

Lives still being lost to preventable diseases in Yemen's war-torn Taiz city, senior UN official warns

11 April 2017 – Despite long-standing humanitarian access restrictions in Yemen, the United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator in the country reported that he has been able to enter Taiz City where, amid some gains, he observed setbacks, particularly as regards the health sector.

According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs ([OCHA](#)), on 9 April, Jamie McGoldrick got a first-hand glimpse of the situation inside the city, which is located in the Yemeni highlands.

“Compared to the last time I was in the city, over nine months ago – and in spite of its current status as an active conflict zone – markets seemed busier with more people, more vehicles were on the roads and many more shops and restaurants were open,” he said in a [statement](#).

Mr. McGoldrick also cited local relief committee members and hospital managers in emphasizing that a recent reduction in fighting has allowed some semblance of normalcy to return to the hard-hit city, enabling some of the partially-functioning hospitals to conduct minor repairs.

“However,” he cautioned, “they also stressed that lives are being lost to preventable diseases. Hospitals and feeding centers struggle to cope due to problems with salary payments, insufficient essential supplies, and lack of medicines. Increasing malnutrition rates, particularly in children, are worsening the already difficult humanitarian situation.”

The UN humanitarian coordinator then called on parties to the conflict to build on the momentum of his recent visit by helping to establish a predictable and regular access mechanism to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance to people in need across Taiz.

“I further call on them to ensure that the mechanism does not only cover Taiz city but also helps to improve humanitarian access to the rural areas in the governorate, where the need is also great,” concluded Mr. McGoldrick.