

**UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS AND
EMERGENCY RELIEF COORDINATOR, STEPHEN O'BRIEN**

STATEMENT ON YEMEN

It is deeply saddening to be marking a whole year of violence in Yemen. A country whose people were already facing great deprivation and hunger, and who have had to deal since last March with the added horror of war, bombing, shelling; losing their homes and loved ones.

I welcome the efforts to find a solution to the crisis, and the announcement yesterday of an agreement to cease hostilities on 10 April is positive. An end to the fighting can't come soon enough for the civilians caught between the warring parties. There are horrifying reports of human rights violations. Over 2.4 million Yemenis - a tenth of the population - have been forced from their homes. Children cannot go to school, mothers cannot get medical care, businesses have closed.

We have seen thousands of civilians killed and injured when schools, hospitals, markets were bombed or shelled. The stark numbers and awful stories do not stay in the headlines, however. Other major world crises attract greater attention – among donors, governments, the media.

The United Nations humanitarian agencies and our partners continue to try and reach people across the country with aid and protection to help them get through this. Despite the dangerous environment and lack of funding, aid agencies are delivering: food for nearly three million in February. Last year four million children were vaccinated against measles and polio. Every month we provide fuel to pump water for over three million people.

We need to be able to reach anyone who needs aid, across Yemen, whoever and wherever they are. The UN and partners continue to call on all parties and their allies to make sure people are able to move freely and safely and that aid organizations can safely deliver critical supplies.

As well as security we need sustained and generous donor support. Humanitarian needs have increased since last year, with 20 million people needing emergency food, water, healthcare and shelter in 2016.

Humanitarian action can only temporarily alleviate human suffering. The people of Yemen want lasting peace and security now so that they can rebuild their lives and safely raise their families.

New York, 24 March 2016