



## Media Release

Date: 6/11/2018

### **ONE HUNDRED CHILDREN DYING EVERY DAY IN YEMEN**

Save the Children staff in Hodeidah, Yemen have reported almost 100 air strikes over the weekend, five times as many as in the whole first week of October.

Tamer Kirolos, Save the Children's Yemen Country Director said: "This serious escalation around Yemen's most important port city could put tens of thousands of children in the direct line of fire and further choke delivery of food and medicine to a country where we estimate extreme hunger and disease are killing an average of 100 children each day.

"Every convoy blocked from the port or unable to leave it because of the violence means more malnutrition and more children dying needlessly.

"Patients in our health facilities are terrified by the bombardment, running to safety at the sound of incoming airstrikes no matter their condition. They know that even health centres aren't safe. We're also worried that people in need of urgent medical attention won't seek out help because of the fighting."

"This surge in violence is deeply concerning in light of plans for further peace talks that could be a vital step to bringing relief to Yemen's children, many of whom have been bombed and starved to death for nearly four years.

"The weekend's attacks show that what world leaders say have no meaning if they're not backed up by concrete actions. The international community must increase diplomatic pressure and intensify efforts to secure an immediate halt to the offensive and a comprehensive ceasefire.

"Save the Children is urging all sides to immediately stop the fighting so more lives aren't lost. They must allow full access to humanitarian aid and commercial imports and negotiate with the UN Special Envoy Martin Griffiths in good faith, without preconditions."

In a joint initiative, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and Defence Secretary Jim Mattis have called for the warring factions to agree a ceasefire within 30 days, to be followed by UN-brokered peace talks. The move comes at a time when the UN is warning that 12-13 million civilians – around half of the Yemeni population – could be facing starvation in the next three months if the fighting continues.

Save the Children NZ. CEO Heidi Coetzee said, "Now is the time to build on the momentum and find a peaceful resolution to the brutal conflict in Yemen. While we welcome the news that both the United States and Britain – Saudi Arabia's biggest arms suppliers – will ramp up pressure for a ceasefire in the Yemen war, hundreds of children are dying each day. Children are not a target.

"The conflict in Yemen is the world's worst humanitarian emergency and the situation is deteriorating rapidly. The recent escalation in air strikes is untenable and we call on the global community to unite to increase the pressure for peace talks to end the deaths and suffering of millions in Yemen."

Save the Children NZ have an appeal to provide life-saving aid for children in Yemen. If New Zealanders would like to help they can go to <https://www.savethechildren.org.nz/the-solutions/emergencies/yemen-emergency/>

## **ENDS**

### **NOTES TO EDITORS**

- Save the Children has over 50 years of experience working in Yemen. Operational in the country since 1963, the charity was the first international aid group in Yemen. We work nationally and locally to promote and protect children's rights, with programmes in education, protection, health, nutrition, water, livelihoods, and food security. For more see [here](#).
- Save the Children stands side by side with children in the toughest places to be a child. We do whatever it takes to make sure they survive, get protection when they're in danger, and have the chance to learn. Together, we fight for children every single day.
- Save the Children have people available for interview in Yemen and the UK, please contact: Ally Clelland, Communications Specialist, Save the Children NZ, phone 022 531 9514 or email [ally.clelland@scnz.org.nz](mailto:ally.clelland@scnz.org.nz)

### **About Save the Children**

Save the Children believes every child deserves a future. In New Zealand and around the world, we work every day to give children a healthy start in life, the opportunity to learn and protection from harm. When crisis strikes, and children are most vulnerable, we are always among the first to respond and the last to leave. We ensure children's unique needs are met and their voices are heard. We deliver lasting results for millions of children, including those hardest to reach. We do whatever it takes for children – every day and in times of crisis – transforming their lives and the future we share.