

STATEMENT ON YEMEN
UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS
VALERIE AMOS
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(New York: 11 October 2011): For far too long, the international community has failed to give enough attention to the humanitarian crisis in Yemen.

Conflict, poverty, drought, soaring food prices and collapsing state services have created a daily struggle for survival for millions of people – including 100,000 displaced by recent fighting in the south, thousands of refugees from the Horn of Africa, and 300,000 displaced by previous conflict in the north.

Every night, a third of the Yemeni people go to bed hungry. In some parts of the country, one in three children are malnourished – among the highest malnutrition levels in the world.

Hospitals and clinics are overcrowded or not working at all, and access to safe water is becoming increasingly difficult. Tens of thousands of children are losing their education due to school closures.

Making matters worse, insecurity has forced UN agencies and other humanitarian organizations to cut back their staff or leave. Accurate information on what is happening is becoming increasingly difficult to gather.

Yemen is the poorest country in the region, and has suffered chronic deprivation for years. If we don't act now, the situation could become a catastrophe.

In neighbouring Somalia, we have seen what happens if warnings go unheeded, and too little is done in time to stop a crisis. Let us not repeat the same mistake in Yemen.

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