Statement by the Spokesperson on the deteriorating situation in Yemen

The ongoing military offensive in and around the city and port of Hodeidah has intensified in the past few days with civilians caught in the crossfire and once again paying the ultimate price of the conflict. As in the past, civilian infrastructure has also been targeted by all sides in breach of international humanitarian law.

Cutting-off access into and from Hodeidah will push even more Yemenis to the brink of starvation, as the supply of basic commodities is disrupted. Today in Yemen 22 million people are in need of assistance and 14 million may soon be in pre-famine conditions; this out of a population of 29 million. It is imperative that basic commodities such as fuel, food and medicines reach the affected populations regardless of the areas where they reside.

Parties to the conflict must allow humanitarian organisations to assist Yemenis in need, guaranteeing humanitarian access in accordance with international humanitarian law. They should also facilitate the safe passage of civilian populations out of the conflict zones.

The European Union continues to fully back the UN-led process and in particular the efforts of the UN Special Envoy Martin Griffiths for an immediate resumption of political talks. We call on all sides to engage fully and constructively with the Special Envoy and his team as we all move to achieve a lasting, sustainable political settlement to the conflict in Yemen.

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