



PERMANENT MISSION OF GREECE
TO THE UNITED NATIONS



**Security Council Emergency Briefing on
the situation in the Middle East (Yemen)
Tuesday 15 September 2026**

Greece's Statement delivered
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Mr. President,

I would like to thank the Presidency for scheduling this urgent meeting, days only after the Council convened on the same issue. I also thank Assistant Secretary General Khiari for his briefing, and welcome the presence of the Permanent Representatives of Yemen and Saudi Arabia to the meeting.

I will raise four points:

First, Greece strongly condemns the expansion of hostilities, including the continuous attacks against civilian population and critical infrastructure in Saudi Arabia, which have led to civilian casualties. Despite repeated appeals to the contrary, the Houthis continue on the path of military escalation, bringing Yemen to the brink of a full-scale conflict. We urge their immediate and unconditional cessation. We express our solidarity with Saudi Arabia and the Government of Yemen in their efforts to defend their sovereignty and territorial integrity, in accordance with international law.

Second, these hostilities are compounded by rapid military advancement of the Houthis along the West Coast of Yemen, as well as their capture of Al-Mokha port and the islands of Greater and Lesser Hanish, off the coast of the strategically vital Bab al-Mandeb Strait. This signals a dangerous turning point for the security of the Red Sea. These developments, coupled with the prolonged crisis in the Strait of Hormuz, have far reaching implications for the security and stability of Yemen and the wider region. The consequences extend further still – to international maritime security and to global trade and prosperity.

For Greece, as one of the world's leading maritime nations, this is a matter of particular importance. Recent attacks against shipping across the wider region, including against Greek-owned vessels, make clear the urgent need to protect those who work at sea and ensure the uninterrupted flow of international commerce. Freedom of navigation and transit passage must be fully respected and safeguarded in accordance with international law, including UNCLOS. Rights of passage through international straits cannot be made subject to unlawful restrictions, discriminatory measures, fees or prior authorisations.

The Bab-al Mandeb Strait remains a critical international waterway in the Gulf region, serving as a vital corridor for international trade and transportation of energy and essential goods. Ensuring freedom of navigation and safe passage through this strategic maritime route is therefore essential for the resilience of global trade and supply chains.

Greece will continue its steadfast engagement in safeguarding freedom of navigation and ensuring the safe passage of commercial vessels through its active role in EU Naval Operation Aspides, in line with its defensive mandate and in accordance with international law. Furthermore, all Member States must fully comply with their obligations under SC resolutions 2140, 2216, and relevant subsequent resolutions, with respect to the implementation of the targeted arms embargo.

Third, alongside the military developments, the humanitarian consequences of the Houthis' continued military actions are gravely concerning, including the further displacement of civilians from their homes and communities, with women and children among those most vulnerable to the devastating effects of the conflict. We urge all parties to fully abide by their obligations under international humanitarian law, including the protection of civilians and civilian infrastructure, and to facilitate safe, rapid and unhindered humanitarian access to all those in need. The growing number of internally displaced persons puts an additional burden on an already fragile humanitarian situation. The continued arbitrary detention by the Houthis of diplomatic staff and numerous humanitarian personnel, including 73 UN staff members, is strongly condemned. We reiterate our call for their immediate and unconditional release.

Finally, Mr. President, we must not lose sight of the political process. All parties should immediately de-escalate and work to preserve the necessary space for dialogue and diplomacy. Channels of communication must remain open. We stand by the side of Special Envoy Grundberg in his efforts towards achieving this objective, in full respect of Yemen's sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and political independence. Only through sustained engagement and a genuine commitment to dialogue can the parties find a way back to the negotiating table, with a view to a lasting and comprehensive political settlement in Yemen.

I thank you.