1. Emergency Directors discussed their previous agreement and advice to IASC Principals of 5 February. All participants confirmed that system-wide suspension is not on the table. They reaffirmed the need for a new approach, including more support from Headquarters. They agreed on the need to continue dialogue, recalibrate programmes when necessary, and maintain life-saving activities. They agreed on common messaging ahead of the Brussels meeting.

2. The EDG reviewed recent discussions on the operating environment in Yemen, noting the extremely difficult situation and recognizing that teams on the ground are facing constant pressure, including security problems.

3. Conditions have been worsening for months. It is also clear that the current level of constraints is unacceptable and getting worse. If authorities prevent partners from delivering assistance in a principled manner, partners may be forced to recalibrate affected programmes. This also applies to cases where authorities refuse to implement previous agreements.

4. Recalibration of programmes as a result of unacceptable conduct by authorities is distinct from partners choosing to suspend operations. Pro-active suspensions are not warranted at this time. However, partners will fully support any agency that decides it must recalibrate programmes based on challenges with the authorities. In parallel, partners will also maintain other programmes.

5. Examples of recalibration were discussed. This includes a lack of progress to ensure WFP can monitor distributions and implement the August 2019 agreement on biometrics and other long-standing issues. UNICEF noted ongoing discussions with authorities on cash-transfer programmes. Some NGOs are already facing de-facto halt in operations due to inflexibility by authorities.

6. Some red-line issues would force recalibration. For example, partners will not pay the proposed 2 per cent levy and would have to recalibrate any programmes where authorities sought to force payment. Theft of humanitarian cargo or assets would also require recalibration until resolved.

7. Participants noted concerns with the pace of some donor decisions, as well as messaging and incorrect figures cited by some donors. Participants agreed on the importance of nuanced messaging, given that Yemen may set precedents for other operations and in light of the risks that these discussions could become politicized.

Common messages ahead of Brussels meetings:

1) Yemen remains the world’s worst humanitarian crisis. Millions of people depend on assistance to survive. There is no credible reason to believe the situation has improved over the last year.
2) The current operating environment is unacceptable. Restrictions in the north continue to proliferate and intensify, putting enormous strain on the operation.

3) Humanitarian partners appreciate ongoing high-level dialogue with the authorities, including recent engagement through donors and diplomats. Partners want to keep these channels open. Enhanced negotiations should include indicators to measure progress.

4) Humanitarian partners remain committed to maintaining principled delivery at scale across Yemen. In cases where the authorities make this impossible, agencies will recalibrate affected programmes based on programme-specific criteria. This requires targeted measures, rather than general or a system wide suspension.

5) Brussels is seen as a moment to take stock and is part of an ongoing dialogue between partners which is very welcomed.