

**UNMAS Director remarks to the press at Sana'a airport  
8 December 2022**

*As delivered*

- Thank you very much for being here today.
- Yemen is among one of the most landmine and explosive remnants of war-contaminated countries in the world.
- Mines and explosive remnants of war, including improvised explosive devices and cluster munitions have been responsible for a large number of civilian casualties, and they continue to kill and injure innocent Yemenis on a weekly basis – many of whom are children.
- These explosive devices are denying many more Yemeni families access to their homes, their farms and other livelihood sources, exacerbating the devastating impacts of this conflict.
- During my week-long stay in Yemen I visited Hudaydah, one of the most explosive ordnance-affected governorates in Yemen.
- In Hudaydah, I was part of the UNMHA convoy that struck a landmine during a field visit on Tuesday. We were very fortunate that no one on the convoy was hurt, but many, many citizens of Hudaydah have not shared our good fortune.
- Over the last 6 months, UNMHA has recorded 159 casualties from landmine and ERW related incidents in Hudaydah governorate, and 50 percent of those injured or killed were women and children.
- For those few moments on Tuesday, I experienced a fraction of the paralysing fear that the people of Hudaydah have experienced for years and continue to experience every day. A landmine is an indiscriminate weapon, and I cannot imagine the horrific impact that living with the fear of falling victim to such a device leaves on Yemenis, particularly children, the most vulnerable members of any society.
- Yemeni girls and boys deserve to live free from the scourge of these invisible killers that wait silently in the ground, to kill or maim them and change their lives forever.
- While I was in Hudaydah, I met with the local authorities including the Hudaydah governor, His Excellency Mohammed Ayyash Quhim, the YEMAC director, Mr. Ali Safrah, and also the RCC team led by General Ali Hmoud Al-Mushiki.
- I stressed the urgency of accelerating mine action efforts and stressed the responsibility of the authorities to protect the civilian population.
- I reiterated the calls by the United Nations Security Council last month for all possible precautions to be taken to protect the civilian population of Yemen from explosive ordnance, including by identifying, marking, and clearing dangerous areas.

- The United Nations Mine Action Service welcomes the efforts by UN partners in Yemen to support mine action, including UNMHA's work in Hudaydah as part of its mandate to oversee mine action in the governorate.
- I would like to stress that the United Nations Mine Action Service, UNMHA and the UN humanitarian country team in Yemen remain committed to supporting the people of Yemen as they work towards a safe future without explosive hazards.
- Mine action in Yemen cannot wait.
- Thank you very much.