



KINGDOM OF BELGIUM

Speech by

H.E. Mr. Marc Pecsteen de Buytsverve,
Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United
Nations

at the Security Council briefing on Yemen

New York, 19/02/2019

Mr President,

I would like to thank Special Envoy Martin Griffiths and Under-Secretary-General Mark Lowcock for their presentation.

Belgium would like to recall that it is **essential for the Stockholm Agreement to be respected and implemented within a realistic deadline**. The agreement on the Port of Hodeidah is of particular importance in view of the humanitarian emergency.

We welcome the **agreement on the first phase of redeployment**, reached during the last meeting of the Redeployment Coordination Committee (RCC), and we hope that implementation within the agreed deadlines will help to improve trust between the parties so that the political process can move forward. Redeployment should also finally allow the humanitarian bodies to access the Red Sea Mills.

The situation remains delicate and **we are once again calling on all parties to exercise restraint**, to refrain from inflammatory rhetoric in the media and mutual accusations of ceasefire violations and **to focus on implementing the Agreement in good faith**. In this respect, we welcome the initiatives of the parties with regard to exchanges of prisoners.

With the implementation of the redeployment plan, it will be even more important to guarantee the **safety of UN personnel**. We are prepared to support the required measures.

Efforts to **improve the catastrophic humanitarian situation** remain essential. With regard to financial needs, the 2019 Humanitarian Response Plan states a requirement of 4 billion dollars, half of which is destined for food aid. We are hoping for firm commitments during the donors' conference next week in Geneva.

We are particularly concerned by the Panel of Experts' reports of the **recruitment of children into conflict**. Children are the biggest victims of the conflict in Yemen. The recruitment, murder and mutilation of children must end. We call on all parties to respect international humanitarian law and take urgent, effective measures to end the recruitment and use of children in the conflict. We ask Special Envoy Griffiths to ensure that provisions to protect boys and girls are placed at the heart of any peace process. This is an issue that we must also consider as part of the sanctions regime.