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New York

President:	Mr. Sangjin Kim	(Republic of Korea)
Members:	Algeria	Mr. Koudri
	China	Mr. Geng Shuang
	Ecuador	Mr. Montalvo Sosa
	France	Mrs. Paolini
	Guyana	Ms. Benn
	Japan	Mrs. Shino
	Malta	Ms. Gatt
	Mozambique	Mr. Fernandes
	Russian Federation	Mr. Nebenzia
	Sierra Leone	Mr. Sowa
	Slovenia	Mr. Žbogar
	Switzerland	Mrs. Baeriswyl
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Dame Barbara Woodward
	United States of America	Mr. Wood

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East

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

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East

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

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Mr. Hans Grundberg, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen, and Ms. Edem Wosornu, Director of Operations and Advocacy, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

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

I give the floor to Mr. Grundberg.

Mr. Grundberg: Mr President, allow me first to wish all Muslims around the world a blessed Eid al-Adha.

I will be briefing the Council today in worrisome circumstances. Before addressing the economic escalation, a fragile military situation and a constricted mediation space, as well as outlining my efforts to protect the path to a ceasefire and a political process in Yemen, I must direct members' attention to the crackdown by Ansar Allah on Yemeni civil society, non-governmental organizations and the United Nations.

Last week 13 United Nations personnel, including one of my colleagues in Sana'a, in addition to five staff members of international non-governmental organizations and many more from national non-governmental organizations and civil society, were arbitrarily detained by Ansar Allah. They remain in incommunicado detention. That comes in addition to the situation of the four staff members from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and UNESCO who have been held in incommunicado detention since 2021 and 2023, respectively. I urge Ansar Allah to respect the rights of Yemenis under international law, to release all United Nations and non-governmental organization personnel immediately and unconditionally and to refrain from the arbitrary detention of civilians. The United Nations is present in Yemen in order to serve Yemenis. Such arbitrary detentions are not the message expected from an actor seeking a mediated solution to a conflict. In addition, I am concerned about the summary judgments handed down by the Ansar Allah-controlled court on 1 June sentencing 45 individuals to death. I would like to reiterate the calls from the United Nations for a moratorium on the death penalty, in law and practice, everywhere in the world.

I have continued my engagements aimed at a ceasefire and inclusive political process that can enable the warring parties to work out their differences through peaceful means. But since last December, when the parties agreed to a set of commitments to be operationalized through a United Nations road map, the regional situation has severely complicated that process. Ever since the escalation in the Red Sea, I have worked to make sure that no one loses sight of the ultimate objective — a peaceful resolution of the conflict in Yemen. However, instead of making tangible progress towards protecting the commitments that have been made and finalizing the road map, the parties have reverted to a zero-sum game. Instead of putting Yemenis first, they have opted for measures that they believe will strengthen their own position. That risks jeopardizing the viability of the commitments made earlier.

That zero-sum mindset is most apparent in the economy, which contracted sharply following Ansar Allah's attack on oil export facilities in October 2022, leading to a complete halt in the export of crude oil and severely impacting the income of the Government of Yemen. In the banking sector, the situation of a single country with two competing monetary authorities and two currencies was already unsustainable, but it has become even more complicated owing to a cycle of escalatory actions. The announcement last March by Ansar Allah that it had brought its own 100-rial coin into circulation to address the problem of disintegrating 100 Yemeni rial banknotes represented a challenge to the monetary authority of the Central Bank of Yemen. The Central Bank responded in April by demanding that banks relocate their headquarters from Sana'a to Aden and announced punitive measures against banks that refused to do so. In reaction, the Central Bank branch controlled by Ansar Allah banned all banks with headquarters in Aden from operating in its area. If banks in Sana'a are indeed cut off from international financial transactions as part of the punitive measures, it would have a severe impact on the economy, as we

will hear about in more detail from Ms. Wosornu. Imports of basic goods, including food and medicine, and remittances through banks would be disrupted. Overall, those developments further deepen divisions and fragmentation in the banking sector, while also opening the door to potential military escalation.

In order to avert that scenario, my office has held extensive meetings in Riyadh, Aden and Sana'a to discuss concrete proposals to resolve the crisis. In line with those efforts, on 1 June I wrote to Mr. Rashad Mohammed Al-Alimi, President of the Presidential Leadership Council, and Mr. Mahdi Al-Mashat, President of the Supreme Political Council, urging them to refrain from further escalation and inviting them to a dialogue, without preconditions, under United Nations auspices. I have yet to receive a positive response. I cannot emphasize enough the importance of the parties convening face to face to discuss those issues, and I urge regional and international stakeholders with power and influence to put their full weight behind such direct talks between the parties.

Apart from occasional flare-ups, the military situation along the front lines has remained relatively stable since the April 2022 truce. Thanks to the continuing collaboration between the parties and my Office through the Military Coordination Committee, we continue to receive the reports of military incidents. The relationships and lines of communication formed during the truce remain effective and have helped to prevent a relapse into larger-scale violence. However, the military situation is not sustainable, and if the parties continue on the current escalatory trajectory, the question is not if but when they will revert to escalation on the battlefield. As I have flagged previously, over the past few months we have seen a gradual increase in fighting, including last month, when clashes were reported in Al-Dhale'e, Lahj, Ma'rib and Taiz, in addition to consistent threats from all sides to return to war. Meanwhile, the situation in the Red Sea remains unresolved. Ansar Allah has increased its efforts to strike commercial and military ships, with several commercial ships sustaining damage during the reporting period. For its part, the United States-led coalition has continued its air strikes in Ansar Allah-controlled areas in Al-Hudaydah, Sana'a and Taiz.

I am frustrated because we have seen the progress that the Yemenis so desperately need overtaken by a regional situation that is beyond our control. I am also concerned about the parties' escalatory measures and rhetoric. However, I do remain hopeful, because despite everything we have seen some positive developments. This week, we witnessed the opening of two additional roads — one connecting Ma'rib city to Sana'a via the Juba district and the other between Taiz city and the neighbouring area of Hawban, enabling civilian movement across the front line running through the city for the first time in more than nine years. That was made possible by the close coordination between the parties and tireless local mediation efforts. It is an important step in the right direction for the city of Taiz, and I hope that it will trigger the opening of additional roads in Taiz, Ma'rib and elsewhere. That development is also a reminder to all of us of the power of mediation and negotiation. In addition, I have taken note of the unilateral release of 113 detainees by Ansar Allah, and I encourage the parties to continue to work for additional releases under the auspices of my Office, in cooperation with the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Above all, I remain determined in my efforts to bring the parties together without preconditions to discuss the issues directly in front of them — on the economy, releasing conflict-related detainees and opening additional roads — and ultimately to finalize the road map. But I also remain determined to continue to work relentlessly, together with the entire United Nations family, for the immediate and unconditional release of our personnel, and I echo the Secretary-General in demanding that. I will continue to engage all available channels to that end and I urge the Council to lend its full support to all those efforts.

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

I now give the floor to Ms. Wosornu.

Ms. Wosornu: I thank Special Envoy Grundberg for his update and his unwavering efforts to help the parties achieve peace for the people of Yemen. And I too would like to wish all Muslims a happy Eid Al-Adha.

I will focus on two extremely concerning developments that were also highlighted by the Special Envoy. The first is the recent detention by the Houthi de facto authorities of Yemeni colleagues working for the United Nations and international non-governmental organizations. The second is the rapidly deteriorating banking and economic situation, with potentially devastating ramifications for millions of people across Yemen. As we just heard, in the past two weeks the

Houthi de facto authorities have detained 13 colleagues working for the United Nations, five staff members of international non-governmental organizations and many more from national non-governmental organizations and civil society. All the staff detained are Yemeni nationals, and they were still in detention as of this morning. The situation is very concerning, and the families of the detainees are even more worried. We have received very limited information on the circumstances of our colleagues' detention. We still do not know their exact whereabouts or the conditions in which they are being held. We are actively seeking clarification from the Houthi de facto authorities on the issue, requesting access to our colleagues in detention and urging their immediate release. That also applies to the four United Nations personnel who have been in detention since 2021 and 2023.

I should point out here that international law prohibits arbitrary deprivation of liberty. It also requires all parties to an armed conflict to respect and protect humanitarian personnel, including against any harassment, mistreatment or unlawful arrest or detention. United Nations personnel and staff of non-governmental organizations — the majority of whom are national staff — work tirelessly to help millions of people in need across Yemen. They are doing that in extremely difficult conditions and at enormous risk to their own well-being and safety. They should never be subject to arrest or detention because of the work they do. I have seen that dedication and work first-hand, including on my recent visit to Yemen. Not only do such acts put United Nations personnel and staff of non-governmental organizations at risk, they delay and impede the delivery of critical assistance to millions of people. They also risk exacerbating the already worrisome levels of misinformation and disinformation regarding the humanitarian community. We call on the Houthi de facto authorities to cease all arbitrary arrests and detentions and to release anyone who is held in such a manner. Again, I reiterate the Secretary-General's call for the immediate and unconditional release of all United Nations personnel detained in Yemen.

Turning to the second set of concerning developments in the past few weeks, both the Houthi de facto authorities and the Government of Yemen have issued competing and increasingly stringent directives banning individuals, businesses and local and international financial institutions from dealing with banks based in areas controlled by the other party. That includes a potentially imminent decision to exclude banks based in Sana'a from using the SWIFT banking system, preventing them from facilitating international financial transactions. Those developments have potentially catastrophic ramifications. They threaten to further fragment and weaken Yemen's already struggling economy. They undermine the private sector's ability to conduct the financial transactions necessary for the import of food and other essential goods, further limiting the availability of basic commodities and of course driving up prices. Above all, they are disrupting the flow of remittances, which so many families in Yemen depend on. All those factors will likely deepen poverty, worsen food insecurity and malnutrition and increase reliance on humanitarian assistance.

Those measures also have serious repercussions for humanitarian relief operations. The increasingly volatile banking environment has worsened an existing liquidity crisis, making it difficult for humanitarian organizations to pay staff salaries or to procure and pay for the many services that they rely on for those life-saving operations. Those challenges will continue to intensify unless solutions are found. If banks in Sana'a and other areas controlled by the Houthi de facto authorities are cut off from international financial institutions and networks, we will lose the ability to transfer the funds required to sustain humanitarian operations. That is particularly concerning in the midst of a worsening cholera outbreak and already high levels of food insecurity and malnutrition.

When we briefed the Council last month (see S/PV.9623), we pointed to the immediate resumption of oil exports and the sustainable payment of salaries to public sector employees as vital to shoring up Yemen's economy. We further urged the parties to put the interests of the people of Yemen first and to end hostile economic measures. In the light of recent developments, that appeal is even more pertinent today.

Allow me to conclude by extending my condolences to the families of at least 49 migrants who lost their lives when their boat capsized on its way from Somalia to Yemen this past Monday. According to our colleagues at the International Organization for Migration, 140 other people who were on board remain missing. That incident is a tragic reminder of the dangers faced by migrants, refugees and asylum seekers along migration routes to Yemen. Ultimately, those challenges require regional solutions.

The President: I thank Ms. Wosornu for her briefing.

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

Dame Barbara Woodward (United Kingdom): I thank Special Envoy Grundberg and Director Wosornu for their briefings, sobering as they are.

I am going to focus on three points.

First, the United Kingdom strongly condemns the Houthis' arbitrary detention of United Nations personnel and staff who work for or previously worked for international and national non-governmental organizations and diplomatic missions. We extend our sympathy to them and their families at this very difficult time. We call on the Houthis to immediately and unconditionally release them. The safety and security of all humanitarian workers, United Nations personnel and current and former diplomatic staff are vital.

Secondly, we share Director Wosornu's concern at the dire humanitarian and economic situation in Yemen. We know that 18.2 million people — more than half of them children — are in need of humanitarian assistance; 17.6 million people — more than half the population — remain food insecure; 80 per cent of the population live below the poverty line; and only 50 per cent of hospitals across the country are partially or fully functioning. It is critical that the parties take steps to address this, including through facilitating unfettered access for aid workers to provide essential support to those in need. Additionally, we call on the parties involved to engage in dialogue, de-escalate, resolve the ongoing banking dispute as a matter of urgency and safeguard the well-being of ordinary Yemenis. The United Kingdom has committed to spend more than $175 million this year to help alleviate the suffering of the most vulnerable, and we urge colleagues in the international community to do what they can to scale up assistance.

Thirdly, we call on the Houthis to cease their illegal and unjustified attacks on maritime shipping through the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, including recent attacks on the *MV Tutor*, the *MV Norderney* and the *MSC Tavvishi*. As a Council, we have been unequivocally clear, in our statements and in our adoption of resolution 2722 (2024), that we condemn the Houthi attacks. Those dangerous and reckless acts must end.

To conclude, we reiterate our unwavering support of the Special Envoy's efforts to secure an inclusive and sustainable peace in Yemen. We continue to urge all parties to de-escalate tensions and preserve space for negotiations, under the United Nations road map.

Mr. Geng Shuang (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Special Envoy Grundberg and Ms. Wosornu for their briefings, and I welcome the representative of Yemen to this meeting.

China has always stood for political and diplomatic means to resolve the question of Yemen. We hope that the parties concerned will adhere to the overarching direction of political settlement, actively respond to the peace promotion efforts of the United Nations and countries of the region, jointly promote the Yemeni-led and Yemeni-owned comprehensive political process, and conduct dialogue and negotiations to resolve differences, with a view to achieving reconciliation, restoring internal unity and launching economic reconstruction at an early date. China supports the mediation by Special Envoy Grundberg and looks forward to a constructive role being played by all parties, in particular countries that have influence on the situation in Yemen.

We once again call on the Houthis to respect the right of navigation of merchant vessels of all countries in the Red Sea waters under international law, to stop their attacks and interference and to maintain navigational safety in the Red Sea waters. We call on the parties concerned to exercise restraint and to cease any actions that might escalate tensions.

At present, the humanitarian crisis in Yemen is still dragging on, while humanitarian operations remain underfunded. We support the international community in scaling up its humanitarian assistance to Yemen to help alleviate the humanitarian situation there. We hope that donors will honour their pledges as soon as possible. All parties must support the Yemeni Government's efforts towards economic development and the improvement of people's livelihood. China echoes the Secretary-General's statement, is also gravely concerned about the recent detention of United Nations personnel in Yemen and calls for the immediate and unconditional release of all United Nations personnel.

The situation in Yemen and in the Red Sea is closely linked with the conflict in Gaza. China calls for the full and effective implementation of resolutions 2712 (2023), 2720 (2023), 2728 (2024), and 2735 (2024) with a view to achieving an immediate ceasefire in Gaza and effectively de-escalating tensions in the region, including the Red Sea. China remains committed to working with the international community to end the fighting, save lives and achieve peace and stability in the Middle East.

Mrs. Paolini (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. Hans Grundberg and Ms. Edem Wosornu for their briefings. I would also like to welcome the presence among us of the Permanent Representative of Yemen.

France strongly condemns the Houthis' recent detention of United Nations personnel and the personnel of international and national non-governmental organizations. Those actions are very serious. They are once again undermining the capacities of organizations on the ground in Yemen, which are already operating in degraded conditions, to carry out their work for the benefit of the population of Yemen. Humanitarian personnel must be able to carry out their operations in a safe and unimpeded manner. We call for their immediate and unconditional release. Those detentions have dramatic consequences for humanitarian assistance to civilian populations, at a time when the World Food Programme has been forced to suspend its activities.

The Houthis must stop committing atrocities against their own population, whom they are economically asphyxiating and threatening on a daily basis. France also deplores the fact that the Houthis are continuing their destabilizing actions in the Red Sea, constantly crossing new lines of escalation, despite the warnings of the Council and the adoption of resolution 2722 (2024), which recalls that States have the right to defend their vessels from such attacks, in accordance with international law. Those attacks undermine navigational rights and freedoms, destabilize Yemen and the region, and disrupt international trade. Given their actions, the Houthis bear a heavy responsibility for the regional escalation. We call upon the Houthis to put an end to that and to immediately release the *MV Galaxy Leader* and its crew, who have been detained since November 2023.

Through the European Union's Operation Aspides, France will continue to uphold its commitment to guaranteeing maritime security and freedom of navigation, in accordance with international law and together with our partners.

On the security front, a complete and lasting cessation of hostilities has to be achieved if we are to prevent a resumption of the conflict on the ground. The humanitarian situation is also disastrous and has deteriorated in recent months. We are particularly concerned about the spread of the cholera epidemic, which is now affecting more than 60,000 people. The Houthis must stop destabilizing Yemen's economy and waging economic war. Their recklessness has contributed to the impoverishment of the population.

Only a political solution can bring an end to the conflict in Yemen. France reiterates its full support to the Special Envoy and to his efforts to define and implement an inclusive political road map. The effective participation of Yemeni women in the negotiations must be guaranteed. We urge the Houthis to stop undermining the peace process and the Special Envoy's efforts.

Mr. Montalvo Sosa (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Special Envoy Grundberg and Director Wosornu for their briefings and acknowledge the participation of the Permanent Representative of Yemen in this meeting.

Ecuador is following with concern the Houthis' increasing attacks on vessels in the Red Sea, as well as reports of missile launches against Israel. The escalating hostilities threaten to deepen the regional conflict, reverse the limited progress that has been made towards restoring Yemeni livelihoods and reignite fighting between warring factions. I want to emphasize the importance of implementing resolution 2722 (2024), whose crucial component is ensuring an end to the Houthi attacks, which have no justification or legitimacy whatsoever. However, the actions that States take in defence of their vessels must be in accordance with international law.

One of the factors exacerbating the humanitarian crisis in Yemen, which has affected more than half of its population — more than 18 million people — has been its economic decline, with a real gross domestic product that has not grown since the beginning of the war. Stalled oil exports and high domestic prices continue to burden economic activity, putting pressure on Government budgets and foreign exchange reserves. And the war, combined with the ravages of climate change, has crippled agricultural production, raising fears of worsening food insecurity, as the most recent *Hunger Hotspots* report warns. On its recent visit to

Yemen, a team from the International Monetary Fund concluded that external financing will be essential to maintaining macroeconomic stability, financing humanitarian relief — which should include action to address the increase in cholera cases — and supporting economic reform. However, that will all be in vain unless tangible progress is made in the peace process, as well as in reducing regional tensions. Ecuador therefore supports the efforts of the Special Envoy to advance the implementation of the United Nations road map and urges all States, particularly those in the region, to support those efforts.

In conclusion, I reaffirm my country's condemnation of the Houthis' detentions of humanitarian personnel, who are protected by international humanitarian law, including the recently adopted resolution 2730 (2024), and I want to add our voice to the calls for their immediate and unconditional release.

Mrs. Baeriswyl (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank our two briefers for the overview they have just presented, however grim it may be.

Switzerland strongly condemns the Houthis' recent arbitrary detention of humanitarian and United Nations personnel and calls for their immediate and unconditional release. We are concerned about the significant and rapid deterioration of the humanitarian situation in Yemen and want to remind everyone that it is essential for humanitarian actors to have unhindered access to the civilian population. As resolution 2730 (2024) points out, those workers are protected by international humanitarian law and their detention considerably aggravates an already particularly tense situation in Yemen. In view of the worrying assessment presented by the two senior United Nations representatives, Switzerland would like to highlight the following points.

On the political front, the parties must refrain from any action that could jeopardize the conditions for implementing the road map. The regional repercussions of the situation in the Middle East have slowed the momentum of the talks that the Special Envoy has committed to in order to reach an agreement. In that context, we reaffirm our full support for Mr. Grundberg and his team. We also want to point out the importance of ensuring navigational rights and freedoms in the Red Sea. As we have already said repeatedly, all the attacks must cease and the crew members of the *MV Galaxy Leader* must be released.

As far as the humanitarian situation is concerned, the various indicators bear witness to the seriousness of the situation. The efforts to contain the cholera epidemic have been hampered by the conflict, difficulties of access and a lack of resources. Landmines laid by the Houthis and other armed groups continue to kill and seriously injure civilians in areas where active hostilities have ceased.

Finally, as we have seen since the truce of 2022, the conflict in Yemen has moved into the economic arena, and that crisis has been acutely exacerbated in recent weeks. If international money transfers via the banks in Sana'a cannot be made in the near future, humanitarian aid will be even more limited, and the civilian population will be directly affected. The various measures that the parties to the conflict have taken are stifling the private economy and hampering the import of essential goods. That burden of that further destabilization is being borne entirely by the civilian population and serves only to reinforce existing tensions. The petroleum and banking sectors have been seriously disrupted, and more recently the telecommunications sector as well. The longer the conflict persists, the more entrenched those divisions become, making the possibility of future reunification a monumental task.

The Security Council and the countries of the region must continue their efforts to contribute to an environment conducive to peace talks and respond to the growing humanitarian needs.

Mrs. Shino (Japan): I thank Special Envoy Grundberg and Director Wosornu for their informative briefings.

The situation surrounding Yemen remains highly volatile across multiple fronts. Today I would like to address four main points.

First, Japan unequivocally condemns the Houthis' detention of 13 United Nations staff members, as well as many non-governmental organization workers. Such detentions are totally unacceptable, as they not only violate the rights of the victims but significantly undermine essential work by the United Nations in Yemen. It is unfortunate that the Security Council has failed to issue a press statement on the matter. The Council should speak out without delay, condemn the outrageous conduct of the Houthis and demand the immediate and unconditional release of the detainees.

Secondly, Japan maintains its strong condemnation against the ongoing Houthi attacks on international shipping, as they are a threat to freedom of navigation and are disrupting global supply chains. We also condemn the fact that the Houthis have now held the 25 crew members of the *MV Galaxy Leader* for more than 200 days, another example of their detention tactics. The Houthis must immediately cease their attacks on vessels and unconditionally release the *MV Galaxy Leader* and its crew, consistent with resolution 2722 (2024).

Thirdly, Japan is seriously worried about the continued dire humanitarian situation in Yemen. We share Ms. Wosornu's concern about the country's increasing food insecurity and widespread malnutrition, as well as the nationwide cholera outbreak. The international community should further strengthen its efforts to save the vulnerable population, especially women and children. For its part, Japan has contributed approximately $46 million in humanitarian assistance to Yemen over the past two years and will continue to provide such necessary assistance. We would once again like to reiterate that the safety of humanitarian aid workers must be fully respected and their freedom of movement guaranteed. That is particularly essential at a time when more than half of Yemenis are dependent on basic humanitarian supplies such as food and water.

Lastly, Japan deeply regrets that the current regional tensions have had a negative impact on the environment for peace talks and caused the peace process, including exchanges of prisoners, to stagnate. We share the Special Envoy's frustration. Meanwhile, the intensification of hostilities between the Houthis and the Government of Yemen on both the military and economic fronts is alarming. We believe that only a political settlement based on an inclusive and comprehensive national dialogue under the auspices of the United Nations, involving women, young people and marginalized groups, can resolve the decade-long conflict in Yemen. In that regard, Japan continues to support the critical mediating role of Mr. Grundberg and his Office to bring an end to the plight of the Yemeni people. We remain hopeful.

Ms. Gatt (Malta): I too would like to thank Special Envoy Grundberg and Director Wosornu for their sobering briefings today.

To begin with, I want to express Malta's condemnation of the Houthis' recent arrest and detention of United Nations personnel, civil society workers and staff working for non-governmental organizations and diplomatic missions in Yemen. The detentions are unacceptable, and we demand the detainees' immediate, unconditional release. All the parties to the conflict must comply fully with their obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law. That includes their obligations regarding the respect for and protection of humanitarian workers and United Nations and associated personnel, including national and locally recruited staff. International law prohibits arbitrary deprivations of liberty and requires all parties to armed conflict to respect and protect humanitarian personnel. We insist on ensuring that they are not subjected to harassment, mistreatment or unlawful arrest or detention. These arrests could have far-reaching ramifications for the delivery of humanitarian aid into and throughout Yemen, further aggravating the suffering of innocent civilians.

The humanitarian situation remains dire, with more than 18 million people in need of aid. The cholera outbreak has continued to spread, with tens of thousands of suspected cases. The insecurity levels for food and nutrition remain alarmingly high, and the situation is likely to worsen in the coming lean-season months. Nearly 3 million people live in areas that are at risk of reaching emergency food-insecurity levels or worse. We are distressed by reports of mothers going hungry to feed their children and once again call for the sustained delivery of humanitarian aid and resources in order to ensure that the most vulnerable are protected. In that regard, the international community must support a robust response to Yemen's humanitarian crisis. We call urgently for scaling up the funding for Yemen's humanitarian response plan to ensure the delivery of aid to people in desperate need.

The main driver of Yemen's humanitarian crisis is conflict. The tensions in Yemen and the region, including escalations in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, continue to disrupt mediation efforts, hamper progress towards a political solution and put the flow of humanitarian and commercial goods at risk. We call on the Houthis to immediately cease all attacks and actions against commercial shipping. The parties to the conflict must prioritize de-escalation and dialogue. A nationwide ceasefire and a resumption of an inclusive Yemeni-led and -owned political process are the only durable paths to sustainable peace. To that end, we call on the parties to constructively engage with the Office

of the Special Envoy on the commitments they have made to the United Nations road map.

As we heard again today, the protracted economic crisis continues to be a major driver of suffering in Yemen. Unilateral economic decisions and policies undertaken by the parties to the conflict are fragmenting Yemen's weak economy, driving instability and undermining steps towards a political solution. The parties should refrain from any action that will aggravate the suffering of the Yemeni people and hinder civilians' access to food and essential goods. We call on the parties to adopt a strategic and coordinated response in order to deal with the challenges facing Yemen's economy.

In conclusion, after almost a decade of conflict, Yemen is facing the possibility of losing the progress that has been made towards peace. The parties must de-escalate tensions, support humanitarian relief and take decisive steps towards a ceasefire and a political settlement.

Mr. Sowa (Sierra Leone): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the three African members of the Security Council plus one (A3+), namely Algeria, Guyana, Mozambique and my own country, Sierra Leone.

We would like to thank Special Envoy Hans Grundberg and Ms. Edem Wosornu, Director of Operations and Advocacy of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, for their comprehensive updates and valuable insights regarding the security and humanitarian situations on the ground. We also welcome the participation of the representative of Yemen in this meeting.

The A3+ joins other Council members in expressing grave concern about the detentions of United Nations personnel working in Yemen, including humanitarian personnel. We demand the immediate and unconditional release of all the detainees and urge the Houthis to ensure their safety. We are also seriously concerned about the devastating impact on the lives and livelihoods of Yemenis of the protracted conflict in Yemen and the persistent stalemate among the parties. The past decade of conflict has resulted in countless deaths and unimaginable suffering for the people of Yemen. With more than 18 million in urgent need of humanitarian assistance, we must redouble the diplomatic efforts to bring the conflict to an end.

We are aware of the complex political landscape in which the Special Envoy has to function, and we commend his efforts to engage the various parties on resuming political talks. The A3+ firmly believes that lasting peace and progress in the political talks can be achieved only through a Yemeni-owned and -led political process, which must include the meaningful participation of women and young people. In that regard, we would like to make the following points.

First, the efforts to restart political talks and address the situation in a sustainable manner require an integrated approach. In line with the relevant Security Council resolutions, we stress the need for all stakeholders to be fully engaged in the political process. We reiterate the need for decisive steps to be taken towards a sustainable ceasefire and our strong support for efforts towards a political settlement that can ultimately put an end to the Yemeni people's suffering. The Special Envoy has a key role to play in rebuilding the momentum of the peace talks, and we reiterate our support for his efforts towards a negotiated, inclusive, Yemeni-led and Yemeni-owned political settlement based on the agreed references and in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions. The facilitating role of Saudi Arabia, Oman and other stakeholders in the region is crucial. The active involvement of civil society, women's groups and young people will be paramount in all aspects of the peace process. Despite the challenges, we believe that through dialogue, diplomacy and negotiation the parties can take a courageous step towards a peaceful and sustainable solution for Yemen that can be operationalized through the United Nations road map.

Secondly, we stress the need to de-escalate the economic war and urgently address the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Yemen. The economy has been devastated by the conflict, and retaliatory monetary and fiscal policy measures have worsened the situation. While we underscore the obligation of Yemeni financial institutions to comply with banking laws and regulations and the importance of safeguarding the banking sector, we urge the parties to the conflict to spare the country's economy from further collapse and refrain from taking measures that would further divide its banking system. We also urge regional stakeholders to include measures in the peace process designed to resolve the divide in the banking system, with a view to addressing the depreciation of the Yemeni rial and the worsening humanitarian conditions.

We reiterate our support for the Yemen humanitarian response plan and urge the international community to address the significant funding gap in order to address the needs of the Yemeni people effectively. Increased humanitarian aid is crucial to preventing widespread famine and disease outbreaks, and it is also essential to lift the movement restrictions on women so as to facilitate their unhindered access to humanitarian aid. And beyond the provision of life-saving humanitarian support, the country is in urgent need of efforts aimed at remedying its years of infrastructural and institutional damage.

Thirdly, we are gravely concerned about the security situation in the Red Sea, and we call on the Houthis to refrain from their escalatory actions. The prolonged Houthi attacks in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden continue to pose an unacceptable danger to maritime vessels, shipping companies and regional and global trade. The level of aggression and escalation in the Red Sea has turned the conflict in Yemen into a mutually punishing stalemate. The A3+ reiterates its condemnation of the Houthi attacks in the Red Sea and demands that the Houthis immediately and unconditionally cease all such attacks and refrain from any further provocative action. We urge them to prioritize political and diplomatic means in resolving the situation in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden.

The A3+ demands the full implementation of the Security Council resolutions aimed at achieving an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Gaza, which will help de-escalate the tensions in the region. In conclusion, the A3+ stands by the Yemeni people and reiterates its support for an inclusive political process that will guarantee peace and development in Yemen. We urge all parties to commit to constructive dialogue and genuine efforts towards reconciliation, ensuring that the voices and needs of all Yemenis are respected and addressed.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are grateful to Mr. Hans Grundberg, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen, and Director Wosornu of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs for their briefings on the political and humanitarian situation in the country.

The situation in and around Yemen is not conducive to peace negotiations. The reason for that is the instability in the region, and first and foremost the ongoing escalation in Gaza. A crisis hotspot on that scale in the neighbourhood cannot help affecting what is going on in Yemen, while the ongoing militarization of the Red Sea and Yemeni waters is also a significant obstacle to the peace efforts. We consider the attacks on civilian vessels in the Red Sea unacceptable and call for an immediate end to the strikes on commercial vessels and any other actions impeding maritime navigation, as well as for the release of the crew of the *MV Galaxy Leader*.

At the same time, we condemn the strikes by the coalition led by the United States and the United Kingdom aimed at the sovereign territory of Yemen. That aggression, which violates the Charter of the United Nations, is pointless, as it is not capable of stopping the attacks in the Red Sea. Furthermore, as in other countries in the Middle East and North Africa, such reckless instances of the use of force by NATO countries are leaving a bloody trail of numerous civilian casualties and ruined civilian infrastructure in their wake. Such illegitimate military interventions cannot be justified either by invoking resolution 2722 (2024) or referring to the right to self-defence under Article 51 of the Charter. On 31 May alone, a missile strike on Al-Hudaydah province reportedly killed 16 people and wounded 35 more. Such actions not only do not help normalize the situation in the Red Sea but on the contrary, they further the spiral of escalation. We call on Western delegations to acknowledge that what is needed to address the situation in Yemen and in neighbouring waters is comprehensive political and diplomatic efforts rather than the West's customary aggressive strikes. And what is needed above all is a speedy end to the violence in the Gaza Strip.

We support Mr. Grundberg's efforts. We do not believe that we should wait for the situation in the Red Sea to change. The work with the parties to the Yemeni conflict has to be stepped up in order to achieve the swift practical implementation of the existing road map and move on to implementing a full-fledged intra-Yemeni normalization process. The situation on the ground, where there have been no large-scale military hostilities for some time now, is an opportunity to step up the reconciliation efforts. The deteriorating humanitarian situation in Yemen also requires immediate action. Nearly half of the country's population is in need of humanitarian assistance. The Yemeni people must have unimpeded access to food, medicine and other basic necessities throughout the country on a non-discriminatory basis. Any restrictions

on the delivery of humanitarian aid or obstacles to the work of humanitarians are unacceptable. The specialized humanitarian programmes remain chronically underfunded. It will take the combined efforts of all international stakeholders to remedy that.

The Russian Federation, like other delegations, was alarmed to learn about the recent detention in Yemen of 13 locally recruited United Nations staff members. However, we should get to the bottom of the circumstances behind that before throwing accusations at any party. We have repeatedly heard from the representatives of certain States that we should allow time for "quiet diplomacy" regarding grave allegations against the staff of United Nations agencies. I also want to point out that in the past some Security Council members present here today refused to condemn the beating and detention of Mr. Krasnoshchekov of the United Nations Mission in Kosovo. Unfortunately, the Council has never managed to send a clear message regarding the catastrophic situation of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East in Gaza, where almost 200 also locally recruited humanitarian personnel have been killed. Of course, the situation of the detainees is very serious, but it is vital to avoid double standards in considering such matters. All humanitarian workers employed by the United Nations must be equally protected. For our part, we intend to assist Mr. Grundberg in every possible way to clarify the circumstances and obtain access to the United Nations staff. All unlawfully detained United Nations personnel must be released.

We welcome the activities of the United Nations Mission to Support the Hodeidah Agreement (UNMHA), supporting the implementation of the agreement on the city of Al-Hudaydah and the ports of Al-Hudaydah, Salif and Ras Issa as set out in the Stockholm agreement. We continue to support de-escalation in Al-Hudaydah and the maintenance of civilian activities at its ports, and we urge the parties to engage constructively with UNMHA. We are ready to continue to provide the Head of the Mission, Major General Michael Beary, with the best possible assistance in his work, and we support the upcoming extension of the Mission's mandate in July.

Russia has continued to maintain close contacts with all Yemeni protagonists and parties to the conflict, encouraging them to show restraint, take a constructive approach and demonstrate a willingness to compromise. We believe that there can be no alternative to a political solution. At the same time, we continue to believe that the Security Council should seriously consider the prospect of updating the international legal framework for a Yemeni settlement so that it reflects the realities on the ground.

Mr. Žbogar (Slovenia): I too want to thank this morning's briefers, Special Envoy Grundberg and Director Wosornu of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. I also welcome the Ambassador of Yemen to the Chamber.

Regrettably, we are meeting today in a context of continuing challenges to peace since our last discussion in the Chamber. We continue to urge all actors to prioritize the welfare of the Yemeni people and to engage in good faith with the Special Envoy's three-pronged approach, which is designed to lead to a road map agreement and an inclusive intra-Yemeni process. It has Slovenia's full support as well as that of the Council and the broader international community. For the sake of the Yemeni people, the significant gains that were made before the end of 2023 should not be reversed and hope should not be lost. It will be imperative to devote every effort to establishing the conditions in which Yemeni society can begin to recover and rebuild, especially those needed for peace, safety and security.

The Houthis' detention a few days ago of a number of United Nations and non-governmental organization personnel and staff in Yemen is deeply disturbing, and we condemn it unequivocally. The incident comes in the wake of a growing erosion of respect for international humanitarian law and the protection of humanitarian, medical and United Nations personnel in conflict zones. It is a worrying trend, and the Security Council should react consistently and firmly to such incidents. All the parties to the conflict in Yemen should comply fully with their obligations under international humanitarian law. That includes obligations relating to the respect for and protection of the humanitarian personnel who are doing life-saving work on the ground. Like Ms. Wosornu and several colleagues before me, we would like to recall that the arbitrary deprivation of liberty is prohibited under international law.

We also have serious concerns about the impact of those latest developments on the provision of humanitarian aid in Yemen, at a time when the needs are so pressing and the country continues to face one of the world's worst humanitarian crises. Ensuring the provision of aid, including the safe passage of aid

workers and their ability to conduct their humanitarian activities, is an obligation under international humanitarian law. Slovenia calls for the immediate, safe and unconditional release of all who have just been detained by the Houthis, as well as those who were previously detained and have been held for a number of years. We support the efforts of the United Nations Verification and Inspection Mechanism in that regard.

The unilateral economic decisions that have been taken and that we heard about today from both briefers are only exacerbating an already dire situation in Yemen. They risk complicating the humanitarian operations and affecting commercial imports. Those issues are also occurring against a backdrop of a worrisome cholera outbreak, a continuing displacement crisis, unrelenting climate-related challenges, rising levels of food insecurity and reprehensible attacks in the Red Sea, which have not ceased in spite of the Council's demands. We therefore call for an immediate end to economic hostilities by all actors, given the extremely fragile economic and humanitarian landscape in the country. We also call on the parties to engage constructively with the Special Envoy to find mutually acceptable solutions that can stabilize the economic situation and unlock Yemen's true economic potential. At this sensitive juncture all the parties should prioritize de-escalation, dialogue and diplomacy. The benefits of long-term peace for Yemen should remain our driving force.

Mr. Wood (United States of America): I thank Special Envoy Grundberg and Director Wosornu for their briefings and welcome the representative of Yemen to today's meeting.

The United States is deeply disturbed by the reports that Houthi rebels detained at least 50 Yemeni employees of United Nations agencies, Member State diplomatic missions, private companies, international organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The detentions include 13 United Nations employees. The humanitarian situation in Yemen remains difficult, and Yemenis need the support of the international community more than ever. The detention of United Nations and NGO staff directly and negatively affects the organizations' ability to provide humanitarian aid. Those actions further call into question the Houthis' commitment to doing what is in the best interests of the Yemeni people, since they reveal their focus on their own ideological goals. We condemn the detentions, and we echo the Secretary-General's strong and clear call for the Houthis to release the detainees immediately. We are disappointed that the Council could not reach a consensus on echoing the Secretary-General's call.

We also strongly condemn the Houthi efforts to spread disinformation regarding the role of detained United States current and former local staff through forced, phony televised so-called confessions. The Houthis are yet again seeking to use disinformation to distract from their failure to meet the needs of the Yemeni people. The simple fact is that the Houthis have held those individuals without justification for more than two and a half years. Their detention, alongside that of the United Nations staff, is an affront to international norms, and they should all be released immediately.

Despite clear warnings and united condemnation from countries around the world, the Houthis have also continued their reckless attacks in the Red Sea, the Gulf of Aden and surrounding waterways with growing negative implications for peace and security as well as global trade. The Houthis must abide by resolution 2722 (2024) and immediately cease their attacks on commercial and merchant vessels. Doing so would enable the unimpeded delivery of food and supplies into ports in Yemen, as well as to the Sudan and other countries with populations in desperate need. Failing that, the Council must remain seized of the issue and extend the requirement for continued reporting by the Secretary-General under resolution 2722 (2024), to ensure that it has accurate and timely data to inform its deliberations on that clear threat to navigational rights and freedoms, as well as peace and security.

We would like to call the Council's attention to the fact that since October 2023 numerous documented vessels have docked at Houthi-controlled ports without inspection by the United Nations Verification and Inspection Mechanism for Yemen (UNVIM). Their failure to submit to UNVIM's inspection highlights the need for Member States to invest in UNVIM and ensure that essential goods, and not weapons supporting the Houthis' reckless campaign, are reaching Yemen. We look forward to conversations with stakeholders about how we can strengthen UNVIM's mandate and ensure its financial security moving forward. Its work is vital and must be supported.

Furthermore, reports published by news agencies directly affiliated with Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps are now publicly and openly proclaiming

that Iran has been supplying anti-ship ballistic missiles to the Houthis. The announcements further validate what we have long said about Iran's provision of advanced weapons to the Houthis in violation of Security Council resolutions. Iran continues to directly support and enable Houthi attacks in the Red Sea region, and the Council should not overlook its ongoing brazen violations of the arms embargo. Iran should not be permitted to hide behind the Houthis. It must comply with the Council's resolutions and cease supplying weapons. The time has come for Council action to ensure compliance with the arms embargo and put a stop to the unprecedented violations of United Nations sanctions. Those transgressions make abundantly clear that the Houthis are the primary actor jeopardizing a political resolution between the Yemeni parties. We should therefore view their recent unilateral release of detainees with scepticism. It is more indicative of posturing so that the Houthis can improve their position in advance of potential United Nations-led negotiations, which should not proceed without a halt to the maritime attacks. We continue to believe that the inclusive road map of the United Nations remains a better path, one that can hopefully lead to a durable end to the conflict that addresses Yemenis' calls for justice, accountability and redress for human rights abuses and violations by all parties in Yemen.

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

I too would like to thank Special Envoy Hans Grundberg and Director Edem Wosornu of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs for their briefings. I also welcome the participation of the representative of Yemen in today's meeting.

In the midst of the compounding crisis that the Yemeni people are facing, shocking news surfaced last week of new Houthi detentions of United Nations personnel and staff working for international and national non-governmental organizations and diplomatic missions. My delegation strongly condemns the latest detentions and demands the immediate and unconditional release of all detainees. The Houthis' action is particularly alarming given that their reckless and unlawful attacks on vessels, including missile attacks on two commercial vessels in the Gulf of Aden over the weekend, are ongoing. Detaining United Nations personnel, including staff working to meet the enormous humanitarian needs of the Yemeni people on the ground, is simply unacceptable. Such flagrant actions undermine the international community's efforts to alleviate the humanitarian crisis and endanger other humanitarian workers. We stress the need to ensure safe, rapid and unimpeded access for all humanitarian actors and to protect them in accordance with international humanitarian law.

The Republic of Korea is also concerned about the worsening economic situation in Yemen owing to hostile Houthi acts such as their issuance of 100-rial coins, triggering countermeasures by Yemen's Government. Economic confrontations at this juncture will exacerbate liquidity crises, leading to a further contraction of vital humanitarian activities and additional difficulties for the Yemeni people's access to key commodities such as food and medicine. Furthermore, economic uncertainties combined with volatile security conditions can only hinder the efforts to resume a political dialogue in Yemen and might even raise military tensions. Without economic stability throughout Yemen it will be impossible to realize a peaceful political transition process, and the dire humanitarian situation will continue. In addition, without a durable political settlement, the country's multifaceted crises cannot be solved. That is why we once again emphasize that a holistic and strategic response is more essential than ever.

In that context, we reiterate our support for the tireless efforts of Special Envoy Grundberg to tackle the ongoing challenges in Yemen and move forward to an inclusive Yemeni-led political transition process under the auspices of the United Nations. It is imperative for all Yemeni parties — notably the Houthis — to stick to the negotiation process to reach a concrete and durable political settlement. At the same time, we hope for the successful implementation of the deal to achieve an immediate ceasefire in Gaza and the release of hostages as soon as possible, which will help de-escalate the tensions in the wider region, including Yemen.

Finally, as Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2140 (2014), the Republic of Korea warmly welcomes the appointment to the Panel of two additional experts on international humanitarian law and armed groups. With the addition of their expertise, we hope that the Panel will be able to analyse the interconnected and complex issues in Yemen in a comprehensive manner. I look forward to the Panel's final report with its findings and recommendations.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Yemen.

Mr. Al-Saadi (Yemen) (*spoke in Arabic*): I congratulate you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month, and I thank your predecessor, the Permanent Representative of Mozambique, for his successful leadership of the Council in May. I also thank Mr. Hans Grundberg and Ms. Edem Wosornu for their briefings.

The Yemeni Government strongly condemns the terrorist Houthi militias' abduction of dozens of employees of United Nations agencies and international and local non-governmental organizations in Sana'a, in flagrant violation of international humanitarian law and a clear threat to the lives and safety of those employees. We express our deep regret that the members of the Council could not reach a consensus on issuing a press statement in that regard. We recall that the Yemeni Government has been warning for years of the dangers of turning a blind eye to the Houthi militias' violations and the extortion and pressure they exert on humanitarian organizations operating in Yemen with the aim of serving their political agenda, harnessing humanitarian aid to promote their security and military goals and turning the areas under their control into gigantic prisons for all who oppose their policies.

We also strongly condemn the Houthi militias' issuance of death sentences, through an illegitimate governing authority affiliated with them, against 45 people who were being arbitrarily detained in their prisons after being kidnapped and thrown in prison in the past on baseless pretexts and allegations, in flagrant violation of international humanitarian law, human rights law and all international conventions and national laws. The unjust sentences were issued at a time when, in coordination with the United Nations through the Office of the Special Envoy and the relevant international organizations, the Yemeni Government was making every effort to achieve a breakthrough on the dossier of the detainees and forcibly disappeared persons in order to get them released and put an end to their suffering and that of their families, based on the principle of all for all. The Houthis have also continued to commit many violations, including confiscating the funds, property and financial assets of individuals and companies and using the judiciary as a tool to terrorize their opponents and settle scores with them. They have continued their repressive policies, muzzling voices, suppressing freedom of opinion and expression, attempting to suppress and terrorize politicians, journalists, activists and citizens in the areas under their control and preventing them from expressing their opinions, condemning the current situation and demanding their right to live in freedom and dignity while the Houthis undermine efforts for calm and peace. We reiterate the call to the international community, the United Nations and human rights organizations to abandon their silence and condemn those criminal acts.

The Yemeni Government reiterates its call to the United Nations and all international organizations working in Yemen to move their headquarters to the temporary capital of Aden in order to ensure a safe and appropriate environment for their work and provide their humanitarian services to all Yemenis in throughout the country without discrimination, obstacles or restrictions. We also reiterate the call to the United Nations Mission to Support the Hodeidah Agreement to quickly transfer its headquarters from the areas controlled by the Houthi militias and free itself from the restrictions imposed by the Houthis on the movement and work of the Mission since it was established five years ago. The disregard of the international community and the Council for the Mission's shortcomings in fulfilling its mandate has enabled the Houthi militias to use Al-Hudaydah and its ports as a platform to threaten international navigation, regional and international security and peace.

While the Yemeni Government is working to implement a package of comprehensive economic, administrative and financial reforms, and as Yemen continues to endure a difficult economic situation, the suspension of oil exports resulting from Houthi attacks on oil facilities and oil export ports has deprived the Government and the people of their most important economic resources and income sources, amounting to about 65 per cent of Government revenues. The Government has therefore been unable to provide basic services or pay regular salaries to State employees, the general budget deficit has increased, the national economy has contracted by more than 50 per cent of gross domestic product, inflation rates are at a record high, the national currency exchange rates have plummeted, and basic services have deteriorated.

The recent events and the Houthi escalation in the Red Sea and Bab Al-Mandab strait have disrupted trade flows and increased commodity prices owing to the

high cost of insurance and maritime shipping, resulting in deteriorating living standards and greater suffering and economic hardship for most of the population, along with a 78 per cent increase in the poverty rate and a 35 per cent increase in unemployment. There has also been a sharp decline in basic services, exacerbating the economic and humanitarian situation and weakening the health-care system. Yemen is facing one of the worst humanitarian crises in the world. Statistics show that 18.2 million people are in need of humanitarian aid, 17.6 million are suffering from acute food insecurity and the number of people forcibly displaced from areas controlled by the Houthi militia has increased to approximately 4.5 million, with people living in random camps that lack the most basic services.

In that context, I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate the commitment of the Presidential Leadership Council and the Yemeni Government to fulfilling their responsibilities towards their citizens, including ensuring the regular payment of employee salaries, improving public revenues and moving forward with comprehensive economic, administrative and financial reforms supported by brothers and friends. In that context, we affirm their full support for the decisions taken by the Central Bank of Yemen and its measures and policies aimed at protecting the banking system, ending monetary distortions, controlling inflation and the national currency, adopting principles of governance, strengthening control over banks and foreign banking operations, meeting disclosure standards and complying with the requirements for combating money-laundering and financing terrorism.

The Houthi militias have also persisted in complicating the general situation in the country and deepening the human suffering of the Yemeni people by escalating their systematic economic war on the Yemeni Government and people in order to evade the requirements of peace. Their practices continue to undermine regional and international peace and security by targeting international shipping lines in the Red Sea, Bab Al-Mandab and the Gulf of Aden on a pretext of solidarity with the Palestinian people, who for the ninth month in a row are facing the genocidal war and brutal crimes perpetrated by the Israeli occupation forces in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

The Yemeni Government reaffirms its commitment to peace and its continued support for regional and international efforts, especially the tireless mediation efforts of our brothers in our sister countries of Saudi Arabia and Oman, along with the efforts of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, aimed at enabling the Yemeni people to achieve their aspirations and economic, social and cultural development by establishing a just and comprehensive peace based on the terms of reference for the agreed political solution, that is, the Gulf Cooperation Council initiative and implementation mechanism, the outcomes of the National Dialogue Conference and the relevant Security Council resolutions, particularly resolution 2216 (2015). My Government values Saudi Arabia's sincere efforts to improve the Yemeni people's living conditions, achieve peace, restore State institutions and stabilize security and the currency, along with its ongoing commitment to ending the humanitarian suffering of Yemenis caused by the Houthi militias backed by the Iranian regime.

In conclusion, it has become more urgent and vital than ever to achieve peace and end the conflict in Yemen. That requires a genuine, serious partner willing to put the interests of the Yemeni people above its own, with a belief in political partnership and equal rights for all Yemenis and in rejecting selectivity and the path of war. In order to achieve that goal, we affirm that any peace process must be based on adherence to the national, regional and international terms of reference, especially resolution 2216 (2015), without prejudice to the legal and political status of the State, as well as inclusiveness, protected by regional and international guarantees, and openness to mediation efforts aimed at achieving peace and alleviating the people's suffering.

The President: There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers.

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

The meeting rose at 11.25 a.m.