



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

**UN Special Envoy Hans Grundberg's Briefing to the Security Council**

**Open session**

**14 May 2025**

Thank you **Mr. President**.

**Mr. President**, developments in Yemen and the wider region have evolved at pace since my last briefing to this Council. Allow me to begin by welcoming the announcement on the 6<sup>th</sup> of May of a cessation of hostilities between the United States of America and Ansar Allah. This step represents an important and necessary de-escalation in the Red Sea and in Yemen following the resumption, on 15<sup>th</sup> of March, of US airstrikes against targets in Ansar Allah-controlled areas. I sincerely commend the Sultanate of Oman for their efforts to achieve this agreement. As I have said many times before, it has become increasingly clear that a level of de-escalation in the Red Sea and in the wider region is needed to bring Yemen back to the path toward peace.

Events in recent weeks, however, have also served as stark reminders that Yemen is ensnared in the wider regional tensions. The attack carried out by Ansar Allah on Ben Gurion Airport on the 4<sup>th</sup> of May, and the subsequent strikes by Israel on Hudaydah Port, Sana'a Airport, and other locations in response, represent a dangerous escalation, and the threats and attacks, regrettably, continue. I renew my call for all parties to abide by their obligations under international law, to protect civilians and civilian infrastructure.

Nevertheless, the announcement of 6<sup>th</sup> of May provides a welcome opportunity on which we must collectively build to refocus on resolving Yemen's conflict and advancing a Yemeni-owned peace process. The challenges facing Yemen are immense: from the deep and significant levels of mistrust between the parties, with some still reportedly preparing for war, to near economic collapse.

As an indicator of the deep economic instability that Yemen is facing, there has been continued deterioration of the currency during the last month, now surpassing 2,500 Yemeni Rial to the dollar. Citizens have suffered worsening electricity black-outs in Government of Yemen-controlled areas, with recent reports of electricity outage for up to 15 hours per day in Aden and a total blackout for over two weeks in the neighbouring governorates of Lahj and Abyan. On Saturday, women took to the streets in Aden to protest and demand better public services and their basic rights.

Meanwhile, in Ansar Allah-controlled areas, the population also suffers from a loss of purchasing power, civil servants' salaries have not been paid in full for years, the physical quality of the currency is deteriorating, and liquidity is drying up. Yet as ordinary people are increasingly unable to afford the most basic commodities, civil society voices there are being repressed. In this regard I am looking forward to listening to the briefing of Ms. El Mamoun from the Center of Civilians in Conflict.

**Mr. President,** across Yemen, the general economic degradation reinforces how urgently Yemen requires a political path to allow for the collaboration needed for economic growth. I am continuing to actively work with Yemeni parties and regional partners to identify solutions to economic challenges and resume dialogue towards this goal.

**Mr. President,** I have been clear and consistent in my approach and I will remain so. The United Nations is committed to offering a viable alternative to military and economic escalation and potential return to war and we will continue to work to bring the parties to the table to identify and agree on solutions that are acceptable to all. It may seem, **Mr. President,** to some that amidst so much upheaval and so much mistrust, a political process is an unrealistic and naïve goal. I am here to argue that this is not the case. The fact is that the parties have already committed to the basis of what should be the beginning of a political process in Yemen: a nationwide ceasefire, measures to address urgent economic and humanitarian issues, and an inclusive political process. These are commitments that need to be fulfilled for there to be a sustainable peace – this is the case now and will be the case in the future. All Yemenis can rest assured: the United Nations will remain ready and unwavering, in our support for a negotiated exit from conflict and for a just, inclusive and sustainable peace.

I recognise, however, that, as time passes, the positions become further entrenched and challenges become more complex. Some may be questioning whether the Roadmap is still valid. My answer remains resolutely the same: Yemen will still need the elements of the roadmap - a ceasefire, economic recovery, and an inclusive political process in order to move forward. That said, I recognise that the mediation environment has changed significantly since late 2023, and the need for additional guarantees to enable the buy-in of the parties and to ensure the support of the region, and the international community and this Council.

**Mr. President,** Yemenis want to move forward – the status quo is untenable. And while the frontlines may currently appear relatively stable, what Yemen has now is not peace. The continued engagement of the international community is needed to help Yemenis realize their desire to build a country that is stable, prosperous and safe. Yemen's neighbors and international partners are needed to support a viable Yemeni-led inclusive political process. And since I last briefed you, I have held meetings with the parties and the diplomatic community in Riyadh and Muscat reiterating this message.

**Mr. President,** as I draw to a close, I want to raise again the unlawful arbitrary and prolonged detention by Ansar Allah of UN staff as well as those from international and national NGOs, civil

society, and diplomatic missions. Not only is their detention in violation of international law, but it has also caused a significant chilling effect throughout the international community, which only has one outcome: undermining support to Yemen, which will sadly impact the Yemenis most in need. I welcome the recent releases of staff members from the Dutch Embassy and international organization. This demonstrates what is possible, but these releases are woefully insufficient. I hope Ansar Allah will hear very clearly what I am saying: Change course. Release the remaining detainees immediately without conditions. Bring this unacceptable situation to an end.

**Mr. President,** Yemenis have endured over ten years of instability, uncertainty and economic collapse. I speak directly to them now and I reiterate what I have said before: I see you. I hear you. You have not been forgotten - and I won't relent in my efforts to pursue peace and stability in Yemen. To the parties, I urge you to be courageous and choose dialogue – the United Nations will not waiver in its commitment to support you in finding a negotiated settlement to this conflict. And lastly, to you here today in this chamber: the collective global membership of the United Nations has conferred upon this Council the primary responsibility for maintenance of peace and security. This is particularly true for Yemen. Real peace and security in Yemen can only be achieved through international commitment, coordination and a common and long-term approach. We must therefore redouble our efforts to offer a credible alternative to war and a vision for Yemen beyond status quo and stagnation. I am grateful for your continued unity and support for my efforts to achieve a peaceful, stable and prosperous Yemen.

Thank you **Mr. President.**