

**UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS AND
EMERGENCY RELIEF COORDINATOR, MARK LOWCOCK**

Statement on the situation in Yemen

I remain deeply concerned by the humanitarian situation in Yemen, which has continued to deteriorate because of on-going conflict, collapsing basic services and economic decline. A record 22.2 million people are now in need humanitarian assistance in Yemen – 3.4 million more than last year.

To respond to the massive humanitarian catastrophe, the United Nations and humanitarian partners launched the 2018 Yemen Humanitarian Response plan on 21 January. The coordinated plan requires \$2.96 billion to provide life-saving assistance and protection to more than 13 million people across the country this year. I encourage all donors to contribute to the Yemen Humanitarian Response plan.

Therefore, I welcome the nearly \$1 billion pledge by Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates that was announced on the same day the plan was launched, as well as a commitment to mobilize an additional \$500 million from regional donors. In addition, the announcement by Saudi Arabia that funds will be deposited into Central Bank of Yemen will also help people across the country through the stabilisation of the local currency. Canada has also pledged \$12 million and the Central Emergency Response Fund will provide \$50 million.

I ask that these pledges be urgently disbursed to enable life-saving operations. Last year, the \$1.65 billion donors provided enabled humanitarians to save millions of lives, including by providing direct food assistance to more than seven million people each month.

I also note the importance of keeping all of Yemen's ports, including Hudaydah and Saleef, open to humanitarian assistance and commercial imports of food, fuel and medicines. Over 70 per cent of people in need of assistance live in proximity to those two Red Sea ports. Since the decision to re-open Hudaydah and Saleef last month, the United Nations and its partners have successfully delivered large volumes of food, medicines and fuel to people in need.

Brave humanitarians are committed to saving lives, but only a negotiated political solution and ending the conflict will end the suffering of the Yemeni people.

Yemenis have suffered for too long. They need the parties to the conflict to respect international humanitarian law by protecting civilians and civilian infrastructure and facilitating rapid, safe and unfettered humanitarian access. I continue to call on all parties to cease hostilities and engage meaningfully with the UN to achieve a lasting political settlement.

New York, 22 January 2018