

مكتب المبعوث الخاص
للأمين العام للأمم المتحدة إلى اليمن



Office of the Special Envoy
of the Secretary-General for Yemen

Briefing to the United Nations by the Special Envoy for Yemen

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Thank you, **Madame President**.

Allow me to start by extending my warmest wishes to Yemenis and to Muslims around the world on the occasion of Eid al Adha. Eid is a time to celebrate and reflect on the values of selflessness and compassion – principles that should guide us as we work towards a more peaceful and prosperous future for Yemen.

Madame President,

With the deadline for the truce extension a mere three weeks away, I want to take this opportunity to 1) highlight what has been achieved in the three and a half months of the truce, 2) discuss some of the obstacles we have faced in implementation and how we are working to overcome them, and 3) outline a way forward that includes extending, consolidating, and expanding the truce so that we increase the benefits to Yemen's population and move toward a political settlement.

To date, the truce has been holding for over three months. It has resulted in a significant reduction in civilian casualties, with the number of civilian casualties reduced by two thirds compared to the three months before the truce began. Due to the sharp decline in hostilities, conflict-related civilian casualties are now mostly due to landmines and unexploded ordnance, which continue to pose a threat to civilians, including children, as they return to areas where hostilities have decreased.

Madame President, we continue to receive reports from both sides about alleged incidents inside Yemen, including direct and indirect fire, drone attacks, reconnaissance overflights, and the establishment of new fortifications and trenches. The parties are also allegedly sending reinforcements to main frontlines, including in Ma'rib, Hudaydah, and Taiz. As you are aware, my Office is supporting the parties in establishing channels of communication to help them manage such alleged incidents in a peaceful manner. I am pleased to report that my Office convened last week the third meeting of the Military Coordination Committee, comprised of representatives of the parties in addition to the Coalition's Joint Forces Command. During the meeting, the sides discussed the formation of the Joint Coordination Room that will be tasked with de-escalating incidents at the operational level and appointed a working group that commenced detailed, technical discussions to consolidate proposals in that regard.

The renewal of the truce on 2 June has allowed the continued flow of fuel into Hudaydah port. Since the truce renewal, seven fuel ships carrying nearly 200 thousand metric tons of various fuel products have been cleared to enter Hudaydah port. High fuel prices have chipped away at the benefit for Yemeni citizens. But there is no doubt that without the imports facilitated by the truce this situation would be far worse. The flow

of fuel imports has helped to avoid disruptions in essential public services that depend partly on fuel – such as clean water, healthcare, electricity, and transportation – and has made a valuable difference to the daily lives and well-being of Yemenis. The UN Verification and Inspection Mechanism (UNVIM) has played a pivotal role in facilitating the smooth import of fuel ships into Hudaydah as mandated by this Council. I am deeply concerned that a shortage of funds could result in the closure of UNVIM in September.

Madame President, the efforts to enhance the freedom of movement for men and women inside Yemen as well as into and outside of Yemen must continue. Since the start of the truce, 15 commercial round-trip flights have transported almost 7.000 passengers between Sana'a and Amman. We continue to work closely with the Egyptian authorities to facilitate regular flights to and from Cairo. I greatly appreciate the continued engagement of both countries. While much has been accomplished in facilitating flights to and from Sanaa International airport, we are working to ensure that a regular schedule of flights can fully meet the promise of the truce and the expectations on the Yemeni people.

Madame President,

Let me now turn to Taiz and the issue of freedom of movement inside the country. It was my sincere belief that by this time in the truce, the parties would have reached an agreement to open roads in Taiz and other governorates. It is regrettable for all of us, but mostly for the men and women of Taiz, that many of the roads there remain closed for the seventh year in a row. Opening roads is not only about easing humanitarian suffering and removing restrictions, it is also about beginning to normalize the conditions of everyday life for Yemenis, including education, work, health services, and the overall economy.

Since my last briefing, I have continued to engage the parties, including in Amman and during my recent visits to Riyadh and Muscat, on viable proposals to immediately open roads in Taiz and other governorates. I also continue to draw on the expertise of local mediators and civil society representatives. Following discussions with the parties, my Office shared an updated proposal on the phased opening of roads. Ansar Allah has since communicated that they do not accept the latest proposal. Still my efforts to reach a negotiated solution will continue.

Madame President, I would like to take this opportunity to revisit the terms of truce where the parties committed to meet to agree on road openings. In the days preceding Eid Al Adha, we have seen different sides announce unilateral action to open roads. While unilateral action could be a step in the right direction, agreement from both sides is important because road openings require coordination and ongoing communication to ensure that roads are opened safely and sustainably for civilian passage. The United Nations-facilitated process provides a platform to come to a sustainable, negotiated agreement on road openings. I therefore encourage the parties to engage constructively with United Nations' efforts to reach an agreement on road openings so that all Yemenis can begin to feel the tangible benefits of the truce in their everyday lives. An agreement on road openings in Taiz and other governorates would be momentous, and its benefits would reverberate across Yemen.

Madame President,

In the last weeks, we have seen worrisome escalatory rhetoric by the parties questioning the benefits of the truce – a dangerous move that I ask both sides to refrain from. Let us be clear, the alternative to the truce is a return to hostilities and likely an intensified phase of conflict with all of its predictable consequences for Yemeni civilians and regional security. I have already outlined the many tangible benefits of the truce for Yemeni men and women. The relative calm it has afforded has also allowed for the resumption of some public works and encouraged international investments. In light of increasing fuel prices and the global economic situation, even more needs to be done to ensure that fuel, electricity, and consumer goods are

available and affordable for civilians across the country. OCHA Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator Joyce Msuya will speak in more detail about the humanitarian situation in Yemen.

This brings me to the way forward. Three and a half months into the truce, we still find ourselves immersed in the details of the truce implementation. This is important. But it has meant we have not been able to invest as much in the task of consolidating and expanding the truce in order to deliver more benefits to the population and set Yemen on the path toward a durable political settlement. In my discussions with the parties, they have emphasized the importance of building on the truce to achieve a wider array of economic and security priorities, and to not lose the opportunity for peace that it provides. Many of those priorities that the parties raised have also been highlighted by the diverse groups of Yemeni men and women that my Office had been consulting since March to inform our multi-track process. In the coming weeks, I will continue to explore with the parties the possibility of a longer extension and an expanded truce agreement. This would provide time and the opportunity to start serious discussions on the economy and security tracks, to start addressing priority issues such as revenues as well as the payment of salaries, and to begin the process of moving toward a ceasefire. I ask the parties to engage with me on these issues with a sense of urgency and flexibility. The participation of broad array of Yemeni stakeholders, including women, youth, and civil society remains a priority of mine to ensure that the political settlement is sustainable and meets the legitimate aspirations and demands of Yemeni men and women.

Madame President, I would like to reiterate my gratitude for the continued support of this Council, as well as from the Sultanate of Oman and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the broader international community. Your concerted support for the full implementation and extension of the truce as well as for the way forward will be vital for the weeks to come. The truce represents the best opportunity for peace in Yemen we have had in years and we should encourage and support the parties to make the most of this opportunity for the benefit of Yemen as a whole.

Thank you very much, **Madame President**.