

Minister of Foreign Affairs, Nikos Dendias' intervention in the Virtual High-Level Pledging Event for the Humanitarian Situation in Yemen (1 March 2021)

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Since the onset of hostilities nearly 6 years ago, Greece has been closely following the tragic developments in war-torn Yemen.

We have expressed our serious concerns over the plight of the Yemeni people.

We have actively contributed to humanitarian efforts, both through national and EU assistance.

As active supporters of peace and security in our already fragile neighborhood, we have also emphasized the ramifications of the conflict on regional stability and development.

Unfortunately, the situation in Yemen remains critical as one of the world's largest humanitarian crises;

It is driven by continuous and escalating conflict, as well as economic collapse.

Last year, the country was also faced with natural disasters, a cholera epidemic and the global COVID-19 pandemic.

All the above have further exacerbated the already dire situation.

Greece remains seriously concerned with the devastating realities on the ground.

Of particular concern to us all is the fact that by mid-2020, Yemen returned to alarming levels of food insecurity.

Widespread famine and surging malnutrition rates among children under the age of 5 are at their highest level yet.

According to the UN Office of Humanitarian Affairs [OCHA], during the past two years, the worst famine in a generation was averted.

However, if looming challenges are not adequately addressed with the urgency they require, we are nearing an irreversible situation;

There will be further tragic consequences for the people of Yemen.

The European Union has allocated eight hundred ninety-six million Euros as humanitarian assistance and developmental aid, since the beginning of the conflict.

EU humanitarian partners continue to help populations in active war fronts in the north and south of the country, but often face constraints and security challenges.

My country is fully aware that in order to avert the worst-case scenario, there is a pressing need to:

- increase international aid funds,
- guarantee unrestricted access of humanitarian agencies to people that urgently require assistance and
- address the political and economic drivers of the crisis.

In light of our grave concerns with regard to the situation, Greece is ready to pledge, again this year, a symbolic contribution in the form of emergency assistance to the people of Yemen.

We believe that in order to achieve this, substantial progress must be made toward a negotiated and viable political solution.

In this vein, missile or any attacks that directly violate International Law and compromise stability in the region need to be strongly condemned.

The time to end this conflict is now.

For the sake of the country, its people and the region as a whole.