



UNOG Bi-weekly press briefing: Yemenis Flee Clashes - UNHCR - IOM

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Shotlist

1. Exterior wide shot, Palais des Nations, Flag alley
2. Wide shot, press briefing room
3. **SOUNDBITE (English) — Boris Cheshirkov, Spokesperson for the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR): “Amid intensified clashes in Yemen’s Marib region UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, is calling for a safe passage for the fleeing civilians. Fighting parties must spare no effort to protect the population caught in the conflict and ease its impact on civilians”.**
4. Medium shot, journalists in press briefing room
5. **SOUNDBITE (English) - Boris Cheshirkov, Spokesperson for the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR): “Out of four million IDPs in Yemen, nearly 2.6 million are just a step away from famine. Most IDPs are sheltering in parts of the country assessed to have acute food shortages or famine-like conditions”.**
6. Medium shot, spokesperson in press briefing room
7. **SOUNDBITE (English) - Boris Cheshirkov, Spokesperson for the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR): “The existing sites for internally displaced are already overcrowded, and the humanitarian response is overstretched. More than 800,000 displaced Yemenis have been taking refuge in this part of the country. Most of them have been sheltering there since the start of the**

conflict in 2015”.

8. Medium shot, journalist in press briefing room
9. **SOUNDBITE (English) - Boris Cheshirkov, Spokesperson for the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR): “Life in Yemen is getting more desperate and dangerous by the day. Based on UNHCR’s assessments, 64 per cent of displaced families have no resources of an income. Others earn less than US\$50 a month to make ends meet. Consequently, two out of three displaced families say they need to resort to harmful coping mechanisms just to survive. They limit or skip their meals, they take children out of school and forego medical attention. Some end up begging or selling whatever they have. Child marriages are on the rise”.**
10. Wide shot, press briefing room
11. **SOUNDBITE (English) – Paul Dillon, Spokesperson for the International Organization for Migration (IOM): “The International Organization for Migration is watching with growing alarm as increasing numbers of people are displaced in Yemen adding to the already worrisome food security concerns there. Hostilities in Yemen’s Marib governorate have led to the displacement of at least 9, 000 people in recent weeks, bringing the total number of displacements in that part of the country to more than 117, 000 people”.**
12. Medium shot, WFP spokesperson in press briefing room
13. Medium shot, spokesperson at podium with screen
14. Medium shot, journalist in press briefing room

Story

As ongoing clashes push Yemenis into “famine-like conditions” UN agencies call for the protection of civilians

Aid organisations are warning of a potential humanitarian disaster as hostilities rise and civilians flee the fighting in and around the city of Marib, some 120 kilometers east of the capital Sana’a.

“Amid intensified clashes in Yemen’s Marib region UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, is calling for a safe passage for the fleeing civilians. Fighting parties must spare no effort to protect the population caught in the conflict and ease its impact on civilians,” said Boris Cheshirkov, spokesperson for the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), speaking to journalists at a news briefing today at the United Nations in Geneva.

These developments are coming ahead of a UN high-level pledging event for the humanitarian crisis in Yemen on 1 March, which will be co-hosted by Sweden and Switzerland.

Marib is a strategically important gas and oil-rich city near the Saudi Arabian border, where rebel Houthi forces are making a drive to take the internationally-recognised government’s last stronghold in northern Yemen.

The increasing insecurity is hindering the delivery of aid to civilians in Marib, with dire consequences for the most vulnerable among them. The growing number of displaced Yemenis are now facing severe food insecurity, according to the UN’s refugee agency.

“Out of four million IDPs in Yemen, nearly 2.6 million are just a step away from famine. Most IDPs are sheltering in parts of the country assessed to have acute food shortages or famine-like conditions,” Cheshirkov said.

Yemen remains the world’s largest humanitarian crisis and ongoing conflict, according to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). More than 20 million people need humanitarian assistance across the country, including the more than 16 million who will go hungry this year, UN sources say. Relief agencies say they will require almost USD 4 billion to assist the people in need.

“The existing sites for internally displaced are already overcrowded, and the humanitarian response is overstretched”, said Boris Cheshirkov. “More than 800,000 displaced Yemenis have been taking refuge in this part of the country. Most of them have been sheltering there since the start of the conflict in 2015”. Some of the displaced people have had to flee multiple times, straining their meager resources, and increasing their dependency on humanitarian aid.

“Life in Yemen is getting more desperate and dangerous by the day. Based on UNHCR’s assessments, 64 per cent of displaced families have no resources of an income. Others earn less than US\$50 a month to make ends meet”, said UNHCR’s Boris Cheshirkov.

“Consequently, two out of three displaced families say they need to resort to harmful coping mechanisms just to survive: they limit or skip their meals, they take children out of school and forego medical attention. Some end up begging or selling whatever they have. Child marriages are on the rise”.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) has also raised its concern about the growing numbers of internally displaced people (IDPs) in the Marib region. Spokesperson Paul Dillon said today that “the International Organization for Migration is watching with growing alarm as increasing numbers of people are displaced in Yemen, adding to the already worrisome food security concerns there”.

“Hostilities in Yemen’s Marib governorate have led to the displacement of at least 9, 000 people in recent weeks, bringing the total number of displacements in that part of the country to more than 117, 000 people,” he added.

Yemen has been facing a tragic and complex political military crisis since uprisings broke out in 2011, with

grave implications for the country's future and the whole region. This latest humanitarian crisis come only days in advance of a United Nations pledging event, hosted by the governments of Sweden and Switzerland, scheduled for 1 March.