



Security Council briefing on Yemen, 15 August 2024

Malta Statement delivered by Ms Francesca Gatt

Chargé d'affaires a.i. of Malta to the United Nations, New York

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

Given the heightened tensions in the region, it is essential for all parties to de-escalate hostilities and exercise restraint.

The regional context is not conducive to efforts to address the dire situation in Yemen, including on the humanitarian front.

More than 18 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance, with more than half being children.

Hunger continues to be a pressing concern, with 17.6 million people suffering acute food insecurity.

Cholera continues to spread throughout Yemen, with nearly one hundred and fifty thousand suspected cases and hundreds of deaths.



Recent flooding in Yemen has impacted tens of thousands of families, damaging homes, farms and infrastructure, and resulting in the tragic death of many civilians.

We call on the Yemeni Authorities to remove obstacles to the delivery of aid and allow for safe, unimpeded humanitarian access to those in need throughout Yemen.

The resource gap is of similar concern. We call on the international community to support a robust response to Yemen's humanitarian crisis, and urgently scale-up funding for Yemen's Humanitarian Response Plan.

Ensuring that our humanitarian colleagues have the appropriate operating environment to meet the needs of all Yemenis is key.

In this vein, we strongly condemn the Houthis' arrests and arbitrary detentions of United Nations personnel, civil society, and staff working for non-governmental organisations and diplomatic missions in Yemen.



These arrests are unacceptable and can have far-reaching ramifications on the delivery of humanitarian aid. It is vital that humanitarian personnel are able to carry out their critical work in a safe operating environment.

We call for their immediate and unconditional release. While in detention, they must be held in good conditions and allowed contact with their families, colleagues, and legal counsel.

We strongly condemn the Houthi's storming of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in Sana'a. This act is inconsistent with the privileges and immunities of the United Nations and constitutes a serious attack on the ability of the UN to perform its mandate. We call on the Houthis to leave the premises and return all seized assets and belongings immediately.

President

The economic war that has been conducted by parties to the conflict has fragmented Yemen's economy and currency, causing inflation to rise and surging the prices of essential goods.



We are encouraged by the agreement between the Government of Yemen and the Houthis last month on several measures to de-escalate on the economic front.

We hope this agreement can be used as a step forward towards establishing a formal nationwide ceasefire and resumption of an inclusive Yemeni-led and -owned political process.

We welcome the efforts of the Office of the Special Envoy and UN Women in holding a fourth consultation with representatives of diverse segments of Yemeni society.

The systematic violation of women's right to freedom of movement limit women's ability to participate in all spheres, including work, education, and access healthcare. To ensure sustainable peace, women must be able to participate fully, equally, meaningfully and safely in political negotiations, and in decision-making for Yemen's future.

In conclusion, Yemen is facing a critical juncture.

Last month we witnessed a new level of escalation, demonstrating the danger of a devastating region-wide conflict.



The Houthis must immediately cease any military acts that could further jeopardise the safety of the millions of Yemenis who have suffered nearly a decade of war. This includes their actions against commercial shipping in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden and their unjustifiable detention of the Galaxy Leader and its crew.

Members of the international community are also responsible to urgently de-escalate tensions in the region and prioritise dialogue to avoid further regional escalation.

I thank you.