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Sixty-seventh year

Provisional

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Tuesday, 4 December 2012, 3 p.m.

New York

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Loulichki	(Morocco)
<i>Members:</i>	Azerbaijan	Mr. Mehdiyev
	China	Mr. Wang Min
	Colombia	Mr. Osorio
	France	Mr. Briens
	Germany	Mr. Wittig
	Guatemala	Mr. Rosenthal
	India	Mr. Hardeep Singh Puri
	Pakistan	Mr. Tarar
	Portugal	Mr. Moraes Cabral
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	South Africa	Mr. Laher
	Togo	Mr. M'Beou
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Mark Lyall Grant
	United States of America	Mr. DeLaurentis

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Expression of thanks to the outgoing President

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): As this is the first meeting of the Council for the month of December 2012, I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute, on behalf of the Council, to His Excellency Ambassador Hardeep Singh Puri, Permanent Representative of India, for his service as President of the Security Council for the month of November 2012. I am sure I speak for all members of the Council when I express my deep appreciation to Ambassador Singh Puri and his delegation for the great diplomatic skill with which they conducted the Council's business last month.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East

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

Under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Jamal Benomar, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General for Yemen, to participate in this meeting.

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

I now give the floor to Mr. Benomar:

Mr. Benomar (*spoke in Arabic*): Yemen has just witnessed a historic milestone. On 23 November, it marked the first anniversary of the signing of its Peace and Transition Agreement. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon personally attended the ceremony to commemorate that achievement. At that time, he assured the people of Yemen of the full support of the United Nations for their peaceful transition. During the preceding months, most people would not have believed such an agreement possible. Indeed, during that period, in Yemen, I saw a nation in turmoil and a State on the verge of collapse.

I saw the capital city, Sana'a, divided and under artillery fire, making life for the civilian population unbearable. I saw and was among demonstrators calling for change, as, for months, they camped out in tents on the streets and squares of the capital and other major

cities. I went to the north of the country, where armed conflict persists and armed clashes still occur. I was also in the south, where the future unity of the country remains an open question.

During this period, most Yemenis have been living in darkness, suffering from shortages in basic food supplies and cooking fuel. Moreover, we all observed with increasing alarm how Al-Qaida managed to expand its influence, at one point gaining control over significant swathes of territory in the south. Conflict and insecurity prevailed, and there was a real threat that the situation would degenerate into a full-scale civil war.

During that period of protracted stalemate, the Secretary-General took the initiative to utilize his good offices to help resolve the deadlock when the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) initiative failed to be implemented. In the end, after six intensive trips to Yemen, we managed to find a way forward and reach an agreement, building on resolution 2014 (2011) adopted in October 2011, which called for a political settlement, and on the tremendous efforts of the GCC.

The Transition Agreement, which we named the Implementation Mechanism of the GCC initiative, was signed on 23 November 2011. It engaged the former regime and opposition in a clear process for a transition to good democratic governance. The Agreement went far beyond simply replacing one individual or governing party with another.

Rather than resigning, President Saleh agreed to transfer his powers to his deputy and to make way for early presidential elections. All sides agreed to support a consensus candidate who commanded the trust and respect of all. A Government of National Unity would exercise power during a two-year transition phase, during which the military and security forces would be restructured under a unified command, a National Dialogue Conference leading to a constitution-draft process would be held, the resulting draft constitution would be approved by referendum and, finally, a fresh set of elections would be set for February 2014.

We made sure the following elements were included in the agreement: a path for fundamental reforms in the practice of governance and redress for the wrongs of the past; recognition of the role of youth and a clear path for their participation in the transition and the realization of their aspirations; a focus on political inclusion that could give an opportunity for the people

of Yemen to shape their country's future and establish a new constitutional order; and the full participation of women throughout the entirety of the process.

Through that framework, the handover of power to a Government of National Unity took place successfully. In February 2012, the second phase of the transition was ushered in when President Mansour was elected by an overwhelming majority, in a poll that was at the same time a kind of referendum on the November agreement and on the transition itself. Today, one year later, an air of normality has taken hold in most parts of the country.

I wish to take this opportunity to commend President Mansour for his leadership. I also commend the efforts of Prime Minister Basendwah's Government, which have allowed the country to move forward. The fight for control of the cities by rival militias has ended, with freedom of movement restored throughout major urban centres.

However, we cannot overlook the fact that the road ahead remains long and arduous and that Yemen continues to face grave challenges on multiple fronts. First, there is the difficult issue of restructuring the military. The armed forces remain divided between two sides. One camp, the powerful Republican Guards, is led by the former President's son, and the other, the 1st Armoured Division, is led by General Ali Mohsen, who broke from the regime during last year's uprising. Corruption remains widespread throughout the institution. A system of patronage favours loyalty to military leaders and not the State. Some top military leaders are publicly engaged in business and politics. Army commanders are able to engage in murky business dealings, including the smuggling of subsidized fuel, inflating the numbers of those in service and pocketing the excess income from ghost positions. President Mansour has taken initial and courageous steps to address military reform. However, the formidable task of integrating the military and security forces under one command will remain a serious challenge during the transition, and will require comprehensive, systemic institutional reform.

State authority remains limited in parts of the country. Clashes between the Houthis and Salafists and tribal groups associated with the Islah party have left dozens of people dead in the north. The country remains awash with arms, with new shipments still reportedly coming in.

Terrorism remains a serious threat. In June, Government forces under President Mansour's leadership were able to dislodge Al-Qaida elements from areas that had fallen under its control. However, that has led Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula to desert the open areas and instead disperse and infiltrate major cities. The continuous spate of terrorist attacks against Government targets in Sana'a is evidence of that development, including last week's abhorrent killing of a Saudi military attaché.

In terms of governance, one year into the transition, it is clear that the honeymoon period is over. Yemenis now expect the Government to deliver concrete results — to provide better security for the nation and basic social services. Coalition Governments are, however, often the product of unhappy relationships and are bound together in unnatural partnerships. In this case, the distrust between the two principal political blocs that constitute the Government of National Unity has never dissipated and remains entrenched. Disputes over civil service appointments are just one example of the issues polarizing the two sides: the General People's Congress (GPC) feels that it is being unfairly targeted for removal, while the former opposition, which is now in the Government, complains of insufficient representation and remains adamant in seeking appointments for key positions.

While both sides signed on to take part in a Government of National Unity, their war continues through the media. Partisan reporting by media outlets owned by each side continues to inflame an already acrimonious and tense relationship. Former President Saleh remains active as the leader of the GPC party — and often acts as the leader of the opposition, demonizing the Government of National Unity — despite it being half-composed of his own party and allies. What many politicians fail to realize is that the political landscape is changing, with prospects for shifting alliances. They continue to view the situation with a perspective locked in the past and in static alliances, rather than looking ahead to the future and to new realignments.

Unrest in the south has its roots in the marginalization and discrimination of southerners that has taken place since unification, including their perceived lack of access to resources and opportunities. Long-standing grievances have left many in the south feeling excluded. Since 2007, southerners have mobilized to demand equal access to employment and Government services, land reform and a certain degree

of local autonomy. That movement, known as the Hiraak, began as a rights-based movement demanding equality under the rule of law. Years of empty promises have deepened resentments and radicalized some in the movement toward a maximalist agenda for a separate State.

In my outreach to Hiraak leaders in Aden and Cairo, I explained to them that the National Dialogue provided an opportunity to address the southern question through dialogue and compromise, and in accordance with Security Council resolutions. I urged them to renounce violence and to participate in the process with no preconditions. I also urged the Government to take confidence-building measures to address the grievances of southerners — of those who were unjustly dismissed from the civil service or discharged from the military in the aftermath of the 1994 war, as well as those whose land and other properties were confiscated. Concrete progress with regard to those two matters would provide an enabling environment for a constructive start to the National Dialogue.

Yemen's humanitarian situation remains in acute crisis. Our humanitarian colleagues and workers tell us that nearly half the population of Yemen are food insecure, with an alarming number living on the edge of starvation. A quarter of a million children are severely malnourished and at risk of dying without proper nutrition interventions. Access to clean water eludes more than half the population, and basic health care remains an aspiration for nearly a quarter of the population. Struggling to provide basic services, Yemen is nonetheless one of the most generous refugee-hosting countries, with more than 230,000 refugees and 500,000 internally displaced persons. The 2012 Yemen Humanitarian Response Plan, which requires \$585 million dollars, is only 57 per cent funded. That leaves a funding gap of more than \$250 million.

On the economic front, there are modest signs of progress. Inflation is decreasing and the decline in economic activity has slowed. The exchange rate, which fluctuated during 2011, has now stabilized and reached the same levels as before the crisis. The momentum of Yemen's transition and recovery must be sustained with strong support from the international community, especially its regional partners. Through meetings in Riyadh and in New York, Yemen's partners have confirmed their commitment by pledging more than \$7.5 billion to help Yemen with its economic recovery.

The continuous engagement of Yemen's development partners, together with the establishment of a new intra-governmental coordinating body to support the implementation of the pledges, will help channel funds effectively, so that Yemenis can start seeing an improvement in their daily lives.

The upcoming National Dialogue provides an opportunity for Yemenis to build a future that meets the aspirations of all. In that regard, the preparatory committee for the National Dialogue, as an all-inclusive body, may serve as the crucible for the new Yemen. My team and I have spent many long days and hours working with the committee. It has been a great inspiration to see youth, women, civil society and representatives of political parties, along with representatives from the south and of the Al-Houthis, participating constructively within the committee. Indeed, the diverse composition and deliberative style of work of the committee, often with a good spirit resulting from the genuine commitment of the participants, have helped them reach decisions based on consensus and compromise.

A few days ago, the committee became deadlocked over the issue of representation and the allocation of seats at the upcoming Conference. At their request, I put forward ideas to help the National Dialogue process move forward, while stressing that there is no one ideal formula that could satisfy all stakeholders. I am pleased that, with that last contentious issue resolved, the committee's long hours and efforts are coming to a conclusion. The fruits of their efforts will soon be seen in the delivery of a final report and other elements finalizing the rules and structure of the Conference. Fully consistent with United Nations standards, we have been successful in supporting the demands of local women's groups that women should constitute at least 30 per cent of those taking part in the National Dialogue.

We have been actively supporting preparations for the National Dialogue through initial funding from the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund. We have now established a multi-donor trust fund to channel international support for the process in a coordinated fashion and to encourage all donors to contribute so as to ensure the timely launch of an effective National Dialogue Conference. Our assistance will continue through the period of the constitution-drafting process and the holding of elections.

I am pleased to report that a new electoral commission has been established by presidential decree. In order to keep within the transition timeline, it will be critical for the new commission to focus on creating a new voter registry. The road towards new elections remains long and difficult.

For the country to move forward, a true reckoning with past injustices, as well as steps to heal old wounds, are essential. There is a strong sense among Yemenis that the transition will remain in suspension in the absence of reconciliation efforts, including restitution or compensation for victims as well as guarantees against recurrence and an end to impunity. With those aims in mind, we hope that an amended draft law on transitional justice and national reconciliation will be adopted by consensus.

The transition is threatened by those who have still not understood that change must occur now. Spoilers of all sorts have not given up. They remain anxious to impede the transition and to profit from instability. In the past few days, Yemenis have once again been left in darkness without electricity. Oil and gas pipelines continue to be subject to attack, causing the Yemeni treasury losses amounting to hundreds of millions of dollars in revenue. Many Yemenis expect the Security Council to keep a careful watch on the spoilers' actions and to hold them to account.

We will continue to work closely with members of the Security Council, the Gulf Cooperation Council, the European Union and other international partners, in particular with the active diplomatic community in Sana'a, to support Yemen's transition. We count on the continued consensus in the Security Council, which has played a crucial role in supporting a peaceful transition in Yemen, to keep the transition on track to deliver within the agreed timeline.

We are all determined to continue supporting a transition that is unique in the region, one that is based on a clear road map. The transition enjoys the overwhelming endorsement and support of the population. It is a transition that offers an opportunity for meaningful participation by all — men, women, young and old. And it is a transition that offers a genuine opportunity to unlock the potential that we all see in Yemen. Yet, while there are tremendous challenges, I am convinced that Yemen has the potential to be a prosperous country, one that can become stable and

governed according to the genuine will and aspirations of its population.

Change in the region has all too often been accompanied by sacrifices that should not have been necessary and that we cannot ignore. The Yemenis have shown us, however, that the time of the gun as a tool for answering the legitimate aspirations of citizens has passed and that a peaceful transformation can emerge from the ashes of conflict. As the Secretary-General observed during his visit to the country two weeks ago, Yemeni men and women have armed themselves instead with the principles of wisdom, mutual respect and peaceful interaction, and have thus avoided the abyss of civil strife. Let us continue our work together to support the profound transformation that the country is now undertaking.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Mr. Benomar for his briefing.

I shall now give the floor to the members of the Security Council.

Sir Mark Lyall Grant (United Kingdom): First, let me take this opportunity to congratulate the President and the Moroccan delegation on assuming the presidency for the month of December, and also to warmly thank Ambassador Hardeep Singh Puri and his delegation for India's excellent stewardship of the Council during the course of the busy month of November. I should also like to express particular appreciation to Special Adviser Jamal Benomar for his briefing and for the remarkable efforts and his tireless commitment since his appointment to that position.

Much has been achieved in Yemen since the signing of the Gulf Cooperation Council initiative on 23 November 2011. The international community's focus, as demonstrated through the Secretary-General's visit last month and the continued hard work of Mr. Benomar, is paying dividends. The next crucial steps will need to be to build on the reforms by the Yemeni Government and to ensure a permanent lasting change that fulfils people's basic rights to freedom and democracy.

Yemen's immediate challenge is to begin a transparent and inclusive National Dialogue Conference. The United Kingdom welcomes President Mansour's 13 November announcement of the imminent start of the Conference and the allocation of seats to the participants. The challenge now is threefold: first,

to ensure that the National Dialogue begins this year; secondly, that it addresses all of Yemen's key challenges; and thirdly, that it is representative of women, youth and all political parties. Outcomes should benefit the many, not just the few. All those who want to play a part in shaping Yemen's future must do so via the National Dialogue Conference.

The appointment of a new electoral commission and the subsequent preparations for the constitutional referendum and 2014 elections are also central to the transition process. Updating the voter list must not be delayed. There is a genuine risk of the Yemeni Government not being prepared in time for a referendum next autumn, and that could cause delays to full elections in early 2014. Such a scenario would have significant implications for the political transition.

President Mansour has led a successful military campaign in southern Yemen, regaining much of the country lost to Al-Qaida. Despite those successes, there has been a worrying increase in attacks targeting military and political personnel. The United Kingdom condemns such cowardly acts, which inevitably hurt ordinary Yemenis. Those responsible must be sought out and brought to justice.

We continue to see negative actions and hear inflammatory statements from certain individuals, whom Mr. Benomar called "spoilers", who wish to derail the political transition and deny the Yemeni people what is rightfully theirs: change, stability and a prosperous future. The United Kingdom reminds those intent on disrupting peaceful transition that the Security Council will not hesitate to implement measures under Article 41 to ensure that the transition remains on track, as stated in resolution 2051 (2012). The Yemeni people demand no less.

The 2013 United Nations humanitarian appeal estimates that more than 12 million Yemenis — around half the population — are now in acute need of assistance. It is vital that the international community enhance its support. The United Kingdom Government recently launched a \$56-million nutrition programme and a \$13-million food security programme, which will support 2 million Yemenis. In September, the Yemeni Government received significant international political and financial support in the shape of both the Riyadh donors' conference and the Friends of Yemen meeting held here in New York. This demonstrates that the efforts made by President Mansour so far have the strong support of the international community.

The United Kingdom Foreign Secretary, as Co-Chair, said in conclusion at the Friends of Yemen ministerial meeting in New York that the challenge now is to turn those pledges into action, to ensure rapid and effective implementation on the ground in Yemen so that the pledges quickly start to make a difference to the Yemeni people. That remains an urgent task.

In conclusion, let me echo what the Special Adviser has just said about how far things have moved in Yemen over the last year. We have progressed from a situation of acute division, political stalemate, daily disturbances and armed clashes to one in which a process of dialogue and transition is now under way. There are formidable challenges remaining, and the Special Adviser is right to highlight them. They demand the Council's continued close scrutiny. But they should not obscure the progress that has been achieved. Yemen demonstrates the value of the Security Council engaging actively in conflict prevention and coming together in a united way in support of the effective application of the Secretary-General's good offices, notably through resolution 2051(2012), which lent strong support to the transition process and made clear the Council's readiness to consider further measures in response to actions aimed at undermining the political transition.

Through the hard work, determination and perseverance of President Mansour and his Government of National Unity, backed by the United Nations, the Friends of Yemen and the international community, a more positive future for generations of Yemenis is now within reach.

Mr. Wang Min (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): At the outset, Mr. President, I would like to congratulate Morocco on assuming the presidency of the Council for this month. I believe that under your leadership our work this month will be very fruitful. I also wish to take this opportunity to express my appreciation and congratulations to Ambassador Hardeep Singh Puri, the Permanent Representative of India, and his team for the wonderful work they accomplished during India's presidency in November. I would like to thank Special Adviser Benomar for his briefing.

More than a year ago, the parties in Yemen, through dialogue and consultation, succeeded in signing the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Initiative and Implementation Mechanism. This is a political transition process completely led by the Yemeni people. In view of Yemen's political, security, development and humanitarian situation, and based on respect for the

will of the Yemeni Government and people, the Security Council has issued multiple presidential statements on the situation there and has adopted resolutions 2014 (2011) and 2051 (2012).

The political transition process in Yemen has made progress, and the people are carefully implementing the Council's relevant resolutions and the GCC Initiative and Implementation Mechanism. A supreme commission for the election referendum has been established, and the National Dialogue Conference will be launched soon. The Yemeni Government has drafted a national strategy and development transition plan outlining steps for future development. China welcomes this.

Meanwhile, the future development of Yemen still faces many challenges. As to how to deal with the issues I have mentioned at the next stage, I would like to make the following four points.

First, Yemen should be supported in its efforts to uphold peace and move forward with the political process. The Yemeni people should continue to lead that process. The international community should fully respect Yemen's sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity, as well as the rights of the Yemeni people to choose their own development path. China supports various parties in Yemen in carrying out, in accordance with the relevant Council resolution, the GCC Initiative and Implementation Mechanism, and in resolving their differences through dialogue and consultation, as well as in launching the National Dialogue Conference on time.

Secondly, we should support Yemen's efforts to maintain State security and stability. The international community should continue to support the Government in strengthening capacity-building for the security sector, guarding against and containing the spread of terrorism and safeguarding State security and territorial integrity. The international community should work more closely with the Government, adopt a holistic approach in dealing with the security threats Yemen faces and help to eliminate breeding grounds for terrorism, with the aim of achieving long-term stability and security.

Thirdly, we should help Yemen to speed up its economic and social reconstruction. The international community should honour its aid commitments to Yemen, help it overcome the current serious economic and social development challenges and alleviate its

humanitarian needs. Substantive progress in Yemen's social and economic reconstruction would also be conducive to smooth completion of the political process.

Fourthly, we should continue to support the good offices of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and Mr. Benomar, the Special Adviser. China welcomes the GCC's continuing important role in seeking an appropriate settlement to this issue. The international community can coordinate its help and support for the Yemeni Government through the Friends of Yemen.

The Chinese Government has consistently supported the Yemeni Government's efforts to promote domestic political, economic and social reforms. Over the years, we have provided assistance, within our capacity, to Yemen's economic and social development and its endeavours to improve its people's well-being. That assistance has been used for economic and social development programmes, to improve the humanitarian situation and to help the Government and people overcome their difficulties. China will continue to provide what assistance it can through various means, and to work with the rest of the international community to carry out positive efforts to help Yemen move forward with its political transition process and economic reconstruction, in order to achieve long-term stability and development.

Mr. Laher (South Africa): Allow me to congratulate you and your delegation, Mr. President, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of December. Please be assured of our full support. We also commend the Indian delegation for its excellent stewardship of the Council during a very busy November.

South Africa thanks the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General, Mr. Jamal Benomar, for his briefing to the Council today. We once again applaud his efforts and encourage him to continue to work with the parties in their attempts to fully implement the Transition Agreement. We particularly welcome the progress made towards the preparations for the National Dialogue Conference, which was scheduled to resume in mid-November. Mr. Benomar and his team's efforts to support the Yemeni stakeholders in their preparations for the National Dialogue are commendable. We also appreciate the attempts to ensure that the National Dialogue is as inclusive as possible so as to prevent potential dissent from those who may be disgruntled if left out of the process.

Last month marked the first anniversary of the historic Transition Agreement signed by the Yemeni parties in November 2011. The signing of that Agreement paved the way for a constructive path for the people of Yemen through a peaceful transfer of power, elections, national dialogue and constitutional reforms. We are disappointed that the National Dialogue Conference could not resume in November as originally scheduled, owing to secessionist tendencies in the South, which have continued to derail progress in the country's transitional process. However, we welcome the agreement by the parties on the allocation of seats for the forthcoming Conference. That important Conference should be convened as soon as possible so as to pave the way for a new political order in Yemen.

We also welcome the promulgation of the presidential decree establishing the Supreme Commission on Elections and Referendums, which will play a significant role in the preparations for the presidential and parliamentary elections to be held in 2014.

The continuing tensions among political parties have the potential to derail the transitional process. We urge all Yemeni stakeholders to forego narrow political positions and to focus on the bigger picture regarding the unity and stability of the country. We encourage the Yemeni authorities to intensify their efforts towards the reunification and reconciliation of the population in order to heal all wounds and create a new future devoid of grudges and factionalism. All stakeholders, in particular young people, should be included in that process.

The Secretary-General's recent visit to Yemen was a significant moment indicating the support of the United Nations for the people of Yemen in their time of need. We echo his words, which I quote: "This is a process which must be irreversible: there is no turning back".

President Saleh and his allies should be condemned for the destructive role that they continue to play in Yemeni politics. Counterproductive activities must be discouraged, and those responsible for acts of aggression must be cautioned. The growing number of terrorist activities in the country is deeply worrying. In particular, we are deeply concerned about the presence and expansion of Al-Qaida, especially in the South. It is important that the international community support the Yemeni authorities in dealing with that threat, which is likely to spill over to the rest of the region if left unchecked.

The deteriorating socioeconomic and humanitarian situation in Yemen is still a cause of concern. We call on the international community to provide urgent support to alleviate that situation. In that regard, we welcome the meetings of the Friends of Yemen, which continue to provide an opportunity to pledge significant support to the transitional process.

Yemen is very different today from what it was a year ago. Significant progress has been made in moving the country towards democracy and stability. It is worth noting that the success of the mediation in Yemen was, to a great extent, a result of positive cooperation between the United Nations in general and the Security Council in particular, regional organizations and other international stakeholders. Specifically, the Security Council, which is divided on many critical issues, spoke with one voice and cooperated with regional organizations, principal among which was the Gulf Cooperation Council. That shows that working together we can accomplish more.

Finally, we support the idea of a Council visit, and we would encourage the Council to visit Yemen at an appropriate time. We believe that a visit to Yemen would bolster the efforts of President Mansour and unblock some of the bottlenecks in the transitional process. A visit would also indicate to the people of Yemen that the Council is accompanying them in their transition towards a new phase in their country's history.

Mr. DeLaurentis (United States of America): I wish to join others in congratulating you, Sir, upon your assumption of the presidency of the Council for December, and to thank Ambassador Puri and his team for their leadership of the Council last month. Let me also thank Special Adviser Benomar for his briefing. We appreciate his hard work to support the National Dialogue and the broader transition process in Yemen.

My remarks today will focus on three areas. First, the United States remains committed to working with President Mansour, the people of Yemen and the international community to support a successful National Dialogue. Secondly, the international community must work to translate recent Friends of Yemen pledges into concrete aid through the Mutual Accountability Framework. Thirdly, we must continue to oppose those who seek to undermine Yemen's progress.

On 23 November, we marked the first anniversary of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Initiative

and Implementation Mechanism, which laid the groundwork for Yemen's political transition. To meet the goals laid out one year ago, President Hadi Mansour and the people of Yemen must move forward with an inclusive, transparent and timely National Dialogue to build consensus on issues fundamental to Yemen's future, including the structure of the Government and constitutional reform.

We welcome the recent announcement regarding progress on the composition of the National Dialogue, and we look forward to hearing more details and a timeframe for the dialogue to commence. We also commend the efforts of the preparatory committee and the United Nations Special Adviser to ensure that the dialogue includes representatives from all elements of Yemeni society, including political parties, southerners, Houthis, women and youth. The outreach and support of Special Adviser Benomar will continue to be important as Yemen turns its attention from the preparations for a dialogue to substantive questions of reform.

Beyond the National Dialogue, we also need to consider several other issues that are important for a successful political transition. We welcome President Mansour's 29 November decree naming a new Supreme Commission for Elections and Referendums. We hope the Commission will be empowered to update Yemen's voter rolls and complete other steps necessary for the constitutional referendum in 2013 and elections for the presidency in February 2014.

Separately, a focus on transitional justice would promote accountability, the rule of law and reconciliation, furthering reinforcing stability in Yemen. We look forward to hearing more regarding progress in those areas.

With nearly half of Yemen's population lacking adequate food and basic services, humanitarian assistance remains critical to achieving stability. In September, the Friends of Yemen pledged over \$7 billion to bolster the ongoing transition and address Yemen's basic needs. We commend the generosity of our international partners and call on them to follow through on their pledges in support of the priorities that the Yemeni Government has laid out in the Mutual Accountability Framework. We also urge donors to contribute to the United Nations 2012 humanitarian response plan, which, as we heard earlier, remains only 57 per cent funded, as well as the 2013 appeal expected this month. For our part, the United States has more

than doubled its assistance to Yemen, including over \$117 million in humanitarian assistance in fiscal year 2012.

While humanitarian assistance is critical in the near term, there can be no lasting stability in Yemen without economic progress. The United States is partnering with the Yemeni Government, the private sector and civil society to promote long-term sustainable development, boost economic activity and reform, and strengthen investment opportunities.

Our Ambassador to Yemen recently brought a trade mission to the United States, during which Yemeni business leaders met with companies and organizations throughout the United States to explore potential cooperation in areas such as renewable energy and water resources. We are also partnering with Yemeni ministries to expand essential services, improve efficiency, combat corruption and enhance transparency. Progress in those areas could do much to solidify Yemen's transition.

The international community must also remain resolute in confronting violent extremists and others who attempt to block Yemen's progress. Attacks on Government officials and other civilians cannot be justified, and we condemn such acts of terrorism in the strongest possible terms. We also recognize the enormous personal sacrifice and commitment of the Yemeni military and police, who have helped to turn the tide against those who attempt to use violence as a means to block positive change.

In line with the terms of the GCC implementation mechanism, we strongly support President Mansour's decrees to restructure Yemen's military and security institutions, which the Council also called for in resolution 2051 (2012).

We call on all Yemenis to show that they will put Yemen's national interests ahead of parochial concerns and abide by the letter and spirit of the GCC Agreement.

In May 2012, President Obama signed an executive order that allows the United States to take action against those who seek to undermine the transition. Shortly thereafter, resolution 2051 (2012) affirmed the Council's willingness to consider measures under Article 41 of the United Nations Charter for the same purpose. We will continue to follow closely any efforts to undermine the Government of National Unity and

the political transition, and we are ready to consider further action, as appropriate.

Last year, hundreds of thousands of Yemeni men and women took to the streets to courageously demand reform. Their courage initiated a historic transition. The United States is committed to doing its utmost to continue supporting these aspirations for a democratic, stable and prosperous Yemen.

Mr. Moraes Cabral (Portugal): Mr. President, I wish at the outset to express my congratulations and best wishes for your tenure during this month. You know, Sir, that you can count on our full support. I wish also to say a very warm word of appreciation and thanks to Ambassador Puri and his team for the way they conducted our business in the most efficient way during what was a very busy month. I also thank the United Nations in general for providing us with a Yemeni-like temperature today, which I think is very appropriate for our debate.

I wish to thank Mr. Benomar for his briefing and especially for his commitment to and continued efforts in support of a democratic transition in Yemen. He has given us a very full, correct and precise report on the situation, the achievements made and the challenges ahead.

Let me also say a word of appreciation to the Secretary-General for his continued good offices. We welcome his recent trip to Yemen on the occasion of the first anniversary of the signing of Yemen's historic Transition Agreement, and we fully support his message of praise and encouragement to the people of Yemen.

Indeed, under the able leadership of President Mansour, Yemen has come a long way over the course of the past year, despite the many difficulties encountered. The transition process remains largely on track and several important benchmarks have been met, the latest of which are the agreement on the distribution of seats in the National Dialogue Conference and the establishment of the Supreme Commission for Elections and Referendum.

We warmly welcome these much-awaited developments and look forward to the early launch of a National Dialogue Conference that makes allows for a participatory, representative, transparent and meaningful process and engages effectively all regions, groups and segments of Yemeni society, including women and young people.

Notwithstanding the numerous accomplishments registered, the challenges are manifold. Heinous acts of terrorism continue to claim lives and destroy public and economic infrastructures. Portugal vehemently condemns any such acts, which are criminal and unjustifiable regardless of their motivation, wherever, whenever and by whomsoever committed, and we fully support Yemen's efforts to combat terrorism.

While calm has returned to many parts of the country, security is still an issue of concern. We welcome the achievements of the Committee on Military Affairs and encourage further measures to complete the restructuring of the security and armed forces under a unified, professional leadership structure, which is essential to guaranteeing State authority and law and order throughout the country.

In addition, it remains necessary urgently to address the economic and humanitarian situation, notwithstanding the fact that some progress has been made, as we heard from Mr. Benomar. Although many people have recently returned to their homes, thousands remain displaced and deprived of the most basic services and needs. We are particularly troubled by the hundreds of thousands of children under the age of 5 who suffer from malnutrition. Equally disturbing are reports that the education of children continues to be disrupted by attacks against and the occupation of schools, which we strongly condemn.

We welcome the commitment made by the Government of National Unity to end the use and recruitment of children by the Yemeni armed forces and call on all parties to urgently end such unlawful acts. We are hopeful that the National Dialogue Conference will enable concrete advances to be made on the issue of transitional justice. Grievances will need to be resolved if a peaceful and lasting democratic transition is to succeed. On the other hand, all those responsible for human rights violations and abuses must be held accountable. The National Dialogue Conference may also provide a valuable forum to respond to the concerns of those that have distanced themselves from the process in a way that preserves the sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Yemen.

In conclusion, Yemen has come a long way, but there is still a long and difficult road ahead, as Mr. Benomar indicated. We call on all Yemenis to build on the progress of the past year and to press ahead with the next phase of the transition process, during which a number of key milestones are to be reached.

Those include, first, the convening of an all-inclusive National Dialogue Conference; secondly, constitutional and electoral reform to prepare for general elections by February 2014; and, thirdly, steps to address transitional justice and support national reconciliation.

Steady progress on such complex and sensitive issues will not be easy. The international community must therefore continue to support the people of Yemen. The United Nations and the Security Council in particular must remain vigilant and ensure that all parties abide by resolutions 2014 (2011) and 2051 (2012). The full implementation of those resolutions is essential for a peaceful, inclusive, orderly and Yemeni-led political transition that meets the legitimate demands and aspirations of the Yemeni people for peaceful change and meaningful political, economic and social reform.

Mr. Hardeep Singh Puri (India): At the outset, I wish to congratulate you, Sir, and your delegation on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of December. I wish you great success in your stewardship of the Council and assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation. I wish also to thank colleagues for their kind words concerning India's presidency last month.

I thank Special Adviser Jamal Benomar for his comprehensive briefing on recent developments in Yemen, including the Secretary-General's recent visit to Sana'a to mark the anniversary of the signing of the agreement brokered by the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

Nearly a year ago, when the Security Council adopted resolution 2014 (2011), Yemen was facing a serious situation on the political, security and humanitarian fronts. On the one hand, the Yemeni people's aspirations for democratic transformation and a stable and secure future were thwarted due to divisions among the political class. On the other hand, extremist and terrorist groups, some linked to Al-Qaida, were expanding their presence in various parts of the country, particularly in the south. Clashes among various factions of the military had led to the deaths of several hundred Yemenis.

By virtue of the unanimous support of the international community, anchored in the Security Council, the efforts of the GCC succeeded, resulting in the signing of an agreement between the main Yemeni parties. It is a great tribute to the Yemeni people and their

leadership that the country is making steady progress in the implementation of the Transition Agreement. We commend President Mansour, whose leadership of the transition process has made an immense contribution in turning a situation of despair into one of hope for a stable, secure, democratic and prosperous Yemen. We would also like to congratulate the Yemeni people for their determination to resolve current challenges through an inclusive, Yemeni-led political process.

India stands by the people and the Government of Yemen in their journey towards a stable, secure, prosperous and democratic future. Despite the significant progress made during the past year, Yemen continues to face multiple political, security, economic and humanitarian challenges.

The political situation remains delicate. The political parties and regional stakeholders have yet to overcome differences over important issues, including transitional justice and reconciliation. The fragility of the situation has compounded the humanitarian situation affecting nearly 10 million Yemenis.

Al-Qaida and affiliated militant groups continue to carry out attacks against Government institutions and officials. Tribal militias also continue hostilities in the southern and northern parts of Yemen. We strongly condemn all terrorist acts and violence in Yemen and urge all groups to lay down their arms and join the political process to address their grievances.

We also fully support Yemen's political independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. We call upon the international community to continue its assistance to the Government of Yemen in its fight against terrorist groups and in its efforts to stabilize the security situation.

We have noted that the Yemeni Government has taken several important initiatives to restructure the armed forces, appoint a new electoral commission and resume economic activities. The preparatory committee for the National Dialogue Conference is engaged in a serious and inclusive dialogue among all stakeholders and is in the final stages of its work. Political parties are actively engaged in dialogue to resolve differences over the law on transitional justice and national reconciliation. We hope that the National Dialogue Conference will ensure the involvement of all stakeholders, including youth and women's groups, the Al-Houthi insurrection, the rebellion in the South, and civil society. We also hope that those initiatives

will pave the way for holding the referendum on the Constitution in 2013 and elections in the beginning of 2014, as envisaged in the Transition Agreement.

India has had a long and historical relationship with Yemen. We have partnered with Yemen in humanitarian, human resource development and various capacity-building areas. In addition to its engagement as part of the Friends of Yemen group, India would be happy to look at specific proposals for cooperation with the Government of Yemen, particularly in the fields of training, capacity-building, entrepreneurship, development, small and medium enterprises, education and information technology within the bilateral cooperation arrangements. India has also provided a consignment of rice amounting to \$2 million and will very soon be sending another consignment of wheat worth the same amount. In addition, India will also be supplying medicine worth \$2 million to Yemen. India stands ready to offer concessional lines of credit for projects and programmes considered urgent and necessary by Yemen under the umbrella of credit lines for the least developed countries. The Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation provides another framework for cooperation with Yemen.

In conclusion, let me reiterate that the continuing support of the international community is crucial to Yemen as it consolidates the gains that have been made during the past year. We would like to wish the friendly people of Yemen continued progress, peace and prosperity and reassure them of India's support as the country traverses through a crucial phase in its history.

Mr. Wittig (Germany): At the outset, let me, as others have done, congratulate you, Mr. President, and the whole Moroccan Security Council team for your assumption of the presidency for this month, and assure you and your team of our full support. Let me also commend Ambassador Puri and his team for their outstanding leadership in what turned out to be a very challenging month. Many thanks also to Mr. Benomar for his excellent briefing. This will probably be my last statement on the situation in Yemen, as my country's Council membership comes to an end soon, regrettably. Allow me, therefore, to take this opportunity to begin with three more general observations.

First, when peaceful demonstrations in Sana'a were met with violence in early 2011, my delegation was among those calling early on for appropriate Council action. Not all shared that sense of urgency, but, in

hindsight, there is no doubt that that was the right thing to do. By addressing the situation on the ground, we made clear that the international community was watching. That also shows that early action by the Council can help prevent a conflict from escalating further. The horizon-scanning briefings provided by the Department for Political Affairs proved instrumental in that regard.

Secondly, the Council, in October last year, unanimously endorsed the Transition Agreement of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), which paved the way towards a democratic transition process. It is no secret that agreement among Council members was not easily reached. Some saw the Council as indulging in undue interference in internal matters, but again it was the right thing to do. I am convinced that it was the Council's united endorsement of the GCC Transition Agreement that made the difference on the ground. Sadly, that contrasts starkly with the situation in Syria, where consensus in the Council on effective measures continues to elude us.

Thirdly, what the Council says and what it does matters to the people in Yemen, and it is registered by those eager to turn back the hands of time. That is why my delegation co-sponsored resolution 2051 (2012) in June. In that resolution, the Council not only expressed its full support for the transition process, under the leadership of President Mansour, but we also warned potential spoilers of the consequences that they would face. The Council must remain closely engaged with the situation in Yemen. If necessary, it will have to take appropriate action.

We can acknowledge today the progress achieved. It is the accomplishment, first and foremost, of the Yemeni people, especially the youth. They have stood up for freedom, democracy and dignity. It was their struggle that found recognition in the Nobel Peace Prize being awarded to Ms. Tawakkol Karman. We must ensure that those legitimate demands of the Yemeni people are met. The progress achieved thus far is by no means irreversible. We have already seen numerous attempts by the old guard in the political and security apparatus to resist change or even to hijack the process. Yemen's transition will thus require continued international support from the Security Council and beyond.

The United Nations plays a pivotal role. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and Special Adviser Jamal Benomar deserve our support. Their efforts were

also recognized by the Government and the people of Yemen during their recent visit to Sana'a. At the Friends of Yemen meeting in September in New York, the international community also underlined its commitment to supporting the Yemeni people on their path to democracy.

A meaningful, fully inclusive and balanced National Dialogue is a key element for the success of Yemen's transition. Progress is urgently needed. We welcome the agreement reached last week on the remaining outstanding issues by the preparatory committee, with the support of Mr. Benomar and his team. We encourage all relevant actors to engage constructively so that the National Dialogue Conference can start without further delay. My country will continue to support those efforts on the ground.

In closing, I want to highlight the important visit by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Ms. Leila Zerrougui, to Sana'a last week. The fight against the recruitment of child soldiers has been a matter of long-standing concern for my Government, including during our tenure here in the Council. We welcome the commitment made by President Mansour to ban the recruitment of children into the regular armed forces, and we call on the armed groups to do likewise. That was also called for in resolution 2051 (2012). Finally, let me assure the Yemeni people and my colleague, Ambassador Jamal Abdullah Al-Sallal, that my country will remain a reliable partner for Yemen after 31 December.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): There continues to be a great need for consolidated work on the Yemeni settlement with the active involvement of the United Nations. It demonstrates the advantages of a comprehensive engagement model in which outside players pursue a coordinated policy and send identical signals to the parties to the conflict, preventing them from worsening the confrontation, while at the same time not imposing recipes for solutions. As a result, the settlement of many issues on the domestic political agenda is considerably less painful.

In analysing the situation in Yemen, we welcome the policy of the country's leadership of implementing the relevant Security Council resolutions and the Riyadh transition agreement of 23 November 2011 on the peaceful transition of power.

We note the efforts of Sana'a to move the political transition process forward, with the primary provision in the short term being the convening of the National Dialogue Conference. Russia is ready to continue to provide the necessary assistance to the Yemeni authorities in carrying out that task, in the context of ten observer countries monitoring the National Dialogue and ensuring the implementation of the intra-Yemeni agreement on the peaceful transition of power.

We are actively strengthening contacts with the leaders of the main political forces in the country, in particular in the south, and urging them to be more flexible and cooperative. It is critical that the fragile balance of political forces in Yemen not be interrupted on the eve of the conference. To avoid that scenario, we must strengthen external political and moral support for the political process in the Republic of Yemen in order to make it irreversible. We welcome the resolution, with the assistance of Special Adviser to the Secretary-General for Yemen, Mr. Benomar, of the quota issue regarding participants in that key exercise.

At this critical juncture, the Yemenis must unite around President Mansour in order to successfully implement the necessary political and socioeconomic changes and, above all, to draw up and adopt a new constitution and to hold presidential and parliamentary elections in 2014 in line with that constitution. In that connection, we welcome the news of the signing late last month of the presidential decree establishing the Supreme Commission for Election and Referendum. Political differences in Yemen must be replaced by the careful and coordinated work of all actors to address all urgent issues in the country.

Ensuring security continues to be an urgent matter. We firmly condemn the terrorist act by unknown persons in Sana'a on 28 November, which caused the death of the military attaché of the Embassy of Saudi Arabia and his bodyguard. The perpetrators and masterminds of that attack by bandits against the staff of a foreign diplomatic mission must be duly held to account and the immunity of diplomatic and consular staff guaranteed, in strict compliance with the provisions of the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations. The tragedy in Sana'a again clearly demonstrates the essential fact that there are no good or bad terrorists. Irrespective of the grounds, such crimes must be robustly and wholly condemned. Double standards cannot be applied as justification.

The Yemeni Government faces challenges, including the ongoing fighting against Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula, overcoming the tragic humanitarian crisis, eradicating poverty and unemployment, ensuring the provision of basic services for the population and assisting refugees and internally displaced persons. At the same time, the Government must rapidly implement an entire range of socioeconomic reforms. That is now critical.

Regional organizations and the international community must play a significant role in these efforts. The third and fourth ministerial meetings of the Friends of Yemen, held in Riyadh and New York in May and September, respectively, were fruitful. The outcomes of such events must be strengthened and increased.

We believe that the efforts of Special Adviser Mr. Benomar to work with the Yemeni political forces are significant. We look forward to such ongoing effective work in order to address the urgent tasks continuing to face Yemen.

Mr. Mehdiyev (Azerbaijan) (*spoke in Arabic*): Mr. President, at the outset, allow me to congratulate the delegation of Morocco on its assumption of the presidency of the Council. I take this opportunity to assure you of our full support and to wish you every success in your important work.

(*spoke in English*)

I would also like to express our appreciation to Ambassador Hardeep Singh Puri of India and his delegation for their excellent leadership of the Council's work last month. I also thank Mr. Benomar for his briefing.

In the year that has elapsed since the signing of the historic Transition Agreement that set Yemen on the path to democracy, the country has made great strides in that direction. The Government and people of Yemen must be congratulated on the progress achieved to date and on their determination to move their country forward. It is clear that what has been achieved should be consolidated and that efforts to carry out an inclusive Yemeni-led political transition process that meets the legitimate demands and aspirations of the people should be continued.

The convening of an all-inclusive National Dialogue Conference, scheduled to take place later this year, in accordance with the second phase of the transition process, takes on particular importance. The outcome

of the dialogue is also vital to drafting the constitution and to conducting the general elections to take place in 2014.

The international community must render all possible assistance to the Yemeni people in meeting those objectives. The recent visit by the Secretary-General to Yemen reiterated international support for the political transition in the country.

Azerbaijan also welcomes the Friends of Yemen ministerial meeting held in New York on 27 September, which pledged additional funds to support the transition process in Yemen. We appreciate the efforts of Special Adviser Mr. Benomar to help bridge the differences among the various groups and to bring them to the dialogue. It must be underscored that engagement with all political forces and groups is vital in order for them to be able to express their expectations of the process.

In that light, we welcome the recent progress in deciding the quotas of political parties and of other groups participating in the National Dialogue Conference. All political forces in Yemen must realize that a successful transition process depends on the involvement and cooperation of all stakeholders in implementing the Gulf Cooperation Council Initiative and Implementation Mechanism, in accordance with Security Council resolutions 2014 (2011) and 2051 (2012).

The presence of the rebel groups in northern Yemen and of Al-Qaida-related groups in the south of the country remains a major threat to Yemen's security and stability. The intensification of suicide attacks against the Yemeni military by those groups, as well as the new clashes that erupted between Yemeni military forces and Al-Qaida-related groups in Abyan at the end of October, gave rise to legitimate concerns. Once again, we would like to express our support to the President and Government of Yemen for the determined efforts in fighting the terrorist threats.

The humanitarian situation in the country remains harsh, although the recent financial pledges of donors offer some alleviation of the economic and social hardship faced by the population in need. More must be done in that regard. The problem of internal displacement in northern Yemen is alarming and represents a heavy economic and social burden on the State. It is nevertheless encouraging to witness the growing number of returning internally displaced persons in the south of the country. According to the

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, that is the first significant decline in displacement since May 2011, when fighting between Government troops and militants erupted in the south.

In conclusion, we would like to reiterate Azerbaijan's full support for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of Yemen and to express our hope that the tenacious work of the Yemeni authorities and the continued support of the international community will yield the best possible results for a successful transition in Yemen.

Mr. Osorio (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I join my colleagues in most warmly congratulating you, Mr. President, and your delegation on assuming the presidency of the Security Council for this month. We are sure that your leadership and efficiency will bring to the Council all the dynamism for which you are known. I also wish to express my thanks to Mr. Hardeep Singh Puri, Ambassador of India, and his entire team for their leadership and the very serious way in which they led the work of the Council in the past month.

I want to thank and commend Special Adviser of the Secretary-General for Yemen Jamal Benomar for his very important work in that country. We greatly regret that the planned Security Council mission to Yemen could not occur, but we are aware that Mr. Benomar's influence and participation in the entire process have been highly significant. We see great progress in the developments he explained to us today, the first anniversary of the signing on 23 November 2011 in Riyadh of the historic Transition Agreement, which ended the violence in Yemen and put the country on the path of democratic transition.

The people and Government of Yemen have acted valiantly, resolutely and in a timely way to save the country from civil war. As the Secretary-General said on his recent visit to Sana'a, the process of change that has been set in motion is irreversible. We underline the strong commitment of the United Nations and the important role it plays in the progress made to date in Yemen. The people and Government of Yemen need and deserve our full support in building a more democratic, prosperous and participatory society.

In our view, building strong foundations for the democratic transition taking place in Yemen under the leadership of President Mansour and his Government of National Unity will require an inclusive and participatory National Dialogue, and that the outcomes

of that dialogue be incorporated in the constitutional process to be concluded by the end of 2013, leading to general elections in February 2014.

We are therefore pleased that, through discussions in the preparatory committee, an agreement has been reached on appointments to open seats at the National Dialogue Conference. The Special Adviser has proposed that 112 of the 556 Conference seats be assigned to the General People's Congress and its allies, 85 to Houthis, 40 to women and 40 to young people, which will allow the protracted stalemate to be overcome. We commend the dedicated efforts of the parties concerned, who have opened the way for the National Dialogue to be effective, broad, constructive and participatory.

We welcome the recent reports from the Geneva Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees that many internally displaced persons are returning to their homes in southern Yemen. According to the Office, in the past four months more than 80,000 people have returned, which represents the first significant reduction in the number of internally displaced persons since May 2011. If that trend is to continue, it will require the sustained and committed support of the international community — all the more so when more than 300,000 people remain displaced because of the conflict between Yemeni Government forces and the Al-Houthi group, which has now lasted almost 10 years.

We must make every effort to ensure security and stability in Yemen. We therefore welcome the significant pledges made by various donors at the 3 September meeting of the Group of Friends of Yemen in Riyadh to support reconstruction, to provide for basic infrastructure and humanitarian assistance needs, and consolidate security and stability in Yemen. It is also essential to address such hugely important problems as political dialogue and preparations for the 2014 elections.

Yemen has undergone a profound change since President Mansour's accession to power last February. However, many relics of the past persist, especially in the military, and they must be overcome. We note that, in the process of centralizing control over the armed forces, President Mansour issued a series of directives in August whereby he placed divisions and brigades of the Republican Guard and the First Armoured Division under his authority.

We reiterate our strenuous condemnation of the terrorist attack of 11 September in which at least 11 people died. We call on all actors in Yemen to reject violence in all its forms and manifestations, and we encourage them to play a constructive role in implementing the Transition Agreement.

The ongoing attacks in southern Yemen that have claimed many victims clearly show the need to make progress on the reorganization of the State's armed forces. Reports of the broad influence of Al-Qaida in Yemeni territory remain a cause for concern. We are aware of the fragility of the transition process. That is why we call on the authorities to commit themselves irreversibly to creating solid institutions and to establish more open and inclusive processes to ensure Yemen's stability in the long term.

A National Dialogue driven by the Yemenis themselves is essential to the country's democratic future. The Security Council and the international community must continue to assert with one voice their support for Yemen's unique example of transition, which enjoys the support of the majority of the population.

Mr. M'Beou (Togo) (*spoke in French*): I would like to begin by congratulating you, Mr. President, on the assumption by the Kingdom of Morocco to the Security Council presidency for December. I wish you every success and assure you of my delegation's full support. I would also like to congratulate Ambassador Puri of India on his outstanding guidance of the Council's work last month. Like many speakers, I would also to thank the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General for Yemen, Mr. Benomar, for his briefing.

I would like to focus on three points: the political, security and humanitarian aspects of the situation. On the political level, we welcome the efforts by the Yemeni Government to create a political agreement based on democratic institutions. In that context, Togo particularly commends President Mansour's directive of 29 November establishing the Supreme Commission for Election and Referendum. The creation of the Commission is an important milestone on the road to holding the upcoming elections, in which all Yemenis are to take part, and which we hope will be peaceful and credible.

We believe that it is the duty of the Yemeni political class to maintain and strengthen the achievements of the transition so far. Such cooperation, which we call for with conviction, can come about only through an

inclusive National Dialogue, which the international community considers to be the best framework for discussion focused on adopting consensual agreements to redefine the future of the country. This national conversation should also make it possible to address all questions, especially those concerning Yemeni unity and the reconciliation of all its sons and daughters.

Togo therefore urges all political and military groups, especially Al-Hiraak and its leaders, to respond positively and promptly to President Mansour's call to return to dialogue, whose success could mitigate the country's strained social atmosphere and persuade the various players to agree on certain crucial questions.

We commend the efforts of the Secretary-General to work with Yemeni authorities to launch the National Dialogue. His trip to Yemen on 19 November was proof of his commitment to helping the country to resolve all outstanding points of contention through constructive dialogue. We urge President Mansour and the Yemeni Government to pursue their efforts to launch an effective National Dialogue Conference, despite all the obstacles to its convening.

My delegation believes that the Security Council should assist the Yemeni authorities in finding new solutions to the claims of the southern groups, which continue to delay the holding of the Convention. Contact between the Government and those groups remains a path to be explored.

As for the security situation, Togo welcomes efforts that have led to a decrease in violence in recent weeks. However, we firmly condemn the attack of 28 November in Sana'a, which took the life of a Saudi Arabian diplomat and his Yemeni bodyguard. We call on all Yemenis to renounce violence and to work together to reconstruct their country. In response to those acts of terrorism, it is more urgent than ever for States to reaffirm their support for the Yemeni authorities by persuading them to do their utmost to combat and eradicate the scourge. This fight will be successful only if the problem of divisions within the army is resolved, allowing space for its restructuring.

With respect to the struggle for peace and security in Yemen, we are encouraged by President Mansour's promise to end child recruitment by Government forces. Other armed groups must also renounce child conscription, which violates the provisions of relevant international conventions.

At the humanitarian level, the situation remains of concern, despite the contributions of donor countries. While thanking them for their generosity, we call on the international community, especially the Friends of Yemen, to strengthen efforts to improve the living conditions of refugees. Furthermore, the international community should take up the situation of Yemeni women, in the light of reports that four out of five women have seen their situation deteriorate over the past 12 months.

Mr. Rosenthal (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): I join my colleagues in congratulating you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency this month. I wish you the full success that you deserve, and I am certain that you will play an outstanding role in the Council. We also thank the Indian delegation for its exemplary presidency in November.

I wish to begin by thanking Mr. Jamal Benomar for his interesting and timely presentation and by commending him for his ongoing work in Yemen.

A year has passed since the signing of the Gulf Cooperation Council Transition Agreement, putting an end to nearly 11 months of fighting in Yemen. Since then, we have seen progress achieved throughout a fairly complicated transition process that could be instructive for other countries in a similar situation. We believe it essential for the transition process to continue and for the constitutional and electoral reforms to be concluded. It is also essential that the unity and democracy process be completed in a framework of respect for the fundamental rights of all the people.

In that context, we welcome the visit of the Secretary-General to Yemen last month. We hope that it will give renewed impetus to the development of policies and capacities that will contribute to a successful conclusion of the transition process. In particular, we believe that the National Dialogue Conference must be launched as soon as possible, although we also understand that if it is to meet expectations, it must be appropriately prepared with the support of all the people of Yemen.

On that point, we warmly welcome the announcement of the agreement to resolve the contentious issue of seat assignment for the inclusive National Dialogue Conference, which is a key element of Yemen's democratic transition. The agreement clears the way for the National Dialogue Conference to be convened by the end of the year. Its results will be incorporated into the drafting of a constitution by late

2013 that will, in turn, enable general elections to be held in February 2014.

In our opinion, a vital part of that process is for all parties to demonstrate mutual respect and to refrain from using force to achieve their ambitions. They must demonstrate flexibility in addressing complex issues and be prepared to accept those compromises that will form a common denominator to preserve the interests of all concerned. In addition, we consider efforts to completely restructure the security sector to be a major step forward. It is crucial to unify Yemen's armed forces in order to empower them in the fight against all groups seeking to destabilize and block the new Government's efforts to establish a democratic State. In that context, we commend President Mansour's efforts to achieve a political transition, which must respond exclusively to the interests of the Yemeni people.

We oppose and condemn all acts of violence or terrorism, irrespective of the source, especially those aimed indiscriminately against civilians. We therefore urge all groups in Yemen to refrain from provocation and to cooperate in the due implementation of resolutions 2014 (2011) and 2051 (2012). We also consider it critical for every individual responsible for violations or abuses of human rights, including acts of violence, to be held accountable for their actions.

The problems facing the people of Yemen cannot be resolved solely by addressing the security situation. All of the measures to counter poverty and unemployment must also be implemented. Policies must be adopted to respond to the social and economic problems that have made Yemen a fertile ground for social dissatisfaction and kept the people in unstable economic conditions. We therefore believe that the results of the meeting of donor countries are positive. We hope that the assistance offered will continue to ensure progress in the transition process.

The Yemeni authorities must continue on the current path of the transition process. At the same time, they must work to implement policies to alleviate the major problems facing their people, especially poverty, hunger and insecurity.

Mr. Briens (France) (*spoke in French*): Allow me to begin by congratulating you, Sir, on assuming the presidency of the Council and assuring you of my delegation's full support. I also thank Ambassador Puri and his entire delegation for their excellent presidency in November.

I thank Mr. Benomar, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General, for his briefing on the situation in Yemen. I welcome the first anniversary on 23 November of the signing of the Gulf Cooperation Council initiative, which paved the way to a peaceful political transition in Yemen. The Secretary-General travelled to Yemen on that occasion to demonstrate the support of the international community to the transition in Yemen.

France reiterates its full support to President Mansour and to the Yemeni Government in their efforts to implement an orderly political transition that meets the aspirations of the Yemeni people. The transition in Yemen is exemplary, primarily because of the commitment of the Yemenis themselves. It shows that, in situations of overt crisis, the implementation of an orderly, peaceful and democratic transition is possible.

The Yemenis have made considerable progress in implementing resolution 2014 (2011). The formation of a Government of National Unity, the beginning of the restructuring of the armed forces and the successful holding of presidential elections are all milestones in the completion of the first phase of the transition. The voter turnout in the presidential elections far exceeded the most optimistic estimates and demonstrated that the people of Yemen, in particular youth and women, support the transition mechanism and thereby sought to take ownership of it.

In order to consolidate the second phase of the transition, it is now urgent to achieve progress in three areas.

First is the launching of the National Dialogue, which must provide an opportunity for all stakeholders in Yemen, in particular youth and civil society, to collectively draft a new social contract and achieve national reconciliation. We welcome the agreement reached on the distribution of groups within the preparatory committee of the National Dialogue Conference. In this respect, we welcome the work undertaken by the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General and by the ambassadors of the 10 countries that are guarantors of the transition. We call on all Yemeni parties to implement the National Dialogue in a transparent and balanced way and to include all stakeholders in accordance with the timetable for the transition.

With the other sponsor countries of the Gulf initiative, France will provide any legal expertise that

is requested of it, when the time comes, to support the members of the National Dialogue as they explore the possible outlines of a future constitution. We also welcome the mandate issued by the Yemeni Parliament to President Mansour to appoint a new electoral commission, and we encourage the rapid progress made on efforts to hold a referendum on the constitution in 2013 and national elections in early 2014.

Secondly, the Yemeni authorities must give particular attention to the ongoing deterioration of the humanitarian situation. The resolution of the humanitarian crisis is crucial to stabilizing the country and to its subsequent economic recovery. Given the magnitude of the needs, we welcome the results of the donors' meeting in Riyadh and the meeting of the Friends of Yemen in New York, which raised nearly \$8 billion through 2014.

In the confident wager that we are all making on the future of Yemen, France has a particular place. With an cumulative amount of \$4.5 billion in economic investments, it is the leading investor in Yemen. France wishes to maintain its commitment to the country through its projects, which are aimed in particular at developing the electricity sector. Concessional assistance of more than \$80 million will finance both the provision of electricity to rural areas and the regulated distribution of electricity throughout the country. The effective implementation of these projects, however, still hinges on an appropriate security framework. These actions are in keeping with the framework of broader cooperation, which ranges from training to security and includes humanitarian and food assistance.

The third priority is restructuring the security and defence forces. France reiterates its firm condemnation of all acts of terrorism, regardless of their justification. In this regard, the Yemeni Government needs to allocate the appropriate resources to protect industrial installations, as their repeated sabotage is denying the country the use of its own resources and deterring investors. The security of airports and maritime ports, two areas that are targeted by terrorists, also remains a major challenge to the economic development of the country.

The Security Council and the United Nations must remain fully committed to the Yemenis. The transition in Yemen has been a success for the Council. Through its resolution 2014 (2011), the Council played a decisive role with respect to a peaceful political transition in

Yemen and in keeping with the expectations of the people of Yemen. If they remain fully committed to the salutary path they have chosen, Yemenis can count on the assistance of the Council as they consolidate their transition.

However, we are particularly concerned by the actions and statements of certain players that could disturb, delay or destabilize the political transition. We remind them that, in resolution 2051 (2012) of 12 June, the Council underscored its determination to support the transition in Yemen, including by expressing its readiness to consider further measures, including under Article 41 of the United Nations Charter, if such actions continue. My country and the Council continue to stand with the Yemenis in this historic transition, thereby confirming our support to the legitimate democratic aspirations that currently abound in the region.

Mr. Tarar (Pakistan): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening today's debate. Let me begin by congratulating the Kingdom of Morocco on assuming the presidency of the Security Council for December. We commend the able manner in which India discharged its responsibilities as Council President for the previous month. We are also grateful to the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General for Yemen, Mr. Jamal Benomar, for his briefing. We commend his work. We welcome the participation of Ambassador Jamal Abdullah Al-Sallal in this meeting.

By avoiding a potentially devastating civil war, Yemen has shown the world that dialogue and political will can lead to the peaceful resolution of complicated issues. The Secretary-General's good offices played an important role in this regard. We share the optimism he expressed during his recent visit to Sana'a that Yemen will overcome all its problems and hurdles as it prepares for the 2014 presidential and parliamentary elections. Progress, however, does not obviate the need to keep the challenges in sight.

Pakistan enjoys deep historical, cultural and religious ties with the people of Yemen. The peace, stability and prosperity of Yemen are dear to us. We hope that the full implementation of the Gulf Cooperation Council initiative for the transfer of power in Yemen will lead to a normalization of conditions in the country. The continued support of the international community for this endeavour is crucial. This does not mean, however, that the international community should micromanage Yemeni affairs. Respect for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity

of Yemen should remain paramount to the Council's deliberations on the issue.

We note with satisfaction that the preparatory committee of the National Dialogue Conference has completed its work. We hope that it would now lead to the convening of an inclusive national dialogue process and a timely conclusion of the transition process. We also welcome the formation of the Supreme Commission for Election and Referendum.

It is heartening to note that the Government of Yemen remains committed to fighting terrorism. We fully support the efforts of President Mansour in that regard and stand ready to provide any assistance that may be required. Pakistan strongly condemns terrorist attacks in Yemen. Our thoughts and prayers are with the victims of those heinous crimes. We remain concerned by the sporadic violence that keeps cropping up.

We strongly condemn the murder of a Saudi diplomat and his Yemeni bodyguard, and offer our sincere condolences to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as well as to Yemen. Such dastardly acts should strengthen our resolve to combat terrorism and extremism in all their manifestations.

We welcome the report that more than 80,000 internally displaced people have returned home in the past few months, the first significant decline in displacement since May of last year, when fighting between Government troops and militants erupted in the south of Yemen. That follows the re-establishment of Government authority in the southern province of Abyan and an improvement in security.

Statistics relating to the extent of the humanitarian crisis in Yemen, however, remain worrisome. With 83 per cent of children under five malnourished, 44.5 per cent of the Yemeni population food-insecure and 50 per cent of Yemenis without access to clean water, as well as with frequent outbreaks of disease, the population awaits the concrete dividends of transition.

Gaps in humanitarian response can undermine political transition and mar the long-term prospects for peace and development. It is disconcerting to note that the United Nations humanitarian appeal for Yemen has been funded only at around 50 per cent. The international community must rise to the occasion and must do everything possible in that regard.

We once again reiterate Pakistan's unflinching support to the process of transition in Yemen and to the

Government and people of Yemen as they go through this trying phase in their history. We are confident that the resilient people of Yemen will be able to surmount those obstacles and emerge stronger.

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

I would like to thank Mr. Jamal Benomar, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Yemen, for his comprehensive briefing on the latest developments. I would also like to thank him for his tireless efforts on behalf of the transition in Yemen. I assure him of Morocco's full and continued support for his efforts to convince the different parties in Yemen to participate fully in the comprehensive National Dialogue to be held in the near future and to find a way out of the complex sensitivities with the south, particularly in the light of the grave differences between the parties. I also commend the achievement, timeliness and success of the Secretary-General's recent visit to Yemen.

That brotherly country, with the determination of its people, has been able to avoid war and chaos beginning with the initiative of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the implementation of the plan on which Yemenis have agreed, in order to create a new situation in their country — a situation of democracy, liberty and stability.

Against that backdrop, we applaud His Excellency President Mansour for his firm commitment to supporting political dialogue and to promoting political transition in Yemen, as well as to reforming the security sector with a view towards realizing the aspirations of Yemenis toward a peaceful transition and comprehensive reform in preparation for the holding of the National Dialogue Conference.

The establishment by the preparatory committee for the National Dialogue in Yemen of the assigned seats to the parties that will contribute to the conference augurs well for all the parties and is an extremely important step in the right direction. We look forward with optimism to the beginning of the comprehensive National Dialogue. We also hope that the latest achievement will be followed by a declaration on the part of those who have so far hesitated, particularly among adherents of Al-Hiraak and among the Houthis, to the effect that they will participate in the National Dialogue.

We call upon all civil society stakeholders to take part in that important undertaking, which is the backbone of the political transition in Yemen, so as to avoid undermining the political settlement reached in the particularly delicate transitional phase. The Government of National Unity should expeditiously set out a plan for the achievement of transitional justice and reconciliation in order to foster the environment necessary to overcome the obstacles at this stage and to prepare and mobilize for the extremely important National Dialogue.

We would like to express our serious concern with regard to the challenges still facing Yemen, particularly in view of the continued attacks against officials and Government targets, along with fuel sources and electrical grids. Those attacks and the continued violence and tension in some areas, together with separatist tendencies and the threat of Al-Qaida, represent extremely great dangers that must be faced. We therefore call on the international community to provide further support to Yemen with a view to establishing peace and stability, which in turn will support regional stability as well.

The political and economic situation in Yemen has led to grave social consequences, such as the spread of poverty and malnutrition among children. International statistics provide us with extremely alarming information in that regard. We therefore call upon the international community in general and donors in particular to make additional efforts to assist Yemen and its people to meet the increasing challenges that face its new leadership.

The changes we have witnessed in Yemen demonstrate the qualitative improvement and the sincere effort to establish and protect the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Yemen. We look forward to the completion of all preparations necessary for launching the National Dialogue Conference, which is an extremely important opportunity for Yemen to introduce constitutional reforms and to achieve democracy and the aspirations of its people for prosperity, peace and stability.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Yemen.

Mr. Al-Sallal (Yemen) (*spoke in Arabic*): First, I would like to congratulate His Excellency

Mr. Mohammed Loulichki, Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Morocco, and to wish him and his delegation every success in their conduct of the Council's work this month. I would also like to thank His Excellency Ambassador Hardeep Singh Puri, Permanent Representative of India, and his delegation for their outstanding success and wise leadership of the work of the Council last month.

I am also pleased to thank the President and all the members of the Council for the interest they have shown in what is taking place in my country, as well as for their commitment to the success of the political settlement in Yemen, as well as the country's unity, security and stability. We would also like to express our sincere appreciation to Mr. Jamal Benomar, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Yemen, for his continued efforts to reconcile the parties and to prepare the environment for the National Dialogue conference, as well as for his strenuous efforts to present us his valuable and comprehensive briefing, which I hope will command the interest of the Council.

The Council has no doubt closely followed the situation in my country and understands the difficulties that Yemen has been facing for over a year. Its members must therefore be well informed of the reality on the ground and be in a position to promote the trust of our people in its cultural history and in the wisdom of its leadership to overcome those difficulties.

In his briefing, Mr. Benomar referred to the progress achieved in the ongoing political process and the obstacles that need to be addressed. There is no disagreement on the grave difficulties faced by my country with regard to completing the second phase of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) initiative. Despite the complexity of the situation and the gravity of the challenges before us, the Government of National Unity has achieved great progress in a short period, in particular in restoring many services that were interrupted last year, such as electricity and fuel supplies and other basic daily necessities for the people. In that context, I would refer to a statement by the President of the Republic that was made a few days ago in Sana'a at the celebration commemorating the signing of the GCC initiative. In it, he stressed the ability of Yemenis to achieve their aspirations as they did when the GCC initiative was signed. The peaceful transfer of power and the success of the early presidential elections last February confirmed that ability. I would take this opportunity to express our sincere thanks

and appreciation to United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and to the Secretary-General of the Gulf Cooperation Council, Mr. Abdul-Latif Bin Rashid Al-Zayani, for having participated in the ceremony and for their commitment to the implementation of the initiative, which is proof of the region's and the international community's commitment to assisting Yemen to succeed in its endeavours and to create the new future to which it aspires.

Today, having listened to Mr. Benomar's briefing, I believe that we are all working for one purpose, namely, to make political transition in Yemen a success. That requires the international community to support the efforts made by President Mansour and his Government of National Unity.

We are now in the second phase of the GCC initiative. I would therefore like to draw the Council's attention to some of the efforts made by the political leadership in my country, with a view to implementing the GCC initiative and resolutions of the Security Council. The Military and Security Committee continued its work to foster security and stability with a view to normalizing the situation through direct supervision and activity in the field. The Committee has achieved tangible success in the capital, Sana'a, and in other capitals of Yemen's governorates. Moreover, President Mansour has taken many important decisions. For example, he has begun to separate certain military units from others and has guaranteed leadership rotation for key positions in the security apparatus. Secondly, he has established an independent investigation committee to look into human rights violations that occurred in 2011. Thirdly, he has established the Supreme Commission for Elections and Referendum. I would also like to note that, recently, a branch of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights was opened in Yemen, as was a Yemeni office for the GCC.

I would like to stress that President Mansour and his Government of National Unity will continue to make efforts to complete the second phase of the GCC initiative and its mechanisms, foremost of which is the holding of the National Dialogue Conference, which we are determined to have begin on time. It is also noteworthy that the President wants to foster the necessary environment for the National Dialogue and to ensure the necessary conditions for the success of that historic undertaking so that everyone can contribute with transparency to obtaining tangible and positive results in the form of domestic peace,

multilateral democracy, the protection of human rights and good governance — all of which is in response to the aspirations of Yemenis. Undoubtedly, the recent agreement on the allocation of seats among political parties and other political forces, including civil society organizations, youth, women and other social components, in the National Dialogue Conference is an extremely important step forward. The technical preparatory committee for the National Dialogue has almost finished its work and will submit its final report to the President in the next few days. He, in turn, will take a decision to begin the Dialogue, after having selected candidates from all the parties.

The President reiterates his full commitment to the drafting of a new constitution and the holding of a referendum on it without delay, as well as the holding of presidential and parliamentary elections on schedule. Undoubtedly, the international community should continue to support the efforts by the President, particularly with regard to the National Dialogue Conference.

The political crisis is but one aspect of the situation in Yemen. Other aspects include humanitarian and economic difficulties, which can be attributed to various causes. The most threatening of them is terrorism, of which Yemen has become a victim. Despite our limited resources and weak national economy, we continue to fight that scourge relentlessly — with international cooperation — in order to eliminate it from our country. There is no doubt that the problems encountered by Yemen during the past year have adversely affected the economic and humanitarian situation in the country. Extreme poverty has spread and unemployment has increased, which has weakened the national economy as a whole, which, in turn, threatens the security and stability of our country. Furthermore, it threatens the stability and security of the entire region and could impact the international community. Yemen is also bearing a colossal burden as a result of the unrelenting waves of asylum seekers from nearby countries in the Horn of Africa.

It is no secret that the economic situation in Yemen could become an insurmountable obstacle to all political progress. Indeed, our economic difficulty represents 70 per cent of all the challenges we face. Permit me to appeal to all our brothers and friends at the United Nations to continue to support Yemen in its crisis so that we can build a modern State with strong national institutions. The international community

must also show patience in dealing with Yemenis in the light of the grave and numerous challenges they face. They should encourage them to find solutions.

I would like to express our thanks to all those who have stood by us, starting with the donors' conference in Riyadh in June through the Friends of Yemen meeting held here in New York in September. That support is extremely important to us. It comes at a historic moment, when we look forward to a better future and greater prosperity for Yemen. I would like to urge all those brothers and friends who have made pledges to fulfil them as soon as possible in order to help alleviate the Yemeni citizens' economic burden and to support the various economic and humanitarian programmes of Yemen's Government of National Unity, with a view to making the country's political transformation a success.

I would like to conclude with what I said earlier: we in the Yemeni Government are working together with the international community in support of the political transition process towards the 2014 general elections, in a way that realizes the aspirations of the Yemeni people, particularly their dream of a stable, democratic society and a modern civil State of law and order, justice, equality, democracy and human rights.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to Mr. Benomar to respond to the comments made by the members of the Security Council.

Mr. Benomar: As we heard today, there is resounding international support for the remarkable efforts made and led by the Yemeni people to move their country forward. I would like to reiterate that the transition in Yemen is largely on track. Yes, there are challenges in the security, economic and humanitarian fields, but the transition is moving forward.

I would like to make special mention of the young people who courageously took to the streets, opening the way for the people's aspirations to be realized. We should not forget how we got here. It all started with young people peacefully demanding change. I am pleased to see Security Council members acknowledging the role they played and their commitment to supporting the people's aspirations.

I would also like to pay tribute to Yemen's political leaders, who have had the courage to pull their country from the abyss; Yemeni leaders who negotiated face to face, constructively, in my presence in November in Sana'a, and who concluded an agreement that made

this unique, peaceful transition possible. Yemenis have developed, through a Yemeni-led process, a Yemeni road map for change and recovery. Our role was, and continues to be, to support their efforts and facilitate agreement at their request, with Yemenis always in the lead.

I am pleased to see Security Council members unanimously commending the leadership and efforts of President Abdrabuh Mansour Hadi Mansour. He has led the way with strong and effective stewardship, steering the country towards a more stable, prosperous and bright future.

I am very pleased to see the Security Council speaking with one voice in support of the Yemeni transition. The National Dialogue definitely represents the beginning of a new Yemen. It provides an opportunity to broaden the political process, ensuring inclusion by allowing Yemenis, men and women, from north to

south, from across the political spectrum, to engage in dialogue and collectively shape the future of their country. Let us continue our innovative cooperation in support of Yemenis in their efforts to forge ahead.

We have all emphasized the importance of a timely start to the National Dialogue. In that regard, it will be important for Yemen's partners to contribute financially to the United Nations trust fund that has been established to support the National Dialogue. I would also like to reiterate the importance of delivering in a timely fashion on the pledges that Yemen's partners have made in the meetings of the Friends of Yemen in support of Yemen's economic recovery.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): There are no more speakers on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 5.25 p.m.