



Security Council Consultations on Yemen, 16 August 2023

Malta Statement delivered by Francesca Gatt

Deputy Permanent Representative of Malta to the United Nations, New York

Thank you, President. I also thank Special Envoy Grundberg, Director Wosornu, and Amat Al-Salam Al-Haj for their briefings.

Malta remains encouraged that the people of Yemen continue to benefit from the longest period of relative calm since the beginning of the conflict. However, as we have heard again today, this calm remains fragile.

We reiterate our call on parties to the conflict to maintain this positive momentum. We hope that they will engage constructively in peace talks to achieve a formalised and permanent ceasefire, and pave a path towards a Yemeni-led and owned political process under UN auspices.

This crucial window of opportunity will not remain open forever, and it must be seized without delay.

Malta remains gravely concerned about the humanitarian situation in Yemen, where civilians, including women, children, and other vulnerable groups continue to bear the brunt of this protracted conflict.

Nearly 22 million Yemenis are in need of humanitarian assistance, 17 million are food insecure. This is inexcusable. Children continue to suffer from the horrors of protracted conflict; many have never experienced anything different. Over 11 million of them are in need of humanitarian assistance, 2.3



million are internally displaced, and more than half a million are acutely malnourished.

Humanitarian aid workers continue to operate under extremely difficult and dangerous conditions. Malta strongly condemns the murder of Moayad Hameidi on 21 July, who served nearly two-decades with the World Food Programme. We convey our deepest condolences to his family and the humanitarian community, and call on the authorities to bring the perpetrators to justice.

The lack of funding for Yemen's Humanitarian Response Plan is also troubling. After almost 8 months into 2023, the plan remains less than one-third funded, preventing the delivery of essential aid to those in need. Despite many warnings, the lack of financing has led the World Food Programme to cut its assistance. At this delicate juncture, the international community must re-double efforts to rectify this desperate situation.

Furthermore, as we continue to see no improvement in chronic access impediments faced by humanitarian workers, we remind all parties of their obligations under international humanitarian law. Restrictions of movement for women aid workers further exacerbate the suffering for Yemen's most vulnerable, and must be lifted immediately.

On a positive note, we welcome the release of five UN staff on 11 August, after spending 19 months in detention. We call on parties to continue dialogues on prisoner exchanges, and reiterate our call for children, humanitarian



workers, and other detainees, including those from the Baha'i community, to be released.

Malta is also concerned by the campaigns of disinformation and misinformation on vaccines in Yemen, which are causing long-term suffering that is needless and preventable. We emphasise that vaccines are crucial, particularly for children, and strongly encourage authorities to counter such callous acts in a decisive manner.

We also urge for greater demining efforts and increased explosive ordnance risk education across Yemen, to eliminate the indiscriminate threat of mines and explosive remnants of war.

In conclusion, President, Malta commends the completion of the ship-to-ship transfer of oil from the FSO Safer. Thanks to donors and the dedicated work of UN staff, a monumental environmental and humanitarian catastrophe has been avoided.

We hope the remaining funding will be made available to ensure a timely completion of the project.

I thank you.