

**JOINT STATEMENT BY 59 NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS  
ON THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF A TEMPORARY CEASEFIRE IN YEMEN  
09 April 2020**

Over five years of brutal war in Yemen have left millions of Yemenis weakened by malnutrition and disease, and decimated Yemen's health system. The imminent threat of COVID-19 will exacerbate an already dire humanitarian situation: 80 percent of the population is in need of humanitarian assistance, the majority of whom are women and children; two-thirds of the country lacks adequate access to clean water and sanitation; millions are living on the brink of starvation; nearly 20 million people lack access to adequate healthcare; and cholera, dengue, and other preventable diseases are already rife. These factors create an environment dangerously conducive to the severe and rapid spread of the COVID-19 virus, threatening countless civilian lives.

Especially in light of this extraordinary threat, **we, the undersigned NGOs, cautiously welcome the announcement by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia of a temporary cessation of hostilities in Yemen. We urge all parties to the conflict in Yemen to immediately halt fighting, to implement a ceasefire on the ground without delay**, to release all detainees and those forcibly disappeared, and to work with the UN Special Envoy to urgently restart comprehensive and inclusive political negotiations to end the conflict.

A ceasefire alone cannot stop the spread of COVID-19 in Yemen. All parties must immediately lift restrictions and end interference with vital humanitarian operations; ensure immediate access to populations in need; facilitate the movement of humanitarian workers and goods and of commercial imports; and end blockades and other actions and policies that prevent or restrict essential commercial imports into Yemen, to maintain the humanitarian response for the millions of Yemenis who need aid to survive, and to support Yemenis' economic livelihood. Yemeni civil society must also be supported to continue their essential role in responding to the crisis. Simultaneously, the international community must ramp up funding for the full range of humanitarian programming in Yemen. Amid this global pandemic, any suspension of life-saving assistance for Yemen, or politicization of humanitarian access and funding, will leave Yemen's already vulnerable civilian population at heightened risk.

A cessation of hostilities in Yemen can only be a first step. Yemenis need a durable ceasefire, a comprehensive and inclusive political settlement to the current conflict, unencumbered access to humanitarian aid and commercial imports, and accountability for the violations all sides have committed during this war. **Yemen cannot wait any longer for an end to the conflict and humanitarian devastation that has ravaged the civilian population for over five years.**

**Signed by:**

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| 1. ACAT-France (Action by Christians Against Torture)                        | 20. Friends Committee on National Legislation       | 40. Peace Direct  |
| 2. Action against Hunger   | 21. Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect | 41. Physicians for Human Rights                             |
| 3. Action Corps  | 22. Global Communities                              | 42. Première Urgence Internationale                         |
| 4. Alliance for Peacebuilding  | 23. Handicap International - Humanity & Inclusion   | 43. Project on Middle East Democracy                        |
| 5. Alliance internationale pour la défense des droits et des libertés (AIDL) | 24. Human Rights First                              | 44. Refugees International                                  |
| 6. ALQST for Human Rights  | 25. International Civil Society Action Network      | 45. Saferworld  |
| 7. Avaaz   | 26. International Federation for Human Rights       | 46. Salam for Yemen   |
| 8. Bread for the World   | 27. International Rescue Committee                  | 47. Search for Common Ground                                |
| 9. Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies                                  | 28. Islamic Relief Worldwide                        | 48. Solidarités International                               |
| 10. CARE International   | 29. Karuna Center for Peacebuilding                 | 49. STAND: The student-led movement to end mass atrocities  |
| 11. Center for Civilians in Conflict (CIVIC)                                 | 30. Médecins du Monde                               | 50. Students for Yemen                                      |
| 12. Center for International Policy  | 31. Mercy Corps                                     | 51. Tearfund  |
| 13. Center for Policy Analysis in Horn of Africa                             | 32. Mothers of Abductees Association                | 52. United Nations Association of the National Capital Area |
| 14. CIVICUS  | 33. Musaala for Human Rights Organization           | 53. Watch for Human Rights                                  |
| 15. Cordaid - Catholic Organisation for Relief and Development               | 34. Mwatana for Human Rights                        | 54. Win Without War   |
| 16. Cure Violence Global   | 35. Norwegian Refugee Council                       | 55. World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT)               |
| 17. Danish Refugee Council   | 36. Observatoire des armements                      | 56. Yemen Relief and Reconstruction Foundation              |
| 18. Dhameer for Rights and Freedoms  | 37. Oxfam   | 57. Yemen Solidarity Network                                |
| 19. Freedom Forward  | 38. Pax Christi International                       | 58. Yemen Civil Alliance for Peacebuilding                  |
|  | 39. Peace and Building Foundation                   | 59. Yemeni Alliance Committee                               |