

Statement by H.E. Mr. Andres Rundu, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Estonia, Head of the Delegation, High-Level Pledging Event for the Humanitarian Crisis in Yemen

1 March 2020

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Dear Co-Chairs, Excellencies, colleagues,

Allow me to thank the United Nations, the Government of Switzerland and the Government of Sweden for organizing this high-level event in support of Yemen. The protracted and multifaceted crisis has caused unimaginable human suffering, which has aggravated even more due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Estonia remains deeply concerned about the alarming humanitarian situation in Yemen. With more than 20 million people in need of assistance and protection, and large-scale famine being a real possibility, the situation in Yemen is worse than ever. In this context, we commend the United States' decision to revoke the designation of Ansar Allah as a Foreign Terrorist Organisation, as the designation would have catastrophic consequences.

To help alleviate the suffering of the people of Yemen, an effective and rapid humanitarian response is crucial. Humanitarian access is key, yet today it is more limited than ever. Hereby Estonia calls on all relevant parties to allow unimpeded humanitarian access to all populations in need and to remove all obstacles preventing the delivery of life-saving assistance. Furthermore, Estonia urges all parties to respect international humanitarian law and human rights law, as well as humanitarian principles, which are the foundation of humanitarian action.

Estonia appreciates highly the work of the humanitarian organizations, who continue to operate in Yemen, even in the most difficult circumstances. We extend our deep gratitude to all humanitarian and health workers on the frontline. We must stress once again that a holistic long-term solution is needed in order to truly help this country.

Estonia is committed to helping to alleviate the critical humanitarian situation of the people of Yemen and continues to support the humanitarian agencies, which do their best in order to prevent the immediate loss of life. Estonia pledges 50'000 euros through the World Food Programme in order to help Yemen.

Thank you.