**Briefing for MPs – Written by Paul Tippell (UNA-UK’s volunteer Yemen constituency coordinator)**

**Humanitarian situation**

* Over 85,00 children under the age of five have died from starvation. This is equivalent to the under-fives population of Birmingham, the UKs second largest city
* 500,000 children are suffering from severe acute malnutrition
* 24 million people require urgent humanitarian assistance, 9.9 million of whom are children. This is over four fifths of the entire population
* 15.9 million are in severe food insecurity, equivalent to the combined populations of London, Birmingham and Glasgow
* 3.2 million are internally displaced,
* 19.3 million in need of health care and protection services
* There have been over 1 million suspected cholera cases
* Teachers, doctors and Government workers have not been paid for over 2 years. Most people in Yemen simply to not have the money to buy what food that is available in markets

**Humanitarian access**

Aid agencies are reporting that all warring parties are imposing access restrictions to warehouses, grain mills and for food distribution. Several main routes necessary for effective transportation of aid remain blocked.

**Imports of food and essential goods**

* Commercial food imports are at their lowest level since July 2016. The Saudi’s have blockaded the port of Hudaydah, through which about 80% of humanitarian and commercial supplied of food pass, since 2015. In November 2017 the Saudis imposed a total blockade of the port which was only partially lifted some months later
* The Saudis have been stopping commercial containerised cargo, containing essential supplies such a milk powder and cooking oil, from entering Hudaydah for over a year
* Some of the largest commercial importers of wheat have stopped exporting to Yemen because they are not able to obtain ‘letters of credit’ from the Yemini Government to guarantee payment.

**Continued fighting and airstrikes**

* The ceasefire in Hudaydah, negotiated by British UN Envoy, Martin Griffiths, is holding, however the war goes on in the rest of the country with continued airstrikes and shelling in populated areas and also hundreds of thousands of land mines laid by Houthi forces which are taking their toll on civilians
* According to the report by the Group of UN Eminent Experts, appointed by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, since March 2015 up to 23 August 2018, 6,660 civilians were killed and 10,563 injured; however, the real figures are likely to be significantly higher; with coalition airstrikes continuing to be leading cause of child casualties as well as overall civilian casualties
* The figures are a conservative estimate, with some aid organisations putting the real figure at 50,000
* The UN Panel of Experts on Yemen, appointed by the Security Council, report that in the past three years Saudi air strikes have hit residential areas, markets, funerals, weddings, detention facilities, civilian boats, hospitals and also civilian infrastructure including water treatment plants and power stations
* The UN Panel considered it almost certain that the coalition did not meet international humanitarian law requirements of proportionality and precautions in a number of airstrikes. The Panel considered that some of the attacks may amount to war crimes
* The British UN Envoy for Yemen, Martin Griffiths, has successfully negotiated a fragile ceasefire in and around the aid lifeline Port City of Hudaydah
* However fighting continues on the rest of Yemen and the Saudis are still dropping British and US bombs from British and US aircraft
* In some cases of airstrikes against civilians and civilian objects the UN Panel of Experts were able to identify the bomb or missile used and its supplier. Paveway precision bombs were used in the majority of cases, some of them supplied by the UK
* The UK Government has issued licences for the unlimited supply of Paveway bombs and Storm Shadow and Brimstone air-to surface missiles. The Government refuse to provide data on the number of bombs and missiles supplied, however it is estimated that nearly 4,000 have been supplied to Saudi Arabia to date