

Speech by H.E. Mr Marc Pecsteen de Buytswerve,
Ambassador, Permanent Representative

to the United Nations Security Council

Yemen – Briefing

New York, 18 July 2019

Mr President,

I would like to thank Special Envoy Martin Griffiths, Under-Secretary-General Mark Lowcock and the Executive Director of the World Food Programme, David Beasley, for their briefing.

We welcome the unanimous adoption of the renewal of the UNMHA mission and call on all actors to facilitate its full implementation as soon as possible.

We take positive note of the results of the **latest meeting of the Redeployment Coordination Committee (RCC) in Hodeidah**, in particular the de-escalation agreements and the CONOPS for phases 1 and 2 of redeployment. We call on all parties to fully implement the agreement on withdrawal, completely respect the ceasefire and resolve outstanding points of disagreement, including the issue of local security forces.

We continue to call on all parties to implement the **Stockholm Agreement** in its entirety, including the prisoner exchange agreement and the statement of understanding on Taïz.

Belgium encourages the Special Envoy to continue preparing the **next steps in the political process, which must be inclusive**. The Hodeidah Agreement is of particular importance to the humanitarian situation, but the core of the conflict requires a sustainable and inclusive political solution. We reiterate our **full support for the work of Special Envoy Martin Griffiths**.

Violence continues in the rest of the country, aggravating the lack of trust between the parties. This violence also has an impact on **access to humanitarian aid**. We call on all parties to cease hostilities throughout the country.

Belgium remains very concerned by the high number of **child victims** of air strikes and ground fighting, and demands that all parties take immediate measures to protect children.

We also strongly condemn **the drone and missile attacks on civilian targets in Saudi Arabia**, which have been claimed by the Houthis. These attacks are unacceptable.

Work is required to **improve the humanitarian situation** which, as we have heard, remains **catastrophic**. We commend the humanitarian agencies on their outstanding work despite

the difficulties. It is essential that all parties facilitate the access of humanitarian aid and respect international humanitarian law. In particular, we strongly condemn any **diversion of humanitarian aid**. Aid must reach those in need. We are concerned that the situation in Sana'a has not yet been resolved. As World Food Programme Executive Director David Beasley has just announced, we hope that an agreement will be signed as soon as possible. We note with concern the financial situation described by Marc Lowcock. Belgium has paid its contribution to the Humanitarian Fund for Yemen and we call on the other contributors to do the same.

Lastly, it is essential that we continue to examine the violations committed in the territory. We call on the parties to respect their obligations and commitments under **international humanitarian law and international human rights law**. **In this respect, Belgium is alarmed by the death penalty imposed by the Houthis on 30 people in Sana'a. These people are on the list for the prisoner exchange.** The Prisoner Agreement must be implemented as soon as possible.

Thank you.