

De-escalation is key to finding a solution to peace efforts in Yemen

Thank you Mr President. Can I start by thanking the Special Envoy, the Under-Secretary-General, and the 2140 Committee Chair, the Permanent Representative of Albania, for each of their reports.

Since the previous Council meeting, we've heard there has been a notable escalation in the conflict, including reprehensible Houthi cross-border attacks on the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. The latest attack on Abha International Airport wounded 12 civilians, whilst the 17th January attack on the UAE killed three civilians. The UK condemns in the strongest terms the Houthis' repeated terror attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure, against Yemenis and Yemen's neighbours.

There remains no military solution to this conflict. As the Special Envoy said, such a hope is futile. We call upon all parties to de-escalate urgently and to engage with the new UN-led peace process. We welcome and fully endorse the Special Envoy's proposals to begin wide-ranging consultations with the parties to the conflict, and the principles for the UN plan. I commend the Special Envoy's inclusive approach which will ensure that a wide range of Yemenis have the opportunity to participate. The UK encourages all parties to participate and to engage constructively in the upcoming consultations.

We are also keen to ensure that regional partners are part of the solution. The UAE's presence on the Council is very welcome in this regard. The UK also hosted a Quint meeting on Yemen in late January where Oman, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and the US came together to coordinate our approach to the conflict in Yemen. We reaffirmed during that meeting, our mutual support for the UN's efforts in finding an urgent and comprehensive political solution.

As you flagged Martin, the humanitarian response faces dire funding shortages. As we approach the seventh anniversary of the conflict, the humanitarian picture is bleak – in your words, a death sentence – and the World Food Program has warned that without funding now, only 3 million people will receive full food rations in February, and only 2 million in March. With the annual high level pledging event set for next month, the UK echoes your call Martin to encourage existing and new donors to pledge as generously as possible.

Finally Mr President, we welcome David Gressly's leadership and the update on the progress towards finding a solution to mitigating the risks posed by the SAFER tanker. It remains an urgent environmental concern, and the UK stands ready to help.

I thank you.