High-Level Pledging Event for the Humanitarian Crisis in Yemen

New Zealand statement

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I would like to thank OCHA and the Governments of Switzerland and Sweden for convening this important event.

When New Zealand delivered a statement at the Yemen pledging conference in 2019, the UN had labelled Yemen the largest humanitarian crisis in the world.

Millions of people were on the brink of famine, and many more were also in need of urgent humanitarian assistance.

We are now two years on, and sadly the humanitarian situation is more acute than ever.

20.7 million people require some form of humanitarian assistance and protection, including 12.1 million who are in acute need.

A lack of political will to end armed conflict and disregard for international humanitarian law expressly designed to place limits on human suffering, continue to drive this crisis.

The recent heavy fighting in Marib, the indiscriminate killing of civilians, the 30 December attack on Aden airport, and cross-border attacks targeting civilian objects show a callous disregard for international humanitarian law.
Civilians, who have borne the brunt of this conflict, must be protected at all times.

Neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian action must also be protected.

We call on all parties to act in compliance with these principles, as required by international humanitarian law.

Humanitarian action needs to be safeguarded.

New Zealand is deeply concerned by attacks on humanitarian workers and medical facilities, deliberate constraints on access, and that the movement of much needed humanitarian supplies is being blocked.

The recent United States decision to reverse its designation of Ansar Allah as a foreign terrorist organisation is timely and one that will help ensure the flow of crucial humanitarian assistance reaches those most in need.

This pledging event is crucial for raising both humanitarian funding and awareness.
New Zealand is pleased to have recently contributed $5 million NZD in humanitarian assistance to the International Committee of the Red Cross and the United Nations World Food Programme.

This brings our total contribution to $18.5 million NZD [$13.4 million USD].

This is in addition to New Zealand’s multi-year funding to the CERF.

However raising funding alone is insufficient.

A sustainable political solution that is inclusive, Yemeni-led and Yemeni-owned is urgently needed.

We call on all parties to recommit to achieving inclusive peace for the Yemeni people.

We fully support the efforts of those working to end the conflict, including the UN Secretary General’s Special Envoy for Yemen, Martin Griffiths.
We call for all parties to seize this opportunity for meaningful political progress so that in two years’ time we are not again talking about a dire situation, but one that has shown meaningful, measurable improvement for the people of Yemen.