

HISAR SCHOOL

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**“Combating Polarization in Times of Global Crisis”**

## Humanitarian Committee

*Developing measures to increase humanitarian aid in Yemen amidst the civil war*

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RESEARCH  
REPORT



**Forum:** Humanitarian Committee (GA)

**Issue:** Developing measures to increase humanitarian aid in Yemen amidst the civil war

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## Introduction

Yemen is the poorest country in the Middle East, it is at the southern end of the Arabian Peninsula. The civil unrest occurring since 2011 is rooted in a political crisis. The civil war caused a famine affecting 17 million people because of an inability to import food. As of 2016, the United Nations reported that Yemen was the country with the most need for humanitarian aid, with 21.2 million people depending on or in need of it. In 2011, the Yemeni authoritarian president, Saleh, resigned his position to his deputy, Hadi in hopes of bringing stability to the country. Since the beginning of Hadi's presidency, there have been various issues for which he has struggled to deal with, such but not limited to jihadi attacks, a separatist movement in the south, the Houthi movement, continued loyalty of security personnel to Saleh, corruption, attacks, and food insecurity. The segregation within Yemen is a prominent cause of this crisis.



## Definition of Key Terms

### Houthi Movement

Officially called Ansar Allah (Helpers of God), the Houthi movement is an Islamic movement. A religious, political, and violent movement that arose in the late 1990s in Sad'aa. Their goals include stability for Yemen and increasing autonomy for the regions of the country most Houthis reside in.

### Proxy War

A proxy war is a war between two or more major powers, none of which is directly involved. Participate and only participate by means such as economical, military, or resourceful assistance. (example; the Cold War)

### Arab Spring

The Arab Spring was a series of revolts in the Middle East, especially in Muslim countries. Countries such as Tunisia, Libya, and Egypt, where the uprisings for democracy started in the Spring of 2011.

## **Ottoman Empire**

A state that, between the 14th and early 20th centuries, governed most of Southeastern Europe, Western Asia, and Northern Africa.

## **General Overview**

Since the 19th century, the territory of Yemen has been divided between the Ottoman and British empires. The Ottoman Empire controlled the north of Yemen and Sana'a city. The south of Yemen and the port of Aden were occupied by the British empire. Ongoing, many different religions, political divisions, and cultures have been integrated into the republic of Yemen. The port of Aden became the place for military aid exchange. Even after the British withdrew control in 1967 such differences persisted. The nation became unified in the '90s.

The root of the crisis in Yemen is rooted in a failure of political transition between authoritarian president Saleh and his deputy Hadi in 2011. Hadi struggled with many problems, such as the jihadist attacks, lack of support from security personnel, economic instability, and food shortages.

Since Salah's presidency, the Houthis (Yemen's Zaidi Muslim minority) have been fighting a series of rebellions. During the Arab Spring, the Houthis made use of the instability caused by Hadi's presidency and dominated Saa'da. In early 2015, the Houthis took over Sana'a with support from Yemeni locals and Sunnis. Hadi was forced to flee in March 2015 when the Houthis and Yemeni security forces attempted to take over the entire state several times. Saudi Arabia and other Arab states formed a coalition in order to restore Hadi's authority and create an air campaign against the rebels. This was supported by the United States of America, France, The United Kingdom, and other countries.

In 2018 The Southern Transitional Council (STC) (led by former Governor of Aden) demanded the removal of the prime minister, the reasoning being corruption and mismanagement by the Hadi government. Supported by the UAE, the STC took control of Aden using the troops provided by the UAE.

Saudi Arabia and the USA pressured Yemen in 2010 to declare war on Al-Qaeda because of the Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula's attempt to seize territory after the chaos followed by the Houthi and Hadi conflict.

## **Major Parties Involved and Their Views**

### **UN Human Rights Council (UNHCR)**

The Human Rights Council has been actively involved in resolving the crisis. During the September 2018 session, they adopted 8 new resolutions.

## Human Rights Watch (HRW)

The HRW is a key provider in reporting the parties involved in this crisis. The HRW has documented 90 coalition strikes led by Saudi Arabia.

## European Union (EU)

In April 2020, the EU's foreign ministers requested the removal of restrictions preventing humanitarian aid from reaching Yemen. In September called on member states to halt weapon sales to Saudi Arabia.

## Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia and the Arab states involved in the coalition began an air campaign in order to restore Mr. Hadi's government. This is supported by the US, UK, and France. This Coalition is formed by Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Morocco, Jordan, Egypt, UAE, Kuwait, and Bahrain.

## Timeline of Events

<b>Date of Event</b>	<i>Description of Event</i>
<b>1967</b>	<i>Britain withdraws from Yemen</i>
<b>1991</b>	<i>Yemen unified</i>
<b>2010</b>	<i>Yemen declares war on AQAP</i>
<b>2011</b>	<i>Arab Spring (start)</i>
<b>2011</b>	<i>Saleh resigns position to deputy Hadi</i>
<b>2014</b>	<i>Houthis use aid from Yemeni Sunni civilians to take Sal'aa</i>
<b>2015</b>	<i>Houthis force Hadi to flee in an attempt to take over the country</i>

<b>2015</b>	<i>Coalition of 8 Arab states (air campaign)</i>
<b>2018</b>	<i>STC take control of Aden (demand removal of the prime minister)</i>
<b>2018</b>	<i>Saudi forces attack Hudaydah by cutting supplies for two-thirds of the country</i>

## **Treaties and Events**

*Human Rights, technical assistance and capacity building in Yemen, 3 October 2017*

*Situation of human rights in Yemen, including violations and abuses since September 2014, 17 August 2018*

*Human rights situation in Yemen, 5 October 2018,*

*Security Council resolution 2402, 26 February 2018*

*Letter from the Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council, 17 September 2018*

## **Evaluation of Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue**

Many NGOs have tried to send humanitarian aid, but many supplies have been unable to meet those in need since the attack on Hudaydah, driving millions to hunger. Many countries have donated millions of dollars to the humanitarian crisis. Over \$2 billion was raised in Geneva in April 2018.

The UN Security Council decided in December 2018 to send a team to Hudaydah to oversee a truce, the outcome of Britain's first UN resolution on Yemen in 3 years. The US wanted the agreement to condemn Iran for breaching Yemen's weapons embargo, but Russia objected, claiming it had declined to send any assistance. The ceasefire will allow aid to reach Yemen again, potentially minimizing cholera and starvation.

## **Possible Solutions**

Not only Hudaydah but also the port of Salef, some 60km north, should remain accessible and conflict-free in order to allow access to food, water, and medical supplies. The prevention of a humanitarian crisis is primarily in the hands of the Houthi militia that governs the port and surrounding

areas. To ensure a constant flow of services, a potential solution would be to return the port to a third-party monitor.

Another crucial problem is that it is unlikely that Saudi Arabia and its coalition would withdraw from the dispute if they think Iran is involved. It will be for an UN-sanctioned comprehensive inquiry into the suspected supplies from Iran to alleviate tensions in the Middle East, to ensure that the sanctions deals are not violated, and to avoid Saudi Arabia's fear of an ideological war over Iran.

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