



Security Council briefing on Yemen, 12 September 2024

Malta Statement delivered by Ms Francesca Gatt

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

Thank you President, and I also thank Special Envoy Grundberg, Acting USG Msuya, and Ms Al Obahi for their briefings.

Malta remains deeply concerned about the well-being of United Nations personnel, members of civil society, and staff of non-governmental organisations and diplomatic missions that continue to be arbitrarily detained by the Houthis for more than three months.

We condemn these detentions, and demand their immediate and unconditional release. We reiterate that those detained must be treated with full respect for their human rights, and that they must be able to contact their families and legal representatives.

We equally condemn the baseless accusations made by the Houthis against UN Agencies in recent days that further threaten the safety of UN staff and humanitarian partners working to serve the people of Yemen.



The humanitarian situation in Yemen remains dire, and these arbitrary arrests and false allegations will have far-reaching ramifications on the delivery of humanitarian aid to those in desperate need.

We stress that humanitarian workers must be allowed to operate in a safe environment, and given unimpeded access to assist those in need throughout Yemen.

Let us not forget that eighteen million Yemenis, more than half of which are children, require humanitarian assistance. The vast majority of them suffer acute food insecurity.

Malnutrition has worsened from the combined effect of the spread of diseases, a shortage of nutritious food, a lack of drinking water, and broader economic decline. This has also led to a surge in the number of children under five suffering acute malnutrition or wasting, which has devastating long-term impacts on their development.



On top of this, flooding has taken the lives of nearly 100 people, damaging tens of thousands of homes, and displacing thousands of families across the country. This disaster has compounded the suffering of millions, including the 4.5 million people internally displaced.

Contaminated water has also surged cases of cholera, and healthcare infrastructure is unable to tackle the spread of the disease.

We appeal to the international community to urgently scale up financial support for Yemen's Humanitarian Response Plan, which as we have just heard from Acting USG Msuya remains drastically underfunded.

President

Malta remains deeply concerned about the increased tensions and insecurity in the region, which risk disrupting ongoing mediation efforts.



We urge parties to return to the negotiating table to engage on commitments made to the UN roadmap. These include the implementation of a nation-wide ceasefire, improving living conditions, and engaging in preparations for the resumption of an inclusive Yemeni-led and -owned political process under UN auspices.

An inclusive political process requires the full, equal, meaningful, and safe participation of diverse women in all peace and security decision making processes and in the humanitarian response.

As we have also heard from Ms Al Obahi, the *mahram* requirement continues to impede women's ability to work, travel, and access healthcare. Women-led civil society organisations, journalists, and women human rights defenders face escalating restrictions, threats, arbitrary detentions, and forced disappearance.

In parallel, we also hope to see greater progress on the economic front to strengthen Yemen's currency and economy.



In closing, President, we note with deep worry and regret that the Houthi attacks in the Red Sea continue to pose a significant threat. We condemn the attack on the MV Sounion oil tanker, which could lead to catastrophic environmental consequences for the region.

We call for the Houthis to immediately cease actions against merchant and commercial shipping, and call for the full respect of UN Security Council Resolutions 2722 and 2739.

I thank you.