

Yemen: UN envoy asks Security Council for more support 'to move back' to the negotiating table

"The level of confidence is at its [lowest](#) and the human and humanitarian cost is ever rising," said the UN's chief Yemen negotiator, by video link from Jordan, noting that "the war has been virtually on all fronts," and the parties "locked into a cycle of violence."

At the same time, he pointed to the Yemeni people, the war's main victims, who yearn for a peaceful political solution to end their suffering, terminate the war and deliver a functioning government to address their basic needs.

"This is no longer a race between political and military institutions and solutions," he continued. "It is, instead, a race to salvage what is left of state institutions as quickly as possible."

Following months of discussions with the parties after the negotiating process had been stalled for two years, he called on 2 August for formal consultations that could kickstart new peace talks.

While Mr. Griffiths acknowledged that things have not been going as planned, he pointed out that the peace process had been relaunched.

"The Yemeni political process, like so many other of its kind, will see ups and downs," he asserted. Calling them "temporary hurdles to be overcome," the UN envoy underscored that though dire, the situation can be addressed through formal consultations.

"We need to stay focused on nurturing the political process, particularly in this, these fragile early stages, and build the needed momentum so that it can deliver tangible benefits to Yemenis throughout Yemen," Mr. Griffiths stated, saying that political will, determination and commitment from all actors, including the Council, was required, along with "putting the interests of the Yemeni people above all else."

We need to stay focused on nurturing the political process, particularly in this, these fragile early stages, and build the needed momentum so that it can deliver tangible benefits – *UN Yemen envoy*

He defined his own role as encouraging the parties "while reminding them of the need to respect their obligations and responsibilities toward the Yemeni people and the international community."

Mr. Griffiths expressed concern over the attacks launched by Houthi forces towards Saudi Arabia and the Red Sea, which he said illustrated "the

continued threat of this conflict towards regional security.”

Turning to the economic situation, he cited widespread demonstrations in the southern governorates, elaborating that rising frustrations threaten conflict there.

“The protestors gave voice to their concern over the economic situation and basic service delivery, and they remind of the importance of listening to southern voices and ensuring their meaningful participation in the arrangements that put an end to this conflict,” he said.

Mr. Griffiths flagged that he would continue discussions through various visits, including by engaging with the political leadership of the Yemeni government in Oman, and the Houthis, who still hold the capital, Sana’a.

As the first of two objectives for his visit, he aims to shape key confidence-building measures, including on prisoner exchanges and opening the Sana’a airport. Secondly, he hopes to secure a commitment from the parties to convene consultations.

“I am also planning to consult very soon with a number of southern stakeholders to agree on their meaningful participation in the process,” he said.

The UN envoy underscored that inclusivity is crucial for success and that at different stages, he would engage Yemeni society.

He concluded by saying that although “the road to peace is never straight,” it does not mean that the process is more difficult, but instead more urgent, and asked the Council for its continued support “to move back to the table with all speed.”

Speaking to reporters afterwards, the President of the Security Council, US Ambassador, Nikki Haley, read out a Press Statement, expressing regret, that the Houthi delegation did not attend the meeting last week in Geneva “despite great efforts by the UN and other States, to address their concerns. They welcome the Special Envoy’s intention to go to Sana’a.”

She added that “the Members of the Security Council reiterated that only a political solution can end the conflict and alleviate the humanitarian suffering. She said they were urging all sides to “get behind” the process that Mr. Griffiths is leading.