commend the leadership of the Government of Yemen in accepting the truce proposal. That is the right decision, attitude and response to the call of the people of Yemen, who have been ravaged by war and want to live in peace and dignity. We regret that the same call of the Yemeni people was not heeded by the Houthis, who instead of thinking about, and working for, the future of the Yemeni people, seem embarked on a dangerous course.

Although open conflict has been avoided, since the expiration of the truce we see growing clashes and worrisome signs of escalation — as explained by the Special Envoy, especially in Ma'rib and Taiz. We call on the Houthis to stop their escalatory steps and

get back to the negotiations. After their long years of suffering, the Yemeni people need hope, not more war; they need a perspective and a future. Houthis must not undo the achievements and benefits of the truce. Hard-won progress must not be wasted. Showing restraint is therefore a must, and work towards a nationwide comprehensive ceasefire must not stop.

Yemen cannot be synonymous with war, and we must do whatever we can so that Yemenis do not succumb to such a terrible predicament. We fully support the efforts of the Special Envoy and share his call — as outlined today — for calm and restraint by all parties.

It is crucial that flights from the Sana'a airport continue and expand and that fuel shipments in the Al-Hudaydah port be maintained. They are important dividends of the truce and must be preserved. They have demonstrated how important and life-changing they are for the Yemeni people. Threats to commercial ships and oil companies are counterproductive and must be withdrawn.

The information that Ms. Msuya provided regarding the humanitarian crisis needs no comment. Humanitarian assistance must reach all those in need, and the humanitarian workers and their work must be respected by all.

We are also very worried about the unknown fate of the staff of United Nations and non-governmental organizations, as well as that of other civilians, abducted by armed groups or forcibly disappeared, including from the continued incarceration of the Yemenis employed by the United States and the United Nations. We reiterate our call for their release.

On a positive note, we would like to thank all the countries, especially the United States and the United Kingdom, for making it possible for the United Nations Verification and Inspection Mechanism for Yemen to overcome the financial gap without any suspension of its work. In the same vein, we are very happy to see that the international community, the regional actors and the private sector have made it possible for the operation for the *FSO SAFER* oil tanker to finally start soon. We commend the stewardship of Resident Coordinator David Gressly, as well as his efforts to overcome one of the biggest environmental challenges in the Red Sea.

Let me conclude by saying that war has not been the solution in Yemen and war cannot and should not be

the way. It is time that that be understood and accepted by all on the ground.

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

The situation in Yemen is troubling. The briefing of Special Envoy Hans Grundberg and the moving testimony of Assistant Secretary-General Msuya attest to the volatility of the situation in Yemen.

We are concerned that the truce in force in Yemen since 2 April has not been renewed since its expiration on 2 October. That non-renewal further darkens the horizon for peace to which the Yemeni people aspire. It is undeniable that the truce of the past six months has had a positive impact on the daily lives of the people, who had not seen a respite for many years, particularly with regard to a reduction of civilian casualties, but also in terms of access to regular fuel supplies, the provision of basic services and the freedom of movement, with the resumption of commercial flights to and from Sana'a.

We remain hopeful that Special Envoy Grundberg's new proposal will be accepted by all. That proposal entails the extension of the truce for six months; the payment of salaries and pensions to civil servants; the opening of specific roads in Taiz and other governorates; the opening of additional destinations for flights to and from Sana'a airport; the unhindered entry of oil tankers into the port of Al-Hudaydah; and the strengthening of de-escalation mechanisms through the Military Coordination Committee and a commitment to the immediate release of detainees.

Launching negotiations towards a ceasefire, the resumption of an inclusive political process and broader economic issues, including public services, are also priorities for the Yemeni peace agenda. We believe that it is crucial to restart negotiations on the terms of a new agreement, based on a multidimensional framework that addresses political, security and economic issues, in order to achieve a comprehensive negotiated settlement of the conflict through an inclusive dialogue that involves women.

On the security front, we note that, notwithstanding a few incidents, there has been no major military offensive on the ground since the end of the truce, although the operational environment remains very difficult for humanitarian agencies. We call on the parties to refrain from any provocations that could lead

to an escalation. We reiterate that there is no military solution in Yemen.

On the humanitarian front, the situation remains worrisome. The protracted war has destroyed the country's economy, adding to the suffering of the Yemeni people. Three quarters of the population are in need of humanitarian aid and protection. In addition, there is the threat of food insecurity, exacerbated by the rising cost of basic necessities and the devastating floods that have left thousands of households in need and led to the displacement of people.

We call for the release of United Nations personnel detained by the Houthis. We also note with appreciation that the funding target for the first phase of the emergency operation to transfer and remove oil from the *FSO SAFER* tanker was met.

Finally, we reiterate our support to Special Envoy Grundberg for his tireless efforts to maintain dialogue between the parties in order to achieve a cessation of hostilities and a comprehensive peace agreement in Yemen.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Yemen.

**Mr. Al-Saadi** (Yemen) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, allow me to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. I wish you and your friendly delegation every success. I would like to thank your predecessor, the Permanent Representative of France, for his successful presidency last month. I would also like to thank Mr. Grundberg and Ms. Msuya for their briefings.

The Government of Yemen welcomes Ms. Msuya's visit to the country to see first-hand the humanitarian situation caused by the armed Houthi militias. Now more than ever, that situation requires that the Security Council and the international community shoulder their moral and historical responsibilities and take a firm position of deterrence to put an end to the acts and provocations of those militias, as they impede the peace efforts and the political process. They must be pushed to engage constructively in the efforts of the Security Council and the United Nations to stop the bloodshed of the Yemeni people and to agree to extend the truce as a glimmer of hope until we achieve a total

ceasefire and resume the political process to put an end to the conflict.

The United Nations-led peace efforts in Yemen have suffered a major setback due to the intransigence of the Houthi militias and their insistence on exploiting the suffering of the Yemeni people for political and military gains. The militias have not responded to the calls by the Security Council and the international community to abandon the choice of war and give precedence to the language of dialogue and the interests of Yemenis by extending and expanding the truce that has been in place since 2 April. The truce brought many benefits to the Yemeni people as a result of the significant concessions made by the Yemeni Government to alleviate the human suffering. The Yemeni Government has shown all kinds of flexibility and cooperation with the Special Envoy to overcome all the obstacles created by the Houthi militias. In that context, the Presidential Leadership Council reaffirms its firm commitment and adherence to peace and to constructive engagement in all regional and international efforts to establish peace and stability in Yemen and end the conflict in accordance with the agreed political terms of reference, namely, the Gulf Cooperation Council Initiative and its Implementation Mechanism, the outcome of the comprehensive National Dialogue Conference and the relevant Security Council resolutions, in particular resolution 2216 (2015).

While the Government commends all the efforts of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General to extend and expand the truce and continues its support for him in achieving a comprehensive and just peace, it stresses that expanding the truce should not be at the expense of the future and aspirations of Yemenis or the country's sovereignty, and empowering the Houthi militias. We also commend the position of the international community and the Security Council on the crisis in Yemen, and we call for the activation of that position to deter the conduct of the militias and bring more pressure to bear on them to choose peace and end the war.

The Yemeni Government received the Special Envoy's recent proposal positively and, by renewing the truce, sought to expand the benefits to all Yemenis. That is in line with our efforts to alleviate the human suffering of all our people in all governorates without discrimination. The main objective of the truce is to stop the bloodshed of Yemenis caused by the war of the Houthi militias and ensure the free movement of civilians, commercial goods and humanitarian aid. However, the Houthi militias have deliberately evaded

commitments to peace by fabricating successive complications and imposing conditions to thwart the truce, thereby prolonging the war and exacerbating the humanitarian crisis. The Yemeni people are aware of such conduct, and the international community is witnessing it first-hand.

Despite the Houthi militias' evasion of their obligations over the past six months pursuant to the truce, and despite their intransigence to open the main roads in Taiz and lift the siege that has continued on that city for eight years, the Yemeni Government has maintained the truce by exercising restraint and facilitating the delivery of more than 1,435,000 tons of fuel through Al-Hudaydah port. The tax and customs revenues from that delivery amounted to more than 203 billion Yemeni rials, looted by the Houthi militias, who deprived civil servants in areas under their control of their salaries and, instead, used the money for their military operations and personal benefit. The Government also facilitated 102 commercial flights to and from Sana'a airport, overcoming the obstacles created by the Houthi militias through demanding official travel documents.

Despite the Houthis' rejection to extend and expand the truce, the Yemeni Government has continued since 2 October to facilitate the regular arrival of fuel vessels into Al-Hudaydah port and the commercial flights through Sana'a airport to ensure the interests of the Yemeni people and support the efforts of the United Nations to achieve a comprehensive and sustainable peace, while the Houthi militias continue to escalate their military operations on various fronts, resulting in more than 1,400 dead or injured persons among the military ranks and 96 civilians during the period of the truce. In addition to their violations and military parades in Al-Hudaydah, in flagrant violation of the Stockholm Agreement and resolutions 2451 (2018) and 2452 (2019), the leaders of those militias even issued statements and threatened oil companies and facilities, as well as cargo ships, that they would disrupt international navigation. This is a serious threat and a dangerous escalation that will have repercussions on the Yemeni economy and infrastructure. It will also lead to deepening the economic and humanitarian crises as well as threatening security and peace in Yemen and the region, in addition to fuel supplies.

Such threats and terrorist acts necessitate a firm stance from the international community and the Security Council to stop the exploitation of Yemen by

those militias as well as their efforts to hinder the peace process. Pressure must be brought to bear on them to engage with peace efforts under the leadership of the United Nations without preconditions, and dialogue must be prioritized in the interests of the Yemeni people, instead of war and satisfying the ambitions of the Iranian regime in Yemen and the region.

This war has led to the loss of hundreds of thousands of lives and left dozens of thousands of casualties. It has pushed more than 20 million civilians into a cycle of hunger. It has also displaced millions of people across countries and continents and pushed more than 4 million people to internally displaced persons camps, where they live under very harsh conditions. It has destroyed livelihoods and brought pandemics. Climate-change-related are causing costly destruction and death, especially with the collapse of the Government-sponsored protection and care network. We therefore have limited options to save lives. The price hikes on fuel and basic goods and the disruption of global supply chains owing to the latest geopolitical challenges and the coronavirus disease pandemic have doubled the humanitarian and economic suffering in Yemen and exacerbated food insecurity in the country.

Accordingly, the Yemeni Government reiterates its support and appreciation for the United Nations-led relief efforts in Yemen to alleviate the suffering of our people. We commend the engagement of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs with the Government to ensure the best implementation of humanitarian programmes.

The Government also commends the generous support of our brothers in the sisterly Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the sisterly United Arab Emirates in various fields, including through the implementation of service projects with costs exceeding \$1 billion. We also commend the support of the United States of America and acknowledge the humanitarian relief pledges from the European Union and the United Kingdom.

Nevertheless, the funding gap is widening, thereby threatening to end additional life-saving relief programmes, including the provision of food and health care. We thank all donor countries that have provided the financing needed to ensure the extend the mandate of the United Nations Verification and Inspection Mechanism.

The Yemeni Government continues to develop a matrix of financial and administrative reforms to

manage resources and monitor and follow up on the swift processing of the support provided by our brothers and international partners, as well as to implement a package of projects that would enhance services, protect the livelihoods of our people and empower State law-enforcement institutions. We look forward to receiving further contributions from the international community to close the financial gap in the humanitarian response plan and to support the Government programmes and plans for ensuring stability and economic recovery, which would alleviate the humanitarian suffering of Yemenis.

In conclusion, the Government of Yemen appreciates all efforts aimed at avoiding an environmental, humanitarian and economic catastrophe off the coast of Yemen, which would have repercussions for the region and the world. We reiterate the need to make greater efforts and mobilize the necessary resources to fill the financial gap and drain the *FSO SAFER* oil tanker without delay. The obstacles posed by the Houthi militias must not prevent us from shouldering our moral responsibility to stop more than a million barrels of oil leaking into the Red Sea, which would threaten to cause an imminent and destructive catastrophe that could surpass by a factor of four the repercussions of the accident involving the *Exxon Valdez* oil tanker in the Pacific Ocean. We should put an end to the manipulation of the militias and their use of this dossier as a card for political blackmail.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Saudi Arabia.

**Mr. Alwasil** (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to sincerely thank Mr. Hans Grundberg, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen, and the Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Ms. Joyce Msuya, for their briefings and efforts to bring about peace and security in Yemen and relieve the suffering of our brotherly Yemeni people.

We all bore witness on 2 October to the rejection by the Houthi militia of the proposal made by Special Envoy Grundberg to extend the ceasefire in Yemen. The rejection was no surprise for those who are aware of the nature of that extremist terrorist militia, which has taken the Yemeni people hostage and is controlling their fate and subjecting entire generations to the dangers posed by war and armed conflict. That militia puts its extremist ideological interests at the forefront,

thereby threatening peace and stability in Yemen and the entire region and preventing a comprehensive peaceful solution of the conflict in the country.

Last week, for the first time, the Security Council issued a press statement (SC/15054) firmly and clearly stating that the Houthis were responsible for hindering a proposal to extend the truce. It called on the Houthis to cease their provocations and military operations in Yemen, in the region and in the Red Sea and to return to dialogue. I note in that regard that the practices of the extremist Houthi militia, including its rejection of proposals made by the Special Envoy for extending the truce, are a part of the dark period that began in 2014, when that militia undertook a coup against the legitimate Government. Since then, Yemen and the entire region have been suffering from the terrorist acts of that militia.

I would like to pose some questions about the nature of what has been happening in Yemen by the Houthis. Although they claim that they seek to ensure the interests of the Yemeni people, what causes the Houthis to reject a truce proposal? That truce proposal includes the following: first, maintaining the cessation of military operations; secondly, increasing commercial air flights; thirdly, putting oil revenue in a joint account to pay civil-servant salaries; and fourthly, opening the roads to Taiz and other regions, which are under Houthi control, for humanitarian purposes. Those who are rejecting the Special Envoy's proposal are also hampering the repairs of the *FSO SAFER* oil tanker, which risks causing an unprecedented environmental disaster in the Red Sea. These are the very people who continue to recruit children and lay mines that kill innocent and civilian people. They continue to smuggle illegal weapons, hijack humanitarian assistance, support inhumane military activities and target the civil infrastructure of neighbouring States using drones. That militia is not a peaceful group. It does not care about the interest of the Yemeni people. In brief, it is a terrorist group pursuant to resolution 2624 (2022).

Although the proposals to extend the truce might in some way partially favour the Houthi militias, the Yemeni Presidential Council accepted them for the sake of the Yemeni people. The international community welcomed that step. My country's Government has supported the efforts of the Special Envoy to ensure the truce, in addition to those of the sisterly countries and members of the Coalition to Support Legitimacy in Yemen, the United States, the United Kingdom and many other countries. The objective is to achieve a comprehensive political solution in Yemen.

Let us recall that the Houthi militia had already violated the truce many times. They refused to transfer the oil revenue into the Central Bank so that civil-servant salaries might be paid. They organized military parades in the city of Hudaydah in flagrant violation of the Stockholm Agreement, which stipulates that the city should be free of a military presence. In addition, the militia continues to besiege the city of Taiz.

As we have exhausted our efforts, the Houthi militia rejects all measures that might lead to a peaceful solution. It insists on rejecting the calls for achieving peace and stability in Yemen. It is therefore incumbent upon the international community and the Security Council in particular to reconsider that extremist group, which is holding the entire future of Yemen hostage. It is time for the Houthi militia to be classified as a terrorist group and to be boycotted and its funding sources to be dried up.

In conclusion, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia reiterates its commitment to supporting international efforts aimed at achieving peace in Yemen. We also reiterate our right to defend ourselves in case that militia resumes attacks against us. We will spare no effort to deter its hostile acts.

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

I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

*The meeting rose at 11.50 a.m.*