



November 27, 2017

The Honorable Rex Tillerson  
Secretary of State for the United States of America

Dear Secretary Tillerson,

As organizations that implement and support humanitarian assistance in Yemen, we write to urge you to mobilize any and all means of diplomacy to lift the Saudi-led coalition's restrictions on commercial access to all ports in Yemen.

Your role in the decision by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to reopen humanitarian imports to Sanaa airport and Hodeidah and Saleef ports is welcome, as several weeks of closure had already sent the prices of basic goods soaring. However, simply restoring limited humanitarian access is not enough to avert a potential famine or further disease outbreaks.

Commercial supplies, including fuel, are critical to feed the population while continuing to support the delivery of basic services such as clean water and sanitation. The Hodeidah and Saleef ports accommodate 80 percent of Yemen's imports, and other routes cannot replace that capacity.

If all commercial restrictions to these ports are not immediately lifted, a widespread famine is likely within 3-4 months. This will dovetail with a cessation of water and sanitation services, as well as a reduction in hospital services, which will lead to a public health crisis of historic proportions.

Water and sanitation networks are already shutting down due to severe fuel shortages and we fear that cholera, diphtheria and other communicable diseases will spread rapidly in these conditions. Malnourished children will be the most vulnerable, with more than 130 under 5s already estimated to be dying every day.

There is no justification for this action, which could amount to collective punishment of the Yemeni people.

The levied restrictions could result in thousands of deaths occurring each day due to lack of food and disease outbreaks. We believe the United States is in a position to prevent the worst famine in a generation and that it is in keeping with longstanding principles of US global leadership to do so.

Thank you for your swift action to fully lift all blocks on life-saving supplies entering Yemen and work toward a peaceful resolution to the crisis.

Signed:

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|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. ADRA                      | 2. CARE                           | 3. Danish Refugee Council |
| 4. InterAction               | 5. International Rescue Committee | 6. Mercy Corps            |
| 7. Norwegian Refugee Council | 8. Oxfam                          | 9. Save the Children      |

Copies to:

Ambassador Mark Green, USAID Administrator  
Lt Gen. H.R. McMaster, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs  
Ambassador Nikki Haley, US Permanent Representative to the U.N.  
John J. Sullivan, US Deputy Secretary of State