

Fifth anniversary of the conflict in Yemen: joint statement

Dominic Raab and Anne-Marie Trevelyan urge all parties to engage with the UN-led peace process on the fifth anniversary of the Saudi-led Coalition's military intervention in the conflict in Yemen.

The intervention came at the request of the internationally recognised Government of Yemen.

Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab and International Development Secretary Anne-Marie Trevelyan said:

Yemen is now at a crossroads between a path to peace or yet more violence. The risk of further conflict as well as the threat of an outbreak of coronavirus could deepen what is already the world's worst humanitarian crisis.

Now, more than ever, all parties must engage with the peace process led by the UN Special Envoy, Martin Griffiths. The UK stands by the people of Yemen and is saving lives every day with vital UK aid support but a political solution is the only lasting way to alleviate suffering. We urge the parties to respond to the call by the UN Secretary General, António Guterres, yesterday to work towards a political solution to end this appalling conflict.

Background:

- The UN Secretary General, António Guterres, issued a [statement](#) on 25 March, which urged the parties in Yemen to immediately cease hostilities, focus on reaching a negotiated settlement and do everything possible to counter a potential outbreak of COVID-19. This followed Guterres' call on 24 March for an end to conflicts around the world amid the global COVID-19 pandemic.
- The year began with some political progress, including agreement on prisoner exchanges and the first of a series of mercy flights of Yemenis to receive medical treatment abroad. However, recent clashes in Marib Governorate and the prospect of a Houthi offensive in that governorate threaten to undermine progress. The Foreign Secretary visited the region in March and met Yemeni President Hadi to reiterate the UK's support for the UN-led process. The UK continues to lead on Yemen in the UN Security Council and funds efforts by the UN Special Envoy to ensure the peace process involves marginalised groups, including women and young people.
- Restrictions on humanitarian access, particularly in Houthi-controlled areas, as well as the beginning of the cholera season and the risk of a COVID-19 outbreak would further worsen the humanitarian situation. The UK is clear that humanitarian aid must not be used as a political tool

and calls on all parties to comply with UN Security Council Resolution 2451 by facilitating safe, rapid, and unhindered access for the humanitarian response. The UK has committed £770 million to support Yemen since the conflict began in 2015 and provided over £200 million in funding this financial year (2019/20).

- The SAFER oil tanker anchored off the coast of Yemen poses a major environmental threat. In accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 2511, the Houthis must immediately facilitate access for the UN to conduct an assessment and essential maintenance.

Further information