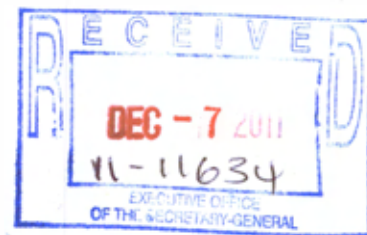


ACTION COPY

Note to the Secretary-General



**MISSION TO YEMEN, 26-30 NOVEMBER 2011**

1. I traveled to Yemen from 26 to 30 November to assess the humanitarian needs and impact of the political crisis and review the humanitarian operations in light of the current security constraints. In Sana'a, I met with Government officials, UN agencies, international and local NGOs, the ICRC and the diplomatic community. I traveled to Aden in the south and Haradh in the north, talking to beneficiaries, humanitarian partners and local officials.

2. The humanitarian situation in Yemen has deteriorated significantly compared to my last visit in November 2010. Loss of Government control and a breakdown in essential social services coupled with the regional drought and global economic crisis have aggravated chronic deprivation and alarming poverty. The crisis is no longer just touching people directly affected by conflict or displacement, but millions of Yemenis who are in acute humanitarian need. Shortages in resources and social services, as well as increasing displacement and the growing influx of refugees and migrants from the Horn of Africa, are placing severe strain on host communities. The need for assistance is increasing, especially in terms of food and nutrition, health care, sanitation and clean water.

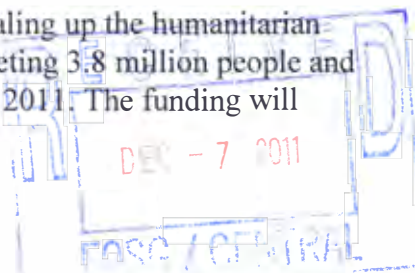
3. In southern Yemen, tens of thousands of people have been displaced by fighting in Abyan. Unable to return home in the near future, they are now residing in schools and with host communities in neighbouring Governorates. The scarcity of resources and the IDP occupancy of schools have led to increased tensions between them and host communities. In my meetings with the Governors of Aden and Abyan, I stressed the urgency of addressing these issues and finding durable solutions. The local officials agreed to cooperate with the UN in finding appropriate solutions for the IDPs, but also highlighted the need for assistance to host communities.

4. Northern Yemen is facing a protracted displacement crisis, with more than 300,000 people displaced from previous conflict between the Government and Al-Houthis in Sa'ada Governorate. In Al-Mazrak camp in Haradh, I met with displaced people, who highlighted the deteriorating situation in the camp, and the shortages of food, clean water and medicine. I also visited an MSF-run supplementary feeding clinic, which provides both in-patient and out-patient therapeutic programmes, aimed at IDPs but also servicing the host community.

5. The number of food insecure across Yemen is conservatively estimated at 6.8 million people, of whom 3 million are severely food insecure. As a direct result of food insecurity, poverty and lack of access to safe water and sanitation, Yemen's malnutrition rates are among the highest in the world. More than half of Yemeni children are chronically malnourished and global acute malnutrition is well above the emergency threshold. However, we are not seeing the same mortality rates as in Somalia partly due to traditional tribal coping mechanisms and nutritional interventions by the international community.

6. The Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) is significantly scaling up the humanitarian response in Yemen. The 2012 Humanitarian Response Plan is targeting 3.8 million people and requesting US\$447 million in funding, a 54 per cent increase from 2011. The funding will

HUM/04/001



150  
primarily cover food and nutrition, water, sanitation and health, expanding programmes beyond those affected by war and displacement to address the needs of vulnerable people across Yemen. This is a major shift from the aid operation conducted in 2011.

7. Our ability to scale up the delivery of humanitarian aid also requires a close partnership with international and local NGOs, who are our main implementing partners. An increasing number of NGOs have included projects in the 2012 Response Plan and the UN is continuing efforts to build capacity of local NGOs, while encouraging more international NGOs to establish or increase their presence in Yemen. Several international NGOs are waiting for visa clearance to enter Yemen and I encouraged officials to speed up the procedures for visa and registration applications.

8. The significant increase in funding requirements for the 2012 humanitarian response means that we can no longer rely solely on the traditional donors to fill the gap. Increased outreach to donors, including to neighbouring countries is therefore critical. I discussed with the HCT the possibility to complement the consolidated appeals briefing on 14 December, with a regional launch, targeting donors in the region. The HCT subsequently agreed to organize a regional media event in Dubai immediately following the global CAP launch, while preparing a partnership conference in the region in January.

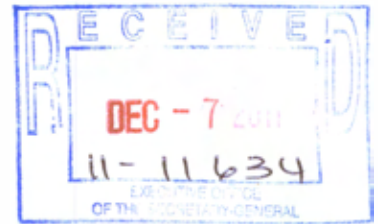
9. To increase humanitarian programming, we need to better address security constraints. Since early June, the UN has several times been prompted to reduce the presence of international staff in country and imposed staff ceilings. A few days prior to my mission, the staff ceiling was lifted and agency managers are now applying programme criticality criteria to determine staff presence in country. I had extensive discussions with our partners, including DSS, regarding risk management and the need to consider mitigating security measures other than large scale reductions in staff, to allow us to stay and deliver during spikes in insecurity. It is important that this discussion continues, including here in HQ, to ensure an appropriate level of preparedness.

10. My mission to Yemen happened to take place a few days after the signing of the GCC-led political transition initiative. Despite this agreement, conflict is likely to continue in Yemen and humanitarian needs are expected to increase further in the coming year. While the international community is increasing its humanitarian assistance, the UN cannot be a substitute to Government-run services. National ownership must be ensured and I encouraged the authorities to step up their efforts to address the needs of their people

11. The UN Country Team is working on a framework, which will outline the UN's political, development and humanitarian priorities and footprint during the country's transition phase. I emphasized the importance of those three pillars being mutually supportive and balanced, allowing for a structure that supports the neutrality of humanitarian aid. The recent ECHA and ECPS meetings were an important first step to establish a coherent UN wide approach to the crisis in Yemen. I would like to suggest that you continue to raise the humanitarian concerns with your interlocutors when opportune.

*Catherine Bragg*  
Catherine Bragg  
28 November 2011

cc: Ms. Amos  
Ms. Clark  
Mr. Pascoe  
Mr. Starr  
Ms. Cheng-Hopkins  
Mr. Kim  
Mr. Guterres  
Mr. Lake  
Ms. Sheeran  
Mr. Benomar



Note to Mr. Nambiar

**MISSION OF THE DEPUTY EMERGENCY RELIEF COORDINATOR  
TO YEMEN, 26-30 NOVEMBER 2011**

Please find attached a note to the Secretary-General on my recent visit to Yemen from 26 to 30 November 2011.

I would be grateful if you could kindly submit it to the Secretary-General.

*Catherine Bragg*

Catherine Bragg  
6 December 2011