



- UN Human Rights Council 48th Session
- Joint Oral Intervention<sup>1</sup>
- Item 2 - Interactive Dialogue with the GEE
- 14 September 2021

Madam President,

Impunity for war crimes and other violations of international law have fueled the conflict in Yemen, creating the world's "largest man-made humanitarian catastrophe."

This September, the war in Yemen will reach its grim seventh-year milestone. The ongoing conflict has ravaged the country, inflicting immense suffering on the people of Yemen. At least 233,000 people have lost their lives, including 102,000 as a direct result of hostilities and 131,000 from indirect causes, such as conflict-related famine, and destruction of health services and infrastructure, to name a few.

Yemen is headed toward the biggest famine in modern history. Today, over 400,000 Yemeni children are at risk of dying and 16.2 million people face acute food insecurity. This is not incidental. The warring parties are deliberately starving Yemenis as a method of warfare.

In 2020, the Group of Eminent Experts (GEE) recommended establishing an international criminally-focused investigative mechanism for Yemen and for the UN Security Council to refer the situation of Yemen to the International Criminal Court.

Madam President,

In 2021, neither of these recommendations have been acted upon or implemented. All they require is political will as the GEE rightly reiterated this year.

We urge states to support the establishment of an adequately resourced and sufficiently staffed international investigative mechanism for Yemen that would:

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<sup>1</sup> Organizations with ECOSOC status: Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies, International Federation for Human Rights Leagues, International Service for Human Rights (ISHR), World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT), Save the Children, Stichting Samenwerkingsverband IKV - Pax Christi (PAX)

Organizations without ECOSOC status: Mwatana for Human Rights, Ceasefire, Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect, Global Rights Compliance, Gulf Centre for Human Rights

- (a) Collect, consolidate, preserve and analyze evidence;
- (b) Prepare case files; and
- (c) Identify victims and document the extent and types of harm suffered in view of reparations claims in each case investigated.

Furthermore, we call on you to support the renewal of the GEE's mandate on the basis of an ongoing mandate or a multi-year mandate, in line with other mechanisms established by the Council on this basis.

The fate of millions in Yemen rests in part upon whether or not the international community will heed the calls of the GEE and take adequate steps to address this "pandemic of impunity."

Thank you.