

# International Development Committee

## Oral evidence: Humanitarian crises monitoring: UK aid to Yemen, HC 1353

Tuesday 20 April 2021

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Members present: Sarah Champion (Chair); Theo Clarke; Mrs Pauline Latham; Chris Law; Navendu Mishra; Mr Virendra Sharma.

Questions 1 - 42

### Witnesses

**I:** Salvatore Vicari, Regional Humanitarian Affairs Adviser, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF); Sultana Begum, Advocacy Manager Yemen, Norwegian Refugee Council; Gillian Moyes, Deputy Yemen Director, Save the Children.

**II:** Rt Hon James Cleverly MP, Minister for the Middle East and North Africa, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office; Michael Aron, Her Majesty's Ambassador to Yemen, FCDO; Chris Bold, Development Director Yemen, FCDO.



## Examination of witnesses

Witnesses: Salvatore Vicari, Sultana Begum and Gillian Moyes.

**Q1 Chair:** I am Sarah Champion, and this is our session on Yemen for the International Development Select Committee. I am very grateful that we have two panels today. The first is with Salvatore from Médecins Sans Frontières, Sultana Begum from the Norwegian Refugee Council and Gillian Moyes from Save the Children.

With the indulgence of the Committee, I would just like to remind everyone of a few facts about what is going on in Yemen. It remains the world's worst humanitarian crisis, with 80% of the population requiring aid and protection. Nationwide famine is a real probability if the conflict is not resolved, and fighting remains intense following escalations and the wider regional instability, which is casting more doubt on the chance of a political settlement being reached for peace. The escalation in conflict has continued, with the recent offensive leading to increased numbers of internally displaced people and further stretching the existing humanitarian resources.

The UK is the penholder, the lead on the UN Security Council, for Yemen, and therefore has considerable influence that could be utilised. The UK has announced its proposed ODA, official development assistance, funding for the Yemen crisis, which will be at least £87 million for this financial year. We need to remember that that is approximately 40% of the contribution that was made in 20-21. If I could ask the panel members to introduce themselves and their organisations, we will then go to questions from Members.

**Salvatore Vicari:** Good afternoon, everyone. Thanks for the invitation to speak before this Committee. My name is Salvatore Vicari. I am the regional humanitarian affairs adviser for Médecins Sans Frontières. I was in Yemen until last week, where we run one of our largest operations in the world. We work across 13 governorates, in more than 25 health facilities, with more than 2,500 staff deployed across the country.

**Sultana Begum:** My name is Sultana Begum. I am the Norwegian Refugee Council's advocacy manager in Yemen. I have been here for two and a half years, and I am based in Sanaa. The Norwegian Refugee Council works across the country. We provide food, water, shelter and education and we also have a legal assistance programme. Last year, we helped 1.5 million people.

**Gillian Moyes:** Good afternoon, everyone. My name is Gillian Moyes. I am the deputy country director for Save the Children in Yemen. I am also based in Sanaa. Save the Children is also working across Yemen in nine governorates through seven field offices, across health, nutrition, child protection, education, food security and the provision of clean water and sanitation services.

**Q2 Mrs Latham:** Salvatore, what are the main humanitarian challenges at



the moment in Yemen?

**Salvatore Vicari:** Let me maybe focus on the humanitarian challenges around health. I will leave it to my colleagues to speak more in detail about the other sectors. When we look at Yemen, we see a population that has been living under strong economic hardship and conflict for several years now. This situation has exacerbated vulnerabilities. When it comes to the health sector, it means that we have a multi-layered crisis.

On one hand, we have structural issues in terms of access to healthcare. You are probably aware that many health facilities are not functional, but even the health facilities that are functional are often understaffed because the health workers have been barely paid for several years now. There are often shortages of medical supplies. This means that, concretely, everything falls on the shoulders of patients most of the time. They have to pay for even the most essential health services; they have to procure their own medical equipment and drugs outside of the facilities. These are structural issues that basically mean that access to these services has today become a luxury in Yemen.

On top of that, there are these constant emergencies hitting the population. In particular, there are outbreaks such as covid. You may be aware that there is a second wave hitting Yemen right now, but there is also a resurgence of vaccine-preventable diseases such as measles and diphtheria. There are other crises with direct consequences on the health of the population related to conflict activities or population displacement.

The crisis is still very much present today. To give you an idea, in the first quarter of 2021, only in 'Amran governorate we admitted 178 measles patients over the same three months. In Taizz city, one of the most active frontlines, we treated 432 war-wounded patients. In Marib, where we work with displaced populations, we provided 13,000 consultations, and the main morbidities were related to the poor living conditions of the displaced population, who, because of the moving frontline, have been the object of multiple displacements and today live in very difficult conditions.

Q3 **Mrs Latham:** Sultana, could you tell us what the current economic situation is in Yemen?

**Sultana Begum:** When we talk about the economy, I would just like to say what the human impacts of that are. Yemen's economy is being kept afloat by several lifelines, essentially: the remittances sent from Yemenis working abroad; humanitarian aid, which is a really important source of support for the country; and injections of finance from the international community to shore up the economy and to subsidise food and fuel imports.

All these things are running very, very low. This means that Yemen's economy, which was already in a really bad place, has been battered even more by covid-19. There is really high inflation. Food prices are



## HOUSE OF COMMONS

escalating: they are 200% higher than at normal times. covid-19 and the impacts of the war mean that people have lost their jobs and their income. Many doctors, health workers and teachers have not been paid for years. While food prices are going up, people's ability to buy food is decreasing.

Since I last spoke to you, I think in November last year, new hunger statistics have been launched by the UN. They illustrate the really stark reality in Yemen, where we have millions of people looking starvation in the eyes. Last month, our Secretary-General Jan Egeland warned donors that we cannot wait for famine and that people are already dying in Yemen. Recently, we met Kadja, a nine-year-old girl. Kadja looked like she was four years old. She could barely walk. This is the situation for many people in Yemen. We also met a marginalised community in Hajjah called the Muhamasheen. They are having to dig into rubbish tips in order to get food.

We are also working in areas like Qarah and Washhah in Hajjah. These are areas where communities are already in pockets of famine. These are conflict-affected areas; they are very close to conflict frontlines. The communities there do not have access to services. They do not have access to aid, healthcare and other things. This is what is causing the hunger, along with the economic situation in the country.

**Q4 Mrs Latham:** I imagine, along with the hunger, there is also some stunting going on. If a girl of nine looks like the age and size of a four-year-old, she is stunted. You never recover from that, do you?

**Sultana Begum:** I am sure my colleague Gillian—Save the Children works on malnutrition—will be able to answer that in a more articulate way that I can. But, yes, stunting is definitely a very big problem in Yemen. Of course, it affects a child's brain development and future prospects. I am sure Gillian can tell you more about that.

**Q5 Mrs Latham:** I was going to ask Gillian whether she could tell us what the primary needs of children in Yemen are and how well they are being addressed.

**Gillian Moyes:** My colleagues have outlined the picture in terms of the general needs in Yemen. The scale of need is overwhelming. We talk about 80% of the population being in need of humanitarian assistance, and 50% of the population of Yemen are children, so the situation for children is really dire.

There are three areas that I would want to highlight. The first is malnutrition. Sultana mentioned the statistics that came out from the UN recently around the projections for hunger this year. We know that more than 2.3 million children under five are projected to face hunger this year, and potentially 400,000 children are at risk of dying from acute malnutrition. The scale of the need this year is worse than last year. That represents a 16% increase on the situation that children were facing last



year in terms of malnutrition. As you have pointed to, it is not just about the risk of death now for children; it is about the impact on their future prospects. Malnutrition does have a profound impact on child growth and development.

The second area I want to highlight is the protection of children who are at risk because of the war. We know that almost one in four of the casualties of the war are children. Again, that is an increase. Last year it was one in five; that has increased to one in four. In our programmes, we see children being affected by the violence because of the conflict. We have a case management programme that supports children who are injured as a result of airstrikes, shelling, mines or unexploded ordnance, as well as other issues that affect children, and we are seeing increasing cases. That is the second area I would like to highlight.

The third is education. Right now only around two-thirds of schools are functioning. More than 2.2 million Yemeni children are already out of school. For those who are in school, the challenge is being able to learn in an environment that is not ideal for learning. Children are incredibly resilient; we know that, but the years of conflict are now really taking their toll. We are concerned—and I am sure my colleagues would say the same for the areas they are working on—about not only the needs right now, the situation right now, the acute humanitarian crisis that children and people in Yemen are facing right now, but the longer-term development crisis that is building up. The longer those humanitarian needs go unaddressed, the worse that longer-term development crisis becomes.

**Q6 Chair:** Salvatore, could you tell us how the FCDO has been helping with the covid pandemic out there? Has there been good co-operation between the international donors to address the pandemic?

**Salvatore Vicari:** During what was considered the first wave around April last year, there was a certain level of mobilisation, even if there have been delays in the response. There has been a certain level of co-operation between donors, NGOs and UN agencies. What is a bit more concerning is that, as I mentioned earlier, as we speak there is a resurgence in the number of cases of covid-19 in Yemen.

At the moment, we run four covid-19 facilities; we are planning to open others. We are planning to open new ones because our ICUs are full. We have reached the stage where our doctors have to prioritise patients who have a higher chance of survival when deciding who gets the free bed in the ICU. Unfortunately, the level of preparedness one year after the first wave is pretty limited. It is linked to a more structural issue of a limited capacity to respond to medical emergencies in the country. I was in Aden around a month ago. While our ICU there was full and we were calling for other actors to support other health facilities, other INGOs were unable to help, either because of lack of funding or in some cases even because the funding came to an end precisely when it was most needed.



**Q7 Navendu Mishra:** Salvatore, what do you see as the potential impact of the cuts to UK aid on the ground in Yemen?

**Salvatore Vicari:** As you know, Médecins Sans Frontières does not receive funding from the UK Government; we mostly work with private funding. We still see the impact of funding cuts around us. I took the example of covid, which is very concrete, but I can give you other examples of what we see concretely in the field in terms of impact.

For example, Abs district in Hajjah governorate, in the north-west of the country, hosts a very large displaced population. In the past, there were several actors working there that provided WASH and access to safe water to displaced camps. We have seen those projects being interrupted because of, among other reasons, a lack of funding. Today, because of the lack of maintenance, we see that those populations do not have sufficient access to safe drinking water. In one of these displaced-population campsites, for example, which hosts 10,000 people, the WASH infrastructure that was providing safe water to the population just does not function anymore. This means that people have to purchase water themselves and often have to resort to drinking unsafe water. We are witnessing some of the consequences among our patients in the health facilities.

Another example that I can provide is with regard to the provision of fuel to health facilities. It is usually provided through the WHO. It is currently going to run until May. Again, because of the funding gaps, we are unsure whether there will be any provision later on. From our side, in the facility that we support, we will probably provide that fuel, which means that we are going to put financial resources that could be used to respond to emergencies elsewhere into the very basic needs of our facility. There is then a big question mark around what will happen in the facilities that do not direct support from INGOs.

**Q8 Navendu Mishra:** Keeping the cuts to the UK aid budget in Yemen in mind, could you give us your thoughts on what areas the FCDO should prioritise in Yemen?

**Sultana Begum:** NRC is part of a consortium project in Yemen. It is a four-year multi-sector humanitarian response programme that the FCDO has funded. That programme was multi-year funding and provided a level of stability for humanitarian organisations, in terms of our staffing and really delivering outcomes for communities. That programme consisted of, first, cash. That cash supports some of the most vulnerable families: female-headed households, elderly people, landless labourers and those people who are in very conflict-affected frontline areas. There are people one step away from famine in many of the areas that consortium works in. Currently, due to the food security situation in-country, it is important for the UK to maintain that level of support through cash, but that cash cannot be one-off cash. It needs to be consistent; it needs to be over a long period of time; and it must be supported.



## HOUSE OF COMMONS

The project that we were working on was not just cash. There were cash-for-work programmes that help build community assets, such as roads or markets, which help communities build up small-scale livelihood activities. That combination of cash plus longer-term and more sustainable support and livelihood activities is going to be really, really important. Another area where we received funding from the FCDO was for water and sanitation programmes. Those helped build water networks and provide clean water and sanitation to vulnerable communities. This also helped people who were receiving cash support. That combination of supporting communities with their multiple and different needs is what makes the difference.

Water and sanitation are important not just for communities' everyday basic needs and to fight disease, but for the covid-19 support that we are talking about right now. It is really important that we receive funding for covid-19. On one hand, we were able to provide clean water, hygiene awareness and all these things to help people protect themselves from covid-19. When I came to the panel last time, I was talking about the secondary impacts of covid-19: the job losses and the other things that are really affecting people. It is really important for the UK Government not just to focus on the immediate effects of covid-19 but to think about how to support the economy, livelihoods and other things, so that people can bounce back from covid-19 and its secondary impacts.

**Navendu Mishra:** The point you made about short-term cash and long-term investment is very important. The point about WASH—water, sanitation and hygiene—especially with covid, is very important.

**Gillian Moyes:** Save the Children is part of the same cash consortium project funded by FCDO that Sultana mentioned. I would just like to add a couple of points to what Sultana said in terms of the impact of funding cuts.

The programme this year is a follow-on from a three-year programme that FCDO funded. Our evaluation from that programme showed that the percentage of households that had an acceptable food consumption score increased from 46% at the beginning of the programme to 93% by the end of the programme. Our concern is that those kinds of gains can be lost, as well as the gains that Sultana mentioned around the building of community assets that we are doing through that project.

I want to mention another example. Save the Children has a food assistance programme funded by the US Government in the north of Yemen. We had to stop that programme for almost 12 months, and we have only been able to restart now. During the time the programme was stopped, we were able to keep track of the families we had been supporting. It was a similar programme to the FCDO programme, except with food rather than cash, but with the same objectives. The follow-up survey revealed that the percentage of families with adequate food consumption had dropped from 98% to 31%. That was even below the



## HOUSE OF COMMONS

baseline when we started that project. That just gives an indication of the losses that can happen when we stop funding these kinds of programmes.

In terms of priorities, there are two other areas that I would like to mention. The first is child protection. Child protection is chronically underfunded in the humanitarian response plan at the moment. At Save the Children, we are facing huge challenges. It is not the biggest part of our programme in Yemen, but it is one of the most critical. I mentioned earlier the case management programme where we support children affected by conflict, particularly those who have been injured or affected by grave violations. Last year, we were able to support 6,300 children through that programme. Our institutional donor funding stopped at the end of last month. We are only able to continue that programme through generous support from the public, the British public and the public in other countries, who donate to Save the Children. That kind of funding does not last very long. I would highlight that as an area that FCDO should focus on.

The second is education. I know the UK has had a particular focus on education, particularly girls' education, across the world. At the moment I am not aware of any particular programmes that FCDO is supporting in Yemen. It is one of the areas in which we at Save the Children have an opportunity both to address the immediate needs of children and to build for the future. In our education programme, we are working closely with the Ministry of Education on both sides, in north and south. We are working on longer-term aspects of building quality education for children as well as dealing right now with providing a safe learning environment for children, providing materials for teaching and learning, and ensuring that children are able to attend school. That is another area that I would like to highlight.

**Salvatore Vicari:** With regards to the health sector, considering the investment that the FCDO has put into the response to covid, it is worth reflecting that the next health emergency is not a matter of if; it is a matter of when. Building an emergency response capacity for health crises in the country, a mechanism that is flexible and can respond to big emergencies such as covid as well as smaller ones—we have constant localised outbreaks of measles and diphtheria—is a key area.

Primary healthcare is another point. We have talked about malnutrition. In our facilities, we often see that the deterioration in the health of malnourished children could have been avoided if they had access to primary healthcare. That is a major gap we see across the board in Yemen.

Q9 **Chair:** Gillian, I do not know whether you want to answer quickly now or to follow up in writing. We would be very interested to know whether you have approached FCDO for funding for education projects. It would also be interesting to know whether your rolling food programme was signed



## HOUSE OF COMMONS

off after 31 March or whether you are still waiting for sign-off on that.

**Gillian Moyes:** I am happy to follow up in writing on the question about education programming. I did not quite get the last part of the question.

**Chair:** Has the programme you have around cash for food been signed off, if it is a rolling programme, for this financial year? Are you still waiting for that to happen?

**Gillian Moyes:** This is the cash consortium programme, which Sultana also mentioned. We had a three-year programme, which ended in 2020, and then we had bridge funding for the current financial year, while the business case was being built and the Yemen strategy was still under discussion. At the moment, that funding ends at the end of June. We have no indications of future funding at the moment. We understand that business cases are going to take a bit longer to produce, and we have not heard anything about possible bridge funding.

Right now, we are having to assume that the programme will end. We are preparing for that. Of course, there are very practical things that we need to do in terms of our staff and offices, which may not be able to stay open. We also need to work on our exit strategy and communicate with the communities we are supporting, with the co-ordination mechanisms, to see whether there are other partners that can take over this support, and with the local authorities. With this kind of timescale, we have to start that work now.

**Chair:** I really hope it is continued.

Q10 **Theo Clarke:** Gillian, just to pick up on that, I would be interested to know a bit more about your specific programming and what the proposed cuts to UK aid mean for your work in Yemen.

**Gillian Moyes:** Save the Children runs child-focused programmes across Yemen with a focus on health and nutrition, the provision of clean water and sanitation, food security, and education and child protection. At the moment, the funding we have from FCDO is specifically for this multipurpose cash consortium that we have mentioned. As I have said, that is due to end at the end of June. We also receive funding through the UN system, which of course FCDO contributes to.

One area that I would highlight again is food security, because we are all conscious of the current predictions around food security for this year, with the potential for famine and for the number of families who are in emergency food security status to increase during the course of this year. We partner with WFP on its general food distribution programme. During the course of 2020, because of the general funding crisis and cuts to Yemen, WFP had to reduce its ration by half. Instead of distributing food packages to families on a monthly basis, that was happening on a bimonthly basis. We are a partner for that programme in two locations, in Sanaa and in Ibb, where there is a high level of displaced families. Right



## HOUSE OF COMMONS

now our assumption is that the half ration is going to continue. That is just one example of where aid cuts are having an impact more broadly.

**Q11 Mr Sharma:** This question is to Gillian and Sultana. What do the commitments at the pledging event mean for humanitarian aid in Yemen? How soon will the cuts to UK aid be felt?

**Gillian Moyes:** As we know, the humanitarian response plan for Yemen for this year is less than 50% funded. As was mentioned at the beginning of this session, the UK Government's contribution has been cut by 60% from last year to this year. I would say that we are already experiencing the impact of those cuts, because the response plan last year was also underfunded.

I have already mentioned UN programmes that have been cut. More than a third of the UN's humanitarian programmes have already been cut back. There was a reduction in services to 300 health facilities as a result of that. As Save the Children, last year we had to withdraw support from 41 health facilities. This year we are facing the same situation. We may need to withdraw our support from 13 health facilities this year. Last year, it had an impact on the services we were able to provide to treat acute malnutrition, so overall there was a 27% drop in the number of people receiving acute malnutrition treatment between January and September 2020 compared with the same period in 2019.

I would say it is part of life already. The question at the beginning was, "What are the major challenges in Yemen?" I would say it is the overwhelming humanitarian need, the scale of the humanitarian need, versus the funding that is available. It is a normal part of being a humanitarian organisation that you have to make decisions with finite resources, but it is really a daily challenge in Yemen at the moment. Yesterday, I was discussing with my team which health facilities we would be able to continue to support and which locations we might have to withdraw from. I am sure I will be having similar conversations tomorrow.

**Sultana Begum:** Gillian has touched on a lot of what I would have wanted to say. You have to put the UK Government's current cuts within the context of the bigger funding cuts to Yemen. We received less money this year than we did last year, basically. What are the impacts of those cuts? Let us think not about NGOs but about what this means for people themselves. Last year, the HRP was underfunded by £1.5 billion. What did that mean in the real-life situation? It meant that 1.5 million more people slid into what is known as IPC 4 or, to put it in lay terms, one step away from famine. That is what we are really concerned about.

Going back to this cash consortium project that we were talking about, yes, it will affect us as humanitarian NGOs. Gillian pointed out the uncertainty that it is creating. Are we able to maintain that programming? Do we have to pull out? But what is really important is the communities at the end of it. Within that programme, we provide



## HOUSE OF COMMONS

unconditional cash transfers. That already only amounts to 80% of a family's food needs per month, and that is not enough.

We are talking to families, and they are basically saying to us that there is a fuel crisis at the moment, which is pushing up prices, and the economy is in a bad state, which is also pushing up food prices. The families that that UK money is supporting are not able to save for when that cash stops. Let us think about the investments that the UK's money has made. It has meant that families like that do not have to pull their kids out of school; it means that girls are not married off young; it means that boys are not recruited or do not join the armed forces as a survival strategy. Those are the kinds of things at risk.

Last year, and Gillian pointed to this, we cut our food aid to 360,000 people as a WFP partner, but the cuts affected 9 million people. What we need is more money. The priority in-country is what the UN has described could be the worst famine in 100 years. We need to be able to get to those families who are basically already living in famine-like conditions. We need to restore aid to the 9 million people who have had their food aid halved. We need to get to the 5 million people who are just one step away from famine. These UK aid cuts are coming into that context and are quite shocking.

**Q12** **Chris Law:** I am conscious of the lack of time left, so I am going to ask this very bluntly and squarely to the three of you. I have heard some shocking statistics and individual stories today. In your opinion, is there a danger that the UK's credibility, and indeed its diplomatic position, will be undermined by the reduction in financial support to the crisis in Yemen? Even if it did reverse those funding levels, what other things should the FCDO be doing differently?

**Sultana Begum:** I was looking forward to that question, actually. I am getting excited. The UK Government have been a leader in humanitarian advocacy. They have advocated with Gulf countries and in the G20 and so on for increased funding for Yemen and for the economy in Yemen. These cuts really threaten to undermine the UK's humanitarian diplomacy. The UK has to match its words with real actions.

Another area where the UK's cuts are unjustified is that the UK has also been a leader in talking about not waiting for famine and looking at the link with conflict-induced hunger, through the work Nick Dyer is doing. We have the G7 meeting of Foreign Ministers and Development Ministers coming up in May. Nick Dyer is going to go to this meeting, and he is going to talk about a famine compact. He will try to get resources from G7 members. He is going to talk about early prevention and all these kinds of things. How is the UK to be a credible voice in that environment and get other Governments to give money?

The UK is the penholder at the UN Security Council. The UK needs to show leadership, including on the political front, whether that is a nationwide ceasefire or the other issues that we would like the UK to



## HOUSE OF COMMONS

work on, including implementing resolution 2417, which is about hunger and conflict. Humanitarian diplomacy alone is not enough. It has to be matched by substantial funding. That is what is going to give the UK its credibility.

**Gillian Moyes:** Sultana has articulated it very well and clearly. I talk about the needs of children, but what children in Yemen need most of all is an end to the conflict. The UK has a key role to play in the UN as the penholder and could do more to champion children's voices in the peace process. Too often, they are not heard. The UK has a track record in this area and can build on this in its diplomatic efforts on Yemen.

**Salvatore Vicari:** Any effort to improve the situation of Yemenis in the long term is very welcome. In that sense, those kinds of diplomatic efforts cannot really substitute today what people need right now in terms of assistance, on which their lives might depend in many cases.

**Chair:** Thank you, panel. We really appreciate not only you coming here today, but the work you are doing in some of the most difficult and challenging situations. The Committee owes you a huge thanks for everything you are doing in Yemen, not least for your resilience, because this has been going on for far, far too long. Thank you for everything.



## Examination of witnesses

Witnesses: James Cleverly, Michael Aron and Chris Bold.

**Chair:** We are very fortunate to be joined by the Rt Hon James Cleverly, who is the Minister of State for the Middle East and North Africa. He is joined by Michael Aron, Her Majesty's ambassador to Yemen, and Chris Bold, the development director for Yemen. Thank you very much for joining us, gentlemen. Hopefully our previous panel has given you lots of ideas of what needs to be done going forwards. I am sure you will share a lot of them.

Minister, we know we are tight on time, so forgive us for firing quick questions at you. We would appreciate direct answers, if that is okay, so we can get the maximum out of you.

Q13 **Chris Law:** This is a question for you, James. The Committee welcomes how well informed you have kept us and the House about the situation in Yemen and welcome the UK's track record of leadership in Yemen. I am sure you heard some of the points raised earlier, for example the nine-year-old girl who has the body of a four-year-old or the fact that there are now 10 million people facing famine, which has increased by 1.5 million. Given the dire situation we have just heard about and the previous leadership of the UK, why on earth has the UK decided to reduce its contributions to this crisis by almost 60%?

**James Cleverly:** I thank you for recognising the commitment that we have made both to supporting Yemenis in these incredibly difficult times and to keeping the House informed. I did not have the opportunity to hear everything that the previous speakers said, but I have engaged with the Yemenis. I have done a virtual tour and I have seen some, although certainly not all, of the terrible situations the Yemenis live under. They are heartbreaking and we completely recognise that.

Our desire to help the people of Yemen persists. That is why we remain one of the largest donors to Yemen to support the crisis. You will know, as we have made clear in the House before, that the unique economic impact of the coronavirus has constrained the UK economy quite significantly while significantly increasing the need to support British people's whose livelihoods are at stake, as well as people whose lives have been at risk. It is a difficult balancing act, but we have maintained a significant commitment to Yemen. It remains one of our largest commitments. As I say, the UK remains one of the largest bilateral donors to the crisis in Yemen.

Q14 **Chris Law:** What you have said contradicts quite a lot of information. If you have reduced your commitment to Yemen by 60%, that is not maintaining at all. If we look at the other G7 nations, all of them have decided to increase their aid budget. We have decided to slash ours. What do these cuts mean in practice for the programmes that run through the embassy in Sanaa?



## HOUSE OF COMMONS

**James Cleverly:** I can ask Chris to go through a detailed breakdown. In the broadest terms, we have focused our efforts in the areas that we know make the most significant difference. The risk of famine is significant, so we are focused very much on maintaining food distribution. That means making sure that our humanitarian money goes towards feeding people.

More than that—and this is something that I did pick up from one of your previous speakers—one of the most important things we can do to help the people of Yemen is to bring the conflict to a conclusion and to use our diplomatic efforts. For example, I spoke to the Government of Yemen about releasing the fuel ships that are outside the harbour, to enable grain to be milled and food to be distributed. Our diplomatic effort goes hand in hand with our humanitarian effort. We are very much focused on feeding people and keeping that as a priority, but also using our diplomatic leverage, as we still have a very substantial voice, to try to bring this conflict to a conclusion.

**Chris Law:** Could I hear a little bit from Michael and Chris on this matter?

**Michael Aron:** Of course, I fully endorse what the Minister says. If you listen to Mark Lowcock in the Security Council and others, we have a dual task in Yemen, which is to bring about an end to the conflict and, in the meantime, to keep people alive and in health. The UK is making a huge commitment to both of those. We will continue to work through our leadership in New York. We also work closely with Martin Griffiths, the UN special envoy, and his team to make sure—

Q15 **Chris Law:** I am sorry to cut across you, but I am asking you a specific question. What do these cuts mean in practice for programmes run through the embassy in Sanaa? I am hearing a lot of platitudes.

**Michael Aron:** I will ask Chris to answer on the detailed programmes, but on the political and diplomatic side we are working tirelessly with our partners to bring about an end to the conflict. None of that will change. Chris, do you want to talk about the specific programmes?

Q16 **Chris Law:** UN Secretary-General António Guterres has called these cuts a death sentence. Do you agree with this position, Chris?

**Chris Bold:** As some of the earlier panel members mentioned, the funding to the UN appeal in total this year is going to be a long way shy of the total that is needed. That is desperately sad. The ambassador and the Minister have been doing their best to get some of the very big donors, particularly the Gulf countries and the US, to maintain and increase their contributions, which is what will make the really big difference to the situation on the ground. The Saudis have put about £17 billion into the humanitarian response in Yemen over the last five years. The numbers are colossal.



## HOUSE OF COMMONS

To your specific questions on programme areas, I will talk about the thematic areas rather than individual programmes. A number of our programmes, as Sultana and Gillian mentioned, are due to come to a close next year anyway. We would have been putting new business case proposals to Ministers for follow-on programmes to them regardless of the funding landscape. We have proposed to Ministers that we make sure that we, first and foremost, protect the relatively small amount of money that we use to support the peace process. We think that supporting Martin Griffiths' efforts will have a very high return on investment. It is a relatively small amount of our budget, but we have to continue to back the peace process. We will protect that funding. It is in the low millions.

Similarly, we will protect our funding that is trying to prevent complete economic collapse in Yemen. The UN tells us that it really values our work in this area. We will basically devote everything else we have to the humanitarian response, and we will focus and prioritise that money even more rigorously than we have had to in the past. Some 50% of our total funding will go to cash for food. We think that providing cash to families is the most effective way of meeting their food needs, so we will favour cash interventions. We are recommending that around 50% of our funding goes to that.

The second biggest funding area will be to malnutrition intervention. Typically, what actually kills people in famine and famine-like situations is communicable diseases and other factors related to malnutrition. That will be our second-biggest area of funding, around 25% of our total.

**Q17 Chris Law:** You have just touched on malnutrition. Some 50% of children now have irreversible stunted growth, James. I wondered who in Government made the decision to reduce the contribution by such a significant amount—60% is an enormous amount. Can you talk us through what that decision-making process was?

**James Cleverly:** Ultimately, the final decision about how we allocate our ODA budget is made by Ministers.

**Q18 Chris Law:** Which Ministers in Government made this decision?

**James Cleverly:** All Ministers in the Department. We work collectively on this. Obviously, I am the Minister with specific responsibility for Yemen. In every single year that the Government have spent money trying to resolve conflict and avert famine, we have to make very difficult decisions. This year has been made difficult because of the economic situation we find ourselves in. Unfortunately, there is always more need than there is resource. Ministers always have to make difficult decisions. The ministerial team here at the FCDO is working through the implications of the economic situation that we find ourselves in to try to make sure that the interventions we make—financial, political and so on—provide the most impact for the money we are spending. That is what we have been doing this year; that is what we are doing at the moment.



**Q19 Chris Law:** I am sorry for interrupting you there. I just want to know what the decision-making process was. If it is all Ministers, that must have included you. You must have signed off on this. Yemen has been described as the worst humanitarian disaster in the world. What justifications were given in order to cut 60% of our budget at a time when 1.5 million more people, as a result of last year and covid, are now facing famine?

**James Cleverly:** Ultimately, as I say, the economic situation has been forced upon us by coronavirus. We have to respond to that. We make difficult decisions about how we allocate our diplomatic effort as well as our ODA money every single year. This year has been particularly difficult. No one is trying to underplay how difficult and painful these decisions are, but nevertheless this is what we have to do, and we have to do this every year.

**Chair:** Minister, just because of time I am going to stop you there. You have repeated the same answer a couple of times. We understand the economic situation; we are sympathetic to it.

**Q20 Mrs Latham:** Minister, with the new regime of the FCDO, normally decisions are made on a rising tide, where you are spending more money each year as the economy improves. I accept that the economy has gone down. While you were doing this and making these drastic cuts, how are you consulting with organisations that administer UK aid programmes in Yemen about the future of their programming? When will these organisations have clarity on their funding for this financial year?

**James Cleverly:** As you say, in previous years those difficult decisions were made against the backdrop of an increasing budget. This year we do not have that economic situation which, as I say, has made those decisions more difficult. Because those decisions are difficult, the process has perhaps taken longer this year than in previous years. I cannot say exactly when we will conclude this, and obviously we cannot communicate decisions to our delivery partners until those decisions have been made. I know we are looking to resolve that fairly soon. As I say, I cannot say exactly when that will be, but we will look to resolve that fairly soon.

There have been some instances—they may have been referred to earlier—where we have tried to give as much certainty as we can. I know Chris has examples of where we have tried to give as much certainty as we can, so that programmes that could be extended have some degree of certainty. We cannot give complete certainty at the moment, but, as soon as we are able to do so, we will. We recognise that our delivery partners need to make plans and they need to put things in place. Not having clarity from us makes that harder, which is why we are trying to get through this as quickly as possible.

**Q21 Mrs Latham:** How much consultation have you done with them?



**James Cleverly:** When the initial announcement was made that we were going to move from 0.7% to 0.5%, we spoke to a number of delivery partners. We speak with our delivery partners on an ongoing basis anyway as part of our process for doing business. We cannot perhaps consult with them because we have to make financial decisions not just within particular geographies, but across the whole of FCDO. Where we have been able to give useful indications to help them plan, we have done so. As soon as we can give them clarity and detail, we will do that.

Q22 **Chair:** If you are consulting so closely with the aid organisations, you must know that many of their funding agreements ended on 31 March. They have had to let staff go. They have had to close facilities. They have no certainty as to when their funding stream is going to come forward. You have to, please, let them know when they are going to get that certainty, because it is having such a dire financial impact. Organisations have to start a redundancy process months before; that is their duty and good practice. You are undermining their ability to deliver the aid, let alone look after their staff properly. When are we going to know about this?

**James Cleverly:** Chair, we are acutely aware that uncertainty makes the planning of a number of our partners very difficult. Where we have been able to give some certainty or help those delivery partners extend programmes to avoid those things like redundancies, we have done so. This is a unique situation because of covid.

**Chair:** You made the decision in November that this was going to come. You have had time to notify the organisations, make the decisions about where the cuts are coming and do the risk analysis. We have just not seen that at all.

**James Cleverly:** This has been a really significant piece of work. Making the difficult decisions we make every year is hard enough, but doing it against a reducing financial envelope is new to everybody within the organisation. Having to look really fundamentally, right across our entire portfolio of operations on a global level, is a really significant piece of work. We have to try to move it as quickly as possible. We would have liked to go more quickly if we could, but it was a big bit of work.

Q23 **Mrs Latham:** This is a question for Chris Bold. What assessment have you made of the potential impacts of this cut, in particular on women, people with disabilities and internally displaced people?

**Chris Bold:** Can I just say a word in response to the previous question before I come to yours? Is that okay?

**Mrs Latham:** We are very short of time, but yes.

**Chris Bold:** Very briefly, we fund both Save the Children and the NRC, two of your witnesses from the first session, through a consortium led by CARE. That is a bilateral programme with just FCDO funding. We have had discussions with them about honouring our funding commitment to



them to the end of that programme. We are aware that we are the only source of funding for that programme. We are acutely aware of the challenges that they have had in getting that programme agreed with the Houthis in the north and the expectation they have raised with the beneficiaries. We have taken particular care to provide reassurance to those partners to the end of that programme, which, as I mentioned, is due to end in the next financial year anyway. Many of our other programmes are funded through the UN and have more latitude via funding between different partners. The situation is less acute for them.

The way we have worked out the results that we will be able to deliver this year has been a bottom-up process. As the Minister described earlier, the way we approach these exercises where there are limited resources is to explain through a bidding process what we can achieve with the resources that we are given. We did not at any point start with an assumption that we would have either the same budget as we started the year with last year, or indeed the budget that we ended the year with. We received a number of increases to our aid budget for Yemen over the course of the year. We built up a picture of the results that we would be able to deliver with the resource that we were given.

Q24 **Mrs Latham:** Sorry, I am talking about going forward, not what happened last year. I am talking about the potential impacts of the cuts that are being made. What impacts are they going to have, particularly on women, people with disabilities and internally displaced people, going forward, not going backwards?

**Chris Bold:** I am sorry if I was not clear. We have laid out the results that we will be able to deliver in the year that has just started with the £87 million allocation that the Minister announced at the pledging conference on 1 March. That includes feeding 240,000 people a month.

Q25 **Chair:** Chris, have you done an impact assessment on what the cuts will mean to women, disabled people and those who are internally displaced?

**Chris Bold:** We have not done an impact assessment. As I explained, we have built it from the bottom up rather than starting from an assumption that we would have had the same funding as last year.

**Chair:** You have made that point three times.

Q26 **Mrs Latham:** Could you tell us what the impact is going to be on women, people with disabilities and internally displaced people? You are not going to do anything like what you have done for them before. What impact are you predicting it will have?

**James Cleverly:** As Chris has put out, the implication in the question is that, with an impact assessment, you judge the impact on the variance from the status quo ante. Because each year we plan from foundation stones upwards, as Chris was saying, it does not lend itself to the kind of impact assessment you would do in a normal year-by-year departmental spend programme.



Ultimately, it is not possible for anyone to predict exactly how the situation will play out in Yemen, because there are a number of factors that interplay. For example, our lobbying efforts for international partners to put money in has a very significant effect. It is not necessarily possible to quantify that exactly, but our lobbying efforts make a difference. The support we give to Martin Griffiths, with the gender advisor we pay for in his team, makes a positive difference. The lobbying that we have done to release the fuel ships for the distribution of fuel makes a difference. But it is not quite possible to say that one thing will have this particular effect, unfortunately.

**Q27 Mrs Latham:** Maybe we can go on to something else. This is to you, James. Do you accept that the approach to funding of using a floor, not a ceiling, provides a lot of uncertainty for NGOs on the ground supported by UK aid? They do not know what that really means. If so, what can you do to mitigate this effect, so they have less uncertainty?

**James Cleverly:** We recognise that there is uncertainty. There is only so much we can do to mitigate that. The reason I used the phrase “a floor, not a ceiling” is to demonstrate that we are going to spend not less than that amount of money.

In previous years, as the year has played out, and we have looked at the speed of delivery in other programmes and where money has become available in-year, we have been able to reallocate some money towards Yemen. I cannot guarantee that we are going to be able to do that again this year. We hope to be able to do that, and I will certainly make bids for any spare money that does become available through the year. But I do not want to imply that that is a guarantee, which is why I have used the phrase “a floor, not a ceiling”. We are saying we will spend not less than that figure. If the opportunity allows, we will look to spend more. I cannot give either you as a Committee or our partners a guarantee on that.

**Q28 Mr Sharma:** This is a question to the Minister. What will the UK Government do with partners to ensure more predictable and sustainable funding from other donors for the Yemen response moving forwards?

**James Cleverly:** That question recognises an important role that we play. Notwithstanding the difficult decisions that we have had to make about our own financial commitment, we made the decision that we would still be a vocal advocate for donations to the Yemen crisis. We have done that. It would be completely wrong for us to try to claim credit for other countries’ donations as well, but we have lobbied to say that this matters, and we will continue to do so.

I understand what your previous witness said about the impact that our own spending decisions might make, but we will continue to advocate for Yemen with our friends both in the region and more broadly. We will continue to support Martin Griffiths in his work through the UN, both in political terms and with regard to secondees.



Q29 **Mr Sharma:** The UK exceeded its pledged commitment last financial year. Can we and the people of Yemen expect to see the same this year?

**James Cleverly:** As I said to Pauline, I cannot make that guarantee. The UK takes its pledges very seriously, and we make every effort to distribute the money that we pledge. Disbursement and pledged figures sometimes do not correlate. The UK works very hard to make sure it delivers on what it promises. Where we are able to deliver more than we promise, we seek to do so. If the financial out-turn this year plays out better than our current modelling or money becomes available in-year, I will make a very strong pitch that we allocate some of that to an increased commitment to Yemen. But I cannot make a hard promise on that.

Q30 **Mr Sharma:** What is your latest assessment of the impact of the coronavirus pandemic in Yemen on the humanitarian situation?

**James Cleverly:** Sadly, Yemen is experiencing its second wave. Infection numbers look as if they have doubled since the beginning of the year. We are lobbying UN agencies to give covid a higher priority and encouraging the Yemeni authorities to be more open with their data disclosures. In partnership with the World Bank and the World Health Organisation, we are going to fund a rollout of about 2 million doses of the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine to help Yemenis fight the pandemic.

Q31 **Mr Sharma:** I have a couple more questions for you. How will the UK ensure Yemen is a priority for the roll-out of the covid-19 vaccinations across developing countries through COVAX?

**James Cleverly:** That is very much part of my job as the Minister responsible for our relationship with Yemen. We have already identified that Yemen is one of the real high-priority countries for us at the FCDO. I am very pleased that the first batch of over 350,000 doses has already been delivered; that was done just at the end of March. We will keep advocating for Yemen, in terms of both conflict resolution and response to the covid pandemic.

Q32 **Mr Sharma:** What steps are the Government taking to ensure that vital UN health programmes on vaccination, cholera prevention and malnutrition are still being delivered despite the pandemic?

**James Cleverly:** This is an incredibly important area. As safe as possible access to Yemen for relief workers, whether they be medical or other humanitarian workers, is really key. Obviously, protection from coronavirus is one of those important things. Protection from conflict is another part. We work very hard, with both the UN and our international partners, to advocate for those safe access routes for humanitarian workers, whether they be in the food famine alleviation space or the health space. We will continue to do so.

Q33 **Mr Sharma:** This is the last question from me; you might be happy about that. What is the UK doing to support health, sanitation, and



education workers so they receive a regular salary regardless of where in Yemen they live?

**James Cleverly:** This is a significant challenge. Chris has already said that we have done cash distribution for people at risk of famine. In terms of Government employees, this is one of the reasons why our work to try to prevent the Yemeni economy from collapsing is really key. While the internal Government structures, the public sector as it were, within Yemen, particularly in the health sector—and I spoke to midwives when I did my virtual visit—have been put under huge pressure, it is really important that we keep the structures up and running as far as possible, so those public servants can be paid and do the essentially work that they do.

Q34 **Theo Clarke:** We have heard today that Yemen is really on the brink of famine. I would like to hear a bit more about the work that Nick Dyer is doing as the UK's special envoy for famine protection and humanitarian affairs to ensure that famine is being averted in Yemen.

**James Cleverly:** Nick is well known and well respected on the international stage. He is part of the diplomatic effort as well. His appointment by the Foreign Secretary does two things. It is a signal to the international community that the UK takes this very seriously. He also has a huge repository of experience that he can bring to bear. He can corral or co-ordinate—whatever verb you want to use—the international work on this. I am very pleased that we have him as a very well-respected and powerful advocate for famine relief.

Q35 **Theo Clarke:** As the penholder in the UN Security Council on Yemen, an important diplomatic ally, and an arms supplier and supporter of the coalition, the UK has considerable leverage in Yemen. What are the UK Government doing to support a peaceful resolution to the conflict?

**James Cleverly:** This is absolutely key. Anyone you speak to will say that the situation in Yemen cannot sustainably be improved while there is a conflict. We have welcomed the ceasefire announcements that have been made periodically by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and we have been very supportive of the creation of the Government of Yemen. I spoke to the Yemeni Foreign Minister shortly after the Government formation. Unfortunately, shortly after the Government formation, we saw the Houthi attack at Aden airport, which was an attempted assassination on that Government.

I have spoken directly in the past, not recently, with the Houthis to encourage them to engage with the political process, renounce the conflict and step away from it. Unfortunately, we still see regular attacks both into Saudi Arabia and within Yemen. We will keep pushing for a ceasefire so that we can bring about a political solution. That will have to be the underpinning of any sustainable good news in Yemen.

Q36 **Theo Clarke:** That is a helpful update. Can I also ask what discussions you have had with your counterparts in the United States, Saudi and the



Emirates Administrations to support last month's Saudi initiative for a ceasefire?

**James Cleverly:** I have recently returned from the UAE. The resolution of Yemen was one of the things that I discussed during meetings there. I speak regularly with my counterparts in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Again, Yemen is always a significant agenda item.

We very much welcome the appointment of Special Envoy Lenderking, who I know has already spoken extensively with Martin Griffiths. We very much welcome that real engagement from the US. I know the Foreign Secretary speaks on this issue as well. We are co-ordinating internationally. We are encouraging the Houthis to step back from violence and aggression. We are working with partners both within the region and more broadly to try to bring this conflict to an end.

Q37 **Theo Clarke:** I know we are short of time. Just to finish, I want to pick up on the reduction to the UK's humanitarian funding and whether that will undermine our position on efforts to secure peace, particularly given our role at the UN Security Council.

**James Cleverly:** I can only give examples from the conversations I have had. The UK has been a top-tier donor to Yemen for many years. We have been one of the largest donors for a considerable period of time. We have been consistent on our positions and our support for Martin Griffiths and the UN peace process.

The feedback I have had is that our long-term commitment to this issue has been recognised. Nobody, ourselves included, is happy that we are in the financial situation that we find ourselves in, but they recognise that our commitment to peace in Yemen is longstanding and meaningful. That still buys us a lot of authority and influence, both with the region and more broadly internationally.

Q38 **Chair:** Could I just put that same question to our ambassador Michael, please? I do not envy your position. I am very grateful for what you are doing, but I would imagine the fact that we are cutting our development and aid budget so dramatically does diminish our influence and commitment to the region. What are your findings?

**Michael Aron:** I have not seen any evidence of that. We engage diplomatically and politically with all the other players. I saw Martin Griffiths yesterday. I talk to Tim Lenderking. I talk to my Saudi colleague on a regular basis. The conversations that we have are "How can we work together to bring about an end to the conflict in the best and quickest possible way?"

They respect our role as penholders in New York. We also attended a meeting of the five permanent members of the Security Council plus Germany, Sweden, the EU and Kuwait in Berlin last Monday. We co-ordinate with the rest of the permanent five members in what we call the quad with Saudi Arabia and the UAE. In all of those conversations, I



## HOUSE OF COMMONS

would say I have not seen any difference in the attitude towards the UK. They want to talk to us. We write drafts of Security Council statements, which we continue to do, and negotiate those in New York and in the region. That continues. I have not seen any evidence of an impact on our diplomatic efforts.

**Chair:** That is very reassuring to hear.

Q39 **Chris Law:** This last question is for James. There are two parts. First, what diplomatic steps has the UK taken to encourage that civilians are not targeted in Yemen or Saudi Arabia?

**James Cleverly:** We take our commitment to international humanitarian law incredibly seriously. That underpins the work that we do. I have had discussions directly with the Houthis in terms of renouncing violence. Sadly, we have seen civilian infrastructure, the airport and other things targeted by the Houthis. Unfortunately, the impact on social infrastructure in Yemen is a testament to how devastating this war is. We take, for example, our arms control licensing commitments incredibly seriously. That will always underpin the decisions that we make on that issue.

Q40 **Chris Law:** According to the Yemen Data Project, there have been almost 60,000 airstrikes since March 2015. A third of these have been carried out by the coalition and hit civilian objects such as residential homes, hospitals, schools, weddings, farms, food stores, school buses, markets, mosques, bridges, factories, detention centres and even water wells. What discussions have you had with your counterparts across Government, including the Secretary of State for International Trade, about arms sales to Saudi Arabia to ensure that UK-manufactured munitions and material are not complicit in violations of international humanitarian law?

**James Cleverly:** The UK takes its arms export licensing responsibilities incredibly seriously. We will not issue an export licence where there is a clear risk of a breach of international humanitarian law. The FCDO works closely with DIT on that. That is the cross-Whitehall Government position on this, and that position will remain unchanged.

Q41 **Chris Law:** I have a very last question. I just wonder what your own personal thoughts are about 60,000 airstrikes, a third of which are on civilian targets, in Yemen from the Saudi-led coalition.

**James Cleverly:** My view is that war is hell—that is a universal truth. None of us wants to see the impact that we have seen on civilian communities or infrastructure. The Saudis have attempted a number of ceasefires, which sadly have not been reciprocated by the Houthis. We have seen recent attacks by the Houthis on civilian targets. We are working tirelessly with our international partners in the region and internationally to try to bring this conflict to an end. Unfortunately, until this conflict does come to an end, we cannot start the meaningful



## HOUSE OF COMMONS

rebuilding of Yemen. That is what the international community ultimately seeks to do.

**Michael Aron:** I just wanted to come in on the point about international humanitarian law. I had a conversation with a representative of the International Committee of the Red Cross recently about its work. It is obviously highly concerned about these issues that Chris has raised. He said that the work that mostly MoD experts were doing with Saudi Arabia to help it to meet its IHL commitments was some of the best work that he had seen anywhere in the world, in terms of helping a country improve the situation.

Nobody is denying that mistakes have been made. But look at the record over the six years of the war. Of course, nobody is saying it is a good thing that there have been six years of war, but the fact is that the vast majority of the serious issues took place early in the war. The record of civilian casualties in the last year or so of the war has been much less than it was at the beginning of the war. This is not me; he attributed that to the assistance that we have given Saudi Arabia to enable its armed forces to better comply with the conditions of international humanitarian law.

Q42 **Chair:** Ambassador, what are your priorities for the next six months and the next year to try to create stability in the region?

**Michael Aron:** We have a peace process in place. We have an outstanding—British, as it happens—special envoy. He is now accompanied by an experienced American envoy. We have seen the Sultanate of Oman under the new Sultan play a more active role in helping to work with the Houthis to try to persuade them to bring about the end of the conflict.

We need to see the Houthis respond to peace overtures put to them by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, most recently last month, in a serious way that will bring an end to the suffering of people in Yemen. I move on in the summer, but I hope that we can bring about a ceasefire before then and move towards negotiations on an overall political settlement. It is very clear.

**Chair:** There would be a great legacy if you would bring that home. We would all be very grateful. Minister, but also Michael and Chris, thank you very much for what you are trying to do in the region. We genuinely understand the financial constraints that you are all working with.

Minister, to reiterate, the aid sector is used to producing miracles on a dime. It needs clarity and certainty, though. It is not getting that at the moment. Speaking on behalf of the sector, I think it would much rather rip the plaster off hard so at least it knows where it stands. At the moment, it is making planning impossible. It is making its duty to employees and those it is working with in-country almost impossible. Anything you could do to get that clarity as quickly as possible would be



## HOUSE OF COMMONS

hugely appreciated by this Committee.

We are grateful to everybody who has taken part today. Thank you for what you are trying to achieve. This remains a real area of interest and concern because it is the worst humanitarian situation and it is manmade. Hopefully, the solution lies with political agreement going forward. Thank you all very much. Thank you to the Committee members and to the first panel for your time.