



DEBATE PACK

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The Yemen Peace Process

Main Chamber

Thursday 23 May 2019

Backbench Business debate

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The proceedings of this debate can be viewed on Parliamentlive.tv

The House of Commons Library prepares a briefing in hard copy and/or online for most non-legislative debates in the Chamber and Westminster Hall other than half-hour debates. Debate Packs are produced quickly after the announcement of parliamentary business. They are intended to provide a summary or overview of the issue being debated and identify relevant briefings and useful documents, including press and parliamentary material. More detailed briefing can be prepared for Members on request to the Library.

1. Background

On 15 May the Houthis withdrew troops from Hodeidah, Ras Issa and Salif, the Red Sea ports at the centre of the struggle to control Yemen.

The move was a partial implementation of the [peace deal reached in December 2018](#) in Sweden, and was welcomed by the UN. The Stockholm Agreement also calls for prisoner swaps and a new joint committee to deal with the fight for the city of Taiz but, until now, it has gone largely unimplemented.

Some fighting has continued in the city of Hodeidah, however, and the internationally-recognised Yemeni government of Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi says that the rebel militia still has disguised fighters in the city. The Hadi government side also says that the Houthi withdrawal violates the Stockholm Agreement because it is unilateral.

The UN must now set up a functioning security force in Hodeidah, something that has been difficult in negotiations, and a port authority to oversee the import of humanitarian supplies – particularly food. At present, Houthi-controlled forces are handling security, something which the Hadi government side does not accept.

At the same time as withdrawing from Hodeidah, Houthi forces launched drone attacks against oil industry targets in the Saudi Eastern Province. The drones, with a much longer range than previously used in the conflict, were [almost certainly deployed with technical help from Iran and Hezbollah](#). The Houthis said they also got assistance from Shiite Saudi citizens in the Eastern Province.

Given the increasing tensions between the US and Iran, the drone strikes against US ally Saudi Arabia are particularly significant, although some commentators argue that Iranian influence on Houthis strategy is “[sharply limited](#)”. In May 2019 the Saudis reported sabotage to Saudi oil tankers in the Gulf and on 16 May the Saudi-led coalition conducted retaliatory air strikes against Houthi positions. Further rocket or drone attacks against Saudi and UAE targets seem likely, and will do nothing to damp speculation about a drift towards war between the US and Iran.

Meanwhile, the World Food Programme warns that 16 million people – more than half the population – [wake up hungry every day](#). The collapsing economy is in danger of killing more people than the violence, especially given the access problems that prevent agencies reaching suffering people.

The International Crisis Group welcomed the withdrawal, organised by UN Special Envoy Martin Griffiths: “While it should not be mistaken for a major breakthrough, his achievement is significant and should be warmly welcomed.” The [ICG called on UN Security Council members](#) to back Griffiths and maintain pressure on all sides to fulfil their commitments in the Stockholm Agreement.

Asked in Parliament in May 2019 [what it is doing to support the Stockholm Agreement](#), the UK government said:

The UK has played a central role in diplomatic efforts to seek a peaceful solution to the conflict in Yemen. Most recently, the Foreign Secretary hosted the Yemen Quad in London on 26 April, bringing together representatives from the US, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), where members discussed the next steps in the UN-led peace process and how best to support the efforts of UN Special Envoy Martin Griffiths. We will continue discussions with partners on how the UN Security Council can support the UN Special Envoy Martin Griffiths on the political process and improving the humanitarian situation, central to which is the full implementation of agreements reached during the Stockholm talks. We welcome reports that Houthis forces have begun their withdrawal from the ports of Hodeidah, Saleef and Ras Issa and await independent verification of this by the UN.

2. Press articles

The following is a selection of press and media articles relevant to this debate.

Please note: the Library is not responsible for either the views or accuracy of external content.

[UK arms exports are still playing a central role in Yemen's humanitarian crisis](#)

The Guardian
Anna Stavrianakis
21 May 2019

[In Yemen, the Houthi strategy has promise and risk](#)

The Brookings Institution
Bruce Riedel
16 May 2019

[Hope for 'turning point' in Yemen after Houthis' Hodeidah withdrawal](#)

The Guardian
Bethan McKernan and Patrick Wintour
15 May 2019

[In Yemen, Fighting Resumes Between Houthi Rebels and Government Forces](#)

The New York Times
Reuters
15 May 2019

[Jeremy Hunt invites Saudi foreign minister for talks on Yemen war](#)

The Times
Catherine Philp
26 April 2019

[Jeremy Hunt attempts to break Yemen peace process stalemate](#)

The Guardian
Patrick Wintour
26 April 2019

[UK Should Acknowledge Whole Story in Yemen](#)

Human Rights Watch
Priyanka Motaparthy
26 April 2019

[Yemeni women demand equal representation in peace process](#)

The National (UAE)
Mina Aldroubi
18 April 2019

[War has broken Yemen. A new route to peace is needed, now](#)

The Guardian
Hisham Al-Omeisy
29 March 2019

[Yemen crisis won't be solved by UK arms exports halt](#)

Politico
Jeremy Hunt (UK Foreign Secretary)
26 March 2019

[Hunt begins Gulf visit in attempt to salvage Yemen peace plan](#)

The Guardian
Patrick Wintour
1 March 2019

[Yemen war: UN anchors ship off Red Sea port for 'neutral ground' talks](#)

The Guardian
Patrick Wintour
3 February 2019

[Yemen: Women, War & Political Marginalization](#)

Atlantic Council
Afrah Nasser
25 January 2019

[Yemen ceasefire: new UN resolution seeks to save agreement](#)

The Guardian
Patrick Wintour
16 January 2019

[Yemen peace talks: UN says Hodeidah should be under joint control](#)

The Guardian
Patrick Wintour
10 December 2018

[Yemen war: 'Milestone' peace talks begin in Sweden](#)

BBC News Online
6 December 2018

[Reviving Peace Talks in Yemen: What Comes Next](#)

Atlantic Council
Jessica Levy and Paul R. Williams
20 November 2018

3. Press releases

[The uplifting and frightening developments in Yemen](#)

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

15 May 2019

Statement by Ambassador Karen Pierce, UK Permanent Representative to the UN, at the Security Council briefing on Yemen:

Thank you very much, Mr President. And again our thanks to all the briefers, beginning with the Special Envoy. I mean what we've heard today is both uplifting and frightening. My Foreign Secretary, the British Foreign Secretary, has spoken about this this morning and he's asked me to pass on his thanks to the UN and related agencies for all the heroic efforts, for the patience and painstaking diplomacy that has got us to this point. And he was able to see for himself the work in hand when he visited Aden in March.

I'll come on later to what this means for the dire humanitarian situation that Mark and Henrietta have told us about. But for the moment I'd like to concentrate on what we heard from Martin. I think we all have to welcome these initial deployments by the Houthis from the three ports. They are significant steps. But they are part of the broader redeployments in Hodeidah. And it was very good that, Martin, you were able to pass on the Government of Yemen's commitment that it too will be discharging its commitments on redeployment. So that is a very important part of where we are. And I completely agree we owe General Lollesgard also our deep thanks for what he's been able to achieve. I think the next stage on that is obviously that the parties need to engage constructively with the General to finalise the outstanding negotiations to allow for implementation of both phases, of Phases One and Two of the Hodeidah Agreement. And it's very good news that there should be a meeting on the 14th of June among the parties in Amman in Jordan to discuss the economic aspects of the Hodeidah Agreement. And I think what we heard from Mark and Henrietta just underscores that this isn't just about humanitarian; it's also about the ability of the Yemeni economy as a whole to revive and work properly. And this Council's been concerned about that before.

On the political solution to the conflict, I mean, yes, we all want to see these recent developments unlock the root to that broader political solution that Martin and his team have been working so hard on. This is necessary in itself, but it's obviously even more urgent given what we heard from OCHA and UNICEF today.

I wanted to move on, if I may, to the drone strike against oil pumping stations in Riyadh province in Saudi Arabia. We condemn this drone strike by the Houthis. As my Foreign Secretary has also said, the risks remain real to the stability of the peace agreement and to its ability to prosper and bring the sort of security and safety to the people and the children of Yemen that we all want to see. The attack is not just wrong; it undermines the trust needed to get to a resolution of the conflict. It's not the time for provocation when we are so close to being able to make significant progress on the ground and unlock some of the

economic and humanitarian and medical things that we all need to see. And I think we need to bear that very strongly in mind.

I think we all were horrified by the briefings that Mark and Henrietta were able to give us and the figures. I won't repeat those figures there. Some of the individual human stories are absolutely heart tugging. But I think for me, Mr President it was the scale of what we're facing, what the people of Yemen are facing, that remains so shocking. So I think we really do owe it to you to make sure that the UN presence on the ground can do its job effectively. Whether it's the monitors or the humanitarian agencies, all the parties need to help ensure the UN can really do its job. That includes letting the UN in in the numbers in which General Lollesgard has said. It includes getting rid of the access constraints. It includes approving travel permissions and operating agreements swiftly, including allowing access to the large number of Yemenis recently displaced in Hajjah and Ad Dhale. And it includes making sure the onward road access from Hodeidah and Salif Ports and the infrastructure remains protected.

I think the other shocking figure was that only 20% of the response plan is funded. So I think it's incumbent on all Members of the United Nations to help OCHA with this and to ensure new pledges, and where pledges have been made, that we get disbursement as fast as possible. And that must be a priority for all of us.

As Henrietta said, you know, we're very close to the point of no return here. So there's an urgency about action that we should all reflect on and report back to our capitals.

The last thing I wanted to say, Mr President, here, is about the stability of the Yemeni rial. I mentioned the economy earlier. We've got to have economic measures working properly so that that in turn facilitates the commercial imports of food and fuel on which Yemen depends so heavily.

Thank you to the Ambassador of Peru for his briefing on sanctions and where the Committee has got to. It was a very interesting visit, I think. A real pity about not being able to meet Ansarullah and I hope that can be corrected for next time.

But I'll close, Mr President, by saying I think the Council is united on Yemen. I hope we can find some way of really expressing the urgency behind the measures that are needed on the humanitarian and economic side while giving our full support to Martin and General Lollesgard to move ahead on Phases One and Two of the Agreement but also the longer term political solution which is now really pressing.

Thank you.

Redeployment Coordination Committee

UN Secretary General

14 May 2019

The Chairman of the Redeployment Coordination Committee (RCC), Lieutenant General Michael Lollesgaard, visited today the ports of Hudaydah, Salif and Ras Issa to verify the redeployment of Ansar Allah (Houthi) forces. UN teams have been monitoring this redeployment which has been executed, partly as agreed by the Yemeni parties in the concept of phase one.

Lieutenant General Lollesgaard welcomes the handing over of the security of the ports to the coast guard and the efforts to remove all military manifestations from the facilities. There is still a lot of work to be done on the removal of the manifestations, but cooperation has been very good.

These steps are significant as the first part of the broader redeployments in Hudaydah, to which both Yemeni parties continue to express their commitment. Lieutenant General Lollesgaard urges the parties to finalize the outstanding negotiations to allow for a full implementation of phases one and two of the Hudaydah Agreement.

UN teams will continue to monitor these initial steps in an impartial and transparent manner. Proof of the effective implementation will be a strengthened UN presence in the ports to support their management by the Red Sea Ports Corporation, and to enhance the UNVIM's monitoring in accordance with the Hudaydah Agreement.

Full implementation of this agreement is critical for returning peace and stability to Yemen and ensuring effective humanitarian access into the country where millions continue to be in need of life-saving assistance.

Text of a Notice on the Continuation of the National Emergency with Respect to Yemen

The White House

13 May 2019

On May 16, 2012, by Executive Order 13611, the President declared a national emergency pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701-1706) to deal with the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States constituted by the actions and policies of certain former members of the Government of Yemen and others that threaten Yemen's peace, security, and stability. These actions include obstructing the political process in Yemen and blocking implementation of the agreement of November 23, 2011, between the Government of Yemen and those in opposition to it, which provided for a peaceful transition of power that meets the legitimate demands and aspirations of the Yemeni people.

The actions and policies of certain former members of the Government of Yemen and others in threatening Yemen's peace, security, and stability continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the

national security and foreign policy of the United States. For this reason, the national emergency declared on May 16, 2012, to deal with that threat must continue in effect beyond May 16, 2019. Therefore, in accordance with section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)), I am continuing for 1 year the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13611.

This notice shall be published in the *Federal Register* and transmitted to the Congress.

Donald J. Trump

Yemen Quad meeting in London: joint declaration
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
27 April 2019

Statement on behalf of UK, US, UAE and Saudi Arabia:

The foreign ministers of the United Kingdom and the United Arab Emirates, the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the United States acting Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs met today (26 April) in London to discuss the situation in Yemen.

The Quad nations underlined their commitment to a comprehensive political solution for the conflict in Yemen and their endorsement of the agreements reached in Stockholm by the Yemeni parties in December 2018. The Ministers underlined that the firing of Iranian-made and -facilitated ballistic missiles and Unmanned Aerial Vehicles by Houthi forces into neighbouring countries posed threats to regional security and prolonged the conflict. The Ministers expressed full support for Saudi Arabia and its legitimate national security concerns and called for an immediate end to such attacks by Houthi forces and their allies.

The Quad members expect the Yemeni parties to start the implementation of the Hodeidah Agreement immediately and in particular called on the Houthis to redeploy from the ports of Saleef, Ras Issa, and Hodeidah. The Quad members looked to the Security Council to review progress on such implementation when they meet on May 15, with the expectation that implementation will be underway at that point.

The 4 representatives noted that implementation of the Hodeidah Agreement would not only have an immediate and significant positive impact upon the lives of Yemeni people, but was a crucial first step towards the larger goal of an enduring comprehensive political settlement in the country.

In that regard, the Quad nations reiterated their full support for the efforts of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen in implementing the Hodeidah Agreement, which will give the opportunity to start a comprehensive, inclusive and enduring political process, in line with his mandate.”

Joint statement on 4th anniversary of Saudi intervention in Yemen

**Foreign and Commonwealth Office
26 March 2019**

The Foreign Secretary, Jeremy Hunt, and the International Development Secretary, Penny Mordaunt, said:

Today, on the fourth anniversary of the intervention by the Saudi-led Coalition into the conflict in Yemen at the invitation of the Government of Yemen, we call on both sides to urgently implement the agreements made at the Stockholm peace talks and end this dire conflict.

Yemen’s humanitarian crisis, the largest in the world, has continued to worsen. The UK will continue to show leadership as part of international efforts to end the appalling suffering millions are facing.

This year we have committed an additional £200 million of UK aid, bringing our total commitment to over £770 million since the conflict began. This support will save lives by meeting the immediate food needs of more than 1 million Yemenis each month over the year, treating 30,000 children for malnutrition and providing more than 1 million people with improved water supply and basic sanitation.

We have been at the forefront of work towards a political solution to the conflict, leading on two UN Security Council Resolutions and bolstering international support for UN efforts to secure peace. Talks in Stockholm in December were a landmark point – the first time that the parties had come to the negotiating table in over two years. But there remains a serious risk that this window of opportunity to make progress towards lasting peace slips away. The UK urges both sides to act in good faith, cooperate with the UN Special Envoy and General Lollegaard and rapidly implement the Stockholm Agreements.

We have been clear that a political settlement is the only way to bring long-term stability to Yemen and to address the worsening humanitarian crisis. We will continue to make every effort to support the UN-led process to get to that solution.

4. PQs

[Yemen: Military Intervention](#)

16 May 2019 | 252823

Asked by: Keith Vaz

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he had on the situation in Yemen in his meeting with his counterpart in the US Administration on 8 May 2019.

Answering Member: Andrew Murrison | Foreign and Commonwealth Office

The UK remains committed to the UN-led political process and will continue to work with the US and other partners in delivering this. The Foreign Secretary hosted a meeting of the Yemen Quad on 26 April in London, where Quad members, including the US, underlined their commitment to a comprehensive political solution for the conflict in Yemen and their endorsement of the agreements reached in Stockholm by the Yemeni parties in December 2018. On 8 May, the Foreign Secretary held discussions with the US Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo, about Yemen, where such commitments were reaffirmed.

[Yemen: Peace Negotiations](#)

15 May 2019 | 251888

Asked by: Richard Burden

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to ensure the implementation of the Stockholm agreement by all parties to the war in Yemen.

Answering member: Andrew Murrison | Department: Foreign and Commonwealth Office

The UK has played a central role in diplomatic efforts to seek a peaceful solution to the conflict in Yemen. Most recently, the Foreign Secretary hosted the Yemen Quad in London on 26 April, bringing together representatives from the US, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), where members discussed the next steps in the UN-led peace process and how best to support the efforts of UN Special Envoy Martin Griffiths. We will continue discussions with partners on how the UN Security Council can support the UN Special Envoy Martin Griffiths on the political process and improving the humanitarian situation, central to which is the full implementation of agreements reached during the Stockholm talks. We welcome reports that Houthis forces have begun their withdrawal from the ports of Hodeidah, Saleef and Ras Issa and await independent verification of this by the UN.

[Yemen: Peace Negotiations](#)

14 May 2019 | 910888

Asked by: Helen Whately

What diplomatic steps he is taking to support a peace process in Yemen.

Answering member: Andrew Murrison | Department: Foreign and Commonwealth Office

The security situation in Yemen is of great concern. Working with partners and agencies, we are monitoring developments and doing all we can to end the conflict. The UK has played a leading role in diplomatic efforts and will continue to do so. My Right Honourable Friend the Foreign Secretary visited Yemen in March. He also hosted a ministerial Quad meeting last month to discuss implementation of the Hodeidah agreement and next steps in the political process. I welcome reports over the weekend that the Houthis have begun their withdrawal from Hodeidah. I look forward to receiving independent verification from the UN and hearing the assessment of the UN Special Envoy during his briefing to the Security Council.

[Topical Questions](#)

14 May 2019 | 660 c92

Asked by: Alison Thewliss

One of the key aspects of the Stockholm agreement was prisoner transfers. What progress has been made on that in Yemen?

Answering Member: Jeremy Hunt | Foreign and Commonwealth Office

We have not implemented all elements of the Stockholm agreement — that is one reason why it has taken so long since the meeting on 13 December. The UN special envoy decided that the best way to break the logjam was to identify the most important part of it, which was the redeployment of troops from Hodeidah. Now that is happening, we will seek to implement the rest of the agreement as quickly as possible.

[Yemen: Peace Negotiations](#)

02 May 2019 | 247978

Asked by: Keith Vaz

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment his Department has made of the effect of the recent escalation of military activity in Al Dhale'e, Yemen, on the implementation of the UN-led peace process.

Answering Member: Mark Field | Foreign and Commonwealth Office

We are aware of the recent escalation of military activity in al-Dhale'e. All parties must engage constructively and in good faith to overcome

obstacles and find a political solution to end the conflict. We urge all parties to support and facilitate the UN's efforts.

The Foreign Secretary hosted a meeting of the Yemen Quad on 26 April in London. Quad members underlined their commitment to a comprehensive political solution for the conflict in Yemen and their endorsement of the agreements reached in Stockholm by the Yemeni parties in December 2018.

Yemen: Peace Negotiations

10 Apr 2019 | HL14938

Asked by: The Lord Bishop of Coventry

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to facilitate an end to the war in Yemen.

Answering member: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon

| Department: Foreign and Commonwealth Office

The UK has played a leading role in diplomatic efforts, including bringing together key international actors to try to find a peaceful solution. We continue to support UN Special Envoy Martin Griffiths and the UN-led peace process. All parties have reaffirmed their support for the peace process and the Government of Yemen have agreed to the UN redeployment plan but, at this stage, the Houthis have not agreed to the UN plan. It is important that neither side exploits the redeployment process. We urge all parties to co-operate with the Special Envoy and act in good faith to implement the agreements made in Stockholm, including the redeployment of military personnel.

Yemen: Humanitarian Aid

10 April 2019 | 240495

Asked by: Keith Vaz

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what progress her Department has made on the distribution of the £200 million pledged in Geneva on 26 February 2019 by the Government for the alleviation of the humanitarian crisis in Yemen.

Answering Member: Harriett Baldwin | Department for International Development

On 24 February, the Prime Minister announced that the UK would provide an additional £200 million in response to the humanitarian crisis in Yemen for the coming 2019/20 financial year.

This support brings the total UK commitment to Yemen to £770 million since the conflict began in 2015 and will provide vital food assistance right across the country to those most at risk of dying from starvation and disease, meeting the immediate food needs of more than 1 million Yemenis each month over the year, treating 30,000 children for malnutrition and providing over 1 million people with improved water supply and basic sanitation.

Now that the 2019/20 financial year has begun we will make our first disbursements of this funding over the coming weeks.

Yemen: Peace Negotiations

08 Apr 2019 | 240629

Asked by: Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps the Government is taking to seek a ceasefire throughout Yemen.

Answering member: Mark Field | Department: Foreign and Commonwealth Office

A nationwide ceasefire will only have an effect on the ground if it is underpinned by a political deal between the conflict parties. A political settlement is the only way to bring long-term stability to Yemen and to address the worsening humanitarian crisis. The Yemeni parties must engage constructively and in good faith to overcome obstacles and find a political solution to end the conflict.

Yemen: Peace Negotiations

08 April 2019 | 238598

Asked by: Keith Vaz

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he (a) has recently held and (b) will hold with the UN Special Envoy on implementation of the Stockholm Agreements in Yemen.

Answering Member: Mark Field | Foreign and Commonwealth Office

The Foreign Secretary last spoke to the UN Special Envoy on 26 March and is in regular contact with his US, Saudi and Emirati counterparts with regards to implementation of the Stockholm Agreement and the redeployment of military personnel. While the Government of Yemen has agreed to the UN redeployment plan, the Houthis have not yet agreed to the UN plan. It is important that neither side exploits the redeployment process. We urge all parties to co-operate with the Special Envoy and act in good faith to implement the agreements made in Stockholm, including the redeployment of military personnel.

Yemen: Armed Conflict**04 Apr 2019 | 239170****Asked by: Stephen Twigg**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the findings of the Civilian Impact Monitoring Report 2018, published on 7 March 2019, that in 2018 (a) more civilians in Yemen were killed in their homes than any other civilian structure and (b) 53 per cent of incidents of armed violence in Yemen affected women and girls.

Answering member: Mark Field | Department: Foreign and Commonwealth Office

We are acutely aware that during armed conflict, civilians often pay a heavy price. Addressing the humanitarian crisis in Yemen is a priority for the Government. We are at the forefront of the international response in Yemen as the fifth largest donor to the humanitarian situation and as the pen-holder on the UN Security Council.

We also acknowledge that the conflict has had a disproportionate impact on women and girls. The incidence of gender based violence has risen by 70% since the start of the conflict. Women and girls bear the disproportionate brunt of obstacles caused by protracted displacement, including lack of access to services and civil documentation. An estimated 76 per cent of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and IDP returnees are women and children.

Through the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF), we support UN Women initiatives, such as the Yemeni Women Pact, to increase women's participation in and leadership of official peace processes.

5. Debates

[Yemen](#)

28 Feb 2019 | House of Commons | 655 cc632-640

Agreed to on question.

[Yemen](#)

15 Nov 2018 | House of Lords | 793 cc2061-2075

Lords question for short debate on what steps they are taking with international partners to end the conflict in Yemen.

[Yemen](#)

11 Sep 2018 | House of Commons | 646 cc605-653

Motion that this House has considered the recent escalation of violence in Yemen. Emergency debate following a Standing Order No. 24 application. Agreed to on question.

[Yemen](#)

10 Sep 2018 | House of Commons | 646 cc489-490

Motion under Standing Order No. 24. Allowed by Speaker.

6. Statements

[Foreign Affairs Council – 18 March 2019](#)

28 Mar 2019 | HCWS1463

My Right Honourable Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs attended the Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) on 18 March. It was chaired by the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (HRVP), Federica Mogherini. The meeting was held in Brussels.

[...]

Yemen

Ministers recalled that there can be no military solution to the conflict in Yemen and that the only way forward was the full implementation of the Stockholm agreement. They stressed the need to keep up the political momentum and to push the parties to fulfil urgently their commitments, as well as the need to see immediate progress on the ground.

The Council reiterated the EU's full support for the UN Special Envoy Martin Griffiths and his efforts in finding a lasting, sustainable, enforceable, inclusive and negotiated political solution within a UN-led framework. Foreign Ministers highlighted in particular the importance of fully involving Yemeni women in the political process, and expressed concern at the lack of improvement in the dire humanitarian situation, especially access for humanitarian aid. The Council reiterated that the EU and its member states would continue their humanitarian assistance efforts and lend political support as necessary.

[...]

[Foreign Secretary visit to the Middle East and the situation in Yemen](#)

07 Mar 2019 | HCWS1383

Jeremy Hunt (Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs): The United Nations describes the situation in Yemen as the worst humanitarian crisis in the world. Of a population of less than 30 million people, 24 million depend on aid for their food and medicines. The number of children treated for malnutrition exceeds 420,000. The number who have died from starvation is estimated to be in excess of 85,000. Behind these stark numbers are individual men, women and children. Their suffering is caused not by natural disaster but by man-made conflict. I will update the House on my visit to the region and my judgement about the prospects for the Stockholm peace process. I want to start by commending the extraordinary efforts of UN Special Envoy Martin Griffiths, without whom Stockholm would not have happened.

My message on this trip to all parties was simple: the ceasefire in Hodeidah, the first sustained ceasefire since the conflict began four years ago, is in peril. It will not last unless what was agreed is implemented in full – and time is running out.

On Sunday, I was the first Western foreign minister to visit Yemen since the war began. I travelled to Aden where I met the Deputy Prime Minister of the legitimate Government of Yemen, along with the Foreign Minister and the Interior Minister. Our talks were in the presidential palace where the scars of battle were visible. I emphasised how all sides must redeploy their forces away from the port of Hodeidah. The Stockholm agreement requires them to hand over control to neutral local security forces “in accordance with Yemeni law and answering to local state institutions.” That matters because Hodeidah is the entry point for about 70 percent of Yemen’s food imports. Over 50,000 metric tonnes of grain from the World Food Programme are stored in the port. Unless the withdrawal happens they cannot be distributed to the rest of the country. I ask the House to reflect on the obscenity of people starving to death in a country where food is just sitting idly in a port because warring parties will not allow it to be released. But a ceasefire in Hodeidah was also meant to be the first step to a nationwide ceasefire. If trust can be established there, it has the potential to be a bridge to the lasting political settlement sought by all sides. But if it cannot, and Stockholm is not implemented rapidly, the ceasefire will end and the prospects for humanitarian relief evaporate.

After meeting government of Yemen representatives, I travelled by helicopter to Aden’s port where a United Nations official described the unique challenges of distributing aid in a country torn by conflict.

I also met Mohammed Abdulsalam, spokesman for the Houthis, in Oman. I listened carefully to their concern but also delivered a candid message about the need to act quickly to save the Stockholm agreement. I also requested humanitarian access for UN helicopters and NGOs, which is currently either impeded or prevented.

I also travelled to Saudi Arabia where I met President Hadi of Yemen and his foreign minister as well as my Saudi counterparts, Adel al-Jubeir and Ibrahim al-Assaf.

Finally, I visited the United Arab Emirates, where I held talks with my counterpart, Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed. I welcomed the restraint shown by the Saudi-led coalition in Hodeidah since the Stockholm agreement but also reiterated my judgement that no side in this conflict can achieve outright military victory. The only way ahead is a negotiated political settlement. In the meantime, Britain and our allies are doing everything possible to alleviate the human suffering. Last month, my RH Friend the Prime Minister announced another £200 million of British aid for Yemen, enough to treat 20,000 children for malnutrition and provide food for 3.8 million people for a month.

This year, the UN has asked for over £3.2 billion to cope with the emergency in Yemen – the largest humanitarian appeal ever. Saudi Arabia and the UAE have each pledged over £570 million. But the

people of Yemen cannot be left to depend on outside aid forever. From my meetings in the region, I concluded that all parties genuinely want Stockholm to succeed, but there is a profound lack of trust and a deep reluctance to take the necessary steps in case they are not reciprocated. But in any successful peace process, all sides must take risks that are deeply uncomfortable. The government of Yemen are understandably worried that without military pressure, the Houthis will not negotiate seriously. The Houthis, meanwhile, do not wish to hand over Hodeidah to any force that might be under government control.

I told all sides that the only way to truly build confidence is for all parties to do precisely what they promised in Sweden, including not just leaving Hodeidah but also prisoner exchanges, paying salaries to government employees, and allowing full humanitarian access to UN agencies. We then need to move rapidly on to discuss a long-term political settlement, including the creation of a government of national unity in which all sides are represented. The Stockholm peace process is our best chance yet to end this war. But the window for implementing it is closing. In the critical weeks that lie ahead, Britain will use every diplomatic and humanitarian lever we have to ensure this opportunity does not slip away.

Yemen

19 Dec 2018 | 651 cc831-845

Jeremy Hunt (Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs): Mr Speaker, with permission, I will make a statement on the quest for a political settlement to the war in Yemen.

Last week, the Houthi rebels and the Government of Yemen held their first direct peace talks since 2016. The negotiations in Stockholm reached agreement on a ceasefire in the port city of Hodeidah and a mutual redeployment of forces, monitored by the United Nations. As we look forward to Christmas, the people of Yemen are enduring one of the gravest humanitarian crises in the world. Hunger and disease are ravaging large areas of the country: 420,000 children have been treated for malnutrition; as many as 85,000 have starved to death. Today, 24 million Yemenis, more than 85% of the population, need help. Behind these stark, impersonal numbers lie real people—individual men, women and children—with hopes and aspirations no different from our own. Their ordeal is not the result of natural disaster or misfortune; this is a man-made calamity, imposed by a war that has torn the country apart and reduced its people to penury, hence the imperative need to resolve this conflict as rapidly as possible.

From the beginning, Britain has made every effort to promote a political solution. Last month, I travelled to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, which lead the coalition fighting to restore Yemen's legitimate Government. I later visited Iran, which supports the Houthi rebels. In every capital, I urged my counterparts to use all their influence to help bring their parties to the negotiating table. After my visit to the region, agreement was reached for 50 wounded Houthis to be evacuated from Yemen to Oman, a confidence-building measure intended to pave the

way for peace talks. On 19 November, I instructed our mission at the United Nations to circulate a draft resolution to the Security Council, reinforcing the need for a political settlement and demanding the unhindered flow of food and medicine throughout Yemen.

On 6 December, the peace talks began in Stockholm, mediated by Martin Griffiths, the UN special envoy. Last Wednesday, I went to Stockholm, and the following day I met the leaders of both delegations. I was the first British Minister to meet representatives of the Houthis. I urged the parties to seize the opportunity to reach agreements that would ease the suffering of the Yemeni people and move closer to the goal of ending the war. Last Thursday, the talks concluded with an agreement for the parties to meet again in January and to build trust by releasing thousands of prisoners.

Members will note the importance of the agreement on a ceasefire and redeployment in Hodeidah. The port is a lifeline for Yemen and the channel for at least 70% of the country's food imports. The ceasefire in Hodeidah port and city came into effect at midnight yesterday, and the UN special envoy has reported that it seems to be working. If the ceasefire continues to hold and the UN succeeds in increasing the volume of traffic through the port, that should reduce the level of suffering. I have urged all parties to stick to the terms agreed last week in Stockholm so that we can find a lasting political solution to this devastating conflict.

After the talks, I spoke about the next steps to the UN Secretary-General António Guterres and the Foreign Ministers of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Earlier, I discussed the situation with Secretary Pompeo of the United States. Based on those consultations and the success of the peace talks, I have instructed our mission in New York to resume work on a draft resolution with our Security Council partners, with a view to adopting it later this week. We will ask the Security Council to vote on the draft within the next 48 hours. The UK text aims to build on the momentum generated in Stockholm by endorsing the agreements reached between the parties, authorising the UN to monitor their implementation and setting out urgent steps to alleviate the humanitarian crisis. Our aim is to mobilise the collective weight of the UN behind the progress that that been made.

I am grateful to Martin Griffiths for his dogged efforts, which are nothing short of heroic. I acknowledge the seriousness of purpose of those in the delegations from both sides whom I met in Stockholm last week. I offer my thanks to the British diplomats, both in the region and at the Foreign Office in London, who have worked assiduously behind the scenes to bring the parties together. Britain has been able to play this role because of our network of friendships—including our partnership with Saudi Arabia and the UAE—and because we are a country that will always step up to its responsibilities.

Although the House can draw encouragement from recent events, I do not wish to give false hope. The positive steps that we have seen could easily be reversed. The ceasefire is highly fragile. Many complex and difficult problems have yet to be addressed, let alone resolved. The people of Yemen still carry an immense burden of suffering, and although we can see some light at the end of the tunnel, we should be

in no doubt that Yemen is still very much in the tunnel. For as long as necessary, this country will continue to use all the diplomatic and humanitarian tools at our command to help to settle this terrible conflict. Our values demand no less. I commend this statement to the House.

[Yemen](#)

21 Nov 2018 | 651 cc831-845

Emily Thornberry (Islington South and Finsbury) (Lab): (*Urgent Question*): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the UK's effort to secure a new UN Security Council resolution on Yemen.

Jeremy Hunt (Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs): I am grateful to the right hon. Lady for raising this vital issue. The conflict in Yemen has escalated to become one of the worst humanitarian disasters in the world. Today, 8 million people—nearly a third of the population—depend on United Nations food aid. Starvation and disease have taken hold across the country. More than 420,000 children have been treated for malnutrition and 1.2 million people have suffered from a cholera epidemic. In total, about 22 million people across Yemen—nearly 80% of the population—are in need of help. Yet the bare statistics cannot convey the enormity of this tragedy. What we are witnessing is a man-made humanitarian catastrophe, inflicted by a conflict that has raged for too long.

Britain is one of the biggest donors of emergency aid, providing £170 million of help to Yemen this year, which brings our total support to £570 million since 2015. But the only solution is for all the parties to set aside their arms, cease missile and air attacks on populated areas, and pursue a peaceful political settlement. Last week, I conveyed this message to the leaders of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, which lead the coalition fighting to restore Yemen's legitimate Government, when I visited both countries. On Monday, I said the same in Tehran to the Foreign Minister of Iran, which backs the Houthi rebels.

On the same day, I instructed our mission at the United Nations to circulate a draft resolution to the Security Council urging a "durable cessation of hostilities" throughout Hodeidah province, and calling on the parties to

"cease all attacks on densely populated civilian areas across Yemen".

This draft resolution also requires the unhindered flow of food and medicine, and all other forms of aid, "across the country". The aim of this UK-sponsored resolution is to relieve the immediate humanitarian crisis and maximise the chances of achieving a political settlement. Martin Griffiths, the UN envoy, is planning to gather all the parties for peace talks in Sweden in the next few weeks.

Amid this tragedy, the House will have noticed some encouraging signs. Last week, Saudi Arabia and the UAE paused their operation in

Hodeidah, although there was a further outbreak of fighting yesterday. The Houthi rebels have publicly promised to cease their missile attacks on Saudi Arabia. Martin Griffiths is meeting all parties as he prepares the ground for the talks in Sweden.

Britain holds a unique position as the pen holder for Yemen in the Security Council, a leading humanitarian donor and a country with significant influence in the region, so we will make every effort, and use all the diplomatic assets at our command, to support the UN envoy as he seeks to resolve a crisis that has inflicted such terrible suffering.

7. Early Day Motions

Bombing of the Kitaf hospital in Yemen

EDM 2267 (session 2017-19)

3 April 2019

Keith Vaz

That this House deplores the bombing of the Kitaf hospital in the Saada province of Yemen on 27 March 2019 which resulted in the death of eight people, five of whom were children; notes that the number of civilians killed in airstrikes has now reached over 17,500 since the four-year bombing campaign began, 1,283 of which were children; considers that the only way of improving life for the people in Yemen is an immediate ceasefire and the resumption of humanitarian aid; demands that there must not be any further bombings of children or hospitals; and expresses deep concern that as the Yemen conflict enters into its fourth year, children continue to suffer from malnutrition and are not safe in Yemen hospitals.

Fourth anniversary of the war in Yemen

EDM 2217 (session 2017-19)

22 March 2019

Keith Vaz

That this House notes with deep sadness that 26 March 2019 marks the fourth anniversary of the beginning of the conflict in Yemen during which an estimated 60,000 people have been killed; further notes that despite the Stockholm Agreement, an average of three civilians a day are still dying and that 22.2 million people are in need of urgent humanitarian assistance; commends aid agencies including Oxfam, Save the Children, the Norwegian Refugee Council, Islamic Relief, Médecins Sans Frontières, Action Against Hunger, International Rescue Committee and Care International, which have highlighted in the last 10 days the terrible plight of the Yemeni people; urges all sides involved in the fighting to implement the peace agreements made in Stockholm, including the mutual redeployment of forces in Hodeidah; implores authorities to allow in humanitarian aid without delay; and calls for an immediate nationwide ceasefire and further peace talks.

UN Security Council Resolution 2452 on Yemen

EDM 1979 (session 2017-19)

16 January 2019

Keith Vaz

That this House welcomes the unanimous adoption of Resolution 2452 at the UN Security Council on 16 January 2019, which calls for the establishment in Yemen of the United Nations Mission to support the Hodeidah Agreement (UNMHA); recognises that this Special Political Mission will allow up to 75 independent monitors to operate in the ports of Hodeidah, Salif and Ras Issa to support the adoption of the Hodeidah Agreement; understands that this agreement, reached in Stockholm in December 2018, calls for the mutual redeployment of

Houthi and Coalition-backed forces from the port, and establishes a ceasefire in the city of Hodeidah; urges the Government to take all necessary measures to support the implementation of this Resolution and the Stockholm Agreement; and calls on the Government to continue to make every effort through diplomatic and political means to ensure there is an immediate and complete ceasefire in Yemen.

Yemen peace talks (no. 2)

EDM 1934 (session 2017-19)

17 December 2018

Keith Vaz

That this House welcomes the announcement by UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres that a truce has been agreed in Stockholm for Hodaydah port in Yemen; expresses its support for other measures agreed at the talks, including the mutual transfer of up to 15,000 prisoners in the conflict, funds for the country's central bank, and a humanitarian corridor into Taiz; recognises the work of UN Special Envoy Martin Griffiths for his diligence in bringing the Parties together; commends the Foreign Secretary for travelling to Stockholm in support of the agreements; hopes that this will act as the basis for future talks, including those planned in January; and further hopes that it continues to press for a wider and enduring ceasefire.

US Senate vote on Yemen

EDM 1898 (session 2017-19)

03 December 2018

Keith Vaz

That this House welcomes Joint Resolution 54 passed in the United States Senate on 28 November 2018 on removing American military involvement from the conflict in the Republic of Yemen, including air-to-air refuelling and intelligence support; commends the actions of US Senators in seeking an end to the ongoing violence in the region, during which 14 million people are at risk of starvation and 85,000 children have died of hunger; notes the statement made by Save the Children, the International Rescue Committee, Oxfam America, CARE US and the Norwegian Refugee Council USA encouraging the US to support Special Envoy Martin Griffiths in his efforts to facilitate peace talks and secure an immediate ceasefire in Yemen.

Yemen peace talks

EDM 1793 (session 2017-19)

31 October 2018

Keith Vaz

That this House welcomes the call made by US Defense Secretary James Mattis and Secretary of State [Mike] Pompeo for a ceasefire in Yemen's civil war and the commitment to peace talks within 30 days; supports the idea of an immediate ceasefire in the conflict; notes that after three years of conflict over 30,000 Yemeni civilians are estimated to have been slaughtered; and calls on the Government to support all efforts to

end the conflict and the bombings of civilian area currently being carried out by the Saudi-Emirati led coalition, and to immediately table a new UN Resolution.

Saudi Arabia and violations of international law

EDM 1726 (session 2017-19)

18 October 2018

Ann Clwyd

That this House is concerned about Saudi Arabia's on-going violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law; acknowledges that serious and systematic violations are being committed by all parties to the conflict in Yemen; notes with alarm that since 2015 the Saudi-led coalition has reportedly undertaken 18,000 airstrikes, one-third of which have hit non-military targets, including a school bus in August 2018, and allegedly caused almost two-thirds of reported civilian deaths and almost two-thirds of damaged or destroyed civilian public buildings; is appalled that up to 13 million Yemenis are facing starvation because of the war, referred to by both the UN and EU as the worst humanitarian crisis on earth, including as a result of the offensive by the Saudi-led coalition to take the port city of Hodeidah from Houthi rebels; notes with concern that in Saudi Arabia activists and critics are being silenced with increasing brutality, illustrated by the arrest and detention of more than 60 of its perceived opponents in September 2017, the subsequent arrest of women's rights activists and, most recently, the alleged murder of Jamal Khashoggi in the Saudi Arabian consulate in Ankara; and calls on the Government to condemn Saudi Arabia for these violations, and to suspend all arms sales and military support to that country immediately.

Yemen peace talks 6 September 2018

EDM 1567 (session 2017-19)

04 September 2018

Keith Vaz

That this House supports the efforts made by Martin Griffiths, the UN Special Envoy to Yemen in convening peace talks in Geneva beginning on 6 September 2018; notes that 22.2 million Yemenis countrywide are in need of urgent humanitarian assistance and that nine million are on the brink of famine; further notes the recent civilian casualties that have occurred as a result of the war; and calls on this House to support an immediate ceasefire in Yemen and give full and unconditional support to the continuation of the UN peace process led by Martin Griffiths.

8. Stockholm Agreement

Stockholm Agreement 13 December 2018

The Parties,

After holding consultations under the auspices of the United Nations from 6-13 December 2018 in the Kingdom of Sweden,

Expressing their gratitude to the Government of the Kingdom of Sweden for hosting the consultations and for the hospitality and support they provided throughout,

Expressing their gratitude also to all states and organizations that have provided the support necessary for the consultations to succeed,

Considering the urgent need to address the dire humanitarian situation and insecure conditions faced by the Yemeni people,

The parties reached an agreement on the following:

- 1- An agreement on the city of Hodeidah and the ports of Hodeidah, Salif and Ras Issa.
- 2- An executive mechanism on activating the prisoner exchange agreement.
- 3- A statement of understanding on Taiz.

We shall be committed,

- To fully implement this Agreement and to work towards the removal of any obstructions or impediments to its implementation.
- To refrain from any action, escalation or decisions that would undermine the prospects for full implementation of this Agreement.
- To continue the consultations unconditionally in January 2019 in a location to be agreed upon by the parties.

9. Further reading

Commons Library papers

[Yemen's fragile peace process](#), Commons Library Briefing CBP-8536, 27 March 2019

[Yemen update autumn 2018](#), Commons Library Briefing CBP-8433, 2 November 2018

Committee reports

[Yemen: giving peace a chance](#), International Relations Committee, HL 290, 16 February 2019

UN publications and Resolutions

[UN Security Council Briefing](#), Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen, 15 May 2019

[The situation in the Middle East](#), UN Security Council Resolution 2452, 16 January 2019

[Agreement on the City of Hodeidah and Ports of Hodeidah, Salif, and Ras Isa](#), UN Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen, 13 December 2018

[Middle East \(Yemen\)](#), UN Security Council Resolution 2216, 14 April 2015

Charities/pressure groups pages

[Yemen](#), Amnesty International

[Yemen](#), Human Rights Watch

[Yemen in Focus](#), International Committee of the Red Cross

[Crisis in Yemen](#), Oxfam

[Yemen](#), Save the Children

Other material

[Yemen Update 9](#), International Crisis Group, 19 April 2019

[Made in France: Yemen Papers](#), Disclose, 15 April 2019

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