



Top envoy to Yemen praises 'flexibility' of chief negotiators as new UN mission chief is named



The UN Special Envoy for Yemen said on Thursday that the main negotiators for the warring sides were continuing to show the "necessary flexibility and good faith" to move forward, despite delays in implementing the agreement marking the first steps towards a lasting peace deal, brokered in Sweden last December.

Martin Griffiths, has been talking with the Houthi rebel leadership in the capital Sana'a "to discuss the rapid and effective implementation of the Stockholm Agreement" the UN said in a briefing note to correspondents based in New York.

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Situation in Yemen is heartbreaking : Grande

A fire broke out at the Red Sea mills in Hodeidah province, causing damage to two silos, the Office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator and humanitarian coordinator in Yemen said.

The office said in a statement that the work is under way to confirm the circumstances that led to the outbreak of this fire .. "It seems that the fire occurred as a result of the firing of mortar shells".

The WFP currently has 51,000 metric tons of wheat stored in the Red Sea Mills, a quarter of the country's wheat stocks, enough to feed 7.3 million people for a month .

"We are losing this wheat at a very difficult time, with more than 20 million people, or nearly



70 percent of the total population, starving," said Ms. Lise Grande, Humanitarian Coordinator for Yemen.

She noted that the situation in Yemen is heartbreaking, with a quarter of a million people in catastrophic conditions, facing famine and a lack of aid. "This is the first time we see such conditions, we need this wheat," she said.

"We are very concerned that some of our wheat stocks have been damaged at the Red Sea Mills," said the WFP's Yemen Director Stephen Anderson

"The program urgently needs access to the Red Sea Mills so that we can assess the level of damage and start moving the unaffected wheat stock to areas of dire need in Yemen," he said.



Rapid City Profiling Towards Early Recovery in Yemen

At the Consultation meeting organized by UN-Habitat in Amman, Yemeni high-level Participants from national, governorate and city levels discussed and agreed upon the selection of cities in Yemen that will develop city and neighbourhood profiling.

The European Union – that funds this important project – encouraged a balanced coverage in the selection of cities.

UN-Habitat organized on Monday 28

January, a consultation meeting in Amman at Talal Abu-Ghazaleh Organization Head Quarters, to launch the project on “Rapid City and Neighbourhood Profiling Towards a Development Oriented Urban Recovery Process in Yemen”,



funded by the European Union. The meeting discussed the objectives, methodology, coordination mechanism and the expected results of the project. The participants also discussed and agreed upon the selection of the following 5 cities in addition to



Sana'a and Aden; Ta'iz, al-Hudaydah, Sa'ada, Al-Hawtah and Zinjibar.

The overall objective of the project is to "better target and coordinate

humanitarian, recovery and development investments, and strengthen the resilience of stakeholders and affected populations in select cities to cope with the impacts of the conflict “.

Top envoy to Yemen praises ‘flexibility’

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He also discussed the deployment of UN staff in support of cementing the fragile ceasefire, and withdrawal of Houthi and pro-Government coalition forces in and around the crucial port city of Hudaydah.

“The Special Envoy is encouraged by the responsiveness demonstrated by the leadership of Ansar Aallah (the official name of the Houthi movement) in that regard. The Special Envoy also discussed the resumption of political consultations, stressing the importance of achieving substantial progress in implementing the Stockholm Agreement, as we move towards convening the next round of consultations”.

During his visit to the Saudi capital Riyadh this week, Mr. Griffiths said he had gained

assurances from Yemeni President Adrabbuh Mansur Hadi and the Saudi-led coalition of their continued commitment to respect and fully implement the agreement.

The envoy said leaders of both parties had “demonstrated the necessary flexibility and good faith regarding the timelines for implementation and the technical challenges that need to be resolved on the ground. The parties also recognize the political and humanitarian importance of the full implementation of the Stockholm agreement. The Special Envoy reiterated the commitment of the United Nations to continue working with the parties to overcome any challenges in this regard.”



Yemen: Security Council backs new mission in support of key port city truce

Among other things, the newly adopted resolution establishes what will be officially known as the UN Mission to support the Hodeidah Agreement (UNMHA).

Last month, after UN-brokered consultations in Sweden aimed at getting the warring sides together to end nearly four years of brutal civil war, the Houthi movement leadership and Yemeni Government representatives, signed the Hodeidah Agreement.

The resolution sets out, for an initial six months, an increase from around 20 observers already in place to monitor the ceasefire, up to 75, positioned in and around the Red Sea port, where Yemen's receives most of its commercial goods and lifesaving aid.

The new special political mission will support the implementation of the December Stockholm Agreement, consisting of three separate pledges between the two sides: halting hostilities in Hudaydah and mutually redeploying forces from the city and the ports, Salif and Ras Issa; a prisoner exchange mechanism; and a statement of understanding on the city of Taiz, where fighters have wrestled for control for years now.

According to news reports, both Houthi rebels and the UN-backed Government have accused each other of multiple ceasefire breaches, calling the terms flawed because they lacked precision. Adding more monitors, will allow for more accurate assessment.

Retired General Patrick Cammaert, chairs the Redeployment Coordination Committee (RCC), and in accordance with the Security Council resolution, will now head up UNMHA, reporting to the Secretary-General through Special Envoy for Yemen, Martin Griffiths.

The RCC includes Yemen government representatives and Houthis, to supervise implementation of the Stockholm Agreement. The UN advance team has already been working with the RCC on monitoring and supporting implementation.

The UK-sponsored resolution requests the Secretary-General to report to the Council on a monthly basis on the resolution's implementation and to present it with a review of UNMHA in five months' time.





The ‘abuse of food relief in Yemen’ must end now

WFP’s demands were issued in a letter to the Houthi leadership as well as in a news release on New Year’s Eve.

“This is an issue that affects not just WFP but all aid agencies working in Yemen and indeed in war zones everywhere and no-one can say for certain how widespread this problem is”, said WFP spokesperson Hervé Verhoosel, noting that humanitarian food assistance was being diverted in Houthi-controlled areas, including the capital of Sana’a, and, to a lesser extent, in the Government-controlled areas as well.

According to news reports, factions and militias on both sides of the conflict have blocked food aid from reaching groups suspected of disloyalty, diverting it instead to front-line combat units or selling it for a profit on the black market.

The UN agency has learned that many desperately poor people have taken to selling part of their food rations for education, medicines and rent.

An ounce of prevention worth a ton of cure

The Yemen Government gave WFP permission to biometrically register beneficiaries, by identifying and authenticating each individual based on person-specific data.

So far, WFP monitoring has identified seven centres in Sana’a city where an estimated 1,200 metric tons of food was diverted in August and September, equivalent to about one per cent of the food provided nationally each month.

“It is our monitoring systems that detected there was a problem”, Mr. Verhoosel explained. “We are committed to ensuring our food assistance reaches those who most need it”.

As the local partner organization involved in the abuse has at the same time helped provide food assistance to three million people, WFP underscored that the authorities must investigate and dismiss those responsible, regardless of whether the corruption was carried out by the Government or non-governmental organizations .

“To improve the support to beneficiaries, we have been looking into the introduction of cash-based transfers in some areas”, said Mr. Verhoosel. “However, given the risk of corruption, we have made it clear to the de facto authorities that we will not introduce cash-based transfers unless we are authorized to implement a biometric identification system that uses personal data, including iris scans and ten-finger prints.”

WFP is tackling the issue by tracking and monitoring suspected locations and closely inspecting distribution centres.

“The de facto authorities in Sana’a have a responsibility to take action against those involved in stealing from the beneficiaries and in trading of food aid,” he stressed. “They should allow an independent beneficiary selection process and a biometric-based registration system”.

Mr. Verhoosel said that the biometric identification system had been rolled out in Government-controlled areas and that authorities in Sana’a had yet to agree to implement the system.



United Nations
World Food Programme





Schools boost efforts to increase immunization in cholera-affected communities in Aden

The threat of cholera and Acute Watery Diarrhoea (AWD) still looms high in Yemen as it recovers from one of the World's worst outbreak in 2017 where more than a million people were infected with over 4,300 deaths. Children were the worst victims. In 2018, over 361,000 suspected cases were registered, with 493 associated deaths across the country. A total of 227 of the 333 districts in country have reported cases during 2018.

UNICEF and partners have stepped up prevention and response activities including surveillance and case detection, community engagement and awareness, enhancing laboratory testing capacity; and training and deploying rapid response teams to affected areas.

Community engagement is an essential component of UNICEF's cholera response to prevent the epidemic from spreading further and to educate the populations living in high-risk areas about simple lifesaving hygiene and sanitation practices they can easily adopt to protect themselves from the disease and stay healthy.

Schools are one of the best platforms to be used for such community-based health activities. In cooperation with students and education personnel, UNICEF Communication for Development (C4D) in partnership with local health authorities set up health clubs in 41



schools in Aden governorate, to raise awareness about the importance of vaccination against cholera, diphtheria and other preventable diseases such as tetanus, and to promote hygiene practices in schools. So far, more than 615 children have been trained as health focal persons and advocates.

On 31st December 2018, in cooperation with the local authorities and partners, UNICEF organized a school health attainment ceremony to recognize the efforts made by the school health club members in educating their peers on health and hygiene best practices and cholera prevention both at school and in their families and communities. "This is a very successful project," says Ansar Rasheed, C4D officer in UNICEF Aden Field Office. "In the last two years, the UNICEF-supported C4D school health clubs have greatly contributed not only to raise awareness about cholera and diphtheria but also to increase the immunization coverage for preventable diseases, especially tetanus, polio and measles, taking part in many immunization campaigns in the area, and I am proud of the work achieved as a team," Ansar adds.





Japan donates \$8 million to boost food and nutrition security in conflict-ridden Yemen

Putting agriculture back on track is crucial to avert famine in the country facing the world's worst food crisis

Japan has contributed over \$8 million (JPY 891,000,000) to back FAO's work on enhancing food and nutrition security for the most vulnerable households in conflict-ridden Yemen, which is facing the world's largest humanitarian crisis. This will be achieved through the provision of crucial agricultural inputs and services, including the distribution of cereal and legumes seeds, restocking of livestock, and the rehabilitation of irrigation systems and other agricultural facilities, using "cash for work". These interventions will help food insecure households produce life-saving food and generate income as well as stimulate local economies through rural job creation.

The two-year project aims to reach about 200 000 conflict-affected Yemenis.

The funding agreement was signed today at FAO headquarters in Rome by Ambassador of Japan to Italy and Permanent Representative to FAO Keiichi Katakami and FAO Director-General José Graziano da Silva.

"FAO is on the frontlines in the fight against hunger in Yemen, providing extremely vulnerable people with the means to resume and maintain food production for their families and their communities," said Graziano da Silva. "This generous contribution from the Government of Japan allows us to continue supporting the Yemeni people in this time of their greatest need. It will enable FAO to help save the lives and the livelihoods of the country's most food insecure people and to put agriculture back on track to reduce their dependence on food assistance and food imports in the long run."

"It is our great pleasure to announce that Japan will support FAO's work through this project

which aims to enhance the agricultural productivity of more than 27,500 households", said Katakami. "This project will provide critical humanitarian assistance to rural populations by

improving agricultural and livestock sectors, which would stimulate household food production and build their resilience to the crisis." Under the project, FAO also intends to focus on emergency livestock assistance and protection.

Provision of animal feed and animal health services such as vaccination campaigns will ensure that products, especially milk, are available to the most vulnerable members of the poor families - especially children, pregnant women and lactating mothers.

In addition, the Japanese funding will enable FAO to improve food production practices and strengthen communities' ability to manage land, soil and water resources in a sustainable manner. FAO Famine Prevention Plan to avert a looming catastrophe

This vital contribution will help meet livelihoods support needs identified in a new famine prevention plan for Yemen, just released by FAO. The plan highlights that some \$83 million in funding will be needed in the next six months to assist 1.6 million most vulnerable and food-insecure people with cash-based assistance and agricultural livelihoods interventions.

The emergency assistance is expected to boost purchasing power of the most vulnerable households, stimulate local demand, boost market functioning and improve availability and access to food in famine-risk areas. It will also help rehabilitate community agricultural infrastructure.

The world's worst food crisis

The current humanitarian situation in Yemen is worse than any the world has experienced in the last few decades. With the conflict now entering its fifth year, the effects on people's lives continue to deepen with each passing day.



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



Humanitarian Airlifts from Yemen Allow Hundreds of Stranded Migrants to Return to Ethiopia

Approximately 350 Ethiopian migrants stranded in Yemen are set to fly home this week under the International Organization for Migration's (IOM) latest Voluntary Humanitarian Return (VHR) flight operation. Such airlifts resumed from Yemen in late November last year.

IOM is handling the logistics to ensure the safe departure of the migrants from Sana'a International Airport to Bole International Airport in Addis Ababa. The beneficiaries will depart on chartered flights leaving 29 and 30 of January.

"There are currently limited pathways for migrants to return home from Yemen. Through the support of and close coordination with government authorities, partners and IOM teams, we have been able to ensure migrants can reach their countries of origin in a safe and orderly manner," said David Derthick, IOM Yemen Chief of Mission.

"IOM will continue to prioritize return movements for migrants in 2019," he continued. The Organization plans to assist more than 3,000 migrants with VHR services this year.

IOM had previously suspended VHR airlifts after the escalation of the conflict in 2015. During the suspension, IOM transported migrants on chartered boats across the Gulf of Aden. In 2018, IOM provided VHR to more than 1,000 vulnerable migrants.

Unpredictable sea conditions, however, often caused delays or restrictions of movement – at times forcing boats to return to Al-Hudaydah's port.

Humanitarian airlifts resumed in November 2018, after IOM coordinated with Yemeni and Ethiopian authorities to allow more than 400 migrants to safely return over the course of four days.

Despite the ongoing conflict, Yemen's proximity to the Horn of Africa means that it remains a significant transit point for migrants seeking livelihoods and opportunities. IOM expects mixed migration flows to Yemen will continue this year, affirming the importance of IOM's Regional Migrant Response Plan for the Horn of Africa and Yemen.

In addition to operating the VHR mechanism out of Yemen, IOM teams provide humanitarian and protection support to vulnerable migrants throughout the country. While efforts are made to meet migrants upon arrival and ensure basic needs are met, IOM also provides longer term interventions, such as health and shelter. Additionally, psychosocial support services help those that have suffered trauma and loss during their journey.

Given the current restrictions on movement, transporting migrants out of Yemen is especially challenging. Many of those assisted require additional support, such as medical escorts to provide in-flight care.

In addition, IOM provides specialized care for unaccompanied migrant children, many of whom were unprepared for the treacherous journey to Yemen. IOM works closely with authorities in Yemen and Ethiopia to ensure these children are cleared for travel and that family members are prepared for reunification.

Upon arrival, IOM Ethiopia provides returnees with temporary accommodation at a transit centre, meals and non-food items, onward transportation assistance and psychosocial support to those in need.

Returnees in need of further medical assistance will be referred to health providers while unaccompanied minors will receive family tracing and reunification assistance. A few vulnerable migrants will receive reintegration assistance through cash grants.





UN Secretary General's Message on THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF EDUCATION

Today we celebrate the first International Day of Education.

Education transforms lives. As United Nations Messenger of Peace Malala Yousafzai once said: “one child, one teacher, one book and one pen can change the world”. Nelson Mandela rightly called education “the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”

Long before I served at the United Nations or held public office in my own country, I was a teacher. In the slums of Lisbon, I saw that education is an engine for poverty eradication and a force for peace.

Today, education is at the heart of the Sustainable Development Goals.

We need education to reduce inequalities and improve health.

We need education to achieve gender equality and eliminate child marriage.

We need education to protect our planet's resources.

And we need education to fight hate speech, xenophobia and intolerance, and to nurture global citizenship.

Yet at least 262 million children, adolescents and youth are out of school, most of them girls. Millions more who attend school are not mastering the basics.

This is a violation of their human right to education. The world cannot afford a generation of children and young people who lack the skills they need to compete in the 21st century economy, nor can we afford to leave behind half of humanity.



We must do far more to advance Sustainable Development Goal 4, to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

Education can also break and reverse cycles of intergenerational poverty. Studies show that if all girls and boys complete secondary education, 420 million people could be lifted out of poverty. Let us prioritize education as a public good; support it with cooperation, partnerships and funding; and recognize that leaving no one behind starts with education.

