Security Council

The situation in Yemen

Research Report

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"Out of this world"

Forum: Security Council

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Introduction

The current situation in Yemen is one of many complexities. Yemen, a country bordering Saudi-Arabia, the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea, has suffered many problems, but the situation is currently heightened by the civil war. Due to western influence and the growing problem of extremism the situation escalated to one of the worst possible scenarios. The civil war doesn't only have an effect on Yemen itself, but for the whole world economy. Because the Houthis control the regions close to the Red Sea, merchant vessels are often the target of violence and have to be escorted by war ships or military personnel. The situation progressed even further when the Israël-Palestina conflict started, which raised tensions in the region even more.
To find a proper solution for this conflict is a difficult task. The Houthis don't want anything else except control over the whole region, whilst the Yemeni government and its powerful allies want the complete eradication of the group.
The stalemate that the region currently finds itself in is only worsened by the lack of fertile land. The people of Yemen are starving for a solution, metaphorically and literally.

Definition of Key Terms

Famine

A long term food shortage problem resulting in a major disaster with a great part of a population suffering from starvation

Houthis

The Houthis are a religious terrorist organisation located in Yemen. They wish to expand their borders and spread the world of Allah. Besides that they are in support of palestine and play a major part in the international tensions for that war

Yemeni Government

The Yemeni Government is the current government in place ruling over the majority of the land mass. The government was created after north and south Yemen merged into a functioning state.

Missiles

The projectiles fired from missile installations, mostly targeted from surface to surface. These missiles are the main reason Yemen is involved in the Israel-Palestine conflict.

Gulf of Aden

The Gulf of Aden is the large body of water partially belonging to the Indian Ocean. It is located between the countries of Yemen, Oman, Somalia and Djibouti. The Gulf is a region frequently harassed by Somalian pirates, further worsening the economics situation for Egypt and the rest of the Red Sea

Bab Al-Mandab strait
This is the Strait separating the Gulf of Aden, and with that the Indian Ocean, from the Red Sea. This chokepoint is a critical point in the world economy and is of utmost importance to protect for the world economy

The Red Sea
The Red Sea is the body of water separating the African continent from the Asian continent.
The Sea is the birthplace of many reasons for conflict and causes many discussions among bordering nations. Lastly, it's a critical region for the world economy.

General Overview

Pre modern era
To understand and comprehend a nation's current situation, it's important to look at the past. The past of Yemen, defining the past as the time during and before the cold war. Before the second world war, Yemen had known many leaderships, mostly being occupied by either British or Ottoman forces, but sometimes the Saudi's got involved too and all the international interference messed with the ability of the Yemeni tribes to create a self-sustaining government. After the second world war, the country had suffered a lot of complicated wars, most notably the war between north and south Yemen. It was one of the many conflicts that the Cold War created and it acted just like it, in this the north being supported by Britain and the south by most importantly Egypt. Eventually the war ended up unifying the country, but not in the way you would imagine. Both governments eventually merged together, with many difficulties along the way. This may or may not have caused some of the troubles of the current Yemenis. Yemen's history can be summed up as a long and hard fought battle to independence and eventually obtaining it in the worst way imaginable.

Houthis
The most known problem coming out of Yeen are the Houthi attacks. The Houthis are an Iranian sponsored military organisation occupying the South-Western Coastal regions of the country. The Houthis are a religious group currently wishing to control Yemen once again, but having greater ambitions than only occupying Yemen. The Houthis have been involved in many conflicts across Yemen, one of them being the civil war currently going on. Yet more notably is their involvement with the Israel-Palestine conflict. After the invasion, the Houthis have launched multiple missile strikes against the Israeli government and civilians and more impactful started raiding ships sailing through the gulf of Aden and the Bar Al-Mandab strait.
The impact on both Yemens security and that of the world market is enormous. Many merchant vessels, also because of Somalian involvement, choose to go all the way around the African Continent and skip the Suez Canal, Mediterranean Sea and the Gibraltar strait. For Egypt this has a massive economic impact as their revenue on the Suez Canal gets decreased and for the world economy this impact is even more enormous, due to the increased travel time and cost for the transport of goods to the European and North American market.
The impact on Yemen's and the Yemeni people's security is maybe even more relevant then the economic impact. As the Houthis increase their international presence, their need for military forces increases. To increase the number of active military personnel the Houthis have decided to recruit more people from the local population, mostly playing into their deep lying hatred for Israel and its allies. As a result of their recruitment process, a notable amount of children get involved in their military.
All this summed up seems like a lot, but the impact that the Houthis and the Yemeni civil war has had on all the civilians doesn't lie in threats from other nations, but famine.

Religion
Another major stake in the conflict is the difference in religion. When the Islamic prophet Muhammed died a major divide in the religion was created. According to the Sunni's, the largest subgroup of the

islam with over 80% of the religion following this branch, there was no heir to the prophet Muhammed and that Abu Bakr was the rightfully chosen caliph. This is also the branch the Yemeni government follows, in contrast to the Houthis. The Houthis together with other terrorist organisations such as Hezbollah, are Shiaistic. Shia's believe that Ali ibn Abi Talib, Muhammeds cousin, should be the religious leader of the Islam. This has sparked many controversies and wars, mostly fueled by the biggest Shia country in the world Iran. Iran is supplying many terrorist organisations with weapons and other supplies to aid in their war for an independent Shia state. This major religious divide causes many of the issues in the Middle East between other Islamic states.

Famine

Yemen has suffered one of the worst famines known to mankind, starting as soon as 2015. At this point the Yemeni civil war had caused too much chaos according to Saudi Arabia and they decided to intervene. In the next couple of years, the Saudi Government decided to effectively close Yemeni ports and greatly affected the potential influx of aid and food sources. Even with most ports partially open, (non profit) organisations still struggle to deliver aid directly to the population. This is both because of the Saudi blockade but also due to the tribes and terrorist organisations in Yemen fighting with each other and the government to gain control of these supplies.
Some estimates say that around 80% of Yemen's population are suffering from food shortages and the situation doesn't seem to have an end soon.

Major Parties Involved

Houthis

The Houthis are the most active, powerful and known terrorist organisation in Yemen. They are strongly backed by the Iranian government, mostly consisting of supplies and weaponry, even stretching to full on missiles. The Houthis control a decent amount of the country and have set the goal of gaining control over the entity region.

Yemen

The Yemeni government has suffered many difficulties during its lifetime and it's faced with one of the most difficult situations it has faced till now, traversing the ever growing political landscape of the Middle East.

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia has a lot of influence in the region and uses it to the highest possible effect. Saudi Arabia is strongly backing the recognised Yemeni government. Due to the tensions with the Houthis and their former grip on the country, the Saudi's had decided to place a blockade on the entire country and caused the start of the current feminine. Saudi Arabia is a major power to consider when thinking about peace in the region.

United States of America and its allies

The United States and its allies are most of the time the main provider of humanitarian aid. The United States itself also has a major military force in the region to ensure peace.

Timeline of Events

1918	The end of World War 2 and the creation of the first Yemeni independent state, in this case in the North of the current country
1948	The assassination of the leader at the time Yaḥyā, thus creating a time of uncertainty for the region.

September 1962	Imam Ahmad, son of Yaḥyā, died and after his son took control, a uprising took place resulting in the war between North and South Yemen
1990-91	The first Gulf war leading to a indirect collapse of the Yemeni government
January 2011	The start of the Arab Spring in Yemen
July 2014	The start of the Yemeni civil war
2015-November 2017	The Saudi Arabian blockade of Yemen denying them any form of relieving supplies
March 2021	After Saudi Arabia allegedly stopped their blockade, UN ships reported being delayed by Saudi Arabian ships
October 7 2023	Hamas launch their surprise attack on Israel, resulting in the Houthi involvement in the region and thus putting the Yemen population at risk

Possible Solutions

Providing aid

A major reason for the famine in Yemen is the fact that a lot of humanitarian aid has conditions that can't be met by the government. Another problem with humanitarian aid is that the humanitarian aid doesn't reach directly to the population. There are multiple possible solutions to this problem. One of those solutions is to provide the parties organising the programs for aid with military force, mainly to attempt to reach the population directly. It's obvious what the troubles for this solution may be, mostly consisting of possible attacks on convoys or misuse of force, but it's a solution that needs to be discussed.
Secondly it's important to have less strict conditions for humanitarian aid, with the goal of seeking the ability to provide aid to the entire population. This solution is a lot easier to use and seems almost necessary to implement.

Negotiations

Due to the many powers involved in the conflict, it seems inevitable that some form of negotiations have to take place. Different parties have other wishes for the outcome of the conflict and it will be difficult to find a proper middle ground. Most importantly it's key to look at Yemen's neighbour Saudi Arabia for not only willingness to pull out of the conflict, but also a solution for the problems like famine and refugees.
Another major topic of negotiations should be the after war situation in Yemen. If by miracle the conflict could be resolved, what would the country look like in the future? What international influence would the international community allow in the region? These are both questions necessary to discuss at those potential negotiations.
Lastly

Military intervention

If none of the above listed solutions or any other thought of solutions would provide a proper solution to the situation at hand, it's necessary to make a last effort to create peace in the region. Many nations have considered a form of military intervention in the region, and it's important to look at how far such an intervention could go.
First of all there should be a larger military presence in the Gulf of Aden, Bandar-El Mandeb strait

and Red Sea to protect merchant and civilian vessels passing through these waterways, regardless of a potential military intervention. Secondly, in the case of the conflict lasting too long, a serious military intervention, like the one in Iraq, should be considered as a last resort if all else fails. Lastly, an entire occupation of the nation would only turn out worse and has to be prevented at all costs.

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