



Briefing Notes Summary

Group 62 – Information Centre for Asylum and Migration

Yemen – January to June 2025

30 June 2025

13 January 2025

Security situation

On 26.12.24, the Israeli military announced that it had carried out airstrikes on several Houthi targets, including Sanaa International Airport and power stations and harbours in Hodeidah. According to the Houthi-controlled TV channel al-Masirah, 11 people were injured and three others were killed in these attacks. On 01.01.25, the US military announced that it had also carried out attacks on Houthi targets in Sanaa and other locations.

Meanwhile, on 06.01.25, Hans Grundberg, UN Special Envoy for Yemen, arrived for his first visit to Yemen since May 2023. According to his office, he wants to advance the peace process in the country and press for the release of UN staff currently being held by the Houthis.

On 10.01.25, the Israeli military announced that it had once again carried out airstrikes, including on a power plant near Sanaa. According to local media, at least one person was killed and several others were injured.

Also on 10.01.25, a security company announced that the oil tanker Sounion had been salvaged. It had been attacked by the Houthis in the Red Sea on 21.08.24, threatening to cause an oil spill.¹

20 January 2025

UN Special Envoy's report on the situation in Yemen

The UN Special Envoy for Yemen, Hans Grundberg, presented his latest report on the situation in Yemen during a meeting held by the UN Security Council on 15.01.25. In this report, he mentioned, among other things, the attacks launched by the Houthis on international shipping in the Red Sea and the subsequent attacks carried out by the US, the United Kingdom and Israel against Houthi targets.

The deteriorating security situation has also had an impact on the humanitarian situation in Yemen, the UN Special Envoy said. Around 17 million people are currently unable to meet their basic food needs.²

Human rights situation; HRW annual report

In its annual report on the development of the human rights situation in 2024, published on 16.01.25, HRW stated, among other things, that the situation for civil society and aid organisations in Yemen has deteriorated. The

detention of some employees of nongovernmental aid organisations and the UN by the Houthis on 31.05.24 is cited as an example of the increased threat.³

27 January 2025

UN suspends humanitarian aid for Houthi-controlled areas

On 24.01.25, the UN suspended its work in areas currently controlled by the Houthi militia after the latter once again detained UN employees. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called for the immediate and unconditional release of the seven people concerned and all of the other 16 UN staffers, some of whom have been held by the Houthis since 2021, according to UN reports.⁴

Houthis release prisoners of war and civilian ship's crew

On 25.01.25, the Houthi militia released 153 prisoners of war, as confirmed by the International Red Cross (ICRC). The released prisoners had previously received visits from ICRC staff, who carried out medical examinations and provided other assistance. The releases are linked to the attempt to bring about peace negotiations with a view to ending the Yemen conflict. The ICRC had already monitored the exchange of around 1,000 prisoners of war in 2020, over 800 in 2023 and an unknown number in 2024. This time the prisoners of war were released unilaterally.

The released did not include any UN staffers held captive by the Houthi militia.

The Houthis released all 25 crew members of the civilian cargo vessel "Galaxy" on 24.01.25. This had been seized in November 2023 after the Houthi militia joined the Gaza war. According to the Houthis, the release of the ship's crew was achieved through mediation by Oman. It is said to be a gesture of approval of the ceasefire agreement negotiated in Gaza and Israel.

Since October 2023, the Houthis have attacked over 100 civilian merchant ships in the Gulf of Oman with missiles and drones. Two ships have also been sunk and four sailors killed. On 21.01.25, a UN representative stated that the Yemeni port of Hodeidah was currently only able to operate at around a quarter of its capacity as a result of Israeli airstrikes. He said the harbour was needed for a considerable proportion of all humanitarian aid imports.⁵

17 February 2025

Aid organisation staffer dies in Houthi prison

The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) confirmed the death of one of its staff members on 11.02.25 after he had been arrested about three weeks earlier and taken to a prison controlled by the Houthi militia in Saada governorate. No cause of death was given.

The deceased, a 40-year-old Yemeni who had worked for the WFP since 2017, was one of seven people employed by the aid organisation who were allegedly arbitrarily arrested by the Houthi militia on 23.01.25 (cf. BN of 27.01.25). UN personnel usually enjoy diplomatic immunity.

The suspension of all UN activities in the Houthi-controlled governorate of Saada, which was decided in response to the arbitrary arrests of UN personnel, affects seven UN organisations, including, for example, the WFP, UNICEF and the WHO. According to a UN spokesperson, at least 350,000 people in Saada were receiving UN aid in 2024. It is estimated that around one million people currently reside in Saada.⁶

24 February 2025

Explosive ordnance clearance

On 23.02.25, Saudi Arabia's Project Masam initiative gave an overview of the explosive ordnance clearance work it has been carrying out since 2018.

According to its own sources, a total of 482,637 mines have been cleared in Yemen so far, mainly in schools, villages and roads, to enable the population to return home. However, the figure on "mines" does not distinguish between

different types of explosive ordnance: the figure also includes unexploded ordnance, unconventional explosive and incendiary devices and other potentially explosive devices such as anti-tank mines.⁷

10 March 2025

Boat accident: two dead, 186 missing

According to a press release issued by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) on 07.03.25, several boats carrying 186 migrants from the Horn of Africa to the Arabian Peninsula sank in rough seas off the coast of Yemen. One of the boats capsized in the waters off the Dhubab district, another in the Dhubab district, both in the Ta'iz governorate. Two other boats reportedly capsized in the waters of Djibouti. According to the IOM, two Yemeni crew members were rescued, but little hope remains for the others.

According to the IOM, 558 people died last year crossing from East Africa to Yemen. The so-called "eastern route" is considered to be one of the world's busiest and most dangerous migration corridors. In 2023, ninety-seven thousand two hundred irregular migrants reportedly reached the coast of Yemen, with the number falling to just under 61,000 in 2024. According to the IOM, there are currently around 380,000 migrants in Yemen.⁸

17 March 2025

Over 50 killed in US military strikes on Houthi positions

US President Donald Trump announced on 15.03.25 that the US military had carried out large-scale air and naval strikes on Houthi militia positions. In addition to the capital Sanaa, the governorates of Saada, al-Bayda, Hajjah and Dhamar were also affected, according to Yemeni news reports.

According to a statement issued by a Houthi militia spokesperson on 16.03.25, at least 53 people were killed and 98 were injured in the strikes. Women and children were reportedly among the casualties. The US did not provide any information on the number of casualties.

According to the US government, the strikes were the beginning of an offensive that would continue until the Iranian-backed militia stop attacking civilian vessels passing through the Strait of Bab al-Mandab (literally: Gate of Tears).

According to media reports, members of the US government are assuming that the campaign could last several weeks. On the same day, the Houthi leadership vowed retaliation against the US. Iran has also condemned the attacks. Since the attacks, which the Houthi militia began carrying out against civilian merchant vessels as a result of the Gaza war at the end of 2023, international shipping has diverted a considerable volume of traffic from Bab al-Mandab (and the Suez Canal) to the route around the Cape of Good Hope near South Africa.⁹

24 March 2025

Missile attacks on Israel / airstrikes launched by the US

The US airstrikes launched against targets in Yemen continue unabated (cf. BN of 17.03.25). According to the US National Security Advisor, several important leaders of the Houthi militia have been killed and key military capabilities destroyed. The Houthis have not confirmed any of this information. The extent of the damage is currently difficult to assess.

On 20.03.25, Houthi forces again launched ballistic missile attacks on Israel. Until the evening of 23.03.25, air raid sirens sounded repeatedly in Israel and the West Bank, with the target allegedly being Ben Gurion International Airport.¹⁰

14 April 2025

More than 120 dead in US military strikes on Houthi positions

There have been continued large numbers of military strikes on positions of the Houthi militia. According to figures

released by the Health Ministry of the Houthi on 14.04.25, at least 120 people have been killed since the start of the military strikes on 15.03.25. The Ministry did not provide any information on the share accounted for by combatants.¹¹

28 April 2025

More than 120 dead in US military attacks on Houthi positions

Large numbers of military strikes continue against targets in the sphere of control of the Houthi militia. On 17.04.25, there were massive strikes on an oil terminal in Ras Isa, leading to 80 fatalities according to information from the Houthi.

An unknown target in Saada was attacked on 27.04.25. According to Houthi spokespersons, a detention centre for 115 African migrants was hit, and according to early reports at least 68 bodies had been recovered.

This means according to media reports that more than 250 people have been killed in Yemen since the beginning of the new campaign of airstrikes in mid-March. There is no information regarding how many of the victims are civilians or belong to the military.¹²

12 May 2025

Ceasefire between USA and Houthis

On 06.05.25, US president Trump announced that the Houthis had “capitulated”. The backdrop to this announcement is a ceasefire agreement between the Houthis and the US administration putting an end to the ongoing US airstrikes which had claimed the lives of at least 250 people since March 2025. Under the agreement, the Houthis will stop attacking US ships in the Red Sea. Since however this only meets one of the USA’s three main demands (cessation of attacks on US ships, resumption of the peace process with Saudi Arabia, and an end to attacks on Israel), many on the international stage regard the agreement as a de facto victory for the Houthis, as it has allowed them to eliminate the USA as a strategic opponent without changing their positions in a relevant way. The restriction of the ceasefire to ships sailing under a US flag also ensures that the Red Sea will continue to be a de facto high-risk area for international maritime trade.¹³

19 May 2025

Fighting with Israel goes on

After the Houthi militia once more fired on Israeli territory, Israel launched attacks on the ports of Hodeida and Salif on 16.05.25. Israel had issued warnings prior to the strikes. There is so far no information on victims. If firing from Yemen were to continue, the Israeli side threatened to target the Houthi leadership in a similar manner as had happened with the leaders of Hamas and Hezbollah.¹⁴

Drastic reduction in humanitarian aid

On 16.05.25, the UN announced that they would have to considerably scale back their aid programmes for Yemen because of the drop in the financial commitment of its member states, above all the USA.

The UN presume that there are roughly 19.5 million people in need in Yemen, but will only be able to try to support approx. 10.5 million people if the estimated 2.4 billion USD in donations are collected. In the meantime, however, it is only possible to plan with a budget of 1.4 billion USD, which the UN hope will enable them to provide at least 8.8 million people with basic aid.¹⁵

02 June 2025

Fighting with Israel goes on

After the Houthi militia had once more targeted Israeli territory several times with ballistic rockets, and air raid

alarms had been set off in several cities, Israeli mounted a counterattack on Sanaa International Airport on 27.05.25. Israel's defence minister Katz and prime minister Netanyahu confirmed several attacks as part of the "golden jewel" operation, and stated that runways and the last remaining aircraft used by the Houthi had been destroyed. Both went on to renew the threat that any attack on Israel would continue to meet greater force. No information was initially provided on casualties. As a reaction to the bombings, representatives of the Houthi in turn stated that they would be continuing the attacks on Israel. They warned international airlines against continuing to fly to Ben Gurion Airport in Tel Aviv.

UN Envoy to Yemen Hans Grundberg expressed his concern over the renewed escalation, stating that Sanaa International Airport was the only safe means for many Yemenites to leave the country for medical treatment.¹⁶

16 June 2025

Fighting with Israel goes on

The Israeli navy stated that it had attacked Hodeidah port on 10.06.25 in response to renewed missile attacks from Yemen on 03.06.25.

Israel accuses the Houthi militia of using the seaport for military purposes to transport weapons. The spokesperson of the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) issued an evacuation order for the ports in Ras Isa, Salif and Hodeidah on the previous evening via social media. There was initially no information regarding casualties. Israel stated that a naval and aerial blockade could follow in the future were the attacks on Israel to continue. Hodeidah port plays a key role in humanitarian aid imports to Yemen.

The Israeli military stated that it had carried out a targeted airstrike on Mohamed al-Ghamari, the Houthi forces' military chief of staff, in Yemen's capital Sana'a in the night of 14.05. to 15.06.25. No information was initially released regarding fatalities and injuries. According to Houthi military spokesperson Yahya Saree, the militia then took part in the ballistic missile attacks targeting Israel, in coordination with Iran.¹⁷

Detention and sentencing of journalists by Houthi militia

On 24.05.25, the Houthi-run specialised criminal court in Sana'a handed down a one-and-a-half-year prison sentence on journalist Mohammed al-Meyahi. He was detained on 20.09.24 following several critical articles on restrictions of free speech, as well as an article on social media. He was accused of publishing false news with intent to disturb public security and peace. Al-Meyahi denied the charges against him, and insisted that he is a journalist. Along with signing a pledge not to continue his journalistic work, he was ordered to pay a guarantee of the equivalent of roughly 20,500 USD. NGO Media Freedom Observatory Yemen refers to the court ruling as part of repeated reports of detentions and attempted intimidation of journalists in the area controlled by the Houthi.¹⁸

Call for release of UN and NGO staff

In a statement on 02.06.25, UN Secretary-General António Guterres renewed his call to the ruling Houthi to release detained personnel of national and international aid organisations.

It is one year since several UN personnel were detained accused of seeking to establish an Israeli-US espionage cell. Moreover, the death in detention of a WFP staff member on 10.02.25 needed to be investigated in this context in a transparent, thorough manner. Aid organisations and their personnel have once more been the object of arbitrary detention by members of the Houthi since early 2025, accused of espionage. The organisations themselves state that this forces them to considerably scale back or even halt their operations on the ground. The combination of repression by the Houthi and the reduction in assistance from the aid organisation USAID is said by the UN to have a massive impact on aid provision in Yemen by national and international NGOs.¹⁹

Detentions following protests in Aden

On 14.06.25, several participants of a protest rally by women were temporarily detained in the city of Aden in southern Yemen. These included human rights activist and head of the civil society organisation Wojood Foundation for Human Security, Maha Awad, and lawyer Afraa Hariri. The rally participants protested against the

still poor living conditions, demanding improvements in water, electricity and healthcare services, amongst other things.

There had already been assaults and detentions by forces affiliated with the Southern Transitional Council at three demonstrations held in Aden in May.²⁰

23 June 2025

UN organisations warn of food insecurity

According to WFP, UNICEF and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the humanitarian situation is worsening further in terms of food security in the areas controlled by the internationally-recognised government. The southern governorates Taizz, Lahij, al-Dhali and Abyan, as well as large parts of al-Jawf, are particularly affected. The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) categorises the severity and scale of food insecurity and malnutrition in phases from one to five. Most of the government-controlled governorates are categorised as phase three on a scale up to five. In the projection period up to August 2025, 3.5 million people are facing food insecurity, and thus malnutrition, according to IPC. Some 1.5 million people are furthermore at risk of extreme hunger and potentially at risk of starvation. According to IPC, this constitutes a significant increase in the number of those affected. According to the UN organisations, some 5.38 million people, that is the majority of the population, in the southern governorate areas can be expected to be severely food insecure in early 2026.²¹

Group 62 – Information Centre for Asylum and Migration
Briefing Notes
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