

Statement
High-Level Pledging Event for the Humanitarian Crisis in Yemen
1st March 2021

Excellencies, colleagues,

I would like to thank Sweden, Switzerland and UN-OCHA for their initiative to convene this event and shed light on the immense humanitarian needs of the people in Yemen.

The humanitarian situation in Yemen is deeply worrying. Years of conflict, natural disasters and the threat of COVID-19 forecast a dire outlook for the Yemeni people. Eighty percent of the population are in need of humanitarian assistance. Six out of ten people are unable to provide for themselves and crucially depend on food assistance, a fact tragically reflected in the exceedingly high malnutrition rates among children under five.

Amid this disastrous humanitarian situation and the added burden of COVID-19, ailing medical and WASH infrastructure are especially distressing. Medicine and medical supplies are scarce as it is. Almost half of all hospitals and health care facilities are out of service, resulting in almost 20 Mio. people in need of basic and emergency health care. Coupled with already prevalent diseases like cholera, the resilience against another threat is slim.

After almost six years of conflict and multifaceted challenges, it has become more difficult and complex than ever to provide the much-needed relief. All parties to the conflict must respect International Humanitarian Law. In order to fulfil their important mission, that we are all supporting here today, free and unhindered access must be granted to humanitarian organisations and the safety and security of humanitarian workers must be guaranteed.

Austria fully supports the efforts of UN-SE Martin Griffiths to restart the political process, which is the only way to a sustainable peace in Yemen and, to an end to this humanitarian emergency. In this respect we welcome the recent formation of a unity government and we reiterate our firm condemnation of the attack at Aden Airport targeting the arriving government. The perpetrators must be held accountable.

Austria has lived up to its humanitarian obligations in the past and will continue to support the international efforts to alleviate the suffering of the people of Yemen. We are therefore supporting the International Committee of the Red Cross and UNICEF in Yemen with a total of 6 Mio Euro.

Thank you!