EMERGENCY RELIEF COORDINATOR'S
KEY MESSAGES ON YEMEN
14 May 2015 • Issue Number 5

I. Key Messages

1. The conflict in Yemen is taking a dreadful toll on civilians. It is nearly two months since the conflict escalated, and more than 1,500 people have been killed and over 6,200 injured by airstrikes and fighting on the ground. Thousands have been forced to flee their homes and civilians have been targeted trying to reach safer areas: men, women and children from all of Yemen’s communities are at risk. Many already vulnerable Yemenis are now deprived of access to basic services, including medical treatment, food, water and other necessities.

2. Despite extremely challenging circumstances, humanitarian partners in Yemen are doing their utmost to deliver essential supplies and services. Since the conflict escalated, humanitarian agencies and our partners have fed over a million people, donated drugs, medical supplies and emergency kits to at least 18 hospitals, provided close to a million people with emergency water and sanitation, and provided thousands of newly-displaced families with emergency shelter and basic household supplies. WFP and UNICEF have been able to bring some fuel, food, water, medical and nutritional supplies into Yemen.

3. Humanitarian agencies and our partners welcome the beginning of the humanitarian pause in Yemen. The pause will allow civilians to escape conflict areas and enable the United Nations and partners to deliver more emergency food rations, provide medical care for the sick and injured and ensure clean water supplies to homes and hospitals. However, it is vital that the pause is implemented by all parties to the conflict and that aid workers receive the necessary security guarantees and logistical support.

4. We call on all parties to the conflict to respect this pause in hostilities. Many thanks to the UN Member States which are supporting our efforts and enabling humanitarian agencies and partners on the ground to provide life-saving assistance. Given the role of the United Nations in coordinating emergency relief activities in an impartial and neutral way, we ask that humanitarian assistance to Yemen be routed through existing UN and international humanitarian organization channels. It is essential that humanitarian assistance is not politicized.

5. The aid operation in Yemen is dependent on safe access by road, air and sea. It is critical that humanitarian organizations are assured safe and reliable access to Sana’a international airport, so that we can bring in staff and vital supplies, and undertake

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The mission of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) is to mobilize and coordinate effective and principled humanitarian action in partnership with national and international actors.
medical evacuations. UN agencies and humanitarian partners are working in Yemen for the sole purpose of protecting civilians and delivering aid. As neutral and impartial organizations, it is vital that we are able to work directly with all parties to the conflict, wherever required, to have access to people in desperate need. While we welcome a humanitarian pause, it is not a substitute for sustained, safe and rapid humanitarian access.

6. The resumption of commercial imports of critical goods, such as fuel, medical supplies and food is urgently needed. Supplies brought in through humanitarian flights and shipments, even if approved in a timely manner, cannot cover the gap, and basic services and markets will close down shortly without the resumption of commercial imports. Unless additional fuel is made available within the next week, hospitals will shut down, water and sanitation systems will come to a halt, telecommunications services will end and power supplies will be cut across the country. The current inspection regime needs to be simplified and made faster so that commercial and humanitarian imports of fuel, food and other life-sustaining necessities can resume.

7. Violence towards civilians and aid workers, and attacks on hospitals and other civilian infrastructure, must stop immediately. All parties to the conflict must observe their duty to protect civilians in accordance with international humanitarian law. They are obliged to provide safe passage for civilians from areas of conflict, to strive to avoid inflicting harm upon civilians, and to comply with the fundamental principles of distinction, proportionality and precaution.

8. Many thanks to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for its $274 million pledge towards the recently issued Flash Appeal. This will enable the UN and partners to scale up life-saving assistance and protection to 7.5 million people for the next three months. But the overall humanitarian response goes far beyond the bare minimum requirements of the Flash Appeal. The Yemen Humanitarian Response Plan, which will be revised in the coming weeks, will require additional resourcing for the remainder of 2015 to ensure that all needs are met and that aid organizations can directly assist everyone affected. The current appeal of $748 million is 20 per cent funded.