



British-Yemeni Society

Yemen Safe  
Passage Group

Rt Hon Dominic Raab MP  
Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office,  
King Charles Street, London SW1A 2AH

5th November 2019

Dear Foreign Secretary,

We are writing to express our continuing grave concern over the devastating humanitarian situation in Yemen and ask that you urgently work to bring about an immediate ceasefire and an end to the humanitarian crisis. Yemen is in its fifth year of war. The need to alleviate the suffering and end the conflict is more vital than ever. During this election period, when you remain Foreign Secretary, there are opportunities for progress towards peace. Six weeks is a long time for the people of Yemen.

The ground conflict, airstrikes and restrictions on imports have left 10 million people facing famine and 24 million people in need of humanitarian assistance. Yemenis continue to suffer from the worst ever cholera outbreak due in part to the destruction of water infrastructure. The battered Yemeni economy is once again beginning to push the country towards the brink of famine. Cyclone Kyaar threatens to exacerbate the situation further.

The December 2018 Stockholm Agreement represented a moment of hope and helped end the threat of a catastrophic assault on the port city of Hodeidah. UNMHA head, Abhijit Guha's negotiation of joint observation posts at potential flashpoints on the city's frontlines further increases confidence. The recent weeks of de-escalation of at least the aerial conflict, based on bilateral understandings between the Saudis and the Houthis, now offer further, albeit fragile, reason for guarded optimism.

We urge you to:

1. Intensify your efforts to press all parties to end the de-facto blockade that is preventing vital commodities, especially fuel, entering the country. Pressure must be increased on *all* parties to permit unrestricted humanitarian and commercial shipments to enable supplies to reach affected populations.
2. Focus particularly on the current fuel crisis, the most severe current expression of the warring parties continuing to use the economy as a weapon of war. Supply chains are badly disrupted, water systems have been shut down in three major cities, and the price of trucked water, on which so many including IDPs depend, has escalated. This will exacerbate Yemen's cholera crisis.
3. Ensure the UN Special Envoy's office is well resourced to coordinate with other bodies and ensure a greater focus on the economic elements of the ongoing crisis in Yemen - including imports, salary payments and key infrastructure - and their relationship to a comprehensive peace agreement. We understand this has long been HMG's position, but we see little progress here.
4. Argue strongly for the early relocation of UNVIM to Hodeidah, as specified in the Stockholm Agreement, including pushing the parties to allow the necessary conditions to make that possible.

The UK can show real leadership towards achieving a lasting ceasefire. Millions of lives and livelihoods as well as the future security and stability of Yemen and the Gulf are at stake.

Yours sincerely,

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