



## Security Council briefing on Yemen, 14 March 2024

Malta Statement delivered by Ms Francesca Gatt

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Thank you, President. I also thank Special Envoy Grundberg and Director Wosornu for their comprehensive briefings.

Malta continues to be gravely concerned by the dire and deteriorating humanitarian situation in Yemen, causing untold suffering for the Yemeni people, for years.

The Humanitarian Response Plan for 2024 is a tragic reminder of the scale of suffering in Yemen. Over 18 million people need humanitarian assistance and protection services.

As we have heard today, Yemen continues to be one of the most food-insecure countries in the world. Seventeen-point-six million people facing food and nutrition insecurity. Nearly half of all children under five are suffering stunting.



The international community must scale up efforts to ensure the World Food Programme and its partners have the necessary resources and access to urgently resume food distribution in Houthi-controlled areas. Without the necessary funding, food security will continue to deteriorate sharply.

President

Military escalations in the Red Sea threaten the advancements towards peace in Yemen.

Malta condemns the Houthi missile attack on the ‘True Confidence’ cargo ship on 6 March which resulted in the death of three seafarers and injured four others. We also condemn the missile attacks on the ‘MV Rubymar.’ Its sinking poses a serious environmental risk in the Red Sea.

We call for the full implementation of Security Council resolution 2722 including the immediate release of the ‘Galaxy Leader’ vessel and its crew.



Furthermore, Houthi attacks against international shipping will endanger the safety and security of seafarers, freedom of navigation, and hinder delivery of essential humanitarian aid into Yemen.

We welcome the launch of the European Union's *Operation Aspides*, which seeks to restore maritime security and safeguard the freedom of navigation in the Red Sea.

The Houthis must immediately cease their attacks and actions against commercial shipping, and abide by their obligations under international law.

We call on parties to the conflict in Yemen to focus their efforts on finding a political agreement that will lead to sustainable peace for the benefit of all Yemenis.

The establishment of a UN roadmap will be crucial to ensure the implementation of a nation-wide ceasefire, improve living conditions, and resumption of an inclusive Yemeni-led and-owned political process under UN auspices.

President



As we also gather for the Commission on the Status of Women, we must highlight that the rights of women in Yemen continue to be violated. The National Dialogue Conference agreed to a 30 percent quota for women's participation. However, they remain marginal to intra-Yemeni talks and committees to implement the Hudaydah agreement.

We urge authorities across Yemen to lift the restrictions which systematically violate women's right to freedom of movement.

By requiring a male guardian's permission or accompaniment, these restrictions impede women's access to health care, education, and work.

Yemeni women working with nongovernmental organisations and UN agencies are being specifically targeted, harassed, and humiliated at checkpoints and many have been forced to resign. This cuts off essential humanitarian aid to Yemeni women and girls and much-needed income for their families.



We urge the UN to ensure that it has sufficient capacity to implement its commitments to the Women, Peace and Security Agenda, including through the deployment of gender advisers and women protection advisers.

We call on all parties in Yemen to fully respect the equal rights and freedoms of women, including their ability to move freely within the country.

In conclusion, President, with start of holy month of Ramadan came expectations of hope for the people of Yemen. Despite these not being fulfilled we remain steadfast in the aspiration of the Yemeni people for a ceasefire and sustainable peace.

I thank you.