



Security Council

Eighty-first year

10193rd meeting

Monday, 13 July 2026, 3 p.m.

New York

Provisional

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Mukongo	(Democratic Republic of the Congo)
<i>Members:</i>	Bahrain	Mr. Alrowaiei
	China.....	Mr. Sun Lei
	Colombia.....	Mrs. Zalabata Torres
	Denmark.....	Ms. Lassen
	France	Mr. Bonnafont
	Greece.....	Mrs. Balta
	Latvia.....	Ms. Pavluta-Deslandes
	Liberia.....	Mr Saydenuh
	Pakistan.....	Mr. Jadoon
	Panama	Mrs. Pretrocelli Rojas
	Russian Federation.....	Ms. Evstigneeva
	Somalia.....	Mr. Mohamed Yusuf
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.....	Ms. Foster
	United States of America	Ms. Bruce

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room AB-0928 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (<http://documents.un.org>).



The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East

The President (*spoke in French*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the 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. Khaled Khiari, Assistant Secretary-General for the Middle East, Europe, the Americas, Asia and the Pacific of the Departments of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and Peace Operations; and Mr. Indrika Ratwatte, Acting Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator.

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

I now give the floor to Mr. Khiari.

Mr. Khiari: Recent developments in Yemen are a stark reminder that there is no alternative to an inclusive Yemeni-owned political process. A negotiated political settlement reached through dialogue under the United Nations auspices can provide a durable and sustainable resolution to the conflict. On 3 July, an Iranian aircraft reportedly traveled from Tehran to Sana'a International Airport before returning to Tehran. This flight reportedly transported, among others, a Houthi delegation to attend the funeral of the late Supreme Leader of Iran. The Government of Yemen, in its letter dated 6 July, addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2026/556), viewed with deep concern this flight as a violation of its airspace and the sovereignty of Yemen.

Today, additional concerning developments took place. Another Iranian plane carrying a Houthi delegation returning from Tehran reportedly landed at Hudaydah International Airport. This followed reports of air strikes at Sana'a International Airport, which the Houthi attributed to Saudi Arabia. According to the Government of Yemen, the strikes hit the airport runway to prevent Iranian flights from landing there. Earlier, the Government of Yemen had warned Iran against unauthorized flights to Yemen and vowed to take all necessary measures. Following the reported air strikes on Sana'a International Airport, the Houthis announced the end of the de-escalation phase with Saudi Arabia and reportedly launched ballistic missiles against the Kingdom, which were intercepted.

We are deeply concerned about the risk of wider escalation. Yemen and the wider region cannot afford another cycle of escalation. We call on all actors to constructively engage in negotiations under the United Nations auspices. Such engagement is essential to ensure de-escalation and advance safe, predictable and sustainable civilian air access, among other priorities. The Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen is actively engaging with the parties and has contacted military representatives from all sides to urge de-escalation.

In April 2022, the United Nations brokered a truce that facilitated commercial flights between Sana'a and Amman, which demonstrated that practical steps are possible when the parties negotiate in good faith and make compromises. This requires political will, constructive engagement, cooperation among the parties and regional and international support. More recently, in May, the parties negotiated and agreed, under United Nations auspices, to release more than 1,600 conflict-related

detainees, the largest such release agreed since the start of the conflict in Yemen. This demonstrates that mutually acceptable agreements remain achievable even amid complex and challenging circumstances. On 11 July, the Special Envoy for Yemen received renewed assurances from the Government and the Houthis regarding their commitment to the full implementation of the deal.

Our message is clear: unilateral measures will not bring Yemen closer to peace. On the contrary, they risk entrenching divisions, accelerating fragmentation and heightening the danger of renewed escalation and military confrontation. We therefore continue to urge all parties to reduce tensions and address their differences through dialogue. Specifically, we call on the parties to engage constructively with the efforts of the Special Envoy to choose dialogue over violence and to refrain from measures that could undermine prospects for peace. We call on all to fully respect international law, including the Charter of the United Nations, international humanitarian law, international human rights law and the relevant resolutions of the Council and to uphold and respect the unity, sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Yemen.

The United Nations remains committed to supporting the Yemenis in restarting a political process to end the conflict in Yemen. As noted by the Special Envoy and many members of the Council in previous meetings, regional de-escalation can create a more conducive environment for reviving the Yemeni political process. In this regard, I echo the Secretary-General's concern about serious escalation and renewed military confrontation in the Gulf and call on all parties to take the required steps to de-escalate.

Seventy-three United Nations colleagues, as well as personnel from non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations and diplomatic missions, remain in arbitrary detention by the Houthis. We again call for their immediate, safe and unconditional release and for full respect for international law, including the privileges and immunities of the United Nations and its personnel.

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

I now give the floor to Mr. Ratwatte.

Mr. Ratwatte: I thank Assistant Secretary-General Khiari for his briefing and for the continued efforts of colleagues to advance a political path for Yemen. Today I want to focus on a simple but alarming reality: Yemen's humanitarian crisis is deepening, just as our ability to respond has been sharply reduced. The country is facing multiple shocks at once: worsening food insecurity, the expected impact of El Niño on food production and livelihoods, and an unprecedented fall in humanitarian funding. This is compounding the extreme fragility of the population. Across the country, families are facing a daunting combination of hunger, economic decline, forced displacement, disease outbreaks and a collapse of essential services.

More than a decade into this crisis, millions of Yemenis continue to wake up each day not knowing whether they will be able to feed their children, access healthcare or secure clean water. Coping mechanisms have simply been exhausted.

The latest indicators paint a deeply troubling picture. Food insecurity is approaching catastrophic levels, with more than 18 million people across Yemen hungry and many of them in an acute situation of hunger. Yemen remains one of the world's worst food security crises. It has the largest population facing emergency levels of food insecurity — Integrated Food Security Phase Classification Phase 4 or worse. Malnutrition continues to threaten millions of children, as well as pregnant and breastfeeding women.

Health facilities are struggling to function. Yemen's health system has long been severely underresourced, even as needs continue to rise. Humanitarian partners have invested substantial effort and resources to help the system cope. However, a chronic lack of funding is now undermining those efforts. Over the past year alone, 450 health facilities, including 76 hospitals, have closed owing to a lack of resources.

Families face the excruciating choice of whether to buy food or medicine, whether to keep children in school or send them to work and whether to stay where they are or move again in search of safety and opportunity.

Despite extraordinary operational challenges, humanitarian partners continue to deliver assistance across Yemen. Local non-governmental organizations and Yemeni communities remain at the forefront of that effort, often operating in extremely difficult circumstances. However, funding shortfalls are forcing painful choices. Programmes are being cut back. Services are being reduced. Assistance is being limited to the most severe cases, leaving many with less support than they need or none at all.

Every funding cut has a human face. It means fewer children receiving nutrition treatment; it means fewer health facilities able to meet basic needs, let alone respond to emergencies; it means fewer protection services for women and girls; and it means fewer chances to prevent crises before they become catastrophes.

Yemen's humanitarian crisis cannot be separated from wider regional developments. Recent months have shown how quickly regional tensions can reverberate inside Yemen, notably through increased food and fuel prices, which are felt first and most fiercely by those who can least afford them. Further escalation, whether within Yemen or across the wider region, could have immediate and dire consequences. It could mean more displacement, fewer and more expensive imports and even tighter constraints on humanitarian access. Those are just some of the risks.

The people of Yemen simply cannot afford another shock. The closure of Sana'a International Airport has made life harder for already fragile communities. Of particular concern is the inability of people in areas under Houthi de facto control to travel for medical treatment. Without access to Sana'a Airport, patients are forced to make long, difficult and sometimes dangerous journeys to reach flights departing from Aden.

Allow me to conclude with four appeals.

First, I appeal to all parties and those with influence to act with restraint and not to allow Yemen to be drawn further into regional instability.

Secondly, I appeal to donors: this is not a moment to step back. Sustained and flexible funding is essential to keep critical services running and to prevent further deterioration.

Thirdly, I appeal to the Council to keep Yemen high on the international agenda. The true cost of inaction will not be measured in percentages or funding figures, but in lives lost, opportunities denied and a generation left behind.

Lastly, I appeal to the Council and all those with influence to advocate in the strongest possible terms for the immediate and unconditional release of all those arbitrarily detained, including our 73 United Nations colleagues. They are not forgotten.

The people of Yemen have shown untold resilience, but they deserve more from us. They deserve the chance to recover, to rebuild and to live with dignity.

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

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

Ms. Foster (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom called for today's meeting, alongside the United States of America, France and Bahrain, in support of Yemen's sovereignty and regional security.

I will make three points.

First, the United Kingdom condemns in the strongest terms today's Houthi attacks against Saudi Arabia. Those attacks are reckless and unacceptable. They threaten regional security, risk further escalation and undermine efforts to secure peace in Yemen. We stand in full solidarity with Saudi Arabia and reaffirm our support for its security.

Secondly, we are also deeply concerned by reports that two Iranian aircraft landed in Yemen, on 3 July and again today, without permission or clearance from the relevant Yemeni authorities. Those landings constitute a clear breach of Yemen's sovereignty and a violation of international law. The United Kingdom reaffirms its unwavering support for the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and unity of Yemen. All Member States must respect those principles and act in accordance with their obligations under the Charter of the United Nations.

If verified, reports that the flights may have transported military personnel, technical experts and equipment to support Houthi military capabilities would raise serious concerns and may indicate breaches of relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions 2216 (2015) and 2140 (2014). Attempts to strengthen Houthi military capabilities are unacceptable and risk destabilizing Yemen and undermining regional stability. We urge further examination of those allegations through the appropriate United Nations mechanisms, including the Panel of Experts on Yemen established pursuant to Security Council resolution 2140 (2014), and call on all parties to cooperate fully with those efforts.

Finally, the United Kingdom stands in full solidarity with our Gulf partners following further Iranian attacks across the region over the past 48 hours, including attacks on Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman and Jordan, as well as on commercial shipping in the Strait of Hormuz. We condemn those reckless actions and call for de-escalation and a return to diplomacy.

Yemen has already endured more than a decade of conflict. The Yemeni people deserve progress towards peace, economic recovery and stability, not actions that deepen regional tensions and increase the risk of renewed conflict. We urge the Houthis to refrain from further escalation and encourage the use of existing channels of dialogue to address concerns and reduce tensions. The United Kingdom remains committed to working with Council members, regional partners and the Government of Yemen to support de-escalation, uphold relevant Security Council resolutions and advance a durable political settlement to the conflict.

Mr. Alrowaiei (Bahrain) (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank the Democratic Republic of the Congo for responding to the request to convene this meeting. I also wish to thank the briefers, Mr. Khaled Khiari, Assistant Secretary-General for the Middle East, Europe, the Americas, Asia and the Pacific in the Departments of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and Peace Operations, and Mr. Indrika Ratwatte, Acting Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator. I also welcome the participation in our meeting today of the Permanent Representative of the sisterly Republic of Yemen, Ambassador Abdullah Al-Saadi.

The Kingdom of Bahrain condemns the Houthi terrorist attacks against the sisterly Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. We reaffirm that we stand alongside the sisterly Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Our meeting today is taking place in extremely delicate circumstances as a result of the serious and repeated violations committed by the Houthi group in the Republic of Yemen with the support of Iran. Iran, for its part, spares no effort to inflame tensions in the region, particularly through its repeated attacks against the member States of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf and the sisterly Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and through its continued closure of the Strait of Hormuz to maritime navigation, in flagrant violation of the Charter of the United Nations, international law and United Nations resolutions, most notably resolution 2817 (2026), which demands that Iran cease its use of proxies.

Houthi threats have expanded to include threatening to close the Bab al-Mandab Strait, in a blatant violation of United Nations resolutions, including resolution 2722 (2024), whose paragraph 2 calls on the Houthis to immediately stop attacks that impede global trade or undermine navigational rights and freedoms.

The Houthis are also continuing to obstruct diplomatic efforts undertaken in accordance with resolution 2216 (2015), which stressed the need to resume Yemen's political transition process, with the participation of all Yemeni parties, in accordance with the Initiative of the Gulf Cooperation Council.

In the light of these violations, I would like to make the following observations.

First, the Kingdom of Bahrain warns that any support provided to the Houthis constitutes a threat to peace and security in the Republic of Yemen and the region, and undermines efforts aimed at arriving at a comprehensive political settlement in Yemen in accordance with resolution 2216 (2015). Such support constitutes a violation of multiple United Nations resolutions, all of which affirm the need for commitment to Yemen's unity, sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity, the most recent of which was resolution 2813 (2026).

Secondly, the threats being made by the Houthis against the brotherly Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, including the threat to target its airports, vital facilities and vessels passing through the Bab al-Mandab Strait, constitute a dangerous escalation that threatens the Kingdom's sovereignty and security, the safety of its citizens and civilian infrastructure, and the stability and security of the region. In that connection, we note the statement of the official spokesperson of the Coalition to Support Legitimacy in Yemen, which stressed that such statements are an attempt to divert attention from Houthi violations of the Yemeni people's rights and to export the Houthis' internal and economic crises to Yemen's regional surroundings.

Thirdly, illegal and irresponsible Houthi threats to close the Bab al-Mandab Strait force us to mention the hostile Iranian actions in the Strait of Hormuz, which threaten the security of international sea lanes, energy security and global trade. The Kingdom stresses the need to abide by international law and international maritime law, to comply fully with the relevant resolutions, including resolution 2817 (2026), and to refrain from any actions that would threaten freedom of navigation or undermine maritime security or regional stability. The Kingdom of Bahrain also reiterates its condemnation of the Houthis' continued arbitrary detention of United Nations staff and the staff of diplomatic missions and non-governmental organizations. The Kingdom calls for the immediate and unconditional release of those personnel, in accordance with resolution 2813 (2026).

In closing, the Kingdom of Bahrain reiterates the importance of reaching a comprehensive political settlement in the brotherly Republic of Yemen that would

end the crisis in a sustainable manner and guarantee a life of liberty and dignity and a prosperous future in a stable and secure region for the people of Yemen. We value the efforts of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, Mr. Hans Grunberg, to restart the peace process.

Ms. Bruce (United States of America): I thank today's briefers.

Once again, the Council has been called into an emergency session to discuss the Iranian regime's efforts to threaten its neighbours in the Gulf and undermine efforts towards peace in the region. On 3 July, an Iranian flight from Tehran arrived in Sana'a in Houthi-controlled territory. The purpose of this flight was to ferry Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps personnel, including drone and missile experts, in support of Houthi terrorism, under the guise of transporting Houthi officials to the late Supreme Leader's funeral. This kind of support enables the Houthis to terrorize the Yemeni people and threaten freedom of navigation in the Red Sea and surrounding waterways. We have not seen Iran attempt such outwardly brazen support for the Houthis since the 2015 aborted Mahan Air flights to Sana'a. In fact, Houthi leaders publicly celebrated the recent flight as a successful evasion of international efforts to isolate the terrorist group.

These actions constitute a violation of resolution 2216 (2015), which prohibits the supply, sale or transfer of arms and related materiel, technical assistance, training or other support to the Houthis related to military activities or the use of arms and related materiel including drones and missiles. The United States has repeatedly called out this long-running record of violations. For nearly a decade, and with Iranian assistance, the Houthis have steadily demonstrated increasing military sophistication, including through frequent cross-border drone and missile attacks and reported use of cluster munitions. That mounting capability is, in itself, evidence that the Houthis have received external support, in violation of the targeted arms embargo. Moreover, this morning, a second Iranian flight entered Yemen despite explicit public instructions from the Government of the Republic of Yemen not to do so. The wilful disregard of the Islamic Republic for the sovereignty of Yemen and the collective decisions of the Council is simply unacceptable.

Similarly, we have seen Iran's blatant disregard of resolution 2817 (2026). With 136 co-sponsors, this resolution represents a unified international demand that Iran cease its attacks. The Iranian regime nevertheless chooses to defy resolution 2817 (2026) with continued attacks — both directly and through its proxies — against its neighbours and maritime shipping. Last week, Iran fired unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and missiles against three civilian commercial vessels transiting Omani territorial waters, in contravention of international law. These strikes had the potential to injure and kill mariners and to impose significant environmental damage. One vessel, a Qatari liquefied natural gas tanker, was left to burn and further threaten vessel traffic in the Strait. Then, Saturday evening, Iran struck a container ship en route to the United Arab Emirates. One Indian national remains missing. These attacks are not born of any legitimate principle. Rather, as an adviser to the Supreme Leader said Sunday, this stems from Iran's desire to unlawfully co-opt a critical waterway for use by Iran as a strategic deterrent.

Beyond the maritime space, in the past week Iran has launched UAVs and missiles against Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates. Qatar's interior ministry reported that three people, including a child, were injured by falling debris from interception operations after Iranian attacks on Sunday. These attacks are unacceptable, and they are a deliberate provocation that contradicts the diplomatic progress forged between the United States and Iran in May. The Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the United States of America and the Islamic Republic of Iran is based on a straightforward understanding — that the

United States will suspend military action and Iran will refrain from threats and the use of force. In the few weeks since the signing of MOU, Iran has repeatedly defied this understanding. The United States will not unilaterally implement the MOU while Iran continues to threaten safe passage protected by the MOU. Simply put, if Iran shoots at ships, we will immediately respond with force. United States military operations are a response to these threats — in self-defence and defence of others.

Furthermore, as Secretary Rubio stressed during his trip to the region last month, the United States will continue to stand with our partners in the region. Make no mistake: this is not a talking point. It is a commitment that we will back — and are backing — with action. The United States stands with our partners in the Persian Gulf, and we stand with the Government of the Republic of Yemen against the Iranian-supported Houthi terrorist threat.

We remain committed to working with Council members to use all available tools, including sanctions, to support a peaceful resolution to the conflict in Yemen and to safeguard international peace and security. Finally, we once again urge the Council to communicate to Iran unequivocally that these unambiguous actions are contrary to international law and are unacceptable.

Mr. Bonnafont (France) (*spoke in French*): I welcome the convening of this emergency meeting of the Security Council, a request that France supported. I thank Mr. Khaled Khiari, Assistant Secretary-General for the Middle East, Europe, the Americas, Asia and the Pacific, and Mr. Indrika Ratwatte, Acting Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, for their briefings. I also welcome the participation of the Permanent Representative of Yemen in this meeting.

France reaffirms its full commitment to the unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Yemen. By landing aircraft in Sana'a on 3 July and then in Hudaydah today, 13 July, without the consent of the legitimate authorities, Iran has undermined that sovereignty and violated international law. France firmly condemns this violation.

This incident is not an isolated one. It reflects Iran's destabilizing behaviour in the region, as illustrated by the resumption of clashes in the Persian Gulf since 7 July and the announcement of the closure of the Strait of Hormuz. These actions must cease immediately and permanently.

By supporting the Houthis, Tehran poses a threat to international peace and security and violates Council resolutions by breaching its obligations under the arms embargo established by resolution 2216 (2015) and extended to the Houthis as an entity by resolution 2624 (2022). France expects Iran to comply fully with its international obligations and to put an end to all transfers of military equipment to the Houthis.

France also demands an end to the Houthis' destabilizing actions. They once again targeted Saudi Arabia today, and France reiterates its solidarity with Saudi Arabia. The Houthis also threatened vessels linked to Israel in the Red Sea. They must immediately cease their attacks and refrain from carrying out their threats. France also reiterates the need to preserve maritime security and freedom of navigation, as demanded by the Council in resolution 2722 (2024). To that end, France will continue its engagement through the European Union Naval Force Operation Aspides, in accordance with international law, in a strictly defensive posture and in coordination with its European and international partners.

In addition, the Houthis continue their persistent and deliberate obstruction of humanitarian action. France demands the immediate and unconditional release of all United Nations, non-governmental organization and diplomatic mission personnel

arbitrarily detained by the Houthis. Both these detentions and attacks on humanitarian personnel are unacceptable and contrary to international humanitarian law, resolution 2730 (2024) and international human rights law. They also impede the delivery of urgently needed humanitarian assistance to the civilian population. Women and children continue to bear the brunt of these actions, as the Assistant Secretary-General reminded us.

There is no military solution to the conflict in Yemen. For that reason, France fully supports the efforts of the Special Envoy, Mr. Hans Grundberg. The recent prisoner release agreement announced on 14 May was a step in the right direction. We call for its implementation without delay. We reiterate that only an inclusive political process, under the auspices of the United Nations and involving women and all segments of Yemeni society, can bring this crisis to an end.

Ms. Evstigneeva (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We thank Assistant Secretary-General Khaled Khiari and Mr. Indrika Ratwatte, Acting Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator, for their briefings.

The issue raised by the Permanent Representative of Yemen in his letter dated 6 July (S/2026/556) is symptomatic of the unresolved conflict in the country. The time has come for active efforts to restore trust between the parties and address pressing humanitarian issues, including the lifting of the air and sea blockades.

It is no secret that Sana'a International Airport is of paramount importance to the residents of the country's densely populated governorates. Sana'a and its suburbs alone are home to approximately 10 per cent of Yemen's population. A fully functioning airport is essential for them to travel for business and medical treatment, undertake pilgrimages and maintain contact with relatives living abroad. Nor should we overlook the important role it could play in supporting humanitarian operations in Yemen. This issue has been discussed repeatedly in this Chamber.

The Mahan Air flight of 3 July was supposed to have been coordinated with the official authorities. Nevertheless, we believe it is important to take into account the strictly humanitarian nature of the flight. This incident resulted in neither deaths nor material damage, but it fuelled tensions in and around Yemen. This is particularly dangerous given the latest escalation in the Persian Gulf. We call on all parties to ease tensions, exercise restraint and engage in dialogue to resolve their differences. We also call on the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen, Mr. Hans Grundberg, to engage urgently within the scope of his mandate.

Russia has consistently called and continues to call for the complete lifting of the sea, air and land blockade of Yemen and for the removal of all restrictions on the delivery of food, medicines and other essential goods to all parts of this Arab country, without exception. This is necessary to help alleviate the catastrophic humanitarian situation in Yemen, which is already compounded by outbreaks of famine and communicable diseases amid shortages of essential goods and a national healthcare system teetering on the brink of collapse. The situation is further aggravated by the still-unresolved issue of the detained personnel of the United Nations and humanitarian organizations. Nearly 20 million Yemenis are in need of humanitarian assistance, which must be provided on a depoliticized and non-discriminatory basis.

The chronic lack of a settlement to the Yemeni crisis, now well into its second decade, creates fertile ground for incidents of this kind and heightens the risks of escalation both on the ground and in the air, as we are witnessing today. We call on all parties to recognize this and, going forward, to refrain from any unilateral actions that could trigger an uncontrolled deterioration of the situation not only in Yemen but across the Middle East, especially in the light of the escalation of recent months.

It must be recognized that the only path to peace and stability in Yemen lies through direct and frank dialogue among all the country's leading political forces, including the Houthis, taking into account the legitimate interests of each. We emphasize the long-overdue need to reinvigorate mediation under United Nations auspices, led by the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen, Mr. Hans Grundberg, and with the active participation of a broad range of Yemen's neighbours, including Saudi Arabia and Iran. This will be possible once the Yemeni parties sign the relevant road map, which has been on the table since late 2023. We also reiterate the need to think long and hard about renewing the international legal framework for settling the Yemeni crisis, including resolution 2216 (2015), which has long since lost its relevance.

We reaffirm our commitment to the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Yemen.

It goes without saying that we also cannot overlook the broader regional context. There is no alternative to a political and diplomatic path towards the settlement of the escalation prompted by the United States-Israeli aggression against Iran. We hope that negotiations will proceed, building upon the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding between the United States of America and the Islamic Republic of Iran, with the assistance of Pakistan, Qatar and other countries in the region. We call on our colleagues on the Security Council to focus on creating conditions conducive to diplomatic efforts and to refrain from any reckless steps or biased assessments of the situation.

Mrs. Balta (Greece): I thank Mr. Khiari, Assistant Secretary-General of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, and Mr. Ratwatte, Acting Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, for their briefings. I also welcome the participation of the Permanent Representative of Yemen in the meeting.

Yemen is once again at a dangerous crossroads, which poses serious challenges to regional peace, security and stability. Houthi threats against maritime and aviation security, including explicit threats of force against neighbouring countries, are not empty rhetoric. They are a direct assault on regional stability, and we condemn them without reservation.

Our message remains clear and consistent: Yemen's sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and independence must be fully respected. That includes respect for Yemen's national airspace, in accordance with international law. We call on all parties to exercise maximum restraint, refrain from any actions that threaten Yemen's sovereignty and support efforts of de-escalation, peace and stability in the country — not as a talking point but as an operational necessity. There is no military solution to the crisis, as previous speakers have stated. Only a comprehensive, inclusive and sustainable political solution, including security guarantees for the Red Sea region, remains the only viable path towards lasting peace in Yemen.

We reaffirm our strong support for the efforts of Special Envoy Hans Grundberg to facilitate an inclusive, Yemeni-led and -owned political process under the auspices of the United Nations, conducted in full respect of Yemen's sovereignty, territorial integrity, independence and unity. Maritime security in the Red Sea region needs to be an integral part of this process.

Let us be clear about what is at stake. Freedom of navigation in the Red Sea is not a regional convenience; it is a global lifeline. International maritime routes must remain open, safe and secure, and commercial shipping must be protected at all times, in accordance with international law. Sanctions enforcement is not optional. Full compliance with the relevant Security Council resolutions and the existing United Nations sanctions regime, including the targeted arms embargo against the Houthis

established under resolution 2216 (2015) and subsequent relevant resolutions, remains vital.

Attempts to circumvent the arms embargo undermine every diplomatic effort under way. We call on all members to assure its full, effective and consistent implementation.

Mr. Mohamed Yusuf (Somalia): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the three African members of the Security Council (A3), namely the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia and my own country, Somalia. We thank Assistant Secretary-General Khiari and Mr. Ratwatte, Acting Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator, for their comprehensive briefings. We also welcome the participation of the Permanent Representative of Yemen in this meeting.

We take note of the letter dated 6 July from the Government of Yemen to the Security Council (S/2026/556) requesting an emergency meeting. In this regard, the A3 would like to highlight the following.

First, the A3 reaffirms its unwavering commitment to the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of Yemen. These principles, enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, must be respected by all. We stress that all external actions that infringe on Yemen's sovereignty or risks expanding the conflict must not be tolerated. Insulating Yemen from the broader conflict unfolding in the Middle East is essential to regional and international peace and security.

Secondly, we are deeply concerned by the renewed tensions in Yemen and the recent attacks near the port of Hudaydah. The hostilities only prolong the conflict and undermine ongoing efforts towards a negotiated settlement. We call on all parties to de-escalate and engage constructively under the United Nations-led political process. The A3 renews its firm support for the efforts of the Special Envoy and for the United Nations-led mediation process, aimed at achieving a comprehensive, inclusive and sustainable political settlement. A lasting resolution can be achieved only through an inclusive, Yemeni-led and -owned political process.

Thirdly, the humanitarian crisis in Yemen is reaching an alarming breaking point. As the country enters the peak lean season, millions continue to depend on humanitarian assistance and protection services, even while funding constraints continue to place significant pressure on humanitarian operations. The A3 calls on the international community to maintain and increase predictable funding.

Furthermore, we remain deeply concerned by the Houthis' continued detention of United Nations personnel, humanitarian workers, staff of non-governmental organizations, civil society representatives and personnel associated with diplomatic missions. We reiterate our call for the immediate, safe and unconditional release of all those detained. At the same time, we welcome the recent United Nations-brokered agreement to release more than 1,600 detainees and encourage efforts to build on this positive momentum towards its full implementation.

In closing, the A3 supports the legitimate aspirations of the Yemeni people and underscores that the path towards lasting peace lies through dialogue, compromise and sustained political engagement.

Mr. Sun Lei (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Assistant Secretary-General Khiari and Acting Assistant Secretary-General Ratwatte for their briefings and welcome the Permanent Representative of Yemen to this meeting.

China has taken note of the letter dated 6 July from the Permanent Representative of Yemen to the President of the Security Council (S/2026/556), as

well as the relevant reports, and is deeply concerned about the escalating tensions surrounding Sana'a International Airport. We have always maintained that the sovereignty, security and territorial integrity of all countries in the Middle East and the Gulf region, including Yemen, should be respected, that the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations should be upheld and that civilians, humanitarian workers and civilian objects should be protected. We call on all parties concerned to remain calm and exercise restraint to avoid further escalation of the situation.

The issue of Yemen is closely linked to the overall situation in the Middle East. With the situation in the Middle East remaining tense, the international community should strengthen unity and coordination, pool its efforts for peace and jointly safeguard the peace process in the region.

I would like to make three points.

First, maximum restraint must be exercised to avoid further escalation. Recently, tensions in the Middle East have continued to escalate. The ceasefire arrangement reached between the United States and Iran is being challenged, which is deeply concerning. A renewed outbreak of hostilities serves no one's interests, and military means cannot resolve the issues. The United States and Iran should faithfully implement the memorandum of understanding that they have signed, refrain from making threatening statements or resorting to the use of force and bring to an early end the hostilities and conflict that should never have occurred. All parties concerned with the issue of Yemen should refrain from taking any action that could escalate the situation or undermine mutual trust, so as to prevent new conflicts. True peace has yet to be achieved in Gaza, and the ceasefire agreement should be fully observed. China welcomes the ceasefire between Lebanon and Israel and urges all relevant parties to cease hostilities immediately.

Secondly, dialogue and consultation must be advanced to resolve differences peacefully. All parties should respect each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity, right to survival and development and legitimate security concerns and remain committed to resolving disputes through dialogue and negotiation. China calls on the United States and Iran to resume follow-up negotiations as soon as possible and reach, at an early date, a comprehensive agreement that is reached by both sides, accepted by regional countries and welcomed by the international community. The Strait of Hormuz is a strait for international navigation. Restoring safe and free passage through the Strait at an early date serves the interests of all sides. A proper settlement is needed to address issues concerning passage through the Strait of Hormuz. The shared concerns of the international community need a proper response. The Yemeni Government and the Houthi group should fully implement the prisoner-exchange agreement already reached, gradually build mutual trust, restart the peace process in Yemen and launch national reconstruction. The detained United Nations personnel should be released as soon as possible. The international community should further step up humanitarian assistance to Yemen. Countries in the region should create favourable conditions for those efforts and play a constructive role.

Thirdly, peaceful coexistence must be upheld, and common security must be built. Countries in the Middle East and the Gulf region are interdependent and inseparable neighbours. History has repeatedly shown that there are no winners in wars and conflicts and that peaceful coexistence is the only right path. The international community should respect the history and cultural traditions of the Middle East, support countries in the region in maintaining strategic autonomy and improving mutual relations, replace confrontation with cooperation, resolve long-standing grievances through reconciliation and promote the building of a common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security architecture for the Middle East

and the Gulf region, so that the region can finally break free from the recurring cycle of conflict and truly achieve lasting peace.

China has always been a builder of peace, a promoter of stability and a contributor to development in the Middle East. Guided by President Xi Jinping's four-point proposal on promoting peace and stability in the Middle East, China will continue to work with all parties and make unremitting efforts to advance the political settlement of hotspot issues in the Middle East and realize lasting peace and stability in the region.

Mrs. Petrocelli Rojas (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): We are grateful for the convening of this meeting, as the events before us warrant the immediate attention of the Council. We also thank the Assistant Secretary-General for the Middle East, Europe, the Americas, Asia and the Pacific in the Departments of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and Peace Operations, Mr. Khaled Khiari, and the Acting Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Mr. Indrika Ratwatte, for their valuable briefings.

The violation of the airspace of the Republic of Yemen constitutes an unacceptable violation of its sovereignty, political independence and territorial integrity, as well as a grave provocation. This incident, which occurred in Sana'a, the capital of the country, currently under the de facto control of the Houthis group, demonstrates the disregard with which that group acts and its willingness to sacrifice the peace and well-being of the Yemeni people.

We also reject the interference by the Islamic Republic of Iran, which is contrary to international law. This incident forms part of a worrisome regional trend involving increasingly recurrent attacks against neighbouring countries and interference by third parties in conflicts, which threaten to deepen instability and create an environment of even greater insecurity in the region.

All those actions are particularly concerning in a context in which the promising, albeit already fragile, Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding between the United States of America and the Islamic Republic of Iran is facing significant challenges.

We are also concerned about the grave humanitarian situation, which is placing a significant proportion of the Yemeni population at risk of famine and was described in stark terms by one of the briefers, Mr. Ratwatte.

We must also address the attacks against ships and commercial vessels in the Strait of Hormuz, including Panamanian-flagged vessels, which continue to affect the security of international navigation. We also express our concern at the risk of a resumption of attacks against merchant vessels in the Red Sea, given the grave consequences that such attacks had previously for the global economy.

In the current context, in which the principal maritime routes are facing growing challenges, any further disruption or deterioration in security along another strategic route would have far-reaching repercussions.

We reiterate that freedom of navigation and safe passage along international maritime routes must be respected at all times, in accordance with international law and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

Ms. Lassen (Denmark): I thank Assistant Secretary-General Khiari and Acting Assistant Secretary-General Ratwatte for their briefings and welcome the Permanent Representative of Yemen to this meeting.

Denmark notes with concern Yemen's letter dated 6 July (S/2026/556), which refers to serious violations committed by Iran against the sovereignty, political independence and territorial integrity of Yemen. Denmark condemns Iran's support for proxies in the region, including the Houthis in Yemen, and demands that Iran cease all provocations and threats against countries in the region.

In the light of today's reported strikes against the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, we express our full solidarity with the Kingdom, as we do with all Gulf States as they face the destabilizing actions and attacks of Iran and its proxies.

We underscore the need for full adherence to international law and Security Council resolutions, including respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Yemen.

Iran's destabilizing actions have been negatively impacting the Middle East for too long. We strongly urge the Houthis and Iran to refrain from dragging Yemen into a broader conflict. Any further escalation or threat will only heighten tensions in an already volatile region and jeopardize steps made towards stability.

The most viable pathway to peace and stability in Yemen has long been, and remains, negotiations and an inclusive political process under United Nations auspices. Denmark fully supports the efforts of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen, Hans Grundberg, to facilitate dialogue between the parties to that end.

We welcome the recent agreement between the Government of Yemen and the Houthis to release more than 1,600 conflict-related detainees. This demonstrates that progress can be made through dialogue and diplomacy. We urge the parties to intensify their efforts to complete the outstanding technical and operational preparations as soon as possible to ensure the safe and timely release of the detainees.

However, for more than two years, the Houthis have been arbitrarily detaining personnel of the United Nations, non-governmental organizations, civil society and diplomatic missions. Denmark strongly condemns those ongoing detentions, and we reiterate our demand to the Houthis for their immediate and unconditional release.

As a result of those actions by the Houthis, the United Nations has had to reassess its direct operations in areas suffering severe humanitarian crises. Some non-governmental organizations continue to persevere on the ground, showing extraordinary courage and commitment. Civilian infrastructure, such as airports and seaports, must be protected, particularly to allow for the timely delivery of humanitarian aid in Yemen. But as we heard from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs last month (see S/PV.10174) and now again today, less access, less presence and less funding mean less food, less medicine and fewer lives saved.

If nothing changes, hunger will deepen, suffering will grow, more lives will be lost, and misery and despair will continue. We are also deeply concerned by the recent escalation in Hudaydah, which has led to many casualties in recent days. We call for urgent de-escalation and dialogue.

In closing, we once again urge the Houthis to prioritize the well-being of the Yemeni people, immediately release those detained, avoid escalating tensions and engage in sincere peace efforts, led by Special Envoy Grundberg and his team, with the Government of Yemen, to bring about a sustainable and lasting peace.

Ms. Pavluta-Deslandes (Latvia): I thank Assistant Secretary-General Khaled Khiari and Acting Assistant Secretary-General Indrika Ratwatte for their updates, and I welcome the participation of the Permanent Representative of Yemen in today's meeting.

An Iranian civilian aircraft reportedly entering into Yemeni airspace and subsequently landing at Sana'a International Airport, followed by a similar landing in Hudaydah today, on Yemeni sovereign territory, without the authorization of the internationally recognized Government of Yemen, represents a flagrant violation of the sovereignty of the Republic of Yemen and a blatant challenge to international law and the relevant resolutions of the Council. Such actions are contrary to the principles that are essential to the security of all Member States. Respect for sovereignty is not optional. It is the cornerstone of the Charter of the United Nations.

Unfortunately, these actions by Iran demonstrate a deliberate pattern of conduct that undermines international peace and security. Iran has failed to meet its binding non-proliferation obligations, instead continuing its efforts to destabilize the wider region. Iran continues to threaten its neighbouring States and has repeatedly targeted their civilian infrastructure with unprovoked strikes, including strikes carried out well after the signing of the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding between the United States of America and the Islamic Republic of Iran, on the cessation of hostilities. The Council thoroughly condemned these strikes at our meeting just two weeks ago (see S/PV.10189).

Iran has also continued its attempts to hold an international waterway hostage, in clear violation of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. Not only is Iran purposefully risking the energy and food security of the world, it is also demonstrating its unlawful intent through continued threats and strikes against commercial shipping.

Moreover, Latvia is deeply concerned by Iran's continued support for the Houthis, including the transfer of weapons, military technology and other forms of assistance, in violation of the Security Council's resolutions, as repeatedly documented by the Panel of Experts of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2140 (2014). Iran's support continues to undermine peace efforts in Yemen, fuel regional instability and enable attacks against international shipping and neighbouring States.

We call on Iran to fully comply with its obligations under the relevant Security Council resolutions and to refrain from any action that could further undermine efforts towards a comprehensive political settlement in Yemen. We continue to unequivocally condemn the Houthis' continued threats to freedom of navigation, destabilizing actions against its neighbours, detention of United Nations and humanitarian personnel, and their persistent disregard for efforts to advance a peaceful resolution to the conflict in Yemen.

The people of Yemen have endured years of devastating conflict and humanitarian suffering. They have borne the greatest burden of this crisis, and any further prolongation of instability will continue to fall primarily on their shoulders. In the light of the recent developments, we call on all parties to exercise maximum restraint, de-escalate tensions and refrain from actions that could further aggravate the situation. Yemenis deserve peace, stability, and the restoration of effective, sovereign governance across the entire country. This can be achieved only through an inclusive process owned and led by Yemenis and facilitated by the United Nations.

I would like to once again reaffirm Latvia's support for the unity, sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Yemen and our strong support for the efforts of Special Envoy Grundberg.

Mr. Jadoon (Pakistan): We thank Assistant Secretary-General Khaled Khiari and Acting Assistant Secretary-General Indrika Ratwatte for their briefings.

At the outset, Pakistan strongly condemns the Houthi ballistic missile attacks against the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. We express our full solidarity with the brotherly Kingdom and reaffirm our steadfast support for its security, sovereignty and territorial integrity. We also reaffirm our unwavering commitment to the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of Yemen, consistent with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

At a time when the region continues to face heightened tensions and multiple interconnected crises, we call on the parties concerned to resolve differences through dialogue, diplomacy and a steadfast commitment to de-escalation. A comprehensive, inclusive and sustainable peace can be achieved only through a Yemeni-led and Yemeni-owned political process, facilitated by the United Nations, that addresses the legitimate aspirations and concerns of all Yemenis. The agreement on the exchange of prisoners earlier this year demonstrates that dialogue can yield tangible outcomes even in a difficult environment. All parties should build on this momentum and continue engaging constructively towards a durable nationwide ceasefire and an inclusive political settlement.

The Yemeni people have endured years of conflict, displacement, economic hardship, food insecurity and the collapse of essential services. Any further escalation risks undermining prospects for peace and deepening the suffering of civilians. Pakistan reiterates its strong condemnation of the continued arbitrary detention of United Nations personnel, humanitarian personnel and diplomatic staff, as well as the unlawful seizure of United Nations premises and assets by the Houthis. These actions contravene international law and undermine humanitarian work. We call for the immediate and unconditional release of all detained personnel and full respect for the privileges and immunities of United Nations personnel, facilities and assets.

Pakistan remains firmly committed to promoting dialogue, diplomacy and regional de-escalation. We encourage all parties concerned to maintain open channels of communication, avoid actions that could heighten tensions and pursue the peaceful resolution of disputes, in accordance with the United Nations Charter and international law. Pakistan will continue to support all sincere efforts aimed at fostering peace, stability and mutual understanding in the region.

Mrs. Zalabata Torres (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mr. Khaled Khiari and Mr. Indrika Ratwatte for their briefings, and I welcome the presence of the Permanent Representative of Yemen.

Colombia reaffirms its support for the sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Yemen. Any action that affects the sovereignty of the Yemeni State or the legitimate exercise of its authority over its territory — including its airspace and borders — warrants close consideration, in strict accordance with international law and the relevant Security Council resolutions.

In that regard, Colombia reiterates that all States have an obligation to act in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, whose principles and provisions cannot be applied selectively. Rather, they constitute legal obligations that are binding on all States equally and form the basis of international order. Consequently, it is important to fully clarify the circumstances surrounding the incident that we are discussing today. It is the Council's responsibility to act on the basis of verifiable information and with a thorough understanding of the facts. In that regard, we encourage all parties to cooperate constructively and in good faith with the relevant authorities, thereby contributing to a careful, objective and de-escalatory response.

In the current regional context marked by multiple hotbeds of tension, any action that might be perceived as provocative runs the risk of exacerbating existing tensions. Colombia appeals to all the parties to demonstrate the utmost responsibility and

restraint. The priority must be to prevent a fresh escalation which might compromise regional stability. It is also essential to preserve the progress made since the 2022 truce, which has contributed considerably to curbing levels of violence and created spaces for dialogue. Although the political process continues to face considerable challenges, the progress made must not be jeopardized. The parties must refrain from taking steps that could undermine trust, erode the negotiating environment or reverse the progress made over the past few years.

In conclusion, Colombia reiterates the importance of support from the international community for efforts aimed at achieving a sustainable political solution. It is more necessary than ever to act responsibly and refrain from any action that could adversely affect Yemen's sovereignty, the integrity of the political process or the prospects for a lasting peace in the country.

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

Mr. Al-Saadi (Yemen) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on assuming the Council presidency this month and wish you every success in carrying out your duties. I also extend my thanks to your predecessor, the Permanent Representative of the brotherly Republic of Colombia, for her successful leadership of the Council last month. I thank Mr. Khaled Khiari and Mr. Indrika Ratwatte for their briefings. I express my sincere appreciation to you, Mr. President, for responding to the request of the Government of the Republic of Yemen to convene this emergency meeting. I also thank all the Council members for their attention to these serious developments, which not only affect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Yemen but also constitute a real test of the principles upon which the international system is founded, most notably respect for the sovereignty of States, non-interference in internal affairs, adherence to the Charter of the United Nations and implementation of Council resolutions.

The Republic of Yemen did not request this meeting merely to discuss an unauthorized flight by a United Nations Member State, but because that flight constitutes an extremely dangerous precedent in the Yemeni situation. It raises the fundamental question of the extent to which the Council is capable of protecting the rules of the international system and preserving international peace and security. The issue before us today is not only about a Member State's right to administer its airspace. We are dealing here with a deliberate attempt to impose a fait accompli that bypasses the legitimate Government, defies Council resolutions, tests the international sanctions regime and turns civil aviation into a tool to achieve military and political objectives that are inconsistent with international law.

We warn against the use of Sana'a International Airport, which is not under the administration of the legitimate Yemeni Government, to receive unauthorized flights. That is not only a violation of the sovereignty of the Republic of Yemen but also creates a dangerous precedent that could embolden other armed groups to exploit civilian facilities outside the control of legitimate governments, thereby undermining the credibility of the international system and undermining efforts to maintain international peace and security.

The Islamic Republic of Iran sent a direct Mahan Air flight to Sana'a International Airport, which is under the control of the Houthi terrorist militias. That cannot be viewed as a humanitarian measure, as claimed by the militias. Rather, it represents a grave violation of the sovereignty of the Republic of Yemen and direct defiance of the relevant Council resolutions, in particular the sanctions measures imposed on the militias. This flight cannot be regarded as an ordinary civilian flight, because it was conducted without prior permission from or coordination with the

competent authorities of the Republic of Yemen. That is inconsistent with the rules governing the operation of international flights into the territory of a sovereign State. The Yemeni Government has documented information indicating that the flight was not purely civilian in nature. It was connected to the transfer of military personnel, expertise and dual-use equipment. The Yemeni Government reserves the right to submit the information and evidence in its possession to the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2140 (2014) and the Panel of Experts on Yemen for the necessary action within their mandates. The operating company, Mahan Air, is not an ordinary commercial airline. Over the years, its name has been associated with Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps logistical support and has been subjected to sanctions by certain countries due to activities related to the transport of military personnel and materiel to a number of conflict zones.

The danger of this incident lies not only in the details of the flight itself but in the political message it sought to send. It was an attempt to impose a new reality that bypasses Yemeni State institutions and test the will of international community to enforce its resolutions. It sends the wrong message that armed groups can, with external support, circumvent international legitimacy without accountability or consequences.

It is important here to stress that the Yemeni Government has never treated Sana'a International Airport as a tool in a political conflict. It is a civilian facility that should remain in the service of all Yemenis. The Government has sought to ensure the continuation of civilian flights through the official national carrier of the Republic of Yemen, as long as the safety of aircraft and their crews are guaranteed. We have tried to ensure respect for the independence of the national carrier and sought the release of its assets arbitrarily seized by the militias and have tried to prevent the use of the airport for military or political purposes serving the Houthi militias and their supporters.

Attempts to portray the unlawful Iranian flights as a response to humanitarian considerations are merely attempts to conceal a very different reality, namely the use of Sana'a International Airport as a platform to entrench Iranian influence, undermine Yemeni State institutions and circumvent international resolutions. Perhaps the most serious piece of evidence showing that we are dealing not with a humanitarian measure, as claimed by the militias, but rather a systematic policy aimed at testing the will of the international community, is that today, with the support of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Houthi militias proceeded to operate a second unauthorized flight to Sana'a International Airport —it landed, of course, at Hudaydah International Airport — despite clear warnings issued by the Yemeni Government and despite the concern displayed by the international community over this issue, in a new challenge to the sovereignty of the Republic of Yemen and binding Council resolutions.

In response to this escalation, the Yemeni Government fulfilled its constitutional and legal duty to protect its airspace. The armed forces took the necessary defensive measures to prevent the imposition of this fait accompli while demonstrating their full readiness to protect national sovereignty and enforce the law. Nevertheless, after making military, security and political assessments, the Yemeni Government chose not to expand the scope of the confrontation, based on its responsibility to protect civilian lives and safeguard national interests, and in order not to provide the militias and their supporters with the opportunity to drag Yemen into a wider regional conflict that serves only the agendas of their backers. We have taken the course of action that any Member State would have taken had its airspace been violated and a fait accompli imposed on its sovereignty.

The real question therefore is not why the Government rejects an unauthorized Iranian flight, but why the Houthi militias, if their objective is humanitarian as they

claim, insist on destroying the capabilities of Yemen's national carrier, obstructing its operations and turning to a foreign company whose name has been associated with activities in support of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps.

The answer to this question clearly reveals the true nature of this attempt and confirms that its purpose was not to serve Yemenis, but to impose a new political and security reality incompatible with the sovereignty of the Republic of Yemen and the Security Council resolutions.

Despite the gravity of these challenges, the Yemeni Government has never abandoned the option of peace. Rather, it has made it a strategic choice to end the suffering of the Yemeni people and to restore security and stability in our country and the region. For this reason, over the years, the Yemeni Government has engaged in good faith in all United Nations-led efforts and responded positively to various regional and international initiatives, based on its firm conviction that a just and lasting peace can be achieved only through a political settlement founded on the agreed reference frameworks, foremost among them the Gulf Cooperation Council Initiative and its Implementation Mechanism, the outcomes of the comprehensive National Dialogue Conference and Security Council resolutions, in particular resolution 2216 (2015).

In that context, the Yemeni Government supported the efforts led by our brothers in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Sultanate of Oman and engaged responsibly in the consultations that lead to the draft road map. Convinced that peace must be given every possible chance, it announced its acceptance of the draft.

However, after participating in those consultations, the Houthi militias chose to renege on their commitments and evade the demands of peace, turning instead to cross-border military escalation in the service of foreign agendas now known to all. That deepened the crisis of trust and confirmed once again that the militias continue to view peace as a temporary tactic, rather than a strategic choice to end the suffering of Yemenis.

Those two incidents cannot be separated from a broader, long-standing pattern of conduct by the Houthi militias: undermining peace efforts, obstructing confidence-building measures and refusing to implement agreements reached under United Nations auspices.

In that context, the Yemeni Government completed all necessary procedures to implement the latest agreement on the exchange of detainees and abductees, reached under the auspices of the United Nations and the International Committee of the Red Cross. The Government was therefore surprised when the two sponsoring organizations formally notified it that the Houthi militias had refused to implement the agreement as scheduled and had postponed it indefinitely. Such conduct reflects the militias' continued exploitation of this humanitarian issue to secure political and military gains at the expense of the suffering of thousands of Yemeni families.

At the same time, the Houthi militias continue to detain United Nations personnel and humanitarian workers, impose levies and extort payments, undermine the national economy and repress citizens. Such actions deepen the humanitarian crisis and confirm that the militias continue to exploit the suffering of Yemenis as a means of political and military blackmail rather than working to end it.

In presenting these developments, the Government of the Republic of Yemen looks to the Council to take a clear and firm position consistent with the Council's responsibilities for the maintenance of international peace and security. We therefore call on the Council to take the following measures.

First, the Council must unequivocally condemn the unauthorized Iranian flight to Sana'a International Airport as a violation of the sovereignty of the Republic of Yemen and a direct challenge to the relevant Council resolutions.

Secondly, the Council must call on the Islamic Republic of Iran to refrain from operating any flights to Yemeni airports without the legitimate Government's approval and to cease all forms of interference in the internal affairs of the Republic of Yemen.

Thirdly, the Council must urge all Member States to refrain from granting overflight clearances or facilitating flights bound for Yemeni airports or entry points not administered by the Yemeni Government, unless such flights have been coordinated with and authorized by the competent authorities of the Republic of Yemen.

Fourthly, the Council must task the Sanctions Committee and the Panel of Experts on Yemen with investigating the Iranian flight to Sana'a Airport and determining whether it involved the transfer of personnel, equipment or technology in violation of the arms embargo and sanctions regime established pursuant to the relevant Council resolutions.

Fifthly, the Council must ensure the strict implementation of Security Council resolutions concerning the situation in Yemen, in particular resolutions 2140 (2014) and 2216 (2015), and strengthen mechanisms to prevent the smuggling of weapons, experts and military or dual-use equipment to the Houthi terrorist militias.

Sixthly, the Council must continue to support the Yemeni Government in its efforts to restore State institutions, end the coup and achieve a comprehensive, just and sustainable peace in accordance with the regionally and internationally agreed reference frameworks, thereby helping to safeguard regional security and international maritime routes.

The Government of the Republic of Yemen affirms that it reserves the full right to take all legitimate political, diplomatic and legal measures available under international law and the Charter of the United Nations to safeguard its sovereignty, territorial integrity and national security.

The Republic of Yemen bears no hostility towards the Iranian people and does not view its relations with other peoples through the lens of political conflicts. Rather, it rejects policies that support armed groups, undermine State institutions and interfere in the internal affairs of States, in flagrant violation of the principles of good-neighbourliness and the United Nations Charter.

Over the years of the crisis, Iranian support for the Houthi militias has not been directed towards enhancing the prospects for peace, supporting State institutions or alleviating the suffering of the Yemeni people. Rather, it has contributed to prolonging that suffering, undermining State institutions, deepening societal divisions, threatening civil peace and strengthening the militias' military capabilities, with adverse consequences for Yemen's security, regional stability and the security of maritime routes and international waterways.

By contrast, the Government of the Republic of Yemen values the fraternal support of the sisterly Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for State institutions and the national economy, humanitarian and development projects and political efforts to end the war and achieve peace. This demonstrates the fundamental difference between those who invest in State institutions and stability and those who support militias and perpetuate the conflict.

What we present to the Council today is a genuine test of the international system's ability to uphold its founding principles, foremost among them respect for State sovereignty, the enforcement of Security Council resolutions and the prevention of armed groups and their backers from imposing new realities outside the framework of international legitimacy.

Ignoring this incident, or merely treating it as an isolated event, would have repercussions beyond the Republic of Yemen. It would send the wrong message to armed groups and their backers throughout the world that they can violate State sovereignty, use civil aviation as a cover for military or logistical activities and circumvent Security Council resolutions without accountability or punishment.

Accordingly, the Security Council's position today will defend not only the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Yemen, but also a fundamental principle underpinning the international system: State sovereignty must not be overridden, and Security Council resolutions must not be tested or circumvented with impunity.

The Yemeni people, who have made immense sacrifices in defence of their State and their choices for peace and stability, look to the Security Council to shoulder its full responsibilities to uphold international legitimacy, enforce its resolutions and counter any attempt to undermine that legitimacy or impose faits accomplis by force outside the framework of international law.

The meeting rose at 4.30 p.m.