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The Situation in Yemen

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Issue Introduction[1]

At eight years in duration, the Yemeni civil war may be one of the world's largest humanitarian, political, and developmental crises today. 24.1 million civilians are said to be impacted by this conflict, which totals approximately 80% of the Yemeni population. The origins of this conflict stemmed from the collapse of Yemen's public institutions, which included healthcare, education, and other public services.

Prior to the war, Yemen was already the poorest of the Arabic countries and the second poorest when northern African countries are included. It is classed as a less economically developed country (LEDC) due to its slow human development and exponential growth in terms of population. Furthermore, its economy has never been globalised and focuses more on agricultural sectors than industrial and corporate. Yemen also frequently faces some instability due to religious intolerance and fighting.

The conflict was prompted after the 2011 elected president, Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi, failed to effectively manage the collapsing economy, which led to riots, higher illiteracy rates, and a shortage of resources. Eventually, these factors put too much pressure on the Yemeni citizens, and a civil war broke out between starving and undernourished citizens and the government. This led to the government's overthrow, leaving no party in power.

Following the initial outbreak of war, many countries have created coalitions in order to 'help' prevent the exacerbation of this conflict. These attempts have led to proxy wars, and contrastingly to initial goals, the conflicts surrounding Yemeni politics and the government of the country, the citizens of the country have been left in a dire situation with starvation and malnutrition becoming a growing epidemic in the war-torn country.

The United Nations, as well as numerous other nonprofit organisations (NGOs), intergovernmental organisations (IGOs) and humanitarian missions have deployed divisions to Yemen in hopes of aiding the de-escalation of the humanitarian crisis. Such attempts have been somewhat successful, although poverty, homelessness, and hunger are still issues in the country.

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[1] *Disclaimer: This report may contain controversial content regarding religion, politics, and extremist movements. This report in no way reflects the personal opinions of the authors and is not intended to offend any countries or political and religious beliefs.*

The conflict is currently in a stalemate and the biggest focus of many IGOs and other countries is the humanitarian crisis.

Definitions of Key Terms

Absolute vs. Relative Poverty:

When GDP is in the 50th percentile, anyone earning below the 20th percentile and unable to afford basic needs (food, clothing, shelter) is living in absolute poverty. Relative poverty is defined as anyone living below the 50th percentile of wages and household income. Those living in relative poverty can usually afford minimum rent and necessities, although they struggle to meet ends or pay for other things such as transportation.[2]

Coalition:

A coalition is defined as a group of parties who form a temporary alliance in order to achieve a common goal from which each party benefits. It often has to do with an armed conflict.

Coup d'état:

An illegitimate/undiplomatic overthrowing and replacement of a country's government. A coup can be performed by any member of a society, which is not limited to civilians, rebellion groups, or other governments. Once a state has fallen under a coup, the leader is deposed and oftentimes forced to flee the country.

Civil War:

A civil war breaks out when there are two conflicting powers in one country under one government.

Famine:

Where a large part of a country or region's population has a gross undersupply of food, which necessarily is caused by the extreme scarcity of it. Famine can result from war, drought, or other unpredictable phenomena.

Human Development:

The improvement of individual liberty and autonomy, for example, women's rights to education, Human development also has to do with the overall opportunities each individual has access to in terms of "living", such as the availability of vital resources like water and food.

Humanitarian Aid:

Any sort of help or aid which is deployed with the goal of improving the lives of people from a certain area which is low on resources is classed as humanitarian aid. Other examples include the supply of food, water, clothes, and medical help. Humanitarian aid is effective in helping with the de-escalation of humanitarian crises, however, it cannot solve such an issue.

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[2] GDP: The average income of the average citizen of a country. This is calculated by including those who are unemployed and any other citizens in the labour force. GDP (per capita) is often the statistic that is used when classifying different countries in terms of wealth. The average GDP per capita changes drastically when the masses are left jobless, which, in recent years, has been due to automation.

Ideology:

Often, political or religious beliefs can impact the way in which a country is governed and its legislation. Basic examples are democracy, conservatism, communism, and socialism. Other common examples are fascism, feudalism, bureaucracy, and anarchy.

(Political) Instability:

The lack of certainty (thereby instability) regarding the political security of a country's powers. This is especially true when there are extreme gaps between the rich and poor, the educated and illiterate, or between general opinions regarding political ideologies. Such instabilities make a country susceptible to coup d'états, a weak economy, and riots.

International Intervention:

Happening quite frequently in conflicts in LEDCs, international intervention is the involvement- often without prenotification, of LEDCs or larger military powers in order to subdue conflict. Oftentimes, though, these interventions are conducted with the ulterior motive of spreading ideologies.

Labour force:

The labour force (sometimes referred to as the workforce) is the total number of people in an economy who are actively engaged in work or who are actively seeking employment. The participation rate of the labour force is the labour force as a percentage of the working-age population. When it comes to the participation rate, many male-dominated sectors such as mining and manufacturing have been shrinking, particularly in many developed countries, and female participation rates are on the rise.

Law of War:

The law of war, which is governed by international law, establishes the rights of every party engaged in an armed conflict. Examples include the refrain from attacking civilians. History has even established prohibitions against engaging in armed conflict between dusk and dawn, attacking people who are unable to defend themselves (such as soldiers who are already injured, civilians, children, or medical personnel), using torture, and engaging in other inhumane acts or violations of humanity like rape or slaughter.

LEDCs:

Less economically developed countries usually have a low GDP (per capita), high birth rates due to a lack of contraception and education, as well as a low age of marriage. They often have high death rates due to a lack of healthcare, education, or poor hygiene. Other characteristics include shorter life expectancies (due to the high death rates) and a large proportion of employment in the primary sector, e.g., cacao farming, factory labour, etc.

War Crimes:

Even in warfare, there are laws (international law) which set guidelines for conduct during warfare. These laws especially protect civilians and uninvolved, unarmed parties. Violations of these laws are called war crimes. Those committing war crimes can be prosecuted for them under the international law of war.

Background Information

Although the geographical situation of Yemen should allow for optimal fishing and perhaps even a strong economic market because of it, Yemen's once stable economy ran on oil and gas and other agricultural products which are harvested on land rather than from the sea. Its specific location is southwest of the Arabian Peninsula, next to Saudi Arabia and Oman, and its capital city is Sanaa (sometimes spelt Sana'a or Sana).

In terms of numbers, over half (55%) of the Yemeni population lives in poverty, and just under 20% (18.5%) live in absolute poverty. 99% of the population follows Islam, a third of the population is illiterate, and 20% are unemployed or underemployed. Unemployment in Yemen is a consequence of the economic collapse, leaving little money in circulation and causing many businesses to go bankrupt. Most people lack the capital to fund a new business, and consumer behaviour is such that very little money is spent- as little as possible.

A series of different conflicts and smaller wars eventually led to political and economic instability in Yemen, resulting in the civil war. The Arab spring of 2010 heavily influenced Yemen, an already struggling economy. Even prior to the Arab spring and the turn of the millennium, Yemen had previously been engaged in armed conflicts such as conflicts between Arab countries in the peninsula, especially territorial disputes such as ones with its neighbours, Oman and Saudi Arabia.

Historical Context and Causes

Arab Spring

The Arab Spring, which started in late 2010, was a series of rebellions, riots, and protests against governments all over the Arab world. These rioters were pro-democracy and protested the Islamic influence on governance. The protests during the Arab spring spread to Yemen and eventually resulted in the president signing a mediated agreement calling for a phased transfer of power to the vice presidents. This transfer was approved and supervised by the United Nations. This, however, did little to subdue the unrest. Following the transfer of power and the new president's incapacity to effectively govern, Yemen fell into its 7-year-long civil war. The fight for democracy has been in vain and resulted in little improvement regarding political and economic capabilities.

Figure 1: Ali Abdullah Saleh Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi[3]

Religious context and causes

Much like many countries in the Arabian peninsula, Yemen is a majoritarian Islamic country, with over 99% of Yemenis following either the Shafi'i order of Sunni Islam or Zaydi Islam, a form of Shia Islam. These beliefs, which were used to govern the country, oftentimes intertwined with the political value system in the government.

[3] BBC. "Yemen: Why Is the War There Getting More Violent?" Bbci.co.uk, 2022, ichef.bbci.co.uk/news/976/cpsprodpb/A62D/production/_91914524_1f324077-3512-4d8a-a7d4-516a434895b0.jpg.webp.

This also translated into a more conservative and right-wing ideology, which was heavily opposed during the Arab Spring, when protesters fought for a democratic system. Furthermore, religious unrest and instability have long since been a cause for conflict, especially in Islam-dominated Arab countries.

Colonisation and tensions in the 20th century

The British, as part of their empire, extended ports to Arab countries such as Oman and Yemen. They occupied a port in the southeast of Yemen and used it to trade goods such as dates, spices, and livestock. Their occupation of Yemen came to an end in 1967, which led to the establishment of the People's Republic of Southern Yemen. This evolved into the Marxist People's Democratic Republic of Yemen. Alongside the British occupation, the Ottoman Empire occupied and ruled kingdoms in the north of Yemen, which was liberated in 1918. Furthermore, the tensions between Saudi Arabia and Egypt influenced the stability of Yemen. The conflict ultimately resulted in the establishment of the Yemen Arab Republic. The northern and southern parts of Yemen conflicted with each other, and although they reached a consensus in 1990. Even so, Yemen remained in a state of tension between the north and south. This was also a factor in the uprising of civil unrest and the civil war.

General Overview

The current state of Yemen is a very fragile one. With plenty of scope for political and economic corruption, many parties and groups are trying to gain power over the country. In addition to other conflicts in the Arabian Peninsula, foreign intervention has also played a big role in the development of Yemen's conflict. Countries such as the United States have intervened by sending ammunition and troops and publicly voicing support for one party rather than the other. This has caused increased conflict as the US has strong economic and political influence. Furthermore, other groups and parties are also attempting to take advantage of Yemen's state by enforcing certain religious or political beliefs. Extremist groups have used force to take control of certain areas of Yemen.

Houthi involvement

Initial invasion

The Houthis are a group from Yemen's Saada province in the northwestern part of the country. They follow a branch of Shiism known as Zaydism. Approximately 35% of Yemen's population is Zaydi. Before being deposed in 1962, a Zaydi imamate ruled Yemen for a thousand years. Since being deposed from their position of political influence, the Zaydis have fought to regain control over Yemen. Feeling threatened by state-funded Salafist preachers who had a base in Houthi areas, the Houthi clan launched a movement to revive Zaydi traditions in the 1980s. Not all Zaydis, however, align with the Houthi movement. Houthi rebels and Yemen's government have been at odds for more than ten years. The Houthi movement has grown beyond its Zaydi roots and evolved into a larger movement opposed to the central government since 2011. Another name the rebels have started using to describe themselves is Ansarullah, or "Party of God."

Iranian support

Iran is frequently charged with supporting the Houthis, a Zaydi Shiite movement that has been at war with Yemen's Sunni-dominated government since 2004. In September

2014, the Houthis overran Sanaa, the capital of Yemen, and by 2016, they had taken over most of the north of the country. The Houthis allegedly received weapons, training, and financial support from Iran and its proxy Hezbollah, according to numerous claims made by Sunni nations and officials in Yemen. But Iranian and Hezbollah officials have denied or downplayed the claims. Physical proof of Iranian arms transfers to the group has been provided by the United States in cooperation with Saudi Arabia.

Iranian officials have supported the Houthis' cause and compared the group to Hezbollah. In October 2014, Ali Akbar Velayati, a top adviser to the Supreme Leader, Khamenei declared that Iran "supports the just struggles of Ansarullah in Yemen and considers this movement as part of the successful Islamic Awakening movements." Tehran, however, has consistently refuted claims that it has given the Houthis money, resources, or training. Furthermore, tensions between Saudi Arabia and Iran regarding the Houthi movements have been consistently rising, especially in the face of the Yemen civil war. Iran has long been charged by Saudi Arabia with providing the Houthis with weapons to wage a proxy conflict. In 2015, Prince Saud al Faisal, the late Saudi foreign minister, said, "We are concerned about the tendencies of Iran in the region, which is one of the main factors introducing instability in the region."

According to a statement made in October 2016 by a U.S. admiral, five weapons shipments from Iran to the Arabian Peninsula have been intercepted by warships from the U.S. Navy and allies. According to reports, the shipments contained thousands of AK-47 automatic rifles, sniper rifles, and anti-tank missiles. Responding, Bahram Ghasemi, a spokesman for the Iranian Foreign Ministry, said, "These accusations are completely false."

Occupation

The Houthis launched an assault on Marib in 2021, the Yemeni government's final northern stronghold and the capital of a province with a lot of oil. The United Nations has issued a warning, stating that two million civilians are in danger and that the fighting has displaced over 100,000 people. A cease-fire has been requested. Since the beginning of the year, the Saudi-led coalition and the Houthi air campaign have increased their brutality. Drones and ballistic missile attacks have been used by the Houthis to target oil installations and other sites in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, injuring civilians in the process.

Figure 2: Houthis in a military parade[4]

According to Saudi and US officials, a UN arms embargo has been violated, with Iran accused of smuggling drones and other weapons to the Houthis. Iran has denied the assertion. The coalition, which is led by Saudi Arabia, is said to have carried out

[4] Huwai, Mohammed. "Yemen's Tragedy: War, Stalemate, and Suffering." Cfr.org, 2022, cdn.cfr.org/sites/default/files/styles/immersive_image_3_2_desktop_2x/public/image/2020/02/Yemen.jpg.webp.

thousands of airstrikes, tens of thousands of which have resulted in fatalities, according to the UN. These include "double tap" attacks, in which the initial blow is delivered to a rebel group and the subsequent blow is delivered to the individuals attempting to rescue the rebels. According to the UN, both sides of the civil war may have committed war crimes. The allegation is denied by both parties.

Other tensions as a result of the Yemen Conflict

Saudi-Iranian tensions

The beginnings of the tensions between Saudi Arabia and Iran go back as far as the Iranian Revolution of 1979, and since, Riyadh and Tehran have been at odds with one another politically. An attack on the Saudi Embassy in Tehran in 2016 forced Saudi Arabia to recall its ambassador from Iran following the execution of the Saudi Shia cleric Nimr al-Nimr. Iran is furthermore believed to have supported the Houthis in Yemen who attacked the kingdom, and tensions have increased as a result. Assaults on Aramco facilities in Saudi Arabia in September 2019 are also thought to have been carried out by Iran. However, there is a new reason for optimism following the fifth round of talks between Iran and Saudi Arabia in Baghdad. According to the prime minister of Iraq, who declared that "reconciliation is near," and the spokeswoman for the Iranian foreign ministry, who saw progress in the most recent round of negotiations and characterised them as "positive and serious," efforts to ease tensions between Saudi Arabia and Iran are already having an effect on other countries in the region.

Since 2011, Yemen has been one of the main battlegrounds between Saudi Arabia and Iran, but as part of talks between the two parties in Iraq, it is now becoming a chance for confidence-building measures. Iran's Yemen strategy is primarily intended to weaken Saudi security by sabotaging many operations and undermining their strategies. Iran has provided significant and deadly support to the Houthis for a long time. Due to their extensive military training, the Houthis have been able to repeatedly attack Saudi territory with the help of Hezbollah and the Quds Force of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. Estimates from 2015 indicate that Saudi Arabia was already spending up to $6 billion per month on the Yemeni conflict at the time. A negotiated cease-fire in Yemen was negotiated at the same time that Saudi Arabia and Iran's talks resumed after a several-month break, suggesting that Iran may have had some influence over the Houthis. The Yemeni cease-fire has been a significant first step toward putting an end to the conflict, and if it holds, it might act as the cornerstone of efforts to build trust between Riyadh and Tehran.

Coalitions

In March of 2015, Saudi Arabia led an intervention in the form of an airstrike along with Egypt, Morocco, Jordan, Sudan, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Qatar, and Bahrain. Eritrea, Djibouti, and Somalia lent their airspace to the coalition in order to aid the execution of the airstrike. Along with these countries, the United States of America, the United Kingdom, and France offered technological assistance with procedures such

Figure 3: Saudi-led airstrikes in civilian areas[5] as aerial refuelling and rescue operations for downed fighter jets. A factor which was unaccounted for, however, was the fact that there were many civilians inhabiting the area which they struck. This resulted in many reported war crimes against these civilians. Marketplaces and even residential areas were attacked by this coalition and therefore gained global criticism.

These attacks by the coalition and other parties have contributed to the famine and starvation endemic in Yemen. The endemic has led to outbreaks of cholera, a deadly diarrheal illness. This has grown into a 'humanitarian catastrophe', and later in 2015 was classed as a level three emergency by the United Nations. A level three emergency is the highest, most urgent level of humanitarian crisis. The Saudi-led coalition was blamed for the rapid progression of this crisis. The then-US president, Barack Obama, who had authorised the attack, was also placed under heavy scrutiny along with the rest of the White House officials.

Factors of instability in Yemen

Lack of leadership

As it was inevitable that the President of Yemen would face persecution if he stayed in Sanaa, Hadi fled abroad as Houthi groups from Saudi Arabia took control of the capital. Due to his inabilities as a leader, many Yemenis resented him for their impoverished state, which inadvertently led to rebellions. After Hadi fled, he allegedly went to north Yemen, although he remained in power. Thus, without a proper head of fulfilling state duties, the Yemeni government and citizens were left without a diplomatic leader and decision-making power.

Extremist groups (Al-Qaeda)

The Al-Qaeda organisation, which was founded in Pakistan in 1989, established itself in Yemen in 2009 through the merger of radical networks in Saudi Arabia and Yemen and has been linked to attacks in Yemen, Saudi Arabia, the United States, and France. Mostly famed for their coordination in the horrific 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Centres in New York, in 2001, and the attacks in Paris in 2015, they are known to the world as an extremist Islamic terrorist organisation. They have frequently been linked to having state

Figure 4: Coalition patrollers in Mocha[6]

5 BBC. "Yemen: Why Is the War There Getting More Violent?" Bbci.co.uk, 2022, ichef.bbci.co.uk/news/976/cpsprodpb/A62D/production/_91914524_1f324077-3512-4d8a-a7d4-516a434895b0.jpg.webp.

6 Keath, Maggie Michael, Trish Wilson and Lee. "The US-Backed Coalition in Yemen Has Repeatedly Claimed It's Fighting al Qaeda — but Turns out It's Actually Aiding Them." Business Insider, 6 Aug. 2018, www.businessinsider.com/us-has-claimed-its-fighting-al-qaida-in-yemen-but-its-aiding-them-2018-8?international=true&r=US&IR=T.

support from Pakistani governments, which would make them one of many Islamic extremist groups that are government-funded by and based in Pakistan. The Saudi-led coalition has set up posts in port cities such as Mocha and Jeddah to patrol the area.

After conflicts between governments and Al-Qaeda, many were incarcerated in prisons all over the Arabian Peninsula. In 2006, however, 23 al-Qaeda militants escaped from a prison in Sanaa, which led to the resurgence of Islamic militancy in Yemen. Nir al-Wuaysh, a former assistant to Osama bin Laden, the leader of al-Qaeda, and Qasim al-Raym were two of the escapees who started to reassemble militant networks and launch attacks against Yemeni targets. Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula was the name given to the new group they announced in January 2009 after incorporating fighters from Yemen and Saudi Arabia into its leadership. That organisation was implicated in a daring assassination attempt on Muhammad ibn Nayif, the head of Saudi Arabia's counterterrorism, in August 2009.

These instances regarding Al-Qaeda increased as the civil war was evoked. Along with other militant groups, the Al-Qaeda used the war as an opportunity to expand their groups and recruited young people to join their 'cause' in exchange for money, shelter, food, and protection from the physical threats of the civil war.

2022 Transferral of power

The ex-president Hadi resigned from Yemeni power in early April of 2022. Instead of the exiled Hadi, the governmental power of Yemen now lies in a new presidential council which will run the government. The presidential council will notably be responsible for negotiating for peace with Iranian-supported Houthis. The Houthis are currently in control of the capital, which gives them the upper hand in such negotiations. The two parties have diametrically opposite goals, aims, and aspirational plans for the country's future. The leader of the new presidential council is Rashad al-Alimi, who is also the chairperson. The 'Presidential Leadership Council' aims to make changes regarding the humanitarian and military crisis which the ex-president could not.

Current context

Proxy war

A major power initiating or playing a significant role in supporting and directing a party to a conflict while taking part in only a small portion of the actual fighting is what is known as a proxy war. This is the exact phenomenon which is currently happening in Yemen, as the tensions between Saudi Arabia, Iran, and countless others have taxed Yemen. With the attacks from the coalitions

Figure 5: Missile strikes in Jeddah, a Yemeni port city[7] and the numerous attempts to spread ideological propaganda through humanitarian aid, the population of Yemen is paying for this political conflict.

When great powers such as the UN P5+1 get involved in conflicts, it often brings them into public speculation. An example of international intervention in the Yemen conflict is the United States, which is one of the main suppliers of jets, bombs, and other military hardware used by Saudi Arabia and its allies, who have killed numerous civilians in Yemen and destroyed vital infrastructure. The United States also assists Saudi Arabia in defending its border against Houthi assaults and intervened in January to assist in defending the United Arab Emirates against a Houthi missile attack.

Humanitarian crisis

The current humanitarian crisis in Yemen is a result of heavy fighting. Although the fighting had reached a stalemate a few years after the fighting commenced, human development has not recovered. With public institutions being collapsed, healthcare, education, and other public services are no longer available to Yemen's citizens. Street violence and instances of rape- by rebels, occupants, and citizens have increased exponentially due to the complete lack of law enforcement. It is estimated that there are over 20 million people in Yemen in need of humanitarian assistance. 19 million are said to be famished, and many more are homeless. Alongside cholera, diphtheria, measles, and dengue fever are other diseases which Yemen's population is battling, many of which have been eradicated by the rest of the world.

Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic has contributed to the extreme situation in Yemen. With the lack of resources and heavy dependence on imports, the pandemic has only amplified Yemen's desperate need for stabilisation. Many countries have been moving away from globalisation and more towards regionalisation and in some cases even self-sufficiency. Because of this and the risk of trading with a war-stricken state, Yemen's imports have been halted and resources have been extremely scarce.

Major Parties Involved

Yemen

Yemen continues to have the greatest humanitarian situation in the world since the beginning of the civil war. More than 23.4 million people need humanitarian aid urgently, and nearly 6 million people have been forced from their homes. The risk of a large-scale famine in the country has never been more acute. Tens of thousands are already living in famine-like conditions, with a staggering five million more just one step away from it. The risk of a large-scale famine, violence, collapsing services and protracted displacement are the biggest challenges in Yemen. Seven years of intense fighting have pushed the country to the brink of economic collapse, severely compounding needs that were already high due to years of poverty and insecurity. 23.4 million people in Yemen are now in need of humanitarian assistance. Women and children are bearing the brunt of the crisis. They constitute 79 per cent of the internally displaced population and are finding themselves in increasingly difficult circumstances.

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7 Clinch, Matt. "Yemen's Houthis Claim Attack on Aramco Facility after Reports of a Huge Fire in Saudi City of Jeddah." CNBC, 25 Mar. 2022, www.cnbc.com/2022/03/25/reports-of-huge-fire-at-aramco-oil-facility-in-saudi-arabia.html.

Iran

In the regional backdrop to the war in Yemen Iran is a pivotal actor. Saudi Arabia has made clear that it sees the conflict in Yemen as the extension of its struggle with the Islamic Republic. Overall, the Iranian debate runs contrary to Saudi Arabia's understanding of the crisis. Saudi Arabia argues that the Houthi takeover in Sanaa represents a 'disruption of normalcy' and a dangerous usurpation of power. From Iran's vantage point, it is the natural consequence of the Yemeni government's repression and external relations. Saudi Arabia justifies its military operation by the deposed President 'Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi's call for the protection of Yemen and its people. Iran contests Mansur Hadi's legitimacy and considers the military intervention arbitrary and illegal. Saudi Arabia sees the Houthis as a proxy of Iran, united by a common Shia identity. Iran perceives the Huthis' Zaydi creed as religiously different but associates its cause with its own political agenda.

Saudi Arabia

Seven years ago, Saudi Arabia launched a military intervention against the Houthis in Yemen. The Saudi-led coalition's intervention was supposed to be a quick victory against an upstart Iranian-backed group and a feather in the cap of the newly named Saudi defence minister. This conflict occurred in response to calls from the president of Yemen Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi for military support after he was ousted by the Houthi movement.

United Kingdom

The UK is one of the largest suppliers of arms to Saudi Arabia, and London immediately expressed strong support for the Saudi-led campaign. Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have shown that UK arms are being used on civilian targets. Furthermore, the UK government has been repeatedly accused of violating domestic, EU, and international law, in particular the Arms Trade Treaty, by maintaining its flow of weapons to the Kingdom. Despite this, it was reported in November 2015 that the UK planned a number of high-level visits to Saudi Arabia over the following three to six months with the aim of securing major arms deals.

United States of America

Since the crisis began eight years ago, the U.S. government has provided nearly $4.5 billion to alleviate the suffering of the people of Yemen. In the fiscal year 2021, the U.S. government provided more than $711 million in humanitarian assistance to Yemen. For instance, at a March 2022 pledging event, the U.S. Government announced nearly $585 million in new humanitarian assistance including more than $561 million in funding from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) for emergency food assistance, as well as prevention and treatment of severe malnutrition and humanitarian protection for vulnerable populations.

Timeline of Events

1990's	Ali Abdullah Saleh transitions from the president of North Yemen—a post he had held since 1978—to the president of the Republic of Yemen.
1994	The unintegrated armies of the north and the south face off, resulting in a brief civil war that resulted in the defeat of the southern army and shored up Yemen's reunification.

2000	Treaty of Jeddah aiming to disarm the Houthis
2004-2010	Tensions run high between Saleh's government and the Houthis—led by Hussein Badreddin al-Houthi—after Saleh's border deal with Saudi Arabia. Al-Houthi eventually leads a rebellion against the Yemeni government in 2004.
2011-2012	Arab Spring eaches Yemen
2014-2015	The Houthis take control of the Yemeni government, a move swiftly denounced by the United Nations.
March 2015	After repeated pleas from Hadi, a Saudi-led coalition of Arab states—including the United Arab Emirates, Egypt, Morocco, Jordan, Bahrain, Sudan, and Kuwait—initiates Operation Decisive Storm in support of the ousted president. The coalition launches air strikes against Houthi targets, deploys small ground forces, and imposes a naval blockade. The United States announces its intention to aid the coalition's efforts.
February 2021	President Joe Biden announces changes to US policy toward Yemen, including revoking the Houthi FTO designation and declaring an end to US support for the Saudi-led coalition's offensive operations in the conflict
April 2022	The UN brokered a two-month truce between warring parties that is, to begin with, the holy month of Ramadan. The agreement is a notable step toward peace, as the last nationwide coordinated cessation of hostilities was during peace talks in 2016.

Previous Attempts to Solve the Issue

The international community has mediated in the Yemen war since its outbreak. Although the efforts have yielded some results, none have resulted in a lasting de-escalation of violence or real progress toward political solutions.

The United Nations has been supporting Yemen for 60 years and is working on development, humanitarian and political issues. As a matter of fact, the United Nations-led talks resulted in a ceasefire agreement for Hudaydah port in December 2018, which gave new impetus to end the crisis in Yemen and created hope for alleviating the humanitarian crisis. Moreover, the

United Nations collaborated with 254 humanitarian partners to agree on priorities and a coherent strategy to meet the needs of 13 million people in 2018.

UN Involvement, Relevant Resolutions, Treaties and Events

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S/RES/2624

This resolution renewed the Yemen sanctions regime for one year and added the Houthis as an entity to the Yemen sanctions list. More specifically, it strongly condemns the cross-border attacks by the Houthi terrorist group, including attacks on Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates striking civilians and civilian infrastructure, and demands the immediate cessation of such attacks. Furthermore, it emphasises the importance of facilitating humanitarian assistance and facilitating commercial imports, noting that the measures imposed by previous resolutions are not intended to have adverse humanitarian consequences for the civilian population of Yemen, nor civilian access to humanitarian assistance, commercial imports or remittances. As a final point, it explicitly mentions that: "*The Houthis have engaged in attacks striking civilians and civilian infrastructure in Yemen, implemented a policy of sexual violence and repression against politically active and professional women, engaged in the recruitment and use of children, incited violence against groups including on the basis of religion and nationality, and indiscriminately used landmines and improvised explosive devices on the West Coast of Yemen.*"

The Stockholm Agreement

In December 2018, Western and international policymakers demonstrated something that Yemenis had long suspected: when motivated by developments on the ground or at home, they can produce diplomatic results, as the United States did by pressuring Saudi Arabia and by extension the internationally recognised government of Yemen into accepting the UN-brokered Stockholm Agreement. The deal, which averted a battle for the Red Sea port of Hodeida, is the signature diplomatic success story to date in the ongoing Yemeni conflict that began in late 2014. For the warring parties and to Yemeni and international observers, however, the agreement also symbolises the limits of external mediation in resolving the conflict: international pressure forced the parties to endorse the deal, but not to implement it.

The Riyadh Agreement

In an effort to make the Hadi government a more credible negotiating partner for the Huthis, Saudi Arabia had sought in the Riyadh Agreement to gather the anti-Houthi groups and local authorities under the government's umbrella. That, too, has stalled. If more Yemeni parties with consequential constituencies, including political parties and civil society groups, were directly involved in talks, it could incentivise the Houthis and the government alike to start making deals with local foes and allies alike to improve their overall negotiating power. The Houthis would have to take more seriously the rival bloc that formed as a result of this process. The UN could also expand formal participation in ceasefire negotiations and political talks. Resolution 2216 allows for expanded formal participation, but political resistance by the Hadi government, the Houthis and Saudi Arabia has made this task virtually impossible for the UN envoy.

Possible Solutions

As far as possible solutions that can combat the phenomenon are concerned, the humanitarian community, led by the UN and encouraged by the Member States, must purchase as many local goods and services from the Yemeni markets as practicable. The UN can also do more to establish the systems and use the appropriate technology to minimise leakages and ensure that assistance is getting to the most vulnerable on the basis of need.

First and foremost, all nations must continue to fund humanitarian assistance in Yemen and advocate for other governments to do the same. The cost of relief operations in Yemen is extraordinarily high, 80% of the population is in need of humanitarian assistance, combined with the difficulties of importation and onward delivery. But according to the United Nations, around 14 million people are at risk of starvation and lives depend on funding for the humanitarian response. There needs to be a sustained commitment from multiple sources so that aid can reach those most in need. Humanitarian appeals are not a long-term solution but for now, they are a lifeline.

All parties must work together to encourage respect for international humanitarian law, with an emphasis on the principles of proportionality and precaution. We are particularly concerned about the impact of restrictions on imports — especially food items and medicines — and civilian casualties. Parties to the conflict must respect the rules of war and have an obligation to take all precautions to minimise the impact of the conflict on civilians.

Furthermore, Member States individually have a substantial role to play in mitigating the humanitarian crises. All Nations can encourage a market economy that is open to small- and medium-sized businesses—and help create a responsible market system that is not simply extractive, oligarchical, and corrupt.

As a final point, nations must keep an open and active dialogue with all parties and encourage the parties to commit to the agreement reached in Stockholm during the peace talks consultations. The conflict in Yemen is multifaceted and characterised by deep mistrust. Decisions around safe humanitarian access, aid pipelines, and respect for international humanitarian law need to be negotiated with multiple parties. To facilitate this, diplomatic channels need to remain open, and humanitarian financing and humanitarian action need to be neutral and impartial.

Thus, blunting the humanitarian crises in Yemen is security, political, economic, and moral imperative. Aside from ending the war through a negotiated political settlement, the most efficient approach is to improve household purchasing power. To do so requires a greater market supply of basic commodities, lower commodity prices, a stable currency, and improved household income. This economic strategic approach is not impossible to achieve, even in the midst of an ongoing war. These steps could help the Yemeni people re-engage in their economy and ultimately create an environment where political accommodation is more likely to succeed.

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