

**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE
REPUBLIC OF YEMEN TO THE
UNITED NATIONS OFFICE**



Number: 561

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Yemen to the United Nations Office and Other International Organizations in Geneva presents its compliments to The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR).

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Yemen would kindly attached with this verbal note “The Progress in Implementing the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 in the Republic of Yemen”.

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Yemen in Geneva avails itself of this opportunity to renew to The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) the assurances of its highest consideration.

Geneva, 4th October 2022

To: The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR).

PROGRESS MADE IN THE MID-TERM REVIEW OF THE SENDAI FRAMEWORK

IN THE REPUBLIC OF YEMEN

SEPTEMBER 2022

Disasters keep increasing in numbers and succession in conjunction with events of climate change in most of countries of the world, including in the Arab region. The ability to predict where and when a disaster may occur is quite limited, especially in the absence of tools to accurately gauge disaster risks, high levels of disaster risks and vulnerability in most Arab countries and the difficulty of facing disasters in any country individually, more regional and international coordination and investment efforts to reduce disaster risks are needed to support weak countries with technology and science and enhance their national and local capacities to protect their people.

Since its adoption of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction in 2015, Yemen has been going through the worst humanitarian crisis in the Arab region and the world, as a result of the war that has entered its eighth year, thus leaving hundreds of thousands of deaths and injuries, including more than ten thousand children. War displaced millions, halted development and collapsed public institutions and services. The humanitarian situation has also worsened as a result, with more than 22 million people in need of (humanitarian) assistance and more than half of them are on the verge of starvation.

Effects of climate change are undoubtedly felt in Yemen. The frequency and severity of extreme events, such as cyclones and air depressions, increased during the first half of Sendai Framework (most notably in Chapala - Meg - Sagar - Mukono- Laban - Kyar - Maha and Shaheen), in addition to changing rainfall patterns, increased frequency and intensity of storms, droughts and heatwaves in many cities. These are accompanied by significant loss of life, property, livelihoods and extensive destruction of infrastructure, services, natural and archaeological landmarks resulting from severe floods, landslides, land drifting, vegetation uprooting, and the growth of diseases and vectors such

as cholera and malaria, and locust plague, as happened after cyclones Mekunu and Luban in 2018, and the destruction of community livelihoods secured through fishing, pastoralism and agriculture.

There is no doubt that the recurrence of such cyclones and air depressions, once or twice a year, portends deadlier future losses and tragic conditions to Yemen and Yemeni society, especially if we take into account the high levels of vulnerability and danger in all Yemeni governorates. The increasing frequency and recurrence of disasters resulting from severe tropical cyclones, coastal storms, extreme wave activity and sea level rise are likely to cause greater losses to many sectors in the future; threaten livelihoods and natural systems such as coastal habitats and coral reefs, turtle nesting areas, reserves and rare and endangered species of flora and fauna water"; affect the quality of surface water; and threaten groundwater sources with the risk of seawater leakage due to rising sea levels.

Oil tanker 'Safer', anchored in Ras Issa, Hudaydah Governorate, on the Red Sea, represents a high risk to Yemen's marine environment and to neighbouring Red Sea countries. In its holds are significant quantities of crude oil that are likely to spill due to its deterioration and no maintenance since 2015. MV SAFER is the third largest floating oil storage in the world, with a total capacity of 3.2 million barrels, a length of 360 meters and a width of 70 meters. The Government of Yemen converted it into a floating port that began operating in 1988 by the Yemeni Oil Company Safer. Since then, Safer has represented one of the most important oil export units in the Republic of Yemen, receiving, storing and exporting light oil flowing from the Marib fields (east of Yemen) from Sector 18, Sector 5 and some adjacent fields, through a pipeline approximately 440 km long.

Since 2015, the tanker Safer has become a high threat factor to the environment of Yemen, the countries on the Red Sea, the Gulf of Aden, and international navigation. The tanker contains more than one million and one hundred barrels of crude oil, its cargo has not been unloaded so far and has not undergone any maintenance operations since 2015. According to experts' expectations, the tanker is threatened with a significant oil spill, especially with the intensification of temperature and high humidity, the risk of hydrocarbon gassing and the possibility of leakage are highly expected.

Government of Yemen requested assistance from the United Nations. However, Houthi militia prevented UN personnel from accessing the tanker more than once. They use it as a bargaining chip with the legitimate government, and adhere to it as a weapon to threaten the environment, and

navigation for the entire world, because of its huge environmental, navigational and economic risks that threaten the environment of the Red Sea, the international fishing and navigation communities, and the food, fuel and life supplies in Yemen.

The environmental and economic risks that may result from oil pollution are very large and may last for several years and exceed national borders, especially with the huge amount of oil in the Safer reservoir, which will make it one of the biggest disasters ever. The oil pollution will cause severe damage to natural resources, marine biodiversity, migratory and resident birds, in addition to damages to the marine fishing process, livelihoods, drinking water projects, desalination plants, fish farms and salt production fields, and damage to ports, boat anchors, coastal areas, cornice and tourist sites.

Yemen demands giving this issue sufficient attention and acting quickly to avoid pollution of the Red Sea environment by putting more pressure on Houthi militia to allow maintenance, as well as strengthening the capabilities of its competent institutions represented by the Public Authority for Maritime Affairs, which is entrusted with combating marine pollution to carry out and provide the mechanisms, tools and capabilities required to respond to the expected disaster.

Despite the current circumstances and conditions that Yemen is going through, there has been some progress in the governmental and societal efforts made to reduce disaster risks. The Government of Yemen, represented by the Ministry of Water and Environment, put the General Department of Environmental Emergencies back to work for the national coordination of disaster risk reduction, approved a set of legislations and decisions, established the Supreme Council for Civil Defence, and formed a Supreme Emergency Committee to respond to Covid-19 epidemic and other health and relief committees.

At the beginning of 2022, the Yemeni national team trained in cooperation with the United Nations programmes for Disaster Risk Reduction in Arab Countries began recording national disaster losses in preparation for global reporting. Furthermore, several meetings, workshops, seminars and a youth forum were held in the capital, Aden, and preliminary reports on disaster losses and cases of COVID-19 were reported. Stakeholders also made efforts to enhance community participation in disaster risk reduction at the national and local levels, seeking to contribute to disaster risk reduction with the participation of local authorities and communities and the efforts made by some national,

international and regional bodies and organizations in the areas of food aid and emergency programmes.

Despite the rapid transformation of Covid-19 into a global epidemic, its outbreak in Yemen was delayed by nearly three months, as Yemen recorded the first confirmed case of Corona virus in Yemen on April 10, 2020 in Hadramawt Governorate, east of the country, and other cases were recorded on April 29. However, many local and international relief organizations began to send early warnings of the serious consequences of the outbreak of the Corona virus in light of the exceptional situation of Yemeni society, the absence of the most basic possibilities of response and preparedness, as well as the severe deterioration of the health sector compared to many countries in the region and the world. At an advanced phase of the pandemic outbreak in Yemen, the government has taken precautionary and preventive measures to respond to coronavirus, the most important of which are the formation of the Supreme National Emergency Committee; establishment of operating rooms in the governorates; timely dissemination of information and data on COVID-19 pandemic by a spokesperson of the Supreme National Emergency Committee; adoption of an emergency budget to support the capacity of the health sector; coordination with some partners (WHO, King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre) and relevant organizations to develop the necessary measures to confront the effects of the coronavirus; providing land, sea and air entry points with medical teams and special devices to ensure the safety of incoming passengers and providing medical supplies; suspension of entry except humanitarian activities, transport aid, commercial and relief shipping; the work to raise public awareness of the dangers of the virus outbreak and the prevention methods needed to prevent its transmission; suspension of studies in educational institutions, mobilization of international support to strengthen preventive and precautionary measures to reduce the virus impacts; supporting the establishment of isolation and quarantine centres and providing the necessary medical supplies in coordination with partners.

As regards disaster risk management, Yemen identified a national focal point for the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Arab Mechanism for Disaster Risk Reduction, a focal point for the Arab Science and Technology Advisory Group for Disaster Risk Reduction, and representatives of the Inter-Agency Expert Group on Disaster Statistics. Arrangements are currently underway to organize the first national forum for disaster risk reduction in cooperation with the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Arab States in order to strengthen

governmental and community partnership and advance work to reduce disaster risks at the national and local levels.

After restoring the stability of the internationally-recognized legitimate government, rebuilding the ministries from temporary capital, Aden, and their administrative supervision over the liberated governorates, and coordinating the provision of services to all the Yemeni people, it becomes possible to move forward in improving disaster risk management, monitoring and reporting the Sendai Framework. Therefore, we have developed our plans and programmes, invited a number of partners to support us in promoting disaster risk reduction at the national and local levels, carrying on the implementation of the Priorities Plan 2018-2020, and then moving forward with the Priority Action Plan 2021-2024. However, this depends on the level of cooperation of the partners during the next phase.

Yemen needs to improve disaster risk management: Many challenges still face Yemen's ability to make the required progress in achieving the global goals of the Sendai Framework 2015-2030. Therefore, Yemen, through the Sendai Framework, submits a request to provide the financial, technical and technological needs required to meet its commitments and enhance its institutional and technical capabilities. Its need for support from international organizations is estimated at five million dollars to implement the following programmes and activities:

- ✓ Establish the National Mechanism for Disaster Risk Management, a national team for disaster risk management, with the participation of the competent authorities and stakeholders.
- ✓ Equip the technical secretariat of the national mechanism (at the Ministry of Water and Environment - the national focal point for the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction).
- ✓ Launch local training programmes on collecting and calculating historical national disaster losses using the DesInventar information system, monitor the Sendai Framework and report on global targets.
- ✓ Support the development of a national strategy and local strategies for disaster risk reduction in 8 Yemeni governorates (in line with the Sendai Framework 2015-2030 and the Arab Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction in accordance with target (E) of the Sendai Framework.
- ✓ Build national capacities and develop national and local forums for disaster risk reduction on an ongoing basis for multilateral consultations, including stakeholders and other groups.
- ✓ Carry out awareness and education programmes on natural disaster risk reduction, observance of the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction and launch of the National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction on the Internet.

- ✓ Carrying out a disaster resilience assessment to track disaster areas, and identify potential opportunities to avoid new disasters.
- ✓ In addition to supporting the establishment of multi-hazard early warning systems that have proven their importance and feasibility in reducing losses caused by disasters.

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SENDAI FRAMEWORK NATIONAL FOCAL POINT

MINISTRY OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENT

REPUBLIC OF YEMEN

September 2022