



February 6, 2018

The Honorable Rex W. Tillerson
Secretary of State of the United States of America

Dear Secretary Tillerson,

As organizations that provide and advocate for life-saving assistance in Yemen, we write to urge your continued efforts to seek a permanent end to the Saudi-led coalition’s restrictions on humanitarian and commercial access to Yemen’s ports, particularly Hodeidah and Saleef. Furthermore, we urge you to redouble your efforts to mobilize political will and realize a political settlement to Yemen’s deadly conflict.

We applaud your personal diplomatic engagement to address this crisis in recent months, which, combined with public statements from President Trump and the efforts of your colleagues in the Department of State and USAID, has so far helped to prevent the world’s worst humanitarian crisis from significant further deterioration. We appreciate the opportunity to engage directly with senior State Department and USAID officials on the matter and look forward to the next discussion. To truly end the suffering of the Yemeni people, however, critical measures remain to be implemented.

The recently-released Yemen Comprehensive Humanitarian Operations (YCHO), proposed by the Saudi-led coalition, asserts that increasing the capacity of additional ports beyond Hodeidah and rerouting all fuel shipments south to Aden will address the dire humanitarian needs in Yemen. As stated in our November 27th letter to your office, there is no alternative to Hodeidah port for ensuring the adequate delivery of humanitarian and commercial supplies to the northern governorates. Roughly 70 percent of Yemen’s population resides in Northern Yemen; Hodeidah and Saleef ports together receive 80 percent of Yemen’s imports and are much more accessible to the majority of those most in need. We are grateful for the steps that USAID and the State Department have taken to address the most concerning aspects of the YCHO and we are hopeful that, with your ongoing engagement, the plan will strengthen the international community’s impartial and effective humanitarian response.

The fragmentation of the conflict in Yemen has made peace a distant hope, but we remain optimistic that a political settlement between the principal parties to the conflict would create the conditions for the unification of Yemen’s state institutions and the revival of its economy. To achieve this end, we urge you to publicly support the adoption of a new UN Security Council Resolution that demands a ceasefire, unfettered humanitarian and commercial access, and flexibility on all sides to achieve a political resolution to the conflict. We have observed that, by imposing unrealistic, one-sided demands on the Houthis, Resolution 2216 precludes incentives for any of the parties to engage in good faith negotiations. A new Resolution that demonstrates the urgency and commitment of the international community to resolving the conflict could empower the new UN special envoy and catalyze a meaningful peace process.

The United States is uniquely positioned to help bring the conflict in Yemen to a peaceful resolution and prevent further suffering and loss of civilian life. Thank you once again for your swift action to press for fully lifting all blockades on life-saving supplies entering Yemen and working toward a peaceful end to the crisis.

Signed:

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| 1. <i>CARE</i> | 4. <i>International Rescue Committee</i> | 7. <i>Oxfam</i> |
| 2. <i>Global Communities</i> | 5. <i>Mercy Corps</i> | 8. <i>Refugees International</i> |
| 3. <i>InterAction</i> | 6. <i>Norwegian Refugee Council</i> | 9. <i>Save the Children</i> |

Copies to:

Ambassador Mark Green, USAID Administrator
Lt Gen. H.R. McMaster, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs
Ambassador Nikki Haley, US Permanent Representative to the U.N.
John J. Sullivan, US Deputy Secretary of State