

**STATEMENT OF THE HUMANITARIAN COORDINATOR IN YEMEN, JAMIE MCGOLDRICK, ON THE CONTINUED VIOLATIONS OF THE PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS**

**Sana'a, 29 August 2016** - The Humanitarian Coordinator in Yemen is deeply concerned by the devastating impact that the recent upsurge in fighting is having on civilians in Yemen and along the southwestern border with Saudi Arabia.

In Yemen, seven people have been confirmed dead and one injured following an attack on a market in Baqim, in Sa'ada Governorate. In Saudi Arabia, media reports indicate that attacks from the direction of Yemen have caused an unconfirmed number of civilian casualties. Civilian infrastructure continues to be hit and power plants were attacked across both sides of the border.

In Yemen, in addition to fighting and insecurity, the continued closure of Sana'a airport to commercial flights is having serious implications for patients seeking urgent medical treatment abroad, given the inability of the national health system to treat all medical cases, particularly chronic or life-threatening diseases such as cancer. Initial statistics from the national airline indicate that thousands of people cannot leave while many others remain stranded outside of Yemen, facing financial hardship and administrative hurdles due to expired visas.

The Humanitarian Coordinator in Yemen calls upon the relevant authorities for the immediate reopening of the airport and the resumption of commercial flights into Sana'a to alleviate some of the suffering of the civilian population.

The Humanitarian Coordinator in Yemen strongly echoes the call made by the UN Secretary-General to all parties of the utmost necessity to protect civilians and civilian infrastructure and to uphold their obligations under international humanitarian law and human rights law. He wishes to underline that a political solution is the only viable option to bring the safety and security that the people of Yemen deserve.

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