



Security Council briefing on Yemen, 13 June 2024

Malta Statement delivered by Ms Francesca Gatt

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

Thank you, President.

I also thank Special Envoy Grundberg and Director Wosornu for their sobering briefings today.

To begin, let me express Malta's condemnation for the recent arrest and detention by the Houthis of United Nations personnel, civil society, and staff working for non-governmental organisations and diplomatic missions in Yemen.

These detentions are unacceptable, and we demand their immediate and unconditional release.

All parties to the conflict must fully comply with their obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law. This includes their obligations related to the respect and protection of humanitarian workers and United Nations and associated personnel, *including* national and locally recruited staff.



International law prohibits the arbitrary deprivation of liberty and requires all parties to armed conflict to respect and protect humanitarian personnel. We insist that they must not be subjected to any harassment, mistreatment, and unlawful arrest or detention.

These arrests can have serious, far-reaching ramifications on the delivery of humanitarian aid into and throughout Yemen, further aggravating the suffering of innocent civilians.

The humanitarian situation remains dire, with more than 18 million people in need of assistance.

The cholera outbreak continues to spread, with tens of thousands of suspected cases.

Levels of food and nutrition insecurity remain alarmingly high, with the situation likely to worsen in the coming months in the lean season. Nearly 3 million people reside in areas at risk of deteriorating into emergency-levels of food insecurity or worse.



We are also distressed by reports of mothers going hungry to feed their children and call once again for sustained delivery of humanitarian aid and resourcing in order to ensure the most vulnerable are protected.

In this regard, the international community must support a robust response to Yemen's humanitarian crisis. We call for the urgent scale-up of funding for Yemen's Humanitarian Response Plan to ensure the delivery of aid to those in desperate need.

President

Conflict is the main driver of Yemen's humanitarian crisis.

Tensions in Yemen and the region, including escalations in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, continue to disrupt mediation efforts, hamper progress towards a political solution, and risk the flow of humanitarian and commercial goods.



We call on the Houthis to immediately cease all attacks and actions against commercial shipping. Parties to the conflict must prioritise de-escalation and dialogue.

A nation-wide ceasefire and the resumption of an inclusive Yemeni-led and owned political process poses the only durable way forward to sustainable peace. To this end, we call on parties to constructively engage with the Office of the Special Envoy on commitments made to the UN Roadmap.

As we have heard again today, the protracted economic crisis continues to be a major driver of suffering in Yemen.

Unilateral economic decisions and policies undertaken by parties to the conflict are fragmenting Yemen's weak economy, driving instability, and undermining steps towards a political solution.

Parties should refrain from any action that will aggravate the suffering of the Yemenis people and hinder civilians' access to food and essential goods.



We call on parties to adopt a strategic and coordinated response to face challenges to Yemen's economy.

In conclusion, Mr President, after nearly a decade of conflict, Yemen faces the possibility of losing the progress made towards peace. Parties must de-escalate tensions, support humanitarian relief, and take decisive steps towards a ceasefire and political settlement.

I thank you.