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Provisional

President: Ms. Oppong-Ntiri (Ghana)

Members:

Albania	Mr. Spasse
Brazil	Mr. De Almeida Filho
China	Mr. Zhang Jun
France	Mrs. Broadhurst Estival
Gabon	Ms. Koumby Missambo
India	Mrs. Kamboj
Ireland	Ms. Moran
Kenya	Mr. Abbas
Mexico	Mr. Ochoa Martínez
Norway	Ms. Juul
Russian Federation	Mr. Polyanskiy
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 3.05 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the 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. Reena Ghelani, Director for Operations and Advocacy, 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: In this briefing, I intend to provide an overview of the situation in Yemen following the formal expiration of the truce on 2 October and to brief the Security Council on current mediation efforts and the way forward.

Seven weeks have passed since the United Nations-mediated nationwide truce in Yemen expired. In that period, despite incidents of concern and the expiration of the truce, fortunately, we did not see a return to full-fledged war. In that connection, I note the courageous and difficult decisions taken in order to avoid that path.

In recent weeks, however, Ansar Allah carried out attacks against oil terminals and ports in Hadramaut and Shabwah governorates, with the aim of depriving the Government of Yemen of its main source of revenue — exporting oil. Those attacks, the last of which occurred yesterday in the Al-Dabba port in Hadramaut, have significant economic repercussions. Attacks on oil infrastructure and threats to oil companies undermine the welfare of the entirety of the Yemeni people. They risk setting off a spiral of military and economic escalation, a pattern we have seen play out before over the course of Yemen's war. Beyond the risk of escalating violence and undermining current mediation efforts, attacks on civilian infrastructure are prohibited by international humanitarian law. As

we will hear from Ms. Reena Ghelani, Director for Operations and Advocacy, those attacks could also lead to further deterioration of the economic and, consequently, humanitarian situations.

Even though overall levels of violence have increased only slightly, as compared to the six-month truce period, in recent weeks we have seen a concerning uptick in incidents in Ma'rib and Taiz, including incidents involving civilian casualties. Such incidents demonstrate how fragile the situation remains and serve to underscore, once more, the need for the parties to urgently reach an agreement to renew the truce. I reiterate my call on the parties to exercise maximum restraint during this critical time.

The absence of a major military escalation thus far has facilitated my continued discussions with the parties, as well as with countries of the region. It has also allowed for the elements operated under the truce, such as regular flights between Amman and Sana'a International Airport and fuel deliveries to the Al-Hudaydah port, to continue for the benefit of the Yemeni people. The Organization's efforts to convince the parties to renew and expand the truce continue. In that context, I would like to express my appreciation for the coordinated efforts of countries of the region, including the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Sultanate of Oman, in support of the efforts of my Office. In the light of the military and economic developments I just outlined, it is vital that the ongoing discussions yield positive results as soon as possible. In addition to the efforts related to a renewal of the truce, I am engaging the parties on not only expanding the truce, but initiating discussions on a path towards a more comprehensive settlement of the conflict. I have outlined ideas and options to them on steps to be taken, and I repeat my message that the international community and, more important, the Yemeni people expect them to demonstrate actionable commitment to a peaceful resolution of the conflict.

The recent developments reaffirm my conviction that addressing urgent humanitarian and economic issues is needed in the immediate term if we are to avoid the situation for civilians deteriorating further. But more durable solutions can be reached only in the context of a comprehensive settlement of the conflict. Many of the economic issues being discussed, such as that of revenue management for the payment of salaries, require cooperation between the parties in order to be sustainable. That is why I want the parties to the conflict

to not only renew the truce but — crucially — to commit to taking steps towards a comprehensive resolution of the conflict. A political process under United Nations auspices will be needed to reach such a resolution, and the sooner we can start that work in earnest, the greater our chances of reversing the devastating trends of this war. I outlined options to the parties in that regard, and I will keep advocating for an approach that looks beyond the immediate interests of the warring sides.

In that context, I would like to reiterate my conviction that, for any settlement to be sustainable, it needs to be broad-based and include all segments of Yemeni society, including young people, civil society and women. The International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women on 25 November serves as a stark reminder — not just on that day, but on every day of the year — of the disproportionate effects that Yemeni women continue to suffer as a result of the conflict and the integral role that women should play in all aspects of an inclusive political settlement. Time is not on the side of Yemeni women as their basic rights, including the freedom of movement, are further violated. That is now affecting all Yemeni women in the north, including our United Nations staff, and we need to be clear that there are no excuses for such actions.

I would like to conclude by reiterating my sincere appreciation for the sustained support of the Security Council. Its support will continue to be vital in order to convince the parties to abandon short-term calculations in favour of political, economic and security cooperation towards a sustainable settlement of the conflict in Yemen.

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

I now give the floor to Ms. Ghelani.

Ms. Ghelani: As the Special Envoy already mentioned, many of the truce's provisions continue to hold despite its expiration on 2 October. That is providing a continued and much-needed reprieve for the people of Yemen. However, the humanitarian dividends of the truce need much more than six months to take hold, and the people affected by the conflict need a sustained guarantee of peace before they decide to return home to rebuild their lives, for some after having been displaced multiple times. They also need to see improvements in their everyday lives beyond a reduction in fighting. Many people, particularly those in the southern parts of the front lines, told us that they

had yet to see the positive impacts of the truce on their livelihoods and economic situation.

Localized clashes continue to impact civilians in some parts of the country. We remain concerned about the possibility that large-scale hostilities may again resurge in Yemen. In the last week of October, according to verified figures, shelling and sniper fire killed two civilians and wounded another eight, many of them children, in Taiz. Earlier this month, in Ma'rib, four displaced civilians were killed and at least another five were injured when a weapons storage facility exploded due to the fighting. Vulnerable groups bear some of the heaviest costs of the clashes. According to open-source reporting, child casualties surged by 43 per cent between September and October.

Landmines and unexploded ordnance continue to account for the largest share of civilian casualties. As we said in previous briefings, the reduction in fighting since April has allowed civilians to move freely. But that has increased their exposure to landmines and unexploded ordnance, with more than 164 civilians, including 74 children, killed or injured between July and September. People too often fall victim to those horrific devices, risking injury, and even death, while striving to access health facilities, schools and other essential services.

The parties to the conflict must take all feasible precautions to protect the civilian population under their control against the dangers resulting from military operations, including by identifying, marking and decontaminating dangerous areas. As mentioned in our briefing last month (see S/PV.9152), we also underline the need for increased funding for mine action activities and the facilitation of importing equipment.

The threats to civilians in Yemen extend far beyond the immediate impact of the hostilities, especially for vulnerable groups facing severe protection risks, as was mentioned. Migrants and refugees also experience significant dangers. So far this year, more than 50,000 migrants have taken the sea route from the Horn of Africa to Yemen in search of a better life. Just last month, another migrant raft sank, leaving three people dead and another 28 missing.

Hunger continues to haunt more than half the population in Yemen, preying on the most vulnerable. As mentioned in our briefing last month, new estimates indicate that the number of people facing acute food insecurity between October and December is slightly

lower than our initial projections in early 2022. That is very good news, but it does not eclipse the fact that 17 million people still do not know where they will get their next meal.

In that context, we welcome the recent arrival of a shipment carrying 14,000 metric tons of wheat flour under the Black Sea Grain Initiative on 15 October, as well as three further grain shipments, which left Ukraine on 23 October and 13 and 17 November.

We have been briefing the Security Council on a regular basis regarding the humanitarian operating environment, which is now becoming increasingly difficult every month. Humanitarian access is still largely constrained by bureaucratic impediments, restrictions on movement and an unacceptable level of interference. The civilian population is again bearing the brunt of those restrictions, and people are not receiving the life-saving services and supplies that they need in a timely manner. Between July and September, more than 70 per cent of the reported access incidents, or nearly 500 out of 673 such incidents, were due to bureaucratic impediments, the vast majority of which took place in Houthi-controlled areas.

Despite all our efforts, restrictions have become more widespread and entrenched. Over recent months, the restrictions on movement imposed by the Houthi de facto authorities, which particularly impact female staff and beneficiaries, are leaving us less room to operate. We are struggling to maintain the space that we need to provide principled humanitarian aid, especially at a time of uncertainty, when we actually need to scale up services.

We recently conducted an evaluation that systematically looked at all aspects of the aid operation. In following up on that, the humanitarian community is working to further address access constraints and advocate for humanitarian space, while also undertaking efforts to strengthen accountability, transparency and oversight in the aid operation.

In addition, the deteriorating security situation is leaving humanitarians increasingly exposed to carjackings, kidnappings and other incidents. That is obstructing safe access particularly in Abyan and Shabwah governorates, where we urgently need to scale up our operations. More than 30 carjacking incidents have occurred in Government-held areas so far this year. Five United Nations staff members are still missing after being abducted in Abyan in February.

Two additional United Nations colleagues in Sana'a remain detained after more than a year. We continue our repeated calls for all staff to be released immediately. We also take this opportunity to remind all parties to the conflict that, under international humanitarian law, they must facilitate the rapid and unimpeded passage of humanitarian relief for civilians in need and must respect and protect humanitarian staff and assets.

As we previously briefed the Council, Yemen's continuing economic instability and the collapse of basic services remain key drivers of the humanitarian needs and leave much of the Yemeni population dependent on aid. That dependency is exacerbated by a long-standing gap in development funding, which is impeding investment in long-term solutions. We are also concerned that the continued attacks and fighting on and around ports could have an adverse impact on the economy, as mentioned, and may subsequently lead to the further deterioration of the humanitarian situation.

With just over a month left in the year, the humanitarian response plan is now 55 per cent funded. Despite all the challenges, aid agencies are reaching 10.5 million people on average every month. We would like to express our appreciation to all donors for their support, especially in these times of global economic uncertainty, while also calling for further support to maintain the life-saving humanitarian services.

Let me conclude by reiterating the concern with which I opened my briefing: any escalation in the fighting will have devastating consequences for the people of Yemen and will send us back to square one. People in Yemen need a return to normalcy so that they can rebuild their fractured lives. The time to deliver that is now.

The President: I thank Ms. Ghelani 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 Grundberg and Ms. Ghelani for their briefings today. We are encouraged that most truce measures continue to hold since the lack of extension in October, but we call for an end to the disturbing pattern of Houthi terrorist attacks on international shipping. The targeting of ships in the southern ports of Al-Dabba and Qan'ah poses a serious threat to peace and risks depriving millions of Yemenis from access to basic goods. We call on the Houthis to take the peaceful

route by pursuing a negotiated, Yemeni-led political settlement under United Nations auspices.

The humanitarian crisis continues to suffer from interwoven challenges, and the independent interagency humanitarian evaluation found that, despite its growing scale, much of the aid quality has been unacceptably low. The relative peace of the past eight months has not alleviated the impact of the preceding years of violent war. As many as 17 million Yemenis remain exposed to an acute food insecurity crisis, with many more projected to be affected in the coming years. That humanitarian crisis underlines the importance of the Black Sea Grain Initiative, which was recently renewed until March 2023. This month, the Initiative facilitated the import of more than 60,000 metric tonnes of wheat into Yemen, and it will continue to be an important lifeline for Yemenis, as we heard again today from Ms. Ghelani.

Internal displacement remains prevalent across Yemen. For those who do chose to return home, the risks of explosive remnants of war are real. The United Kingdom is supportive of ongoing demining initiatives and urges the international community to unite behind that issue.

As we approach the start of the global 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence, the United Kingdom reiterates its commitment to working towards a future in which all women and girls live free from the fear of violence. We call for an end to the Houthi-imposed *mahram* restrictions, which are directly curbing the freedoms of Yemeni women.

The only permanent resolution to all of those issues is long-term peace. And as I said, that will require a negotiated, Yemeni-led political settlement under United Nations auspices. The truce continues to represent the best opportunity for progress, and for the sake of the Yemeni people, this opportunity must not be squandered.

Mr. Mills (United States of America): I thank Special Envoy Grundberg and Director Ghelani for their briefings today. Their dedication and efforts to help facilitate peace are commendable.

Nearly two months have passed since the truce expired on 2 October. Like our colleague from the United Kingdom, we are encouraged that key elements of that truce continue to hold, but remain deeply concerned that the Houthis have failed to set negotiations on a path

to a more durable peace and instead have taken actions that run counter to the strong, ongoing international support for United Nations-led peace efforts in Yemen.

The recent Houthi terrorist attacks on the Al-Dabba oil terminal and the Qan'ah seaport are unacceptable. They are an affront to the Yemeni people and the entire international community. Those Houthi attacks on commercial vessels delivering essential goods are directly exacerbating the suffering of Yemen's people and threaten to plunge the country back into conflict.

In addition, on 16 November, the United States Navy interdicted 170 tons of lethal materials used as missile fuel components and explosives that were hidden aboard a ship bound for Yemen from Iran. The seized fuel component was enough to enable the launch of more than a dozen medium-range ballistic missiles.

A group seeking peace does not launch strikes on seaports and oil terminals, cutting off flows of humanitarian supplies and basic goods for the people in the country. A group seeking peace does not attempt to covertly import fuel for medium-range missiles. Those actions will only further cripple Yemen's economy, lead to a resurgence in civilian deaths and worsen the humanitarian crisis.

We urge the Houthis to take another path: seize this moment and choose to end eight years of devastating war. We call on the Houthis to engage in good faith and United Nations-led negotiations and return Yemen to the path of peace through a negotiated, inclusive Yemeni-led political settlement. Millions of Yemenis are calling for peace, justice and economic stability — they are not calling for more weapons. There is no military solution to this conflict.

The truce provided considerable life-saving benefits to the Yemeni people, including a dramatic decline in civilian casualties, increased access to fuel and commercial flights out of Sana'a airport for the first time since 2016. Agreement on a peace process would further set Yemen on the path to recovery and provide even greater benefits to Yemenis, such as the payment of public sector salaries, road openings, more flights and streamlined import processes.

Despite the current global divisions, there is remarkable unity for such a solution within the Security Council and throughout the region. We welcome the continuous support of the Government of the Republic of Yemen for United Nations efforts and the support

from Saudi Arabia, Oman and other regional countries for initiatives aimed at peace. We also commend the restraint those partners have shown in the face of the Houthis' recent attacks.

As we seek to end the conflict, it is important that we continue to support the United Nations Verification and Inspection Mechanism for Yemen (UNVIM), which has played a critical role in ensuring that commercial goods can flow into Yemen unimpeded, helping to address the humanitarian crisis. Although UNVIM's immediate funding crisis has been averted, it is essential for it to have the funds to continue operations in the long-term.

Finally, I note that it is critical that we maintain momentum in resolving the situation of the *FSO SAFER* oil tanker. With the funds for phase one now in place, it is essential we avoid any delays in the timeline for the operation.

The United States remains committed to supporting active peace efforts in Yemen. Today the Houthis are faced with the choice of bringing peace and prosperity to all Yemenis or continuing a pointless cycle of violence that has destroyed the lives of so many. The United States urges the Houthis to negotiate in good faith, address Yemenis' calls for justice and accountability and show their support for an inclusive and durable peace for the country in word and deed.

Mr. Abushahab (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to thank Mr. Hans Grundberg and Ms. Reena Ghelani for their briefings.

Yemen has reached a critical phase since the truce ended, with the Houthi terrorist militia continuing its hostile posture towards the Yemeni people and their legitimate Government. That has, in turn, deepened the Houthis' isolation at both the regional and international levels, and demonstrated the magnitude of the threat they pose to regional security and peace.

Since our previous meeting on Yemen (see S/PV.9152), the Houthi militia has launched several terrorist attacks using drones against oil facilities and oil tankers in Hadramaut and Shabwah. Those attacks, which my country strongly condemns, constitute a serious threat to international maritime navigation, global energy supplies and the Yemeni economy. The Houthis have also bombed civilian facilities and internally displaced persons camps in the Ma'rib and Taiz governorates, resulting in civilian deaths and injuries, including among women and children. In

addition, they have bombed roads and bridges, such as the bridge linking Lahij and the besieged city of Taiz. The Houthis continue to perpetrate the most heinous violations, including by launching campaigns to intimidate and arrest people.

Those crimes reflect the Houthis' determination to return the situation in Yemen to the way it was prior to the truce, in contrast to regional and international endeavours to renew it. Their crimes look exactly like the tactics deployed by other terrorist groups to achieve political gains by launching attacks against civilians. While the Presidential Leadership Council has shown significant flexibility and self-restraint, the Houthi militias continue to cling to incapacitating terms in the negotiations. Although several advantages of the truce remain in place, including the flow of oil derivatives through the port of Al-Hudaydah and the arrival of commercial flights into Sana'a airport, the Houthi militias continue to respond to all attempts to restore calm and build bridges with more provocations. Such behaviour is no longer surprising from a group that has deliberately sought to foil the negotiations since the beginning of the crisis.

The United Arab Emirates continues to strongly support the efforts of the Special Envoy to reach an agreement that will renew and expand the truce. We reaffirm that a peaceful solution is the normal path to end the conflict and enable the Yemeni people to begin the reconstruction and building process. Now is the time to agree on solid ground to resume a comprehensive political process under the auspices of the United Nations.

Opportunities for peace in Yemen remain open, but only if the Houthis commit to a political solution. We reiterate our deep concern regarding the continued violations of the arms embargo imposed by resolutions 2216 (2015) and 2624 (2022). Last week, nearly 170 tons of explosive material were seized in the Gulf of Oman by the United States Navy. We affirm that any threat posed by the Houthi terrorist group to neighbouring countries, including through launching missiles or the use of drones, is considered a direct aggression against those countries and will be met with an immediate and firm response by the Arab coalition to support legitimacy in Yemen.

With the considerable military escalation and targeting of Yemeni economic interests, human suffering is increasing in Yemen. Attacks by the Houthis

on oil facilities may have catastrophic environmental consequences in the Arabian Sea and the Gulf of Aden. At the same time, the dilapidated *FSO SAFER* tanker remains a serious environmental threat. Additionally, the Houthi militias must remove all barriers that prevent humanitarian access in areas under its control and stop imposing restrictions on the movement of humanitarian workers, especially Yemeni women.

In conclusion, the United Arab Emirates reaffirms its continued support for improving living standards in Yemen. We also emphasize the importance of continuing to speak with one voice in the Council against the hostile behaviour that undermines peace in Yemen. The Council should take deterrent measures, including by applying further pressure and imposing sanctions, to dissuade the terrorist Houthi militias from continuing to threaten the security and stability of Yemen and the region.

Mr. Abbas (Kenya): I thank Special Envoy Grundberg and Ms. Ghelani for their briefings. I also welcome the participation of the representatives of Yemen and Saudi Arabia in this meeting.

Last month, a bus fell off a cliff while navigating Houthi checkpoints around Taiz. It left three passengers dead and 22 others seriously injured. It was a painful reminder of the urgency of fully reopening those roads in Taiz currently controlled by the Houthis. The Houthis have also recently targeted civilian infrastructure, including the Al-Dabba oil terminal in Hadhramawt and Qan'ah port in Shabwah. We condemn those destructive acts, which are in violation of international humanitarian law and also heighten and perpetuate tensions that could lead to a resumption of hostilities.

The objective of the Houthis may be to deny the Government of much-needed revenue from oil derivatives, but they must realize that those suffering most from their actions are innocent Yemenis, including the most vulnerable, namely women, children and people with disabilities.

The reported interception of a vessel smuggling 70 tons of ammonium perchlorate — a substance used to make rocket and missile fuel and explosives — suspected to be bound for Yemen, is an indicator that Yemen could be used as a base to destabilize the entire region. We call for urgent and independent investigations into that serious matter and the necessary action taken against those responsible.

The truce was an opportunity for the parties to set aside their narrow interests, prioritize the wider interests of their country and its people and engage in a Yemeni-led and Yemeni-owned process facilitated by the Special Envoy for a sustainable political solution. As we have said before, now is not the time to escalate tensions or reactivate front lines — there is too much at stake. An eruption of another cycle of violence would lead to further civilian casualties, internal displacement and the disruption of much-needed humanitarian assistance and access.

With three quarters of Yemenis relying on agriculture and livestock for their survival, the climate crisis is pushing communities already reeling from the effects of a prolonged conflict to the brink. Yemeni farmers have seen it all: if it is not protracted conflict destroying their livelihoods, then it is extreme drought; if it is not drought, then it is flooding. Therefore, even as we address the immediate humanitarian concerns, there is an urgent need to consider long-term solutions and pragmatic approaches, including investing in climate-resilient agriculture to improve food security and encourage self-reliance.

We remain deeply concerned by the presence of landmines and other explosive remnants and their destructive impact on civilians, including women and children. We advocate for increased demining action in all affected areas, prompt facilitation of the necessary equipment used in mine clearance activities and support for the victims.

We continue to monitor progress on the *FSO SAFER* tanker and appreciate the generous contributions made to date. We 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. Zhang Jun (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Special Envoy Grundberg and Ms. Ghelani for their respective briefings. I also welcome the presence of the Permanent Representatives of Yemen and Saudi Arabia at today's meeting.

As the Special Envoy noted in his briefing, the security situation in Yemen is very fragile. In the past month, we have witnessed a spate of armed clashes in locations such as Ma'rib and Taiz, while the Al-Dabba and Qan'ah oil terminals came under attack. The spread

of fighting is worrisome. Military means cannot solve the Yemeni issue, and the escalation of the conflict will only bring more suffering to the Yemeni people. We strongly condemn the attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure and call on the parties to the conflict, especially the Houthis, to put the interests of the Yemeni people first, to stay committed to the path towards a political settlement, to cease all hostilities and to ease tensions on the ground as soon as possible. China fully acknowledges the overall restraint shown by the Yemeni Government in the process.

The six-month truce has brought significant peace dividends to the Yemeni people. Restoring the truce is not only in the common interests of the Yemeni people, but also an expectation shared by countries in the region and the wider international community. The window of opportunity for peace in Yemen remains open and rightly so. Special Envoy Grundberg has been working relentlessly to re-establish the truce. Saudi Arabia, Oman and other countries in the region have also played an active and constructive role in that regard, which China appreciates. We call on the relevant parties, in particular the Houthis, to actively cooperate with the Special Envoy and set reasonable expectations on key issues, such as the payment of civil servants' salaries, in order to find a solution at an early date, re-establish the truce as soon as possible and reach an agreement on launching a more extensive political process. China supports the Gulf Cooperation Council's initiative on the issue of Yemen and encourages countries with influence on the situation in Yemen to continue to provide constructive assistance in de-escalating the situation and restoring the truce.

Yemen is facing one of the most serious humanitarian crises in the world, with more than 23 million people in urgent need of humanitarian aid and an acute malnutrition problem. At the same time, funding shortfalls have forced many United Nations humanitarian and development programmes in Yemen to curtail or even suspend their operations. That is truly disturbing. We call on the international community to act immediately to scale up humanitarian and development assistance to Yemen, provide adequate funding for United Nations operations in the country and support the efforts of the Presidential Leadership Council in improving living standards and stabilizing Yemen's economy and currency in order to ease the plight of the Yemeni people. All parties in Yemen should also facilitate and cooperate with assistance operations.

Sufficient funds have been raised for the first phase of the operation to address the situation of the *FSO SAFER* oil tanker. That is encouraging news. Regardless of whether the issue is viewed from an economic, humanitarian, security or environmental perspective, it is crucial that the potential risks of the oil tanker be eliminated without delay. We hope that the United Nations will speed up the implementation of the action plan to ensure the safe transfer of the tanker's crude oil as soon as possible and avoid a disaster.

Mr. Polyanskiy (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I would like to thank the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen, Mr. Hans Grundberg, and the Director for Operations and Advocacy, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Ms. Reena Ghelani, for their briefings on the political and humanitarian developments in Yemen.

We are disappointed that the truce between the official Yemeni authorities and the Houthis that ended almost two months ago has not yet been restored. We note, however, that the situation on the ground now is noticeably better than it was at the beginning of the year. The armed clashes are sporadic. The internationally recognized Government is exercising restraint and a relapse into open warfare has so far been avoided. Commercial flights to Sana'a continue to operate and oil tankers continue to dock at Al-Hudaydah port.

Nevertheless, the fragility of the current situation of neither peace nor war is obvious to everyone. In the circumstances, we consider any provocative unilateral actions unacceptable, especially those of a military nature, which would violate the provisions of the ceasefire and lead to further escalation. We call on all the parties in Yemen, in particular the Houthis, to exercise maximum restraint and continue to work constructively with the Special Envoy, whose mediation efforts to find a mutually acceptable solution to the protracted conflict in Yemen we continue to support.

At this stage, the task of Council members, as international mediators, is to prevent the results of the six-month truce from being nullified. We have repeatedly said that seeking to resolve the intra-Yemeni conflict exclusively through pressure will have the opposite result. We are convinced that the only way to overcome the deadlock in the negotiating process is through direct contacts with the Houthi movement. In that regard, we welcome any communication channels and opportunities that could lead to practical results on

the ground and help to stabilize the situation and finally open the way to a full-fledged political process. We see no alternative to finding the necessary solutions through broad intra-Yemeni dialogue with the participation of all parties to the conflict. For our part, we will continue to provide significant assistance to the international mediation efforts in Yemen by maintaining contacts with all of the country's leading political parties and actively encouraging them to engage constructively.

We are becoming concerned about the increasingly clear fixation of our Western colleagues on the issue of resuming uninterrupted exports of Yemeni hydrocarbons. They risk overlooking fundamental issues hindering a solution to the crisis. We would like to caution them against making that kind of mistake, which is already having a very negative impact on the settlement of a number of other crises in the Middle East.

The six-month truce significantly improved the daily life of ordinary Yemenis, but the humanitarian situation in the country remains dire. In many regions, including in Taiz, there are shortages of basic goods, food and medicine. We reiterate that providing Yemenis with basic goods should continue on a non-discriminatory basis. We call on all players involved in the Yemeni settlement to continue to cooperate in that area with international financial organizations and to support the work of United Nations specialized agencies. Any restrictions on the delivery of humanitarian assistance and on humanitarian work are unacceptable.

Ms. Koumbi Missambo (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen, Mr. Hans Grundberg, and the Director for Operations and Advocacy, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Ms. Reena Ghelani, their valuable briefings on the latest developments in Yemen. I also welcome the participation in this meeting of the Permanent Representatives of Yemen and Saudi Arabia.

Gabon notes with great concern the renewed tensions and security incidents targeting civilians in Yemen since the end of the truce. We firmly condemn the recent drone attacks on the Al-Dabba oil port in the Hadramaut governorate and the port of Qan'ah in the south of the country in Shabwah on 21 October and 9 November. Against the backdrop of an economic war, such attacks are likely to seriously threaten the peace process and stability in Yemen, and if not neutralized as soon as possible could draw the country into a conflict

even more intense than the previous one. In that regard, we call on the parties to exercise maximum restraint, abide by international humanitarian law, work in concert with the Special Envoy and refrain from any action that could jeopardize the hard-won peace and stabilization efforts in the country.

The renewal of the truce in Yemen remains a crucial issue for my delegation. The truce made it possible to make significant progress in people's everyday lives, notably in terms of reducing the number of civilian casualties, ensuring regular fuel supplies, providing basic services and allowing free movement and the resumption of commercial flights to and from Sana'a. Despite the alarming signs around the developments on the ground, we hope that the parties will put the interests of the Yemeni people ahead of their own and avoid any temptation to use force. We therefore urge the parties to resume negotiations in order to prioritize a peaceful settlement of their disputes and with the support of the Special Envoy to commit to a new multidimensional agreement in the framework of an inclusive dialogue involving women and young people.

My country takes note of the commitment of the Government of Yemen to supporting the Special Envoy's efforts to provide adequate conditions for a renewal of the truce. We also welcome the positive role played by the region to re-establish the humanitarian truce.

The humanitarian situation remains critical. War has plunged the country into a serious humanitarian crisis — one of the worst in the world. Given the scale of the situation, the benefits of the truce prove lacking. The economy remains in shambles, thereby exacerbating the suffering of the Yemeni people. The challenges in gaining access to basic products, education and basic health care leave thousands of households in need and lead to many population displacements.

The effects of explosive remnants of war on civilians are also a source of concern. According to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the number of victims of explosive remnants of war has increased since the end of the truce, making those devices responsible for the largest number of civilian victims during the conflict period.

The Yemeni people need everyone's support, in particular during the winter months. We therefore encourage donors to make a greater contribution to the humanitarian response plan for Yemen, which, to date, is only 48 per cent funded.

In conclusion, Gabon reiterates its support for the Yemeni people, who demonstrate considerable resilience, and for Special Envoy Hans Grundberg and his tireless efforts to maintain dialogue between the parties with the aim of reaching a truce and, in the longer term, a comprehensive peace agreement in Yemen.

Ms. Moran (Ireland): I thank Special Envoy Grundberg and the Director for Operations and Advocacy of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Ms. Ghelani, for their sobering briefings today.

Last month, we expressed our disappointment that the truce in Yemen was not renewed (see S/PV.9152). That is a disappointment for the international community, but much more particularly for Yemenis, who had hoped that the truce would create further momentum for progress towards an enduring political solution. While we do not have positive news today on a renewal, we continue to believe that the truce represents the best opportunity for sustainable peace in Yemen and stability in the region. We reiterate our wholehearted support for the Special Envoy in his ongoing efforts. The progress achieved in the past months on the humanitarian, political and economic fronts, no matter how modest, should not be overlooked.

It is essential that all parties refrain from reckless, risky actions. Last month, the Council spoke with one voice to condemn the 21 October Houthi drone attacks on the Al-Dabba oil terminal. We re-emphasize that condemnation today, particularly in the light of the fresh strike yesterday. Such attacks, including on the port of Qan'ah, on 9 November, are totally unacceptable. They constitute a serious threat to maritime security in the region and are not the actions of a credible interlocutor. We urge all parties, and the Houthis in particular, to refrain from military action and engage constructively and urgently with the United Nations process. We once again stress that there can be no military solution to the conflict in Yemen and acknowledge the role of regional actors in facilitating genuine dialogue.

As we continue in our collective efforts towards a negotiated, inclusive and Yemeni-led settlement, we cannot sideline half the population. As we know, women in Yemen play crucial mediation and leadership roles, including at local and community levels. We must work to support women leaders, elevate a broad range

of women's voices and protect those who are targeted by harassment, threats and violence.

We are extremely concerned about the impact of the lapsed truce on Yemeni women, including the imposition of travel restrictions. Women and children are also disproportionately victims of unexploded ordnance and remnants of war. We therefore support the Special Envoy's inclusive approach, including his commitment to reserving non-transferable seats for women representatives in talks. We welcome his convening of a consultative meeting on gender inclusion on the margins of a European Union event earlier this month. We remind all parties that the participation of women is not negotiable and should never be used as a bargaining chip. Diverse Yemeni women must have a say in the shaping of their own futures.

With the already formidable threat of food and economic insecurity, it is crucial that the elements of the truce, which have brought marked relief to the Yemeni people, be preserved. That includes steady flows of fuel into Al-Hudaydah port and commercial flights through Sana'a airport. We encourage all parties to continue to implement those measures in good faith for the benefit of the Yemeni people. That is particularly important during the trying winter months and for Yemen's millions of internally displaced persons, including in Ma'rib. We must work to address funding gaps for the humanitarian response, including critical shelter programmes, and to protect the humanitarian space.

Finally, we call on all actors to fully respect international humanitarian law and international human rights law. We cannot lose sight of the need to pursue accountability for alleged violations and abuses perpetrated against Yemenis, with impunity, throughout the course of the conflict.

Ms. Juul (Norway): I would like to extend a warm welcome to Special Envoy Hans Grundberg and commend his continued efforts to secure peace and stability in Yemen. I would also like to thank Reena Ghelani for her valuable update on the humanitarian situation.

As we have heard, the situation in Yemen is dire. We are concerned about the increase in civilian casualties over the past few months, including the loss of 11 children. Parties to the conflict must do their utmost to protect civilians. All perpetrators of violations of humanitarian law and of human rights violations and abuses must be held accountable for their actions.

We condemn the recent attacks by the Houthis on Al-Dabba port and on the oil tanker in the Qan'ah port. Those attacks represent a serious threat to the peace process and stability in Yemen. As we stated last month, it is urgent to come to an agreement to extend and expand the truce to make room for a political process. We commend all efforts that can lead to progress in the United Nations-led process. Those efforts must also ensure the inclusion of women at all stages. We support the Special Envoy's consultation with Yemeni women from diverse backgrounds and regions.

The importance of supporting the most vulnerable in the conflict in Yemen, the children, cannot be overstated. Forty per cent of Yemen's population is under 14 and at least 8 million children are in need of assistance, with 1 million in acute need of child protection assistance. We call on all parties to fully and swiftly implement action plans to end and prevent abuses against children. Moreover, the recommendations of the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict must be swiftly implemented.

While we note positively the Government's ongoing efforts to remove unnecessary bureaucratic impediments for humanitarian workers, those efforts must continue to facilitate access for life-saving humanitarian work. Landmines also have a heavy impact on civilians, in particular children. We heard Ms. Ghelani underscore the need for support to work on demining and urge the parties to fully cooperate with those efforts. Donors must also scale up their support for mine clearance and mine-risk education.

In conclusion, the Council can be assured that Norway remains committed to supporting the people of Yemen.

Mr. De Almeida Filho (Brazil): Let me start by thanking both our briefers for their informative briefings. I also welcome the delegations of Saudi Arabia and Yemen to today's meeting.

As we gather for our second Security Council meeting after the end of the truce, the situation in Yemen remains largely unaltered. Although the truce was broken, there has been no significant movement of troops or rise in hostilities. Despite incidents of drone attacks, one of which the Council firmly condemned in a press statement in October, the overall scenario remains relatively stable, with no increase in casualties. In this context, we commend the Government of Yemen for the restraint it has displayed. The fact that

some of the effects of the truce endure even if it is no longer in place benefits all Yemenis, for example, the maintenance of flights to and from Sana'a, the flow of essential shipments and the progress of the *FSO SAFER* salvage operation. Rather than be discouraged, let us build upon this foundation to further improve and stabilize the country while we hope that the truce agreement will be restored at the earliest opportunity, bearing in mind the current efforts by Special Envoy Grundberg in this regard.

Brazil also notes the Special Envoy's recent visits to Muscat and Riyadh and reaffirms its strong support for his work in favour of a lasting solution to the crisis in Yemen. Unfortunately, the dire situation in Yemen lingers on, and the prospect of peace appears to be distant. Almost a decade of civil war has plunged Yemen into an unparalleled humanitarian crisis. The Yemeni people have borne the brunt of the many hardships befalling the country, from the collapse of public services to widespread unemployment and inflation, from malnutrition and famine to human rights violations.

The issue of land mines and unexploded remnants of war is of particular concern, as the lower intensity of the conflict prompts greater movement of civilians, with the most vulnerable, namely, women and children, being further exposed to the risk of such devices. I therefore urge the relevant authorities to undertake all efforts to enable the full resumption of mine-clearance activities throughout the country, such as the importation of field-clearing equipment and the facilitation of visas for specialized personnel.

Brazil remains committed in its support for the activities of the United Nations Mission to support the Hodeidah Agreement and the United Nations Verification and Inspection Mechanism, both of which have been instrumental in helping to sustain a lifeline for the Yemeni population. Furthermore, we echo the calls for the reduction of movement restrictions and bureaucratic hindrances affecting the crucial humanitarian work performed by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and other United Nations agencies.

Yemen deserves a safer and brighter future in peace and stability. Yemen deserves to harness its full potential for growth and development. Let us seek further unity in the Security Council and beyond to

secure the political settlement we hope for by building upon the gains achieved so far.

Mrs. Broadhurst Estival (France) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I would like to thank Hans Grundberg and Reena Ghelani for their briefings. I would also like to welcome the presence of the representatives of Yemen and Saudi Arabia in this afternoon's meeting.

I have three messages today. First, the Security Council must do everything possible to avoid a new increase in tensions. As we know, the breakdown of the truce has not been accompanied by an escalation on the ground, which is good news. But the situation is unstable and could quickly deteriorate. France therefore calls on all parties to show restraint — and on the Houthis to refrain from any provocation that could again tip Yemen into a new cycle of violence. We strongly condemn the recent terrorist attacks by the Houthis on oil terminals in Hadramaut and Shabwah. The objective of these attacks is to economically stifle the Yemeni Government.

Although the clashes on the ground remain localized, the Security Council cannot be satisfied with the status quo. In Ta'iz in particular, the situation is untenable, and its inhabitants are virtually cut off from the outside world. It is urgent to renew the truce on the ground, which is the first step towards the resumption of a political process. In order to do this, it is first necessary to re-establish trust. In this respect, France welcomes the gestures made towards the Houthis by the Yemeni Government. We call on the Houthis to show tangible signs of their willingness to negotiate, particularly with regard to access to Ta'iz.

Secondly, humanitarian access must be improved. United Nations and humanitarian personnel must be allowed to move without fear of being targeted or arrested. It is imperative that the Houthis stop intimidating female aid workers by imposing male guardians. We are also very concerned about the Houthis' desire to impose a tax on health-care workers. We reiterate the importance of ensuring full humanitarian access and better working conditions for humanitarian actors, so that they can assist all Yemenis in vulnerable situations. We also call for the immediate and unconditional release of United Nations and humanitarian personnel held by the Houthis.

Eight years of war and conflict have left their mark, and mines and explosive remnants of war pose a

serious danger to the population and are causing many civilian casualties. This is a major challenge that needs to be addressed, including with continued funding for mine-clearance activities, as mentioned, and more risk-education sessions for the population.

As Yemen continues to face a severe humanitarian crisis, migrants and displaced persons are among the most vulnerable. In particular, they face higher risks of abduction, torture, detention and exploitation. We call on the parties to the conflict to ensure that these fragile populations receive all the assistance they need.

It is also important to rapidly launch the first phase of the operational plan to rescue the oil tanker *FSO SAFER*; the threat of an ecological disaster is still imminent.

Finally, France would like to express its full support for the Special Envoy and his efforts to revive the political process. All stakeholders must commit themselves without delay and in a constructive manner to a political process to end the crisis. France welcomes the commitment of the Yemeni Government in this regard as well as the constructive involvement of certain regional actors. It is essential that all these mediation efforts be carried out in proper coordination with those of the Special Envoy.

More than a month after the expiration of the truce, we note with regret that, for the moment, the Houthis are showing no real willingness to negotiate with the Yemeni Government and the Special Envoy. We hope that they will put the interests of the Yemeni people before their own and assume their responsibilities.

In this difficult context, France commends the work of the Special Envoy and his strong commitment to involve Yemeni women in the peace process. We know that the full participation of women in peace processes increases the chances of success. It is therefore essential that they be involved in the decision-making process concerning the future of their own country.

France remains committed to working alongside the Special Envoy to put an end to this conflict.

Mr. Ochoa Martínez (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to begin by thanking Special Envoy Grundberg and Director Ghelani for their briefings. We welcome the delegations from Yemen and Saudi Arabia to this afternoon's meeting.

As mentioned by the Special Envoy, the truce has not been renewed, but, in general terms, some of its provisions remain in force, such as flights to and from Sana'a and the entry of fuel from the port of Al-Hudaydah. Nevertheless, we would caution that there is a hidden risk of escalation. This is evidenced by the attack against the oil facilities in Al-Dubba, as well as attacks committed against civilian infrastructure in Hadramaut and Shabwah.

Mexico reiterates its support for the efforts of the Special Envoy aimed at renewing the truce, and it welcomes regional efforts, such as those of Saudi Arabia and Oman. In this regard, the mediation efforts that have taken place at the local level for the cessation of hostilities in Ma'rib and Hadramaut are encouraging.

On the other hand, we condemn the threats and incitement to violence that the Houthi have directed against foreign corporations. This type of provocation inhibits economic revival and the production and export of energy, and it infringes on the freedom of movement in the area. In this fragile context, we once again urge all parties, especially Ansar Allah, to show flexibility in order to renew the truce and definitively cease hostilities.

The Yemeni economy has been significantly affected by eight years of armed conflict, which has had an extremely high humanitarian cost. In the last quarter of this year, 17 million people, or 56 per cent of the population, will face acute food insecurity. In addition, 4.5 million people have been displaced by violence.

Mexico expresses its concern about the insufficient funding of the humanitarian response, as mentioned by Director Ghelani. Equally concerning are the access difficulties faced by agencies on the ground. The magnitude of the needs requires that access be facilitated for the entire population. We therefore call for the removal of administrative and bureaucratic obstacles and an end to threats against humanitarian workers.

We reiterate our support for the Special Envoy's proposed multitrack framework to promote a sustainable and inclusive peace that includes measures for economic recovery. That is the only way to prevent the population from continuing to depend on humanitarian assistance.

On the other hand, we express great alarm at the number of casualties caused by mines and explosive remnants. In the past six months alone, 300 incidents were recorded. It is imperative that we redouble our

efforts to address that problem, which means facilitating the import of equipment and granting the necessary visas for specialized personnel.

In conclusion, we welcome the progress made in planning the operation to address the *FSO SAFER* oil tanker situation. We hope that the transfer of fuel to another vessel will begin soon in order to avoid an environmental, economic and humanitarian catastrophe.

Mr. Spasse (Albania): I thank Special Envoy Grundberg for the information provided, and I thank Director Ghelani for the clear introduction on the humanitarian situation in Yemen. Let me reaffirm Albania's full support for the relentless efforts of the Special Envoy towards the political process in Yemen. I also welcome the presence of the representatives of Saudi Arabia and Yemen in the Chamber.

We support all international efforts to achieve the renewal of the truce as the best way to provide the Yemeni people with the hope to live in peace and security and leave behind the dark days of fighting and conflict. In that respect, we appreciate the sincere engagement of Saudi Arabia, the Sultanate of Oman and other regional actors in facilitating those efforts.

Although there has been no serious deterioration of the situation on the ground since the expiration of the truce, insecurity and uncertainty have increased, and fear of further escalation is alive among the Yemeni people. We therefore call for the parties to exercise full restraint and engage constructively in talks to go back to the truce renewal and, in a broader perspective, to restore the political process. We have said it before and would like to reiterate that there is no military solution to the conflict in Yemen. The international community and the Security Council should maintain their support for a Yemeni-led and -owned political process facilitated by the United Nations. The unity of the Security Council in that regard is therefore crucial, while the political process must be timely and inclusive, with the meaningful participation of women and youth. Peace can be restored through efforts in good faith and with trust. We call on the Houthis to refrain from their maximalist requests and to work constructively.

Peace and security concern all Yemenis. The recent attacks on Taiz and clashes in Ma'rib and other Government-controlled areas will only move the country away from a truce and plunge it back to fighting, with all the dire consequences for civilians, including children. Respect for international humanitarian law

is an obligation. Let me also reiterate Albania's strong condemnation for the Houthi terrorist attacks on civilian ports and call on them to cease acts that exacerbate the suffering of the Yemeni people.

We remain deeply worried about the worsening humanitarian situation in Yemen and the continued shrinking space for humanitarian workers in the country. We call on all parties to not interfere with humanitarian workers in Yemen, who must be able to conduct their work freely, without hindrances and with full access to all areas. All parties must guarantee the security of humanitarian workers. We will continue to seek clarity for the unknown situation of the staff of United Nations and non-governmental organizations, as well as other civilians abducted by armed groups and the Yemenis employed by the United States Embassy who continue to be incarcerated. We call for their immediate release.

I would also like to join others in expressing concern about the increasing number of incidents — affecting mainly children — caused by the landmines in Yemen. The situation must be addressed as soon as possible, and all United Nations efforts in that regard are strongly welcomed.

Let me conclude by reiterating the importance of the full implementation of resolution 2216 (2015), on Yemen. We are deeply worried that the sanctions regime on Yemen has reportedly been violated. The interception of a stateless boat carrying more than 170 tons of a urea fertilizer and ammonium perchlorate — an Iranian shipment — is yet further clear testimony of the continued obstructive activities of Iran in Yemen. While the international community, including the Council, is actively engaged for peace in Yemen, it must not tolerate such destructive behaviours. I reiterate that the unity of the Security Council remains crucial to supporting an inclusive political process, with the meaningful participation of women and young people, in order to address the real concerns and aspirations of the Yemeni people.

Mrs. Kamboj (India): I thank Special Envoy Hans Grundberg for his briefing. We recognize his ongoing efforts to resume the truce and bring the Yemeni parties back to dialogue. I also thank Ms. Reena Ghelani, Director for Operations and Advocacy at the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) for her briefing. We appreciate the important contribution of OCHA, the humanitarian community

and aid workers in Yemen in delivering life-saving humanitarian assistance to the people of Yemen.

Yemen is at a crossroads. One path leads to the peaceful resolution of the conflict and the other leads to the resumption of active hostilities, which will only exacerbate the suffering of the Yemeni people. The choice is clearly for the parties to the conflict to make. We urge them to embrace the path towards peace by shedding the military approach and by extending and expanding the truce into a comprehensive nationwide ceasefire. The focus should be on cooperative and confidence-building measures in order to alleviate the lives of Yemeni people and, eventually, by starting an inclusive political dialogue to end the conflict.

In that regard, we are concerned by the actions of Ansar Allah and condemn its attacks on ports and shipping vessels in Yemen, as well as its threats to shipping vessels travelling in and out of Yemen. The use of sophisticated missiles and drones in those attacks raises questions over the implementation of the targeted arms embargo established by the Council. I reiterate India's call for the strict implementation of the arms embargo in order to effectively eliminate such threats in future. Those attacks, which have targeted the oil sector in particular, will have severe consequences for the already-fragile economy of Yemen. Such actions can also turn Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea into a potential conflict zone, thereby destabilizing maritime security in the region.

On the humanitarian side, two wheat shipments of almost 85,000 metric tons have departed for Yemen under the Black Sea Grain Initiative within the past 30 days. We welcome that development and hope that this important Initiative will continue to benefit Yemen. India has also taken steps to address food security in Yemen by prioritizing wheat exports to the country. Despite our national regulations on wheat exports, we have continued to export wheat to Yemen to mitigate the adverse impact of supply changes in the global commodity markets. We remain committed to doing so in future as well.

Let me conclude by calling upon all parties to engage constructively with the Special Envoy in his efforts to renew the truce and seek a political solution to the conflict. The Security Council should send a strong and clear signal to anyone who stands in the way of these efforts.

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

Let me begin by thanking Special Envoy Hans Grundberg and Ms. Reena Ghelani for their briefings.

At the outset, we note with regret the continuing inability of the parties to reach an agreement to extend the truce in line with the proposal of the Special Envoy, since it elapsed early last month. We renew our appeal to the international community to take the necessary steps to prevail on the parties to renew the truce agreement and forestall any possible escalation of military hostilities with its attendant consequences for civilian lives. Regional stakeholders with influence over the parties must leverage those relationships to get the parties to end the conflict and take the path of peace.

We condemn recent reports of attacks in the country, including the aerial attack against a vessel at Al-Dubba oil terminal in Hadramaut governorate on 21 October 2022, for which Ansar Allah claimed responsibility. We remind the parties that any escalation of hostilities will reverse the marginal progress made under the truce agreement and exacerbate the humanitarian situation in the country. We therefore implore the parties, particularly, Ansar Allah, to refrain from actions that may derail the relative calm and tranquillity that the people of Yemen have enjoyed in recent times.

It is imperative that the interests of the people of Yemen should reign supreme as the parties engage in negotiations. In this regard, as we welcome the continuing engagement of the Government of Yemen with the Special Envoy in his quest to extend the truce, we urge the two parties, especially Ansar Allah, to be flexible and undertake constructive dialogue in the spirit of compromise and with a view to reaching a peaceful resolution of the conflict.

On the humanitarian front, we call for continued international support to address the widespread food insecurity in Yemen that puts parts of the country's population at high risk of famine. International support in that regard must be increased to help bridge the humanitarian funding gap and make food and other essential supplies reach all those in desperate need in the country. We remain concerned about the fate of missing and detained humanitarian workers in the country and call for necessary information on their whereabouts as well as for their immediate and unconditional release.

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 claim the lives of many Yemenis. We call for global and concerted efforts to address the problem.

It is regrettable that the continuing blocking of roads into and out of the city of Ta'iz remains one of the main sticking points in the negotiations to extend the truce. We call on the parties, particularly Ansar Allah, to take immediate steps towards lifting the siege to help ease the suffering of the affected people.

On the issue of the *FSO SAFER* oil tanker, we commend all stakeholders who have made various contributions to enable the first phase of the operation to commence, and we call for expedited action by the United Nations and all those involved in the process so as to avert humanitarian and environmental disaster.

In conclusion, we entreat the parties to be flexible and make the needed concessions to renew the truce agreement in the interest of all Yemenis.

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, I would like to congratulate you, Madam President, on your country's presidency of the Security Council for this month. I wish you every success in your tasks. I would also like to thank your predecessor, the Permanent Representative of Gabon, for a successful presidency last month. I also thank Mr. Grunberg and Ms. Ghelani for their briefings.

The Presidential Leadership Council once again reiterates its commitment to comprehensive and lasting peace on the basis of the agreed terms of reference of the political solution, namely, the Gulf Cooperation Council Initiative and its Implementation Mechanism, outcomes of the comprehensive National Dialogue Conference and relevant Council resolutions, particularly resolution 2216 (2015).

At the time when our Yemeni people cherished the hope of reviving the peace track by agreeing on the humanitarian truce under the auspices of the United Nations, and optimism reigned in Yemen after eight years of war and stalemate, that hope dissipated as expected when the Houthi terrorist militias, supported

by Iran, chose to unprecedentedly escalate the situation and refused to renew the truce. That clearly proves hindering of the peace efforts and continuing their terrorist actions in Yemen and beyond. It also proves that those militias do not want peace, so as to alleviate the suffering of the Yemeni people and end the catastrophic humanitarian crisis. Their rejection also threatens security and stability in Yemen and the region, as well as completely undermining peace efforts.

The Presidential Leadership Council reiterated its commitment to all the truce items and remains committed to them to this day, notwithstanding the refusal of the Houthi militias to renew the truce, not meeting their commitments and not opening the main roads to Ta'iz, which has been besieged for eight years. The Yemeni people had hoped to witness another step towards achieving peace that would yield more benefits for them through renewing the humanitarian truce for an additional six months, allowing more travel destinations and paying salaries for civil servants, in line with the 2014 register, in the regions under the Houthis control.

Although the Presidential Leadership Council has fully accepted and supported the truce in order to move from war to peace and meet the aspirations of the Yemeni people, those militias seek to undermine all the achievements made for the Yemeni people during the past six months. They have evaded the entitlements of peace while targeting the economy and the infrastructure by perpetrating a determined war crime, including targeting the ports of Al-Dabeibah, Al-Nusheima and Qan'ah ports in Hadramaut and Shabwah governorates in recent weeks, and repeating that yesterday on 21 November when they launched a new terrorist attack using Iranian drones targeting the Al-Dabba oil terminal in Hadramaut when a commercial oil tanker was anchored in the port.

Those terrorist acts have led to preventing exports from those vital ports, with the aim of creating comprehensive humanitarian and economic crises across the country and obstructing the economic reform process that had been launched by the Presidential Leadership Council and the Yemeni Government over recent months. Moreover, those militias have developed other means to threat international maritime shipping by randomly placing mines in international shipping routes and attacking commercial tankers with drones, booby-trapped boats and guided missiles, not to mention piracy and the seizing of ships. Those militias also

sponsor black markets for oil derivatives, even though millions of tons of fuel are flowing into Al-Hudaydah port. In addition, they impose restrictions against rights and freedoms, while preventing women from travelling by air and setting up security check points to prevent them from travelling between different governorates. Recently, they imposed the so-called job code of conduct, which compels all civilian employees to adopt the extremist ideologies of the Houthi militias, and whoever refuses to accept is to be terminated from their job.

Every day, those militias launch new threats targeting national economic infrastructure in Yemen and in neighbouring countries, including by sending letters to some Members States of the United Nations saying that commercial ships flying their flags in territorial waters or when approaching Yemeni ports could be attacked. That reflects the terrorist nature of that group and is a flagrant challenge to all international appeals by the Security Council to extend the truce, stop the escalation and positively engage with the efforts of the United Nations through its Special Envoy for Yemen, while maintaining the peace track and resuming the political process. That requires the international community and the Security Council to assume their responsibilities, take firm measures against that dangerous escalation and put an end to those threats and terrorist acts, which seek to prolong the conflict in Yemen and threaten regional and international peace and security. We call on the international community to find a realistic approach to dealing with the Houthi militias by moving from condemning such terrorist acts to collective action to address the terrorist threats by classifying the Houthi militias as a terrorist group, having demonstrated their aggressive and terrorist nature, which poses a threat to peace in Yemen, the region and the world.

The Yemeni Government warns that the terrorist attacks on economic facilities and infrastructure will obstruct the Government's efforts, destroy the foundations of the national economy and the capabilities of the Yemeni people, exacerbate the catastrophic humanitarian crisis and lead to the Government's inability to pay the salaries of employees and fulfil its obligations to provide basic services to its citizens, as well as torpedo peace efforts. In that regard, we appreciate the role of the Special Envoy and his team in order to establish peace and stability in Yemen, and the importance of redoubling the pressure of the

international community and the Council on those militias to deal positively with peace efforts and give priority to the interest of the Yemeni people over the interests of the militias leaders and supporters of the Iranian regime.

The Houthi militias have caused the killings of approximately half a million Yemenis, including women and children, displaced about 5 million others, internally and across other countries and continents, and planted millions of internationally banned mines, devices and other explosives. As members have heard, 170 tons of explosives and explosive material sent by the Iranian regime to the Houthis were confiscated. Those militias compelled thousands of children and young people to be soldiers and sent them to die in crematoriums, began to obliterate the Yemeni national identity, crushed rights and societal gains and eliminated the climate of coexistence and pluralism that prevailed in Yemen throughout history. In addition, today more than 80 per cent of our population is waiting today for aid from relief agencies because of the intransigence of the Houthi militias and their rejection of all efforts and endeavours to establish peace, stop the war and end the catastrophic human suffering.

The Yemeni Government, based on the directives of the Presidential Leadership Council, approved the preparation of a strategy according to well-studied mechanisms that include the legal and economic tracks and ensure that the decision to classify the Houthi militias as a terrorist group does not affect commercial activity and the private sector, as well as the smooth flow of food commodities and the implementation of a number of reforms in the field of institutional and service building, fighting corruption and protecting rights and freedoms, including activating the role of judicial and oversight bodies, in addition to assessing the level of implementing the plan of economic, financial and administrative reforms, activating the performance of State institutions, working to accelerate the implementation of those reforms in a way that will reflect positively on the national economy and Government efforts during that stage, and arranging priorities in line with urgent needs and alleviating the suffering of citizens.

We commend the role of our brothers in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates and their continuous efforts to alleviate the suffering of Yemenis and the response of the two brotherly countries to the development needs that will result in

the implementation of a number of vital projects, in addition to the hoped-for improvement in the value of the national currency and economic conditions. We also appreciate the support provided by the United States of America and the United Kingdom to strengthen the account of the Central Bank of Yemen by \$300 million from the International Monetary Fund's Special Drawing Rights, in a move that will support the national currency, continue the import of food commodities and improve living conditions.

In conclusion, the Yemeni Government reaffirms its full support for the United Nations plan to address the situation of the *FSO SAFER* oil tanker in order to prevent an environmental, humanitarian and economic disaster. We call for a speedy transition to the implementation of the plan and welcome the announcement by the United Nations that field work will begin to empty the tanker in the first quarter of 2023. We stress the need to maintain pressure on the Houthi militias to prevent their continued manipulation of that dossier and use it as a political blackmail card.

The President: 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 the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen, Mr. Hans Grundberg, and the Director for Operations and Advocacy at the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Ms. Reena Ghelani, for their briefings and their concrete efforts to promote peace and security in Yemen and alleviate the human suffering of the brotherly Yemeni people. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia reiterates its firm and steadfast position of supporting the political efforts of the United Nations represented by Mr. Hans Grundberg and the humanitarian efforts represented by Mr. Martin Griffiths, and all humanitarian workers. The Kingdom will spare no effort in supporting the United Nations efforts aimed at establishing security and peace in Yemen.

We are meeting today to discuss the Yemeni crisis after the refusal of the Houthi militias to extend the truce agreement, as the entire international community is silently watching the delicate and critical conditions that Yemen is currently going through, and their dire consequences on the Yemeni citizen, the security of the region, the security of navigation and regional and international sea lanes, which necessitates that the

Security Council discuss the current Yemeni scene in all transparency and objectivity. We are meeting again, after our previous meeting on 14 November, to discuss the impact of serious security and political developments that warns of further instability and insecurity in Yemen and the region. We have all witnessed the resumption of the Houthi militias' terrorist acts that targeted the ports of Al-Dabba port in Hadramaut, the sea ports of Qan'ah and Al-Nashima in Shabwah and the targeting of refugee camps in the city of Ma'rib, in addition to the exploitation of Yemeni ports, namely, Al-Hudaydah and Ras Issa, to perpetuate the smuggling of weapons, ammunition and contraband to the Houthi militias, and the smuggling of military experts from neighbouring countries and international terrorists from some regional countries that support those militias. The United States marine force confiscated in mid-November explosive material contrary to relevant international resolutions, including resolutions 2624 (2022) and 2216 (2015).

The Houthi militias still require the following conditions for the extension of the truce.

First, the Arab Coalition to Support Legitimacy in Yemen should pay the salaries of its outlaw fighters who are committing humanitarian crimes against the Yemeni people, and secondly, those salaries should be paid in United States dollars, not in the local currency.

In flagrant violation of the truce agreement, those militias still refuse to deposit the revenues from the Al-Hudaydah ports in the Central Bank of Yemen, in accordance with the first truce agreement. The Houthi groups are currently using the revenues from those ports to fund their military operations in Yemen. They also continue to impose a blockade of the city of Taiz, which is witnessing a dire humanitarian situation, while the international community is unaware of the humanitarian catastrophe in that city.

Moreover, the Houthi militias are depriving the Yemeni people in areas not under their control of their livelihoods by targeting the export of natural resources from which the salaries of teachers and employees in the public and health sectors are paid. Attacks on commercial and oil vessels in all ports controlled by the legitimate Government therefore constitute criminal acts that seek to impoverish and starve the Yemeni people. Through those actions, the terrorist militias are taking the Yemeni people hostage, controlling their destiny and exposing entire Yemeni generations

to the danger of wars and armed conflicts, while prioritizing its extremist ideological interests above all considerations.

As the international community is aware, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is one of the largest donors to the brotherly people of Yemen. My country will continue to support the Yemeni people alongside Yemen's regional and international partners. At the same time, we are aware of the scope of the humanitarian and security challenges in Yemen, especially with regard to the mechanisms for distributing humanitarian assistance. Hence, there is a need from all of us to find more effective ways to address the humanitarian crisis and the best means to develop our humanitarian response plans in line with the current situation on the ground.

We must also prevent the Houthi militias from controlling and diverting humanitarian assistance, thereby depriving those in need. The truth should be told to the international community, namely, that the Houthi militias continue to interfere with the distribution of humanitarian assistance through their humanitarian arm, the so-called Supreme Council for the Management and Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. We believe that that body is the primary cause for exacerbating the humanitarian crisis in Yemen. We clearly call for promoting the independence of humanitarian work, without any influence or interference from that inhumane body.

On the other hand, it should be noted that the Stockholm Agreement is in real crisis that needs the attention of the Security Council. The Houthi militias control all Al-Hudaydah ports, which are now plagued by sea mines and are being used by the Houthi militias for military activities. They have been turned into a hub to smuggle weapons, internationally prohibited materials, terrorists and those wanted internationally, in the absence of any international inspection mechanisms. The question here is whether international silence regarding those violations serves the Yemeni people.

The Houthi militias disavow from the obligations they made to the United Nations Special Envoy in the context of the first truce agreement, and we are all witnesses to their intransigence and refusal to discuss any proposal to extend the truce or to reach a peaceful and lasting settlement to the Yemeni crisis. Regrettably, we are also seeing how some international parties are ignoring the violations of the Houthi militias. We

condemn those who justify the heinous practices and support militias that adopt obscure ideologies.

Lastly, the current situation is extremely serious and threatens to collapse at any given moment. It seems that there is no effective international strategy or vision that would compel the Houthi militias to disarm and engage in reaching a final peaceful settlement to the Yemeni crisis.

The deterioration of the security and humanitarian situations in Yemen will affect the entire region. Classifying the Houthi militias as a terrorist group is today a matter of the utmost urgency, as the actions of those militias and their illegal practices require such a measure. That is particularly true in the light of the failure of peaceful negotiations and efforts during

previous years towards achieving tangible results. The international community must take a clear stance against terrorist activities that use ballistic missiles and drones targeting Yemenis, neighbouring States and commercial and oil vessels.

In conclusion, we reiterate from this Chamber that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will not hesitate to defend itself and will respond firmly to any threat to its national security or to that of Gulf or Coalition countries.

The President: 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 4.45 p.m.