

United Nations Human Rights Council

39th session

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Item 10, Technical assistance and capacity building – ID on HC report on Yemen

Joint oral statement by Save the Children and 17 Civil Society Organizations

Urgent need to address the humanitarian crisis in Yemen and its impact on the most vulnerable populations

A call for renewal and strengthening of the mandate for the Group of Eminent Experts

Mr. President,

This statement is made on behalf of Save the Children and 17 civil society organisations, including organisations with current operations in Yemen.

Fighting around Hodeidah city has increased since early September and throughout the country, the welfare of at least 8.4 million people on the brink of starvation, including at least 4.2 million children, is at stake. This year alone we expect some 400,000 children under five to suffer from severe acute malnutrition.

Humanitarian access remains extremely challenging with more than 1.4 million people in need of assistance living in districts with high access constraints.¹ Parties to the conflict continue to deny or delay basic humanitarian services, access to essential supplies into and within the country.

We have repeated on many occasions that the humanitarian situation has escalated to an unacceptable level of widespread violations and abuses of international human rights law and international humanitarian law. Since June, at least 425 attacks on and military use of schools and hospitals have been documented and verified.² 450 civilians have lost their lives in the first nine days of August alone.³

We call on Member States to take immediate action to hold all parties to the conflict to account for violations of international law.

In particular, we urge Member States to:

- Call on all parties to the conflict to comply with their obligations under international law, and take immediate measures to prevent and end violations against civilians, notably children, including by supporting all authorities in Yemen to implement the Safe Schools Declaration and associated *Guidelines for Protecting Schools and University from Military Use during Armed Conflict*;
- Urgently renew and strengthen the mandate of the Group of Eminent Experts on Yemen;
- Suspend the sale or transfer of arms, munitions and related materials to all parties to the conflict; and
- Engage all parties to the conflict to find an inclusive peaceful, sustainable and implementable political solution that involves women, youth, children, minority groups and civil society.

Thank you.

Signed by:

Adventist Development and Relief Agency
Action contre La Faim
Danish Refugee Council
Defence for Children International

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https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/20180806_humanitarian_update_final.pdf

² https://www.unicef.org/yemen/YEM_sitreps_Jun2018.pdf

³ <http://www.unhcr.org/news/briefing/2018/8/5b8503637/unhcr-calls-protection-civilians-fleeing-yemens-al-hudaydah.html>

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