

Yemen parties underscore 'strong desire' for peace, UN Envoy reports

Warring parties in Yemen have expressed their "strong desire" to achieve peace, the [United Nations Envoy](#) for the country has reported.

Martin Griffiths was in the capital, Sana'a, this week for two days of talks with leaders and representatives of the Ansar Allah rebel movement and the rival General People's Congress, the party of the current and former President.

The rebels, also known as Houthis, and pro-Government forces, backed by a Saudi-led coalition, have been battling for more than three years.

"I am reassured by the messages I have received, which have been positive and constructive. All parties have not only underscored their strong desire for peace, but have also engaged with me on concrete ideas for achieving peace," Mr. Griffiths told journalists on Wednesday, adding that he will continue talks with the parties in the coming days.

The UN Envoy expressed thanks to rebel leader Abdel Malek al-Houthi, with whom he held a "fruitful discussion" in Sana'a.

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He also expressed hopes of meeting soon with President Abed Rabboh Mansour Hadi, in a follow-up to talks held last week which he described as "positive".

"I look forward to work with all the parties urgently to find a solution first that will restore security and stability in (Hodeida) but also create positive conditions for a rapid and urgent restart of political negotiations in the coming days," he said, referring to the battle for the key port city.

Mr. Griffiths was at UN Headquarters on Thursday to brief the Security Council behind closed doors.

UN relief chief Mark Lowcock also addressed the 15 ambassadors on the humanitarian situation in Yemen, where more than 22 million people require some form of aid or protection assistance.

The crisis in Yemen has its genesis in the 2011 Arab Spring uprising, which swept across the country amid ongoing rebel insurgency.

Although anti-Government protests led to the ouster of the then President,

the transfer of power to Mr. Hadi, his deputy, proved rocky.

The Office of the UN Special Envoy supports the return to a peaceful political transition in Yemen, engaging with all sides – as well as civil society, women, youth and others – in the process.