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Security Council

Eighty-first year

Provisional

10222nd meeting

Tuesday, 15 September 2026, 3 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Bonnafont/Mrs. Ben Kraiem	(France)
Members:	Bahrain	Mr. Alrowaiei
	China	Mr. Sun Lei
	Colombia	Mr. Gaona
	Democratic Republic of the Congo	Mr. Mukongo
	Denmark	Ms. Lassen
	Greece	Mrs. Balta
	Latvia	Ms. Pavļuta-Deslandes
	Liberia	Mr. Brown II
	Pakistan	Mr. Ahmad
	Panama	Mr. Moscoso
	Russian Federation	Mr. Nebenzia
	Somalia	Mr. Ibrahim
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Ms. Foster
	United States of America	Ms. Locetta

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East

The President (*spoke in French*): The representative of the Russian Federation has asked for the floor on a point of order.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are once again compelled to take the floor on a point of order in order to object to yet another unilateral decision by the French presidency to alter the established principle governing the order of speakers at a Security Council meeting. This decision was once again taken unilaterally, despite objections and without any consultation of Council members whatsoever.

We wish to point out that the issue is not one of the particular delegation that the presidency placed at the top of the list, ahead of Security Council members, but rather one of the highly selective approach of the Security Council presidency, which has decided that it possesses a prerogative of some kind to depart from long-established practice. We recall that a similar situation arose back in September during the Council's discussion of the Syrian chemical file (see S/PV.10217). Incidentally, we never heard any clear or convincing arguments from our French colleagues, not then, nor on this occasion. Instead, we were simply told about a certain interpretation of presidential note S/2024/507. However, that note, in fact, states that "those who have a direct interest in the outcome of the matter under consideration may speak prior to Council members, if appropriate."

Nonetheless, nowhere does it indicate that such a decision may be taken unilaterally by the presidency. Our French colleagues, who pay such close attention to the issue of the Security Council's working methods, must be keenly aware of the fact that the President does not have prerogatives, only duties. The President of the Council is a coordinator, who is obliged to perform his or her duties in strict accordance with the provisional rules of procedure and the established practice of this organ. Furthermore, as one of the permanent members of the Security Council, France bears a further responsibility to uphold the Council's traditions and to facilitate its smooth functioning. It is strange that, after its 69 presidencies, France suddenly forgot about this when presiding over the Security Council for the seventieth time. If the new French team does not know about this, or — a thought I dread — the President of the Council himself does not know this, we are prepared to hold a seminar for our French colleagues on this topic. They will not even have to go to Manhattan, we can do it here and, what is more, completely free.

We would like to note that we fully welcome the presence of our Yemeni colleagues at this meeting and are willing to listen to their remarks. In line with established practice, they will be given the floor under rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council. However, we do not see how changing the speaking order will make their voice carry more weight. In addition, as shown by the discussion of the situation in Yemen last week, the position of the Yemeni colleagues who spoke after Council members was very clearly conveyed. Equally unconvincing are our French colleagues' arguments that such an approach will help streamline the Council's discussions.

The speaking order has long been established for specific agenda items and agreed upon by all members of the Council. Any possible changes thereto are not something for the President of the Council to decide unilaterally, but ought to be the

outcome of discussion with all Council members. These kinds of actions simply set a dangerous precedent under which certain delegations are granted the preferential right to speak at the top of the list of speakers, while others are denied that same right.

We call on the French presidency to, finally, think better of their actions and not to test our patience and that of other delegations with this unilateral and disrespectful attitude towards other Council members.

Mr. Sun Lei (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): Inviting the countries concerned to participate in Security Council meetings is an important working method of the Council. China has consistently maintained that when discussing relevant issues, the Council should give due attention to the views of the countries concerned. China also respects the discretion of the President of the Security Council in conducting meetings.

At the same time, we believe that making an exception is one thing and forming an established practice is another. With regard to procedural arrangements, such as the order of speakers, the President should respect long-established practice and make decisions by consensus after full consultation with Council members, based on the rules of procedure. The fact that a permanent member of the Security Council has repeatedly expressed concerns on this matter warrants serious consideration in order to better preserve the Council's unity and cooperation.

I would like to emphasize that China's aforementioned remarks are not directed at the country concerned or at the subject of today's meeting. China welcomes the representative of Yemen to today's meeting and welcomes his remarks.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank both representatives for their explanations. As indicated, after having had extensive exchanges with the members of the Council, the presidency believed it was important for the representative of Yemen to be able to take the floor immediately after the briefing by Assistant Secretary-General Khaled Khiari, in accordance with the spirit and the letter of paragraph 36 of the note by the President, document S/2024/507, so Council members would be able to take into account the remarks of the main country concerned by the threats to peace and security in question.

In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Saudi Arabia and Yemen to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Khaled Khiari, Assistant Secretary-General for the Middle East, Europe, the Americas, Asia and the Pacific, Departments of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and Peace Operations, to participate in this meeting.

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

I now give the floor to Mr. Khiari.

Mr. Khiari: The situation in and around the Bab al-Mandab Strait has become increasingly volatile in recent days. Further to the briefing of Special Envoy Grundberg to the Council on 10 September, fighting has intensified along Yemen's west coast, as the Houthis continued their advance towards the Bab al-Mandab Strait, reportedly capturing several islands in the southern Red Sea.

According to maritime tracking sites, commercial shipping flows through the Red Sea appear to remain unaffected for the time being. Nevertheless, the Houthi advance has added to market concerns, amid continuing disruptions in the Strait of Hormuz.

In parallel, the Government of Yemen reportedly launched a counteroffensive following the Houthi advances over the past week, with localized clashes reported across several front lines in Marib, Lahj, Al-Jawf, Hajjah, Al-Bayda and Sa'ada. The counteroffensive, reportedly including extensive air strikes, also extends to Taiz. Unconfirmed estimates indicate hundreds of combatant casualties in recent days.

The impact of these hostilities also extends to the civilian population, forcing people to flee their homes, causing civilian casualties and putting already stretched humanitarian operations under growing pressure. Our colleagues from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs warn that at least 125,000 people have now been displaced across Yemen since the start of the month.

Over this same period, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has reported 40 civilian casualties: eight people killed and 32 injured. Women and children account for half of those killed and more than half of those injured.

Meanwhile, across the Red Sea in Djibouti, United Nations teams are working closely with the Government of Djibouti in response to the arrival of people fleeing the latest escalation of conflict in Yemen. As of 14 September, approximately 2,300 people had arrived in the Obock region in northern Djibouti. Registration is continuing and further arrivals are expected.

We call on all parties to protect civilians, respect international humanitarian law and facilitate safe and unimpeded humanitarian access so that urgently needed assistance can reach communities in need.

The ongoing escalation is not limited to the Bab al-Mandab Strait and Yemen. On 14 September, the spokesperson for the Saudi coalition forces said 13 individuals were injured and seven residences were damaged in Houthi missile and drone strikes on Abha, Khamis Mushait and Taif in Saudi Arabia. On 12 September, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia condemned the targeting of the East-West pipeline in the Riyadh and Madinah regions by several drones, reportedly launched from an area inside Iraq. The attacks reportedly resulted in injuries and material damage. The strikes caused the pipeline to shut down for repairs, interrupting the crucial artery Saudi Arabia had been using as an alternative to the Strait of Hormuz.

In a statement, the Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs indicated it had decided to avoid escalatory countermeasures following a request from Iraq's Prime Minister. On 12 September, the Office of the Iraqi Prime Minister released a statement expressing appreciation for "the Kingdom's response to the efforts made by Iraq to contain the situation." The statement also noted that Prime Minister Al-Zaidi had ordered an urgent investigation into the attacks and the parties behind them. Iraq also reaffirmed that "its territory and airspace will not be a launching pad for aggression against any State".

On 14 September, the Houthis claimed to have targeted the King Khalid airbase in Khamis Mushayt in southern Saudi Arabia with several ballistic missiles and drones in response to "300 Saudi air strikes over the past five days". This follows an earlier attack on 8 September on civilian and economic targets across Abha, Khamis Mushayt, Jazan and Najran in southern Saudi Arabia, reportedly injuring 73 civilians, including women and children. We reiterate our firm condemnation of Houthi cross-border attacks on civilian and energy infrastructure in Saudi Arabia. Navigational rights and freedoms in and around the Red Sea and the Bab al-Mandab strait must be fully restored and respected by all, in accordance with international law and consistent with the relevant resolutions of this Council, including resolution 2722 (2024). We remain concerned by the continued intensification of military clashes across multiple

front lines in Yemen and call upon all parties to exercise restraint, prevent further escalation and engage constructively with United Nations-led political efforts.

We remain deeply concerned by the continued instability affecting another critical maritime waterway in the region: the Strait of Hormuz. Navigational rights and freedoms in and around international maritime corridors must be fully restored and respected in accordance with international law. The longer the Strait remains choked, the higher the cost globally. Further escalation risks grave consequences for international peace and security, global energy markets, food security and the economies of countries beyond the region, particularly the most vulnerable. All parties must take every feasible precaution to protect civilian vessels, crews and infrastructure.

Developments around the Bab al-Mandab underline the urgent need to prevent Yemen's conflict from further threatening the security of the Red Sea and this vital international maritime route. What is needed now is sustained engagement that reduces tensions, prevents further escalation and safeguards freedom of navigation. The parties in Yemen should prioritize dialogue and engage constructively with United Nations-led efforts towards a negotiated political solution.

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

I now give the floor to the representative of Yemen.

Mr. Al-Saadi (Yemen) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this emergency meeting. I thank the members of the Council for responding at a time when the Houthi escalation is no longer an internal Yemeni affair or a crisis that can be contained within the borders of our country, but rather a growing threat to the security of the region, freedom of navigation, energy supplies and one of the most important arteries of global trade. I thank Mr. Khaled Khiari for his valuable briefing.

A few days ago, on 10 September, the Republic of Yemen stood before this esteemed Council and presented a clear picture of the course of military escalation launched by the Houthi terrorist militias (see S/PV.10219). We warned of the danger of treating every Houthi aggression as a temporary threat, only to revert to a policy of containment and waiting for the next attack. We warned specifically against the Houthi terrorist militias' attempt to impose military action on the ground by force along Yemen's west coast and at the Bab al-Mandab strait. We stated that the Yemenis, in defending their land, waters and maritime corridors, are in fact defending a common international interest. Today, we are no longer warning of the danger. We are seeing it taking shape before our very eyes.

The Yemeni Government is addressing the latest developments on the west coast and at the Bab al-Mandab strait with full responsibility and resolve and with complete confidence in its ability to manage their implications, regain control and turn these developments into an opportunity to strengthen national unity, reorganize our capabilities and resources and direct them towards the common goal of the Yemeni people: restoring State institutions and ending the Houthi threat. We assure our partners in the region and around the world that these developments, however serious they may be, will not alter the course or objectives of the struggle, nor will they impose a new reality by force of arms. Rather, the Government and the national forces will redouble their determination to protect Yemen's sovereignty and the security of its waterways.

The Houthi militias previously believed that their seizure of the capital and State institutions by force of arms had become a fait accompli, before the Yemenis recaptured Aden and other cities and more than 70 per cent of the country's territory.

Today, this extremist terrorist group will once again fail to turn any gains on the ground into a fait accompli. The Yemen Armed Forces are reorganizing their ranks, regaining control and working to prevent these militias from turning their presence on the west coast into a permanent platform from which to threaten the Bab al-Mandab strait and international shipping. The Armed Forces' concern for civilian lives and their commitment to the rules of engagement in accordance with international humanitarian law are neither signs of weakness nor hesitation but rather the difference between a State that protects its citizens and militias that throw them into the battlefields and exploits their territories as a cover for its expansionist project. The Republic of Yemen will continue to exercise its sovereign right and constitutional duty to fully liberate its territory, protect its territorial waters and maritime routes and prevent them from being used to threaten Yemenis, their neighbours or international peace and security.

The Bab al-Mandab strait is Yemeni territory and water, yet the interests in protecting it extend to encompass the entire planet. Every ship passing through this strait, every energy shipment and every supply chain that relies on it makes its security an integral part of the economic security of nations thousands of kilometres away from Yemen. For this reason, Yemenis, as they defend their coasts, waters and the Bab al-Mandab strait today, are not merely fulfilling a patriotic duty. They are forming the first line of defence for an international corridor on which the interests of the entire world depend.

Herein lies a truth that must not be overlooked by this Council: Yemen is not asking the world to defend it. Yemen is, in fact, defending the interests of the world. The question is whether the world will realize that protecting these interests is a shared responsibility or whether the world will leave Yemenis alone to bear the cost of protecting a corridor that everyone uses. The issue is no longer about who controls a few kilometres of coastline, but whether the international community will accept that one of the most important gateways for global trade and energy should become a tool for blackmail in the hands of a cross-border terrorist group.

The Houthis' ongoing attacks on the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and their targeting of cities, civilian infrastructure and energy sources are not isolated incidents separate from the escalation in Yemen and the Bab al-Mandab. They are part of a single threat structure that uses Yemeni territory, missiles, drones and maritime corridors to serve a regional agenda that transcends the interests of Yemen and its people. We view the targeting of energy facilities and their supply routes as an attempt to increase the cost of the sanctions imposed on the Iranian regime, shifting part of that burden onto the region and the global economy and turning energy and sea lanes into tools of pressure as an extension of the strategy of threats and blackmail in the Strait of Hormuz.

The Republic of Yemen stands firmly alongside the brotherly Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and supports its inherent right to defend its territory, citizens and national resources in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. Yemenis will long remember the Kingdom's steadfast fraternal stance in support of their State and people and its solidarity with them in the struggle to restore State institutions and safeguard security and stability in Yemen and the region. We also appreciate the clear positions adopted by those States that have condemned the Houthi escalation, rejected the targeting of the Kingdom, affirmed the right of Yemen and Saudi Arabia to protect their security and sovereignty and warned of the dangers posed by the threat to Bab al-Mandab and international shipping.

However, this new phase calls for more than condemnation. What is required today is a deterrence system that prevents the militias from turning Yemeni geography into a open platform from which to threaten the region and the world. This means

effectively enforcing the arms embargo, disrupting financing and smuggling networks, preventing the flow of military components, technology and expertise, and strengthening the capacity of the Yemeni State and its partners to protect coasts, ports, territorial waters and maritime corridors.

There should be no doubt that the Yemeni Government will not abandon its responsibility to protect Yemen's citizens and territorial sovereignty. The Yemeni armed forces are performing admirably in deterring the threat as they work towards full liberation and an end to the long-standing suffering of the Yemeni people. However, the security of the Bab al-Mandab Strait and the Red Sea is a responsibility that extends beyond Yemen. The threat emanating from there makes no distinction based on a vessel's nationality or flag, or on which State will pay the price for disrupted trade or higher energy prices.

There is another dimension to this danger that we must not overlook. The Yemeni coast and the Bab al-Mandab Strait lie within a highly fragile security environment extending into the Horn of Africa, where terrorist groups and organized networks are engaged in illicit trafficking and the smuggling of weapons, drugs and people. Allowing an armed militia to entrench itself along this strategic corridor, across from coasts where terrorist groups, smuggling networks and piracy are already active, threatens to turn both shores of the Bab al-Mandab Strait into an interconnected operational environment for extremist groups and organized criminal networks.

This danger may go beyond missiles and drones. It includes threats to global interests, the smuggling of weapons, drugs, fighters and military components, human trafficking and the emergence of vulnerable areas in which terrorist groups and criminal networks can advance mutual interests and exchange services and illicit resources. The world must not wait for such an environment to take shape before considering how to dismantle it. Preventing it from emerging today is far less costly than confronting it tomorrow.

The Houthi militias launched an armed coup against the national consensus and State institutions in September 2014. They then directed their missiles and drones at neighbouring countries. Commercial vessels and international shipping lanes then came under threat. Today, Bab al-Mandab lies at the heart of the same dynamic. This is how terrorist groups operate: whenever they face no real cost for escalation, they move to an even more dangerous level. It is therefore unrealistic to believe that this threat will automatically stop in the Red Sea. An undeterred threat expands; weapons outside State control seek new targets; and blackmail rewarded today will return tomorrow with more onerous demands.

Amid these strategic and security calculations, there is a simpler and more painful truth: Yemenis are the first to pay the price. Yemenis have been killed and wounded, families have been forcibly displaced from their homes, and tens of thousands have been forced to flee, some for the second or third time after years of hoping that the war was beginning to subside.

But I do not wish to reduce the suffering of Yemenis before the Council to a series of statistics. I will give just one image: a child named Mohammed Ali Jassar. He is 11 years old and was in the fifth grade. Mohammed should have been at school. Instead, the Houthi militias thrust him into a war he did not choose, leaving him, still a child, on a battlefield, where no child should ever be. Mohammed has an older brother, aged 16, who has been detained by the Houthis for more than two years because he refused to go to the front. The Houthi militias are demanding large sums of money from his poor family in exchange for his release.

Mohammed is not an exception. He is one of tens of thousands of children whom the Houthi militias thrust into their recruitment and mobilization system, while drawing vast numbers of children into mobilization programmes and camps during school holidays. They are not soldiers. They are children. A Yemeni child's place is with their family and at school, not behind a barricade or in a graveyard.

The picture we present today is this: a militia threatens a neighbouring State that has long been a principal pillar of the region's security, stability and prosperity; targets energy facilities; seeks to turn the Bab al-Mandab Strait into an instrument of blackmail; relies on arms and smuggling networks; and operates in a regional environment in which the interests of terrorist groups and organized crime may intersect. Within Yemen, the militia thrusts children into the war. By contrast, the Yemeni State is shouldering its responsibilities, and its armed forces are fighting to reclaim Yemeni territory and restore State institutions, while protecting an international waterway and a global interest.

The equation, therefore, is not between the Yemeni Government and an extremist terrorist group. It is between a Member State of the United Nations seeking to restore its legitimate monopoly on arms and its authority over decisions of war and peace, and an armed group seeking to exploit arms, geography and international waterways for blackmail and illicit financing.

Yemenis are therefore determined to restore their national institutions across every inch of their territory, because Yemen's future can have no State within the State, no weapons outside State control and no decisions on war and peace outside State institutions. The question today is not whether Yemenis will restore their State institutions. It is whether the international community will stand with them now as they defend their State and a global interest, or wait until the cost for restoring peace in the Red Sea the Bab al-Mandab Strait becomes higher for all.

The choice is not between war and peace. It is between a State reaching out to lay the foundation for sustainable peace, in accordance with the agreed terms of reference for the political settlement and the relevant Security Council resolutions, foremost among them resolution 2216 (2015), and an armed terrorist militia that perpetuates war and blackmail whenever it has the time and resources to do so.

The Yemeni people have chosen the State. They have chosen peace protected by the State and will press ahead towards that goal. We hope that the international community, too, takes a firm stand and recognizes that there is no path to peace and stability in Yemen and the region except by ending this reckless conduct and the threats arising from it, and preventing armed militias from imposing their will on peoples and holding the world and its vital waterways to ransom.

In that context, we call upon the Security Council to take the following steps.

First, the Council should condemn the continuing Houthi escalation, including the targeting of civilians, displaced persons camps and civilian objects in Yemen, attacks on the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the continuing threats and attacks against commercial vessels and international navigation.

Secondly, the Council should hold the Houthi militias responsible for this escalation and its humanitarian and security consequences. The Council should also avoid any language that equates the terrorist Houthi militias with the Yemeni State, which, in accordance with international law, is exercising its right and fulfilling its duty to protect Yemeni citizens and safeguard Yemen's sovereignty.

Thirdly, the Council should ensure the full and effective implementation of resolutions 2140 (2014), 2216 (2015) and 2722 (2024); halt the flow of weapons, technology, expertise and financing that enables the Houthi militias to continue their

attacks; and hold accountable any parties that violate the measures imposed by the Council.

Fourthly, the Council should support the Yemeni Government and its institutions in extending State authority and sovereignty over the territory of the Republic, its coasts, ports and territorial waters, and strengthen the capabilities of the armed forces, naval forces, coastguard and law enforcement agencies to enable the State to protect its citizens, prevent arms smuggling and secure maritime corridors.

Fifthly, the Council should respond urgently to the growing humanitarian needs of displaced persons and host communities and ensure that the necessary resources are available to protect civilians and meet their basic needs.

In conclusion, we hope that this meeting will mark the beginning of a different international stance — one that turns this year into a time for closing the chapter on militias and wars and opening a new chapter for Yemen, the Yemeni people and the region, defined by statehood, peace and stability.

The President (*spoke in French*): I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements.

Mr. Alrowaiei (Bahrain) (*spoke in Arabic*): I wish to thank the French Republic for its initiative in calling for this emergency meeting. We also thank Assistant Secretary-General Khaled Khiari for his briefing. We welcome the participation of the Permanent Representative of the sisterly Republic of Yemen and thank him for his briefing. We also welcome the participation of the Permanent Representative of the sisterly Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The Kingdom of Bahrain joined the United Kingdom, Latvia, Greece and Denmark in requesting this meeting to consider the threats posed by the terrorist Houthi militias to the security of navigation in the Bab al-Mandab Strait and the Red Sea, as well as their repeated attacks against the sisterly Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and within the sisterly Republic of Yemen. In doing so, those terrorist militias are continuing their hostile approach of destabilizing security and stability in the region, thereby entrenching their role as an instrument for threatening regional and international peace and security.

As stated by the Kingdom of Bahrain at last week's meeting (see S/PV.10219), the current escalation by the terrorist Houthi militia and the clear violation of the truce that it represents are condemnable and constitute a growing threat to the security of Yemen and the region. That is evident in the militias' seizure of the coastal city of Mukha' and extensive areas of Yemen's western coast, extending as far as the islands of Mayyun, Hanish and Jazirat Jabal Zuqar in the Red Sea. This threatens the security of navigation and the safety of international waterways in the Bab al-Mandab Strait and the Red Sea. The escalation has also had grave humanitarian consequences within Yemen and has forced growing numbers of civilians to flee the fighting, at a time when the Yemeni people are facing an acute humanitarian crisis.

As part of that escalation, the Houthi militia has, since Tuesday, 8 September, renewed its repeated attacks against the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, targeting civilians and civilian infrastructure. The Kingdom of Bahrain reiterates its strong condemnation of those attacks, including the Houthi shelling that targeted Al-Tuwal Governorate in the Jazan region and the cities of Khamis Mushayt, Abha and Ta'if, causing civilian casualties and material damage to a number of homes and a mosque.

Last week, the sisterly Kingdom of Saudi Arabia also witnessed an attack on the East-West oil pipeline, which resulted in the suspension of its operations. The Kingdom of Bahrain affirms its full solidarity with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the legitimate Government of the Republic of Yemen, as well as its steadfast support

for the legitimate measures they take to protect their security and safeguard their sovereignty and territorial integrity in the face of those repeated acts of aggression and threats, in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations.

Despite the Council's repeated condemnations, the terrorist Houthi group continues to arbitrarily detain United Nations personnel, civil society workers and members of diplomatic missions. It is disregarding persistent demands for their release, including those made by the Security Council. Despite the Council's repeated condemnations, the Houthi group also continues to threaten navigation, disrupt the arteries of maritime trade and relentlessly attack States of the region, with its attacks affecting civilians and civilian infrastructure.

The Houthi terrorist approach has turned the lives of Yemenis into fuel for conflicts that do not serve Yemen, forcing them to pay the price for agendas alien to Yemen's homeland and interests. The truth that can no longer be ignored is that the international community has failed to impose firm and deterrent measures in response to the continuing hostile conduct of the terrorist Houthi group.

The time has come for the Security Council to take a firmer position. Over the years, that extremist terrorist group has squandered every opportunity to build confidence and has proved time and again that it is the foremost obstacle to the peace sought by the Yemeni people and one of the instruments used to destabilize security and peace in the region.

As we affirmed in our statement at last week's meeting, the Kingdom of Bahrain calls for the full and strict implementation of the arms embargo imposed pursuant to the resolutions of the Council, including resolution 2216 (2015), and for the strengthening of its enforcement mechanisms in order to halt the flow of weapons and their components to the Houthi militias.

The Kingdom of Bahrain also calls for full accountability for the perpetrators of those violations and their supporters and for the application of the designation criteria set out in resolution 2801 (2025), including those contained in paragraph 12 concerning cross-border launches using ballistic missile technology. It further calls for those criteria to be expanded to encompass attacks carried out using uncrewed aerial vehicles.

The Kingdom further calls for the scope of reporting to be expanded to include attacks against the territories and critical infrastructure of States in the region, alongside attacks against commercial vessels, thereby presenting the world with a complete picture of the scale of Houthi violations and documenting them to serve as enduring testimony to the crimes of their perpetrators and supporters.

In conclusion, the Kingdom of Bahrain affirms its steadfast commitment to supporting the establishment of comprehensive and sustainable peace in sisterly Yemen. From that standpoint, it reiterates its full support for the legitimate Government of Yemen and for the efforts of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General to reach a comprehensive and sustainable political solution that safeguards the unity, sovereignty and independence of Yemen and fulfils the aspirations of its brotherly people for security, stability and prosperity.

Ms. Foster (United Kingdom): I thank Assistant Secretary-General Khiari for his briefing and welcome the representatives of Yemen and Saudi Arabia to this meeting.

The United Kingdom joined the Kingdom of Bahrain, Denmark, France, Greece and Latvia in calling for today's meeting because, in recent days, the Houthis have continued their reckless attacks against Saudi Arabia, escalated military operations inside Yemen and further endangered international shipping and regional stability.

The United Kingdom strongly condemns those actions. Overnight, Houthi attacks against Saudi Arabia have reportedly injured a further 13 civilians, damaged homes and residential areas and disrupted commercial aviation. The Houthis have sought to consolidate control along Yemen's Red Sea coast and around the Bab al-Mandab Strait.

Those actions pose a direct threat to one of the world's most important shipping routes and to the freedom of navigation on which the global economy depends. The impact is felt first and hardest by developing countries. The Houthis bear full responsibility for that escalation. We stand in solidarity with Saudi Arabia and the Government of Yemen in the face of those attacks and reaffirm their right to defend their security and sovereignty in accordance with international law.

The humanitarian consequences of Houthi actions are becoming increasingly severe. More than 126,000 people have now been displaced, and that number is likely to grow. Humanitarian agencies are warning of the impact around Ma'rib, which already hosts one of Yemen's largest displaced populations. Alongside displacement, we are seeing signs of rising food insecurity, as well as growing health and protection needs, in particular for women and children.

We are deeply concerned about reports of increasing harm to civilians, including impacts on displaced people, civilian infrastructure, schools, homes and other protected sites. Humanitarian access has been further disrupted, preventing assistance from reaching extremely vulnerable populations. The Houthis' continued detention of humanitarian, United Nations and diplomatic mission personnel remains unacceptable. We call for their immediate and unconditional release.

Lastly, this escalation did not occur in a vacuum. Iran's long-standing support for the Houthis continues to enable attacks that threaten civilians, neighbouring States, maritime security and prospects for peace. The Council's resolutions, including resolutions 2140 (2014) and 2216 (2015), are clear. All Member States must fully implement their obligations, including measures to prevent the transfer of arms and military support to the Houthis.

The United Kingdom remains steadfast in its support for the United Nations-led peace process and the efforts of Special Envoy Grundberg. But there can be no progress towards peace while the Houthis continue their military offensive, their attacks against Saudi Arabia, their threats to international shipping and their obstruction of humanitarian action. Today, the Council should deliver a simple and united message: the Houthis must cease their attacks, release detained personnel, de-escalate immediately and return towards the pathway to peace.

Ms. Pavļuta-Deslandes (Latvia): First, I thank the French presidency for convening this urgent meeting. I also thank Assistant Secretary-General Khiari for his briefing and welcome the participation of the representatives of Yemen and Saudi Arabia in this meeting.

Latvia condemns in the strongest terms the Houthis' continued attacks against Saudi Arabia and the resumed hostilities in Yemen, including advances that threaten the Bab al-Mandab Strait. The Bab al-Mandab Strait and the Red Sea are vital arteries of global commerce, and their waters must not become a theatre of intimidation and hostilities. The security of international maritime navigation is not negotiable. Commercial vessels exercising their rights and freedoms of navigation in accordance with international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, must be able to transit safely and unhindered. We call on the Houthis to immediately halt all threats and attacks, both within Yemen and beyond its borders, including attacks against commercial shipping, and to respect the fundamental principles governing freedom of navigation.

The continued flow of weapons and other support to the Houthis, including from Iran, is further contributing to regional destabilization. Effective implementation of the arms embargo is therefore essential to curbing the Houthis' capacity to sustain hostilities and to reducing the risk of further escalation. An embargo that is not fully and collectively enforced cannot fulfil its purpose, and we are witnessing the consequences of this today. Latvia therefore calls for full compliance with the relevant decisions of the Council.

The impacts of the renewed fighting extend far beyond the battlefield. Since our urgent briefing last week (see S/PV.10219), continued fighting along Yemen's west coast has led displacement to increase manyfold. Last week, citing data from the International Organization for Migration, I mentioned that approximately 18,500 people had been displaced in just 72 hours, following the escalation of hostilities on 3 September. The latest data show that this number has now exceeded 93,000. We are also witnessing the spillover of the humanitarian consequences across Yemen's borders into neighbouring regions, notably in Africa. More than 2,000 people are fleeing violence and have already reached Djibouti's northern shores. This movement is a stark warning about the wider regional humanitarian and security crisis that this escalation could bring about.

Renewed hostilities represent another serious setback to efforts to bring Yemen's devastating conflict to a negotiated and lasting end. There is no military path to lasting peace in Yemen. All parties must exercise restraint, abide by international humanitarian law, reject further escalation and return to meaningful negotiations. At the same time, we recognize the right of the Government of Yemen and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to defend themselves. Latvia continues to stand with the people of Yemen and to uphold the country's unity, sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity. We remain fully committed to a comprehensive, inclusive and sustainable Yemeni-led and Yemeni-owned political process facilitated by the United Nations. In this endeavour, the sustained efforts of United Nations Special Envoy Hans Grundberg remain of vital importance, and Latvia reiterates its firm support for his tireless efforts at this critical juncture. The Council's engagement will be essential to maintaining international attention on Yemen and, above all, to ensuring that the aspirations of the Yemeni people are not lost amid the political and humanitarian challenges facing this country.

Mrs. Balta (Greece): I would like to thank the presidency for scheduling this urgent meeting, only days after the Council convened on the same issue (see S/PV.10219). I also thank Assistant Secretary-General Khiari for his briefing and welcome the presence of the Permanent Representatives of Yemen and Saudi Arabia at this meeting.

I will raise four points.

First, Greece strongly condemns the expansion of hostilities, including the continuous attacks against the civilian population and critical infrastructure in Saudi Arabia, which have led to civilian casualties. Despite repeated appeals to the contrary, the Houthis continue on the path of military escalation bringing Yemen to the brink of a full-scale conflict. We urge their immediate and unconditional cessation. We express our solidarity with Saudi Arabia and the Government of Yemen in their efforts to defend their sovereignty and territorial integrity in accordance with international law.

Secondly, these hostilities are compounded by the rapid military advancement of the Houthis along the west coast of Yemen and their capture of Mukha' port and the islands of Great Hanish and Little Hanish, off the coast of the strategically vital Bab al-Mandab Strait. This signals a dangerous turning point for the security of the

Red Sea. These developments, coupled with the prolonged crisis in the Strait of Hormuz, have far-reaching implications for the security and stability of Yemen and the wider region. The consequences extend further still — to international maritime security and to global trade and prosperity.

For Greece, as one of the world's leading maritime nations, this is a matter of particular importance. Recent attacks against shipping across the wider region, including against Greek-owned vessels, make clear the urgent need to protect those who work at sea and ensure the uninterrupted flow of international commerce. Freedom of navigation and transit passage must be fully respected and safeguarded in accordance with international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. Rights of passage through international straits cannot be made subject to unlawful restrictions, discriminatory measures, fees or prior authorizations. The Bab al-Mandab Strait remains a critical international waterway in the Gulf region, serving as a vital corridor for international trade and transportation of energy and essential goods. Ensuring freedom of navigation and safe passage through this strategic maritime route is therefore essential for the resilience of global trade and supply chains. Greece will continue its steadfast engagement in safeguarding freedom of navigation and in ensuring the safe passage of commercial vessels through its active role in European Union Naval Force operation Aspides, in line with its defensive mandate and in accordance with international law. Furthermore, all Member States must fully comply with their obligations under resolutions 2140 (2014) and 2216 (2015) and the relevant subsequent resolutions with respect to the implementation of the targeted arms embargo.

Thirdly, alongside the military developments, the humanitarian consequences of the Houthis' continued military actions are gravely concerning, including the further displacement of civilians from their homes and communities, with women and children among those most vulnerable to the devastating effects of the conflict. We urge all parties to fully abide by their obligations under international humanitarian law, including the protection of civilians and civilian infrastructure, and to facilitate safe, rapid and unhindered humanitarian access to all those in need. The growing number of internally displaced persons puts an additional burden on an already fragile humanitarian situation. We strongly condemn the continued arbitrary detentions by the Houthis of diplomatic staff and numerous humanitarian personnel, including 73 United Nations staff members, and we reiterate our call for their immediate and unconditional release.

Finally, we must not lose sight of the political process. All parties should immediately de-escalate and work to preserve the necessary space for dialogue and diplomacy. Channels of communication must remain open. We stand by the side of Special Envoy Grunberg in his efforts towards achieving this objective, in full respect of Yemen's sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and political independence. Only through sustained engagement and a genuine commitment to dialogue can the parties find a way back to the negotiating table, with a view to a lasting and comprehensive political settlement in Yemen.

Ms. Lassen (Denmark): Let me also thank Assistant Secretary-General Khiari for his briefing.

Denmark condemns the continued attacks by the Houthis in Yemen and against Saudi Arabia. The Houthis are targeting civilian infrastructure and innocent civilians, which is a flagrant violation of international humanitarian law. These attacks undermine efforts to secure peace in Yemen and risk further destabilizing the wider region. We call on the Houthis to immediately end all attacks inside and outside Yemen, including attacks against commercial shipping in the Red Sea. Denmark also condemns Iran's support for the Houthis.

We are deeply alarmed by the Houthis claiming control on more islands and territory in and along the Bab al-Mandab Strait. This could have significant repercussions for maritime security and global supplies. As a major maritime nation, Denmark remains fully committed to ensuring the freedom of navigation and the stability of global supply chains in the Red Sea and beyond, for the benefit of global trade and development. It is essential that the international community continue to uphold freedom of navigation, not least in the world's most critical waterways, in accordance with international law. Neither the Houthis nor Iran can be allowed to take this freedom away. The denial of unhindered passage in the Strait of Hormuz and Bab al-Mandab is driving up energy and food prices. This has made food insecurity a very real and imminent threat that is severely affecting the most vulnerable people in particular, especially in conflict situations. We strongly urge the Houthis to cease their escalatory attacks on commercial vessels and preserve freedom of navigation in accordance with Security Council resolutions.

More than 125,000 people have been displaced in Yemen during the two weeks of increased fighting. They must be able to move safely and have access to food, water, healthcare and other essential services. With more than 22 million people — half the population — across Yemen already in dire need of humanitarian aid, the recent escalation deepens the suffering of Yemenis who have already endured more than a decade of conflict. Any further disruptions and impediments to humanitarian aid could have catastrophic consequences.

In closing, the Houthi attacks not only threaten maritime security in the Red Sea but seriously undermine peace efforts in Yemen. Once again, we call on the Houthis to cease their attacks and provocations and engage constructively in Special Envoy Grunberg's efforts to end the conflict, which has had a devastating impact on millions of Yemenis.

Mr. Ahmad (Pakistan): I would like to thank Assistant Secretary-General Khalid Khiari for his briefing. We too welcome the participation of the representatives of Yemen and Saudi Arabia in this meeting.

The very fact that the Council is meeting again in less than one week speaks to the urgency and gravity of the rapidly deteriorating situation in Yemen. The Houthi military escalation inside Yemen and the continued Houthi attacks against the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the latest military developments along Yemen's Red Sea coast have brought the conflict to an extremely dangerous juncture.

Pakistan condemns, in the strongest terms, all Houthi attacks against the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Yesterday, Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, in his conversation with His Royal Highness Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, reiterated Pakistan's strong condemnation of these attacks and underscored that they threaten regional peace and stability, with serious consequences for the global economy and energy security. Pakistan will continue its earnest efforts at the highest levels to help defuse tensions and advance peace and stability in the region.

Pakistan reaffirms its unwavering support for the sovereignty, territorial integrity, security and prosperity of Saudi Arabia and stands in complete solidarity with its leadership and Government and the brotherly people of the Kingdom. Consistent with the Charter of the United Nations and international law, Pakistan fully supports the Kingdom's legitimate right to take all necessary measures to defend its territory, protect its citizens and safeguard its national assets against any threat.

The expansion of Houthi attacks in and around the Bab al-Mandab, this vital maritime corridor, represents a serious escalation. Combined with continued violations of international law against commercial shipping, these developments pose a growing threat to freedom of navigation and the uninterrupted flow of international

maritime commerce. Any attempt to threaten, obstruct or weaponize vital waterways will have consequences for international trade and commercial shipping, global supply chains and energy security.

The relative calm, painstakingly maintained in Yemen since 2022, has unfortunately collapsed. Continued escalation risks reigniting a full-scale conflict and drawing Yemen deeper into the wider regional confrontation. This must be prevented. The current developments further exacerbate the already dire humanitarian situation in Yemen, compounding the suffering of the Yemeni people.

Diplomacy must assume urgency in proportion to the gravity of this situation. We strongly support the resumption of an inclusive Yemeni-led and Yemeni-owned political process, under United Nations auspices, and in this regard, we appreciate the Special Envoy for his continued engagement.

Pakistan will continue to support all sincere efforts towards de-escalation, dialogue and a comprehensive political settlement that can bring lasting peace and stability to Yemen and the wider region.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Madam President, please convey to your Permanent Representative that we were surprised by his reaction to our statement and that of China. It seemed as if he had not heard what we were saying. I would like to warn the French presidency that we will not let such arbitrary conduct simply slide.

We thank Khaled Khiari for his briefing.

The current military and political situation in and around Yemen is extremely alarming. The country is going through one of the most dramatic periods of escalation in recent years. We discussed what is unfolding in this Chamber less than a week ago. Regrettably, the situation has deteriorated since then, with hostilities between the opposing sides intensifying. The advance of Houthi forces along the country's Red Sea coast is facing fierce resistance from forces affiliated with the official Yemeni authorities. Unfortunately, there are so far no signs of the situation calming down.

Another problem, however, is that this essentially internal conflict is gradually spilling beyond Yemen's national borders, entailing repercussions for the entire Middle East. We are deeply concerned about the ensuing destabilization of maritime navigation in the Red Sea and the Bab al-Mandab strait. The trade routes through these waters serve as a vital artery for international trade and global supply chains. Free and safe navigation in this part of the world is essential to ensuring the uninterrupted delivery of both commercial and humanitarian cargo. The latter, in turn, is critically important for providing assistance to many countries facing difficult socioeconomic conditions, including Yemen itself, where most of the population has for years been living under severe constraints.

Russia condemns attacks on civilian vessels wherever they may occur, as they jeopardize the freedom, safety and security of navigation, the lives and health of seafarers and the integrity of cargo. Such actions generate additional risks in an already destabilized region. We reiterate our call on the leadership of Ansar Allah to refrain from any actions that could pose a threat to commercial vessels and their crews in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden. We hope that they will exercise restraint, demonstrate responsible conduct and seek to resolve the accumulated disputes with their neighbours through negotiations rather than threats.

However, we are convinced that, in the current difficult circumstances, Security Council members should also keep a cool head. The response of this body, which is entrusted with the responsibility of preventing threats to international peace and security, ought to be rational, carefully weighed and, most importantly, commensurate

with what is happening on the ground. The unfortunate experience with resolution 2722 (2024), the provisions of which were subsequently misconstrued by several Council members, cautions us against hasty and ill-considered steps. We find such an approach detrimental to any remaining prospects for a settlement.

The issue of navigation through the Red Sea and the Bab al-Mandab strait cannot be considered in isolation from developments within Yemen itself. We would like to recall that the root cause of all the problems in the waters adjacent to Yemen is precisely the simmering armed conflict with its periodic outbreaks of violence. Attempts to resolve this conflict have thus far failed to produce tangible results, with temporary lulls in hostilities on the ground being time and again followed by new and more dangerous spates of violence.

In this regard, Russia calls for the most rapid possible de-escalation in and around Yemen through stepping up efforts to resume an inclusive political and diplomatic dialogue under the auspices of the United Nations. All major political forces in the country, including the Ansar Allah movement, should participate in such a dialogue. Moreover, what is now needed more than ever is active support for this process from regional actors that have leverage over the Yemeni parties. Without coordinated efforts on their part, the process may well stagnate. We assume that this logic is to be followed by all Yemeni parties, including Ansar Allah, as well as by the regional actors involved. For its part, Russia will continue to provide all possible support in this endeavour.

In conclusion, we would like to reaffirm our commitment to the unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of friendly Yemen.

Mr. Brown II (Liberia): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the African members of the Security Council (A3), namely the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia and my own country, Liberia.

We thank Assistant Secretary-General Khaled Khiari for his briefing, and we welcome the participation of the representatives of Yemen and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in today’s meeting.

The A3 is closely following developments along Yemen’s south-western coast, including reports of changes in territorial control in and around Mayyun Island, Mukha’, Dhubab and neighbouring areas. Given the strategic importance of these locations near the Bab al-Mandab strait, we are concerned that further changes on the ground could increase tensions, deepen mistrust among the parties, complicate efforts to resume an inclusive political process and pose risks to regional security and international navigation. The position of the African Union remains absolute: there is no military solution to the conflict in Yemen. Force cannot substitute for statecraft, and unilateral actions will not yield sovereign stability. We reaffirm our uncompromised commitment to the sovereignty, unity, independence and territorial integrity of Yemen.

Furthermore, any credible political process must address the concerns of all Yemenis and preserve the country’s sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity. It must also respond to the economic and humanitarian pressures that continue to affect millions of Yemenis. Yemen must not become an arena for regional power projection or proxy warfare. We call on all parties to exercise maximum restraint and preserve the diplomatic space required for an inclusive, Yemeni-led and Yemeni-owned political process under the auspices of the United Nations.

For Africa, the security of adjacent waters is neither distant nor abstract. The Red Sea and the Bab al-Mandab are vital lifelines linking our continent to global commerce and food supplies. Freedom of navigation is a legal cornerstone, not an

optional privilege. Anchored in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the relevant Security Council resolutions, the safety of maritime transit must be respected. Merchant ships and civilian seafarers must never be targeted, seized or held hostage to armed conflict. Maritime disruption imposes an intolerable tax on developing nations. Diverted routes and soaring freight and insurance rates translate directly into higher prices for imported grain, fuel and fertilizer across Africa. Safety along vital international straits cannot fluctuate according to the calculations of armed actors.

Beneath the regional geopolitics lies an unbearable humanitarian toll. More than 18 million Yemenis urgently require life-saving humanitarian assistance. More than 2.2 million children, as we have already heard, suffer from acute malnutrition — an entire generation growing up under the shadow of deprivation and trauma. Civilian infrastructure, hospitals and water networks must remain fully protected under international humanitarian law. The A3 issues an unequivocal call for the immediate, safe and unconditional release of all United Nations personnel, non-governmental organization staff and civil society workers arbitrarily detained in Yemen. Humanitarian access must never be impeded, criminalized or weaponized for tactical advantage.

The international community cannot remain trapped in a cycle of concern without consequence and condemnation without change. A sustainable path forward requires decisive confidence-building measures: opening critical transit routes, securing nationwide public sector salary payments and formalizing a permanent nationwide ceasefire. The choice before the Council is clear. We can either invest the political will required for peace today or pay the compounded price of a wider catastrophe tomorrow. Let us choose resolve over paralysis and afford the people of Yemen the lasting horizon of peace and dignity they deserve.

Ms. Locetta (United States of America): I thank the Assistant Secretary-General for his briefing.

The situation in Yemen has further deteriorated since the Council met just five days ago to discuss the situation (see S/PV.10219). Houthi forces have advanced along Yemen's Red Sea coastline, extending their presence near the Bab al-Mandab Strait, through which roughly 12 per cent of global trade passes. We are monitoring these developments closely with our regional partners.

The Houthi escalation has taken a terrible toll on civilians. The Houthis have bombed cities, displaced nearly 100,000 Yemenis and killed a significant number of civilians. The Houthis have also destroyed tens of millions of dollars in vital port infrastructure, which the region relies on for imports of food and other essential humanitarian goods. The Houthis also continue to unjustly detain at least 20 of our local embassy staff and more than 70 United Nations local staff. The United States calls for their immediate and unconditional release.

Beyond Houthis' disregard for Yemeni civilians, their actions threaten regional and global energy security. This includes attacks on multiple tankers and the killing of at least three mariners in the process. As the Government of Yemen has noted, threats to shipping raise transportation, insurance, food, fuel and medicine costs worldwide. The Houthis' acts of terrorism also undermine regional stability.

On 14 and 15 September, the Houthis launched missile and drone attacks against multiple Saudi cities, wounding 13 civilians. This follows their 8 September attack, which wounded more than 70 people, including women and children, and ignited fires at critical oil facilities. These attacks are only the latest examples of the Houthis' blatant disregard for Saudi sovereignty and civilian life.

As President Trump has emphasized, freedom of navigation underpins the global economy, and the United States is working with our partners to protect it. The United States supports Yemen's legitimate Government as it counters the Iran-backed Houthi militia. We demand that the Houthis halt their advances, withdraw from seized territory and cease attacks. We likewise demand that the Islamic Republic of Iran cease its support for Houthi terrorist activities.

The Council must remain clear-eyed about Iran's role in sustaining this conflict through arming, funding and directing the Houthis. Addressing this external support is essential to eliminating Houthi capabilities. We join the Republic of Yemen in calling on the Council to ensure effective implementation of resolutions 2140 (2014) and 2216 (2015) and to halt the flow of arms and related materiel as well as related technical assistance, training, and financial or other assistance to the Houthis.

The Iranian regime is the principal violator of both resolutions. It has defied the arms embargo under resolution 2216 (2015) and undermined the sanctions regime under resolution 2140 (2014). The Council cannot look away from those facts.

The United States will continue to work with our partners to address this situation and support long-term regional stability.

Mr. Moscoso (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank Mr. Khaled Khiari, Assistant Secretary-General for the Middle East, Europe, the Americas, Asia and the Pacific, for his update, in particular for the information on the evolving situation and recent developments. We also warmly welcome the representatives of the Republic of Yemen and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, who honour us with their presence at this meeting.

Less than a week ago, we met (see S/PV.10219) to assess what then appeared to be a worrisome scenario that has now, unfortunately, materialized. We again face a situation that requires us to understand what has happened, assess its possible repercussions and consider the options available to us. The prospect of a critical maritime route being closed again is particularly concerning. After approximately six months of disruption and pressure on major shipping routes, another interruption would have significant additional consequences for international trade, supply chains and the global economy, and directly affect those who depend on these routes for access to and the provision of essential supplies.

The scale of these risks demands a clear response now. The actions taken by the Houthis against international shipping cannot become a mechanism of coercion or pressure. No group or actor may use a maritime route critical to international trade as an instrument of confrontation, let alone when doing so endangers the lives and safety of seafarers. What is at stake goes beyond the immediate consequences of the situation in Yemen. The stability of these routes is essential to the functioning of global trade and the economic security of millions of people.

Compounding this is the serious situation arising from attacks on energy facilities in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which are putting further pressure on international energy markets and disproportionately affecting countries of the global South. In that context, it is concerning to see how sanctions and other measures are gradually losing effectiveness because some States fail to implement or comply with them. The decisions of the Council must not be rendered ineffective for lack of will to enforce them.

Against that backdrop, we also express our firm and full support for Mr. Hans Grundberg, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen, and his ongoing efforts to advance a political, peaceful and inclusive solution to the conflict. We

consider it essential to support his good offices and United Nations mediation, particularly when preserving space for dialogue is critical.

It is therefore incumbent on the Council to act with determination, responsibility and prudence to prevent further escalation and safeguard the conditions necessary for a political solution. In the face of growing regional instability, our responsibility is to preserve the international order based on law and seek to act before the costs of inaction grow even greater.

Mr. Sun Lei (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Assistant Secretary-General Khiari for his briefing. I also listened carefully to the Yemeni Permanent Representative's presentation of the situation. I welcome the Permanent Representative of Saudi Arabia to today's meeting.

Only last Thursday, the Council held an emergency open meeting on the situation in Yemen (see S/PV.10219). In the mere five days since then, there have been major new developments in Yemen, the Bab al-Mandab Strait and the surrounding areas. Large-scale fighting between the Government of Yemen and the Houthis continues. De facto control over strategic islands in the Bab al-Mandab Strait has shifted, and a key Saudi oil pipeline has been attacked by drones. The conflict is intensifying and tensions are rising. As a result of changes in the regional situation, the number of merchant vessels passing through the Bab al-Mandab Strait has fallen sharply in recent days, while international concern about navigational safety in the Strait has grown rapidly.

China is closely following developments in Yemen and the surrounding areas and is deeply concerned about the rapid and continuing escalation of the conflict. China has consistently supported efforts to safeguard the sovereignty, security and territorial integrity of Yemen and Saudi Arabia and firmly opposes attacks on civilian infrastructure, including energy facilities, during armed conflict. We stress that protecting civilians and civilian facilities is a red line that must not be crossed under any circumstances. The waters of the Red Sea and the Bab al-Mandab Strait are important international shipping routes for goods and energy resources. Maintaining normal shipping operations in those waters is the common responsibility of all parties. China firmly opposes any attack on civilian vessels. The right of commercial vessels of all countries to navigate the Red Sea in accordance with international law must be respected by all parties.

The situation in Yemen now stands on the dangerous brink of full-scale escalation. The fundamental solution to the risks facing the safety of navigation in the Red Sea and the Bab al-Mandab Strait is to end the armed conflict on land and achieve lasting peace. No matter how great the differences may be, a way forward should be found at the negotiating table rather than through a contest of strength amid the sound of gunfire and artillery. The most urgent task is for all parties to remain calm and exercise restraint, immediately cease fire and end the fighting, refrain from actions that aggravate tensions and return to the proper track of diplomatic negotiations as soon as possible. The Gulf countries possess unique advantages and a successful record in mediating a settlement of the Yemen issue. We support them in playing a greater role in mediating the current conflict.

The current escalation in Yemen and the surrounding areas has taken place against a backdrop of growing turmoil in the broader Middle East. China supports the countries of the region in developing friendly and good-neighbourly relations; upholding a vision of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security; strengthening dialogue on peace and security; exploring the reshaping of the regional security architecture; advancing a comprehensive approach to common regional security and jointly building a new security architecture in the Middle East. China

stands ready to work with all parties and make unremitting efforts to safeguard the security of international waterways, bring an end to hostilities in the Middle East and restore regional security and stability.

Mr. Gaona (Colombia) (*spoke in French*): For Colombia, there is no doubt. What we are facing at this point following the developments of recent days, is a direct, serious and flagrant violation of international humanitarian law — not only of the principles of distinction and humanity, but also, and in particular, of the most important decisions in international jurisprudence, including the Tadić ruling, dating from 1995, and the advisory opinion on the legality of the threat of use of nuclear weapons, as well as those concerning the protection of civilians and the principle of distinction. This is where Colombia wishes to express its grave concern over a persistent violation that places us in a critical situation.

(*spoke in English*)

Colombia wants to make sure that we do not read the facts as merely a violation of sovereignty. The conflict is escalating very fast. It is true that the sovereignty of Yemen and Saudi Arabia has been violated, but today we face a humanitarian situation, with more than 22 million people in need of humanitarian aid and more than 4.5 million internally displaced within Yemen alone. That situation unmistakably leads us to believe that, given the fact that the use of proxies is prohibited by international law and that the geopolitical situation in the Strait of Hormuz and the Bab al-Mandab Strait affects one third of the oil supply on the planet, we are potentially facing an international conflict whose effects will be felt first in the developing world and then in the developed world. We believe that the consequences of inaction are greater than the conflict we face today.

(*spoke in Spanish*)

For the Republic of Colombia, it is clear that resolution 2216 (2015) and resolution 2140 (2014), in particular, are being violated with respect to the Sanctions Committee established pursuant to resolution 2140 (2014) and its Panel of Experts. Naturally, we maintain our consistent support for the efforts of Special Envoy Hans Grundberg. We also welcome the briefing by the Assistant Secretary-General and the statements made by the representatives of Yemen and Saudi Arabia.

We also wish to emphasize that resolutions 2801 (2025) and 2826 (2026), the latter in particular, are being violated. Nor can we overlook other violations of United Nations instruments and of resolution 2730 (2024), concerning the protection of United Nations, diplomatic and humanitarian personnel. Colombia once again demands the unconditional release of the humanitarian and diplomatic personnel and the 73 members of the United Nations staff who are being held captive.

Colombia also supports the mandate and work of Special Envoy Hans Grundberg and calls for an immediate cessation of hostilities and violations of the sovereignty of Yemen and Saudi Arabia. We once again draw attention to the international repercussions for trade and, ultimately, for the development of other regions of the world, given that one third of global oil resources passes through two straits that are of critical importance at the present time. We are facing a conflict that initially appeared to concern national sovereignty, subsequently appeared also to be a regional conflict and is now unquestionably escalating to the international level. That is so not only because of its commercial consequences for oil prices, but also because of its humanitarian implications for the region and the world, with more than 22 million people exposed to a humanitarian crisis.

The violations in this case concern not only international humanitarian law and public international law, but also the human rights treaties to which several States that

may ultimately play a role in resolving the conflict are parties. The Republic of Colombia therefore also calls for the historical record to be preserved so that, following the resolution of the conflict, responsibility may be determined for the serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law that have been committed.

The principle of distinction affords particular protection to civilians, yet civilians are being attacked on both sides of the border, in both Saudi Arabia and Yemen. There is no justification under international law for those attacks. They must be condemned in the strongest possible terms, and the historical record must be preserved for the time when the conflict is brought to an end through good offices.

Lastly, Colombia likewise calls for the conflicting parties to cease excessive acts that cause unnecessary harm to the population in violation of the time-honoured principle of international humanitarian law dating back to the *Corfu Channel* case of 1949. This principle of humanity requires the parties to remember that the aim is not only to protect the civilian population but also to not subject them to an unending and wholly unnecessary conflict. The protection of State sovereignty is not at issue; the protection of the civilian population is unquestionable and indisputable.

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

I thank Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs Khaled Khiari for his briefing, and I welcome the participation of the Permanent Representatives of Yemen and Saudi Arabia.

France, with a number of partners, requested this emergency meeting owing to the threat the Houthis pose to international peace and security. By launching an armed offensive on 3 September, by continuing their unacceptable attacks against the legitimate Government of Yemen and against Saudi Arabia, including against civilians and civilian infrastructure, and by forcibly seizing the Yemeni Red Sea coast on 11 September, the Houthis have chosen escalation. We roundly condemn this. Amid this escalation, France calls on the Houthis to immediately cease all military action in Yemen and throughout the region. We express our solidarity with the legitimate Yemeni authorities and with Saudi Arabia. We also call on Iran to stop arming the Houthis in violation of the embargo laid down by resolution 2216 (2015) and, more broadly, to end its destabilizing policy vis-à-vis the region and freedom of navigation.

We point out that seas and oceans are not lawless zones. International waters are a global commons whose use is protected by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. It is necessary to drive home the point that freedom of navigation in the Red Sea and international straits is non-negotiable. The Council demanded adherence to that principle in resolution 2722 (2024) on the Red Sea and resolution 2817 (2026) on the Strait of Hormuz. With the Strait of Hormuz now still closed, neither France nor any State committed to international law will countenance an upsurge in the disruption to global supplies already being seen, of which the most vulnerable communities are bearing the brunt. We cannot tolerate the unilateral imposition of restrictions or transit routes in the straits. That would set a dangerous precedent for international law and freedom of navigation. We must reject this holding of global trade hostage and strive for a full and unconditional reopening of the straits.

To safeguard maritime security and restore freedom of navigation in the Red Sea, France will remain engaged as part of the European Union Naval Force operation Aspides, while operating with a strictly defensive posture and in coordination with its European and international partners. Regarding the Strait of Hormuz, France stands ready, conditions permitting, to contribute to reinstating freedom of navigation

through the Multinational Military Mission for the Strait of Hormuz, M3SOH, launched with the United Kingdom and over thirty or so other partners. This mission, I reiterate, is neutral and strictly defensive in nature.

The path forward in the Yemen crisis is well known. It first entails an immediate halt to the escalation in which the Houthis are engaging so as to eventually enable an inclusive political process to resume under United Nations auspices, with the involvement of all of Yemeni society. In making this call, we have not forgotten the urgent need for the release of the United Nations and humanitarian personnel being unlawfully held by the Houthis. France fully supports the efforts of Special Envoy Hans Grundberg to move towards a political settlement, and we urge him to continue in that vein, while calling on the parties to commit to the process forthwith by affording precedence to the path of negotiation.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I now give the floor to the representative of Saudi Arabia.

Mr. Almadi (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, we thank the French Republic for its call to convene this emergency session. We also appreciate the participation of the Kingdom of Bahrain, the United Kingdom, Denmark, Greece and Latvia. We also thank Mr. Khaled Khiari, Assistant Secretary-General, for his briefing, which included a detailed account of the current developments.

This meeting is being held amid grave developments that demand that the Security Council consider the risks and threats entailed with a sense of the utmost responsibility. These rapid developments in Yemen, alongside the terrorist Houthi militia's persistent escalation, have imposed themselves on the agenda of the Council today, as have the increasing threats to the security of the Red Sea region and the potential repercussions that extend beyond Yemen and the region, adversely affecting international trade and the global economy and disrupting international supply chains.

Throughout the Yemeni crisis, the Kingdom has supported de-escalation and prioritized a political solution. It has contributed to various efforts aimed at ending the crisis and at fostering the conditions for Yemenis to achieve a comprehensive and sustainable peace. The Kingdom has striven diligently, in cooperation with the United Nations, through Special Envoy Hans Grundberg, and neighbouring brotherly countries, to bring peace, stability and prosperity to Yemen by attempting to find international, regional and national political initiatives that end the Houthi militia's control over the territories that it seized by force and coercion. However, the terrorist Houthi militia, with its radical, obscurantist and extremist agenda, has consistently eschewed any action that would alleviate the stark plight of the Yemeni people or bring stability to the region.

These recent Houthi threats cannot be viewed in isolation from the pattern of escalation the militia is pursuing against my country. On 8 September, they began their attacks, targeting civilian and economic sites in Abha, Khamis Mushayt, Jazan and Najran, killing and injuring 73 civilians, including women and children. Less than a week later, on 14 September, the Houthi militia renewed its attacks on Khamis Mushayt, Abha and Ta'if, injuring 13 civilians and damaging seven homes and two vehicles. This was coupled with their continued targeting of commercial vessels and threats to maritime security in the Red Sea and Bab al-Mandab, which shows that this escalation is not limited to a single country, but rather threatens the security of the region and the safety of one of the most significant international waterways. Its economic repercussions extend throughout the region. The conduct of the Houthi militia, the militias that support them and their backers in the region clearly points to a policy of militarizing international straits to terrorize the international community and besiege the global economy and blackmail it.

The Security Council must take a robust stance against this. Responsibility to protect the region's international waterways cannot be the sole responsibility of any one country in the region; it is a shared international responsibility that requires a firm stance and adherence to international law and the relevant Security Council resolutions, in particularly resolutions 2216 (2015) and 2722 (2024). Out of its belief that the security of maritime routes is a collective responsibility requiring effective international partnership, the Kingdom launched the Multinational Maritime Defense Coalition, which has become institutionally and operationally active with the aim of enhancing collective maritime security, protecting freedom of navigation and maritime waterways, especially the Bab al-Mandab Strait, the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, and supporting the continuity of international trade and global supply chains. This initiative is a practical translation of the Kingdom's commitment to the security of maritime waterways and its belief that confronting the threats targeting them requires organized and sustainable international cooperation that maintains freedom of navigation and protects the common interests of the international community.

Lastly, the Kingdom affirms that its approach of supporting reconciliation and peace goes hand in hand with a firm stance on safeguarding its national security and the integrity of its territory, as well as the safety of its citizens, residents and resources, and that it reserves the right to take whatever measures are necessary to safeguard its security and counter any attacks against it, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

At the same time, addressing the threats to navigation in the Red Sea and the Bab al-Mandab Strait in a sustainable manner hinges on the stability of Yemen and the resolution of its crisis. The Kingdom therefore reaffirms its unwavering position in support of the unity of the Republic of Yemen, its sovereignty, its independence and the integrity of its territory, and reaffirms its support for the efforts of the United Nations and its Special Envoy to reach a comprehensive and sustainable political solution that meets the aspirations of the brotherly Yemeni people.

The Kingdom will continue to work with its partners and the international community to achieve this objective, in a manner that safeguards the security of the region and the safety of navigation and international trade.

The meeting rose at 4.50 p.m.