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Note to the Secretary-General

**SAUDI FUNDS FOR YEMEN**

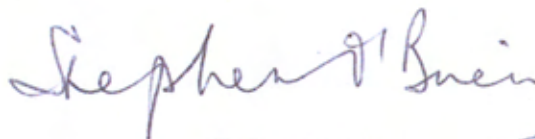
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1. Following your phone call with the Saudi Foreign Minister over the weekend, I met yesterday with Mr. Al-Mouallami, Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Despite the assurances you received from the Foreign Minister, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will not transfer the funds to the United Nations towards the UN Yemen Flash Appeal. Funds were already disbursed to the King Salman Humanitarian Centre in Riyadh. The Ambassador called this change a 'blip' and suggested setting up a mechanism by which the Centre would disburse funds by project, in cooperation with OCHA. I fear that this is an attempt to vet humanitarian programmes and add conditionality to humanitarian assistance in Yemen. Such an approach may also compromise the fundamental tenets of our work, namely that assistance needs to be provided according to need only and in an impartial and neutral way.
2. Mr. Al-Mouallami said that statements perceived as negative from OCHA staff in Riyadh about the King Salman Humanitarian Centre were the reason for not transferring the funds to OCHA. This has been compounded by the fact that the Yemeni Government has complained to Saudi authorities that humanitarian aid provided during the humanitarian pause was diverted. They claim that UN humanitarian assistance ended up in the hands of the Al-Houthi commanders, who used it for political gains. I assure you that these assertions are baseless. Humanitarian assistance, now as well as during the pause, has been provided in an impartial and neutral manner. These allegations are a misrepresentation of how humanitarian actors carry out our work.
3. I have decided to visit Saudi Arabia on 10 June to address this misunderstanding and improve OCHA's overarching relationship with Saudi Arabia. I hope Saudi authorities will agree. While I hope my visit will lead to a better partnership, I am aware that unfortunately, the prospects to secure the funding towards the Flash Appeal are doubtful and we need to assess how we communicate this to other donors, operational partners and the general public.
4. I will keep you updated of developments.



Stephen O'Brien  
2 June 2015

cc: Mr. Eliasson  
Ms. Malcorra  
Mr. Feltman  
Mr. Ould Cheikh Ahmed

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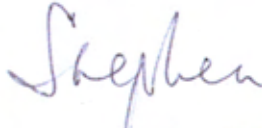
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**Note to the Deputy Secretary-General**

**SAUDI FUNDS FOR YEMEN**

Please find attached a note to the Secretary-General update on the Saudi funds for Yemen.

I would appreciate if you could kindly submit this to the Secretary-General.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Stephen".

Stephen O'Brien  
2 June 2015