



**Office of the Special Envoy
of the Secretary-General for Yemen**

UN Special Envoy Hans Grundberg's Briefing to the Security Council

Open session

14 April 2026

Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. President, allow me to begin by expressing my deepest sympathies for the civilian suffering in your country and across the wider region. The people of Bahrain, like so many across this region, have lived through weeks of violence imposed upon them and wholly undeserved. We now look to the ceasefire between the United States and Iran to help end this conflict and begin lifting the long shadow of uncertainty and fear it has cast over the region. The stakes for the people of the region, including in Yemen, could not be higher.

Yemen has not been spared the gravitational pull of this war. When Ansar Allah launched attacks against Israel at the end of March there was global concern that the war would expand to another front. I shared that concern; I was also alarmed that Yemen risked again being drawn into a full-on regional confrontation, with devastating consequences for its people. So far, Yemen has avoided that fate—but risks remain. I echo the Secretary General's call on the parties to the current conflict in the Middle East to abide by the terms of the ceasefire, and I call on Ansar Allah to refrain from any further attacks.

Throughout the past two months, I have engaged intensively with the Yemeni parties, including Ansar Allah, as well as regional and international actors. From Amman and on trips to Aden, Moscow, Riyadh, and Washington D.C., I have been emphasizing the need to safeguard Yemen's peace process from regional escalation, as well as to maintain freedom of navigation in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden. The concerns about maritime security now gripping the world have been live issues in Yemen, the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden since 2023, and I reiterate the need for upholding freedom of navigation and international maritime law.

Mr. President, my recent trip to Aden was a reminder that, after a decade of conflict, Yemen has little margin to absorb more shocks. The new Cabinet, under the leadership of Prime Minister Shaya Al-Zindani whom I met in Aden, is prioritizing efforts to stabilize the economy, including regarding electricity provision and public sector salaries, with the vital support of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Two milestones deserve particular note: the approval of the 2026 state budget – the

first in seven years – and the conclusion of Article IV consultations between the Government and the International Monetary Fund, the first in 11 years.

These are positive signs. But Yemen remains highly exposed to the economic repercussions of the regional escalation, and as the global situation has made clear, it is always the poorest and the most vulnerable who bear the heaviest burden. Yemenis across the country have long contended with inadequate public services, delayed salaries, and rising prices, and they will now have to contend with import disruptions and higher fuel and food prices triggered by wider conflict in the Middle East. Yemen is also very dependent on remittances from GCC countries, which are at risk of declining. These pressures fall on a Yemeni economy already weakened by the obstruction of government oil and gas exports, by the division of the Central Bank, and by the broader weaponization of economic life that has, far too long, made ordinary Yemenis pay the price of decisions taken over their heads.

My Office continues to engage the parties and other stakeholders in our economic track – working to reduce economic tensions and build arrangements in which the parties have more to gain from cooperation than confrontation. These issues are inseparable from the search for a sustainable political settlement to the conflict.

Mr. President, the broad de-escalation that has held inside Yemen since the 2022 truce remains a crucial achievement for the parties to build on. But there are worrying indications, including reports of troop movements, that this relative calm cannot be taken for granted, particularly in a moment of regional turmoil. Moreover, Yemeni civilians continue to suffer the consequences of an unsettled conflict. The devastating Ansar Allah shelling of a Ramadan iftar gathering in Hajjah governorate, as well as the increased number of sniper incidents near the frontlines in Taiz, resulted in civilian casualties, including children. And I reiterate my call for accountability and respect for international humanitarian law.

I am also concerned by the casualties during recent demonstrations in Mukalla. President Al-Alimi's call for an investigation is a welcome step, and all actors must exercise restraint. Such incidents underscore the importance of advancing dialogue and shared understandings among southerners – a point reinforced by the civil society voices I heard during my visit to Aden.

Turning to Hudaydah, the United Nations Mission to support the Hudaydah Agreement concluded its mandate on the 31st of March in accordance with Security Council resolution 2813. My Office will continue to support the implementation of the Agreement through engagements with the parties through our offices in Aden, in Sana'a and Amman. Achieving a nationwide ceasefire remains the priority, and we will continue our efforts to de-escalate frontlines across Yemen.

Mr. President, for the past ten weeks, the parties that had been in direct negotiations under UN auspices in Amman on conflict-related detainees – - this is the longest round yet of negotiations on this issue. These talks show that negotiations on issues of deep importance to the Yemeni public remain possible, even in today's difficult climate. While significant progress has been made, the

talks have not yet come to a conclusion, and the parties need to make additional compromises to unlock the releases. I urge the parties to redouble their efforts and bring this process to a positive conclusion. And I remain grateful to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for hosting these negotiations and the International Committee of the Red Cross for its vital role.

The absence of loved ones is also felt deeply by the families of United Nations, NGO and embassy colleagues who remain arbitrarily detained by Ansar Allah. Of our 73 United Nations colleagues detained, several have been held incommunicado throughout the duration of their detention, while others have been allowed irregular contact with their families. These detentions violate United Nations privileges and immunities, and are crippling the United Nations's ability to carry out its mission, with direct consequences for the Yemeni people. I continue to urge Ansar Allah to immediately and unconditionally release all detainees and to halt all criminal proceedings, which lack due process. And I count on this Council's steadfast support to push for their release.

Mr. President, the way forward for Yemen's peace process is not without challenges. Every escalation in the region deepens the trust deficit between the parties, and the concerns with which Yemen is viewed from beyond its borders. But Yemenis need a solution for Yemen; their future should not be held hostage to regional turmoil. An inclusive political process remains the only viable path to durably resolving the conflict, delivering a secure and prosperous future for Yemenis, and providing the guarantees that the region and international community need – including on freedom of navigation in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden.

Mr. President, in a moment as uncertain as this, there is often a temptation for conflict parties to wait – to let the dust settle, to watch where the chips fall and to hope that they fall in one's favor, to believe that the regional storm might rearrange the table in ways that excuse one from the discomfort of compromise. However, to bet on the storm is to bet on something no one fully controls. The Yemeni parties must instead invest in achieving a political settlement that secures a better future for the Yemeni people. I call on this Council to continue its concerted efforts to help ensure they make this choice.

Thank you very much **Mr. President**.