

Key messages on the UN-Coordinated Plan for the FSO Safer – 25 May (Updated 25-May-2022)

Donors have pledged or contributed \$40 million for the UN-coordinated operational plan to address the threat of an oil spill from the FSO Safer. That is a good start, but not enough to begin work. The aging tanker off Yemen's Red Sea coast holds one million barrels of oil and could break up or explode at any time. A major spill would result in a humanitarian and environmental catastrophe and have profound economic costs across the region.

- Moored off the Red Sea coast of Yemen, the FSO Safer is a rapidly decaying supertanker at risk of a major oil spill from breaking apart or an explosion that could occur at any time. The result would be a humanitarian and environmental catastrophe with its epicenter on the coast of a country already devastated by more than seven years of war.
- The UN-coordinated plan to address the threat has the necessary support of the parties to the conflict and key stakeholders. The planned operation comprises the installation of a replacement vessel or equivalent capacity and a four-month emergency operation to transfer the oil to a safe temporary vessel before it is too late.
- The plan is contingent on urgent funding. Every day we wait for funds is a delay to the start of the operation, bringing closer the day when the vessel breaks apart. By October, high winds and volatile currents will make the operation more dangerous and increase the risk of the ship breaking up. The main impediment to success is the funding gap. We must not allow this catastrophe to happen.

The cost of the UN-coordinated plan

• The budget for the two-track plan is \$144 million, including \$80 million urgently required for the emergency operation.

Note: this figure assumes the installation of an FSO as the long-term solution.

The high cost of inaction

- A major spill would devastate fishing communities on Yemen's Red Sea coast, with 200,000 livelihoods potentially wiped out instantly. Whole communities would be exposed to life-threatening toxins. Highly polluted air would affect millions of people.
- A major spill could close the nearby ports of Hodeidah and Saleef which are essential to bring food, fuel and life-saving supplies into a country where 17 million people need food assistance. Desalination plants on the Red Sea coast could be closed, cutting off a water source for millions of people.
- The environmental impact on water, reefs and life-supporting mangroves on Yemen's coast and potentially across the Red Sea would be severe.
- The cost of cleanup alone is estimated at \$20 billion. Disruptions to shipping through the Bab al-Mandab strait to the Suez Canal could cost billions more every day.
- Tens of millions of dollars in funding now will save tens of billions of dollars in the future.

For further information, please contact:

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