



**ICRC**

Speech given by Mr Peter Maurer

President of the International Committee of the Red Cross

**High-level pledging conference for the**

**Humanitarian Crisis in Yemen**

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Excellencies, distinguished representatives.

Seven years of grinding conflict in Yemen has resulted in today's protracted and dire humanitarian crisis. Two thirds of Yemen's population require humanitarian assistance. The country's economy is in tatters and critical infrastructure and basic services have all but collapsed.

Beyond the immediate needs, the legacy of this crisis will be felt for generations. Re-establishing a unified economy will be extremely challenging. The future prospects for a 'lost generation' of Yemenis - whose education has been stolen by war - are bleak.

The collective response of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement to the crisis in Yemen is one of our largest humanitarian response operations worldwide. Even after seven years of conflict, the ICRC, IFRC, the Yemen Red Crescent Society, remain operational throughout all parts of the country. But even together with other humanitarian actors, it is still not enough – every day, millions continue to suffer.

ICRC operations in Yemen remain focused on delivering a robust and multifaceted response. Our 2022 budget of 134 million Swiss francs reflects our expanding priorities;

- We are carrying out much-needed protection and prevention work - visiting detention centers and supporting the release of detainees as a neutral intermediary; running family links and forensic programs and also delivering training in international humanitarian law.
- We are delivering emergency assistance - particularly in hard-to-reach areas where other humanitarian actors are not working.
- We are supporting hospitals, primary healthcare services and physical rehabilitation centers... and fixing water and sanitation infrastructure; and
- We are supporting the Yemen Red Crescent Society to strengthen its capacity, as well as working jointly on projects locally.

Today I make four calls;

1. As global attention shifts to other high-profile crises such as Ukraine, the world must not abandon Yemen : the needs of people there have not diminished as other crises have arisen. We urge all donors to urgently scale up and support countries like Yemen that are constantly on the brink. We also ask that donors honour Grand Bargain commitments to support local actors, such as the Yemen Red Crescent Society.

2. Political efforts must be renewed and intensified to find a political solution to the conflict in Yemen. Humanitarian agencies cannot be expected to care for millions, subsidize the state and keep the economy from collapsing.
3. Parties to the conflict, and those who support them, must respect international humanitarian law and other relevant international laws to safeguard civilian life and essential infrastructure. They must allow safe passage for people who want to escape the fighting. All persons captured in relation to the ongoing hostilities must be treated humanely.
4. There must be greater protection of humanitarian workers in accordance with IHL. The space for neutral, independent and impartial humanitarian action must be preserved and respected, ensuring that humanitarian actors in Yemen, such as the ICRC and the Yemen Red Crescent Society, are able to work unimpeded, fulfilling their role in support of people affected by conflict and violence.

Thank you.