



**STATEMENT BY THE HUMANITARIAN COORDINATOR FOR YEMEN,
MR. JAMIE McGOLDRICK,
ON THE VITAL IMPORTANCE OF KEEPING YEMEN'S ENTRY POINTS OPEN**

Sana'a, 11 January 2018: The opening of the Red Sea ports of Al Hudaydah and Saleef to commercial and humanitarian shipments is a constructive and welcome step. Yemen imports about 90 per cent of its staple food and nearly all its fuel and medicine, therefore the functioning of all ports - including Al Hudaydah, Saleef and Aden - is critical to meet vital needs.

Since 20 December, 13 vessels have delivered both food and much needed fuel to Yemen, with more in the pipeline. This is positive, but is far less than what is needed to meet overall food and fuel needs.

I welcome too, the Saudi-led Coalition's approval to move four cranes to Al Hudaydah port, which will enhance the capacity of the port, and allow for faster off-loading of vessels and thus help avert an even greater humanitarian disaster.

The lives of Yemenis, of whom more than 22 million are in need of humanitarian assistance, depend on keeping the ports open without interruptions or delays. I therefore urge all parties to the conflict to refrain from any disruptive action which may lead to further suffering of the Yemeni people.

Specifically, I call on the Coalition to continue allowing vessels into the Red Sea ports, and for the Houthis to desist from threatening this vital access route. The steady flow of imports is a lifeline for millions of vulnerable Yemeni people.

I also call on all parties to the conflict in Yemen, to fulfil their obligations under International Humanitarian Law to ensure rapid and unimpeded humanitarian access to all populations in need in all areas of the country. All sides are required to facilitate the work of humanitarian partners.

For further information, please contact:

George Khoury, Head of Office, UN-OCHA Yemen | Tel: +967 712 222 207 | E-mail: khouryg@un.org

Ahmed Ben Lassoued, Public Information Officer, UN-OCHA Yemen | Tel: +967 712 222 855 | E-mail: benlassoued@un.org