

External Factors In Yemen Crisis: A Critical Overview

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Abstract

The Yemen crisis is an ongoing conflict in Yemen that began in 2015 when Houthi seized control of the capital city of Sana'a and ousted the internationally recognized government. This conflict escalated into a full-scale civil war, with a coalition of Arab countries led by Saudi Arabia intervening in support of the government and against the Houthis. The crisis has led to a humanitarian disaster, with millions of people facing starvation and disease. External factors have played a significant role in the Yemen crisis. Iran has been accused of supporting the Houthi rebels, including weapons and training. Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states have intervened in the conflict in support of the government, with the United States and other Western countries providing logistical and intelligence support to the coalition. The crisis has also had regional and international implications, with the conflict being seen as a proxy war between Saudi Arabia and Iran and raising concerns about the stability of the Gulf region. The primary purpose of this study is to explain the overview of the role of external factors involved in the Yemen crisis. Secondary data sources are used to describe and analyze the research, and the analysis are made under the qualitative content analysis method.

KeyWords: Yemen Crisis, Middle East, Gulf Politics, Middle Security, Strategic competition, Saudi-Iran rivalry

Introduction

Yemen is a country in Western Asia (the Middle East) that shares borders with Saudi Arabia, Oman, the Red Sea, and the Bab el Mandeb Strait. It is 527,970 square kilometers in size and shares maritime borders with Djibouti, Eritrea, and Somalia. The capital and largest city of Yemen is Sanaa. In 1990, South and North Yemen merged to form what is now known as the Republic of Yemen. Until the end of World War One, northern Yemen was a part of the Ottoman Empire. Northern Yemen achieved independence after World War I, while southern Yemen

achieved independence in 1967 following the British withdrawal. Before its unification in 1990, northern Yemen was called the Arab Republic of Yemen and had membership in the United Nations. A theocratic government was in place, known as an Imamate, led by the Zaidi people.

On the other hand, communist Yemen was based in southern Yemen, which was officially called the People's Republic of Yemen. The 1960s saw the rise of the anti-Imamate movement in North Yemen, which used the slogan "free Yemenis" to topple the Imamate ruled by Zaidi tribes. That was the beginning of the current civil war in Yemen. Gamal Abdul

Naseer of Egypt supported the movement (Laron, 2014; Witty, 2001). The movement popularized the idea of "real Yemenis," or Yemen's original inhabitants (Qahtani). The Zaidi tribes, on the other hand, migrated to Yemen from southern Arab countries after the spread of Islam.

Northern Yemen is now officially known as the Yemen Arab Republic (YAR) thanks to the removal of the Imamate following years of conflict (Tür, 2020). However, the informal distribution of power among the various groups and tribes in Yemen ensured the continued dominance of the highland elites in the country's politics. In 1978, Ali Abdullah Saleh took office as President of YAR, and the following year, a civil war broke out between the two Yemeni states. Representatives from the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen and the Yemen Arab Republic signed a unification treaty in April 1990 (S. Day, 2010). The Republic of Yemen appeared on the global map after its southern and northern halves were united.

Due to widespread death and destruction, the Yemeni Crisis ranks among the worst in modern history. Although the Crisis has many causes, they are intertwined with Yemen's history before it was united. After the Houthis seized control of Saana, Yemen's capital, in 2014, President Mansoor Hadi fled to Aden, the country's largest city, and then to Riyadh. As Mansoor Hadi put it, the Houthis are "rebels," He has asked the KSA and the other GCC states to crush them (Hokayem & Roberts, 2016). Operation Decisive Storm was the name given to the invasion of Yemen by the United Kingdom and her allies meant to reinstate the government of Mansoor Hadi.

Yemen in the Contemporary Era

The Crisis in Yemen continues to have devastating effects despite the intervention of Saudi-led coalition forces and despite resolutions passed by the United Nations Security Council. The death of Abdullah Saleh and the subsequent

dissolution of the Saleh-Houthi alliance has not brought an end to the Crisis but has only made matters worse. Millions of lives were lost, infrastructure was destroyed, and a humanitarian crisis was triggered due to the Crisis. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and its allies have been conducting military operations against the Houthis since 2015. The Saudi government and the United States both suspect that the Houthis receive support from Tehran (Al-Tamimi & Venkatesha, 2020). The conflict's center of gravity has constantly been shifting since the first day of the Crisis. Since the year's final month, Houthi and Hadi's forces have been battling it out in Marib, which is strategically significant due to the hydrocarbons found there. Marib is home to several refineries, power plants, and oil and gas fields. The last major city in Yemen under the control of Mansoor Hadi's internationally recognized government is Marib. In the first month of 2022, the Houthis took control of six neighborhoods in Marib. Despite a two-month ceasefire in the spring of 2022, Houthi fighters are still attacking government-controlled areas, according to an Aljazeera report (al-Sakani, 2022). One of the most significant new developments in the Yemen crisis is the decision by the Biden administration to withdraw its support from the war there. Several policies regarding Yemen were established in February 2021 by the Biden administration per that decision. They delisted the Houthis from the list of terrorist organizations and decided to end their support for offensive military operations (Ali, 2021).

On March 22, 2021, Saudi Arabia launched a peace initiative to end the war and find a political solution to the Crisis in Yemen (Doucet, 2021). According to U.N. Security Council resolution 2216, KSA wants to negotiate with Houthis, but Houthis have refused to accept it and ramped up their attacks in Marib. The Houthis demanded airports and ports under their control be opened to the public, but the Saudi and

Hadi governments refused to do so. Reports from the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED) indicate the diplomatic efforts successfully calmed the conflict. The noted 3900 political violence and protest cases were reported between January and June 2022 than in the same period in 2021. The noted 5020 fatalities are the lowest six-monthly total since 2015 when the number of fatalities was also at 5020 ("Yemen Mid Year Update: Diplomatic Efforts Succeed in Subduing the Conflict," 2022).

Another major event in Yemeni politics occurred on April 7, 2022, when President Mansoor Hadi of the internationally recognized government of Yemen handed over executive power to the Presidential Council or Presidential Leadership Council. After the change in government, Saudi Arabia announced a \$3 billion aid package (Ghobari & Tolba, 2022). Two billion dollars will come from the Saudi government, with the United Arab Emirates (UAE), also a coalition member, contributing the remaining billion dollars. Hadi's adviser Rashid Al-Alimi heads up the eight-person Presidential Council. Control of the military and the ability to appoint governors and other top officials come with the position of chairman of the Presidential Leadership Council (Ardemagni, 2022). Many factors include the Yemen conflict involving multiple factions with competing interests. Therefore, no obvious path to peace, the Houthis' rising military power, foreign involvement, and the failure of U.N. peace efforts have rendered conflict resolution strategies ineffective. Yemen now needs a peaceful solution through Yemeni-Yemeni talks rather than Saudi-Iranian or Saudi-UAE talks; otherwise, all efforts will be futile. The newly formed Presidential Council is nothing more than "old wine in a new bottle" because its members are drawn from specific regions rather than the entirety of Yemen and were previously part of Hadi's government.

External Factors

Several external factors have triggered and sustained the current Crisis in Yemen. The following are a few of the most important outside influences:

USA in Yemen crisis

The U.S. suffered a severe setback when President Obama's "Yemen model," which relied on the support of Washington, was abandoned after the overthrow of the government of Yemen and the ouster of President Abdrabbu Mansoor Hadi. Following the Arab Spring-inspired uprising in 2011, Obama introduced a model similar to Yemen's. The internationally recognized Yemeni government was established after Abdullah Saleh was deposed and replaced by Mansoor Hadi under the Yemen model (S. W. Day & Brehony, 2020). It was embarrassing for the Obama administration when Houthi rebels removed Mansoor Hadi from office because of the failure of the political transition and the Yemen model.

The Obama administration announced the establishment of a "Joint Planning Cell" in Saudi Arabia to provide U.S. military and intelligence support to the Saudi-led operation in Yemen after Riyadh initiated military action (S. W. Day & Brehony, 2020). Saudi Arabia and its coalition group intervened in the Yemen crisis to reinstate former president Mansoor Hadi's government. The Obama administration backed "Operation Decisive Storm." Despite the deaths of many innocent people, including children, the United States kept selling weapons to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. The Obama administration signed a \$1.29 billion arms deal with Saudi Arabia at the outbreak of hostilities (Oakford & Salisbury, 2016). When Saudi forces attacked a funeral home in October 2016, killing more than 140 people and injuring over 500 others, the Obama administration's involvement in the war came under fire. That's why Obama's government won't let Riyadh buy \$ 350 million worth of ammunition (Cooper, 2017).

Despite President Obama's protests in the face of criticism, the move came too late to stop the Saudi aggression. Byman (2018) claims that the Obama administration was on the fence about the issue.

After taking office, President Donald Trump made the Middle East a top priority, making a trip to Saudi Arabia. Trump agreed during his first visit to Saudi Arabia to lift an Obama administration ban on arms sales to the kingdom. Trump has been very vocal about his support for the Saudi-led coalition and his criticism of Iran's support for the Houthis in Yemen. By 53 to 47, the U.S. Senate authorized the sale of precision-guided munitions to KSA in June 2017 (Cooper, 2017). Also, the President has officially recognized the Houthis as a designated foreign terrorist organization (FTO). As the first president to ever use the veto three times in support of any other country, Trump used it three times to keep arms sales going to Saudi Arabia. Afterward, in January 2020, when Joe Biden's administration took office, they renounced any further arms sales to Saudi Arabia. The Yemen conflict was peacefully resolved thanks to pressure from the Biden administration on Saudi Arabia and her coalition partners. Vice President Biden also voiced his dismay over Yemen's civilian casualties caused by Saudi-led airstrikes. He claimed that the Crisis in Yemen was getting worse because Saudi airstrikes were killing children. Joe Biden called the Saudi prince a "pariah" and said the country needed to answer for its actions in Yemen and promised to end all forms of subsidies and weapon sales to Saudi Arabia during the fifth 2020 presidential election debate hosted by MSNBC and the Washington Post on November 20, 2019.

Biden initially opposed defending Saudi Arabia's sovereignty and territorial integrity, but once in office, he realized there was a discrepancy between campaign rhetoric and reality. The appointment of career diplomat Timothy Lenderking as U.S. special envoy to Yemen by

Vice President Joe Biden marked the first step in U.S. diplomatic efforts to resolve the Yemen crisis. More interestingly, Biden's administration took a wise decision regarding the Yemen crisis: Biden cut off all support for the Saudi Arabian offensive operation in Yemen, favored diplomacy by appointing a U.S. special envoy for Yemen, and delisted the Houthis as a foreign terrorist organization.

Johnsen (2022) claims that the Biden administration made two poor choices regarding Yemen: (1) the United States overestimated its importance to the Crisis, and (2) it underestimated the Houthis' narratives. U.S. think tanks viewed the Yemen conflict from their country's perspective, but Washington was biased towards Riyadh, and Joe Biden was V.P. when the conflict began. Civil war and regional proxies play a role in Yemen's current Crisis (Johnsen, 2022). Despite diplomatic efforts, the Houthis have accelerated their offensive in Marib, Yemen, because of the region's oil and gas field. The Houthis viewed the Biden administration's pressure put on Bin Salman as a chance to get what they wanted rather than as a positive development to resolve the Crisis (Sheline & Riedel, 2021). It was reported in 2021 by the U.S. special envoy to Yemen to Congress that the Houthis did not want to be a part of the Yemeni government but instead wanted to form a separate state for Houthis with the hydrocarbon-rich governorates of Marib, Shabwa, and Hadramawt. Since the United Arab Emirates (UAE) is the most important ally of Saudi Arabia (KSA) in the Yemen crisis, the United States (U.S.) provided UAE with full assistance when the Houthis launched several ballistic missiles in late 2021. U.S. forces deployed a guided destroyer and an F-22 to the United Arab Emirates and fired an interceptor missile from the country. General Frank McKenzie, head of U.S. Central Command, also visited the UAE (Gavlak, 2022). Saudi Arabia in Yemen Crisis

The people of Yemen took to the streets on the crest of the Arab Spring wave to call for political and economic change. After the government of Abdullah Saleh ignored the protesters, Saudi Arabia and the other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries intervened, and Abdullah's deputy Mansoor Hadi, assumed control of the country. At first, the Yemeni government had things under control thanks to the mediation of its neighbors. But later, the conflict escalated when politically marginalized communities like the Houthis and other northern Yemenis felt they weren't getting their fair share from the Hadi government. Yemen's capital city of Sanaa was taken over by the Houthis in September 2014, prompting Mansour Hadi to flee to Riyadh. Then, Riyadh sent coalition forces into the conflict. Yemen's Hadi government was overthrown, and the Saudis and the UAE launched operation decisive Storm (Shabaneh, 2015) to put things right.

Despite the heavy civilian casualties and injuries caused by Saudi-led coalition airstrikes in Yemen, Riyadh has not yet been able to restore the Hadi government or crush the Houthis. Restoration of the Hadi government, suppression of the Houthi insurgency in Yemen, demilitarization of Houthi forces, and protection of other gulf monarchies were the primary goals of the intervention by the Kingdom and UAE. UAE withdrew its forces and handed over responsibility for security to KSA later in 2019, but it kept providing aid to the Southern Transitional Council (STC). According to al-Kheshaiban, however, Saudi Arabia is primarily concerned with three issues: preventing the Houthis and Iran from seizing control of Yemen, maintaining political stability in Yemen, and preventing Yemen from becoming a gateway for Tehran into the Arabian peninsula. In addition, Darwich (2018) concluded that the Saudi intervention in Yemen was a power struggle. Iran and Yemen crisis

Iran plays a minor role in the Yemen crisis than Saudi Arabia and the other GCC states. Before the unification of Yemen, Northern Yemen under Saleh supported Iraq during the Iran-Iraq war, so relations between Iran and Saleh were tense. However, in 2000 Saleh visited Tehran, and in 2003 President Khatami visited Sanaa, improving the situation (Ghasemzadeh & Heidarpour, 2019). However, when the Houthis came to light and a wave of the uprising spread across Yemen, the Saudi-backed Yemeni government in KSA blamed Tehran for aiding the Houthis in the north. The Arab Spring, which challenged the autocratic rule in the Middle East, was widely celebrated in Iran, although the Iranian narrative was consistently opposed to it. The U.S. strategy in the Middle East was deemed a failure, while Iran celebrated it as the dawning of Islam and the triumph of a revolution in the style of Tehran (Zweiri, 2016). The Houthi takeover of Sanaa was a shock to Iran, which had not anticipated the dramatic shifts in power in Yemen. The international media has long accused Tehran of providing arms, military training, and intelligence to the Houthis, who have been at the forefront of Yemen's anti-government movement from the start. Despite Tehran's denials, the Houthis have used Iranian-made weapons against Saudi Arabia and other adversaries.

Several academics have asserted that the Houthis and other anti-government groups in Yemen receive financial and military support from Tehran. Since the Saudis are Iran's main regional rival and the monthly cost of their intervention is about \$5 to \$6 billion, Tehran's primary interest in Yemen is to engage its regional rival in the Crisis there (Feierstein, 2018; Juneau, 2022). Iran invests less than \$1 million per month in Yemen. However, Iran has reasons for wanting to see the pro-Saudi government in Yemen toppled. It also wants to use Yemeni soil to expand its influence across the Arabian Peninsula, gain control of the Gulf of Aden and Bab al Mandeb to keep an eye on Saudi Arabia's

export route, and counter Saudi Arabia's regional influence.

Major conflicting parties in Yemen Crisis

Even though the Yemeni Crisis is complicated by the fact that it involves multiple warring ethnic groups and tribal factions. Unknown at this time is both their exact number and their motivations. There are essentially three camps of significant combatants in the Yemen crisis:

Houthis

Since 2014, Houthis have been one of the most influential groups in the Yemen crisis. Cultural, educational, and theological factors all played a role in the birth of the Houthi movement. Hussein Badreddin al-Houthi founded the group known as Ansar Allah (party of God) in the 1980s. The Zaidi Houthis' dissatisfaction with Saudi interference and Saleh's marginalizing policies led them to rebel (Singh, 2018). Supporters of the Houthi movement demonstrated in a mosque in 2004 under the slogan "death to America," and the government of Yemen at the time, led by Abdullah Saleh, reacted by killing Hussein Badreddin al-Houthi by Yemeni Armed Force (YAF). They went violent after their leader died, eventually becoming the Houthi rebel group. Previous leaders of the Houthi movement include Abdul Malik al Houthi and his nephew. From 2004 until 2010, President Abdullah Saleh did his best to put an end to the movement. That group blamed the United States and Saudi Arabia for their marginalization and the expansion of Saudi influence in the region, even though their primary goal was the revival of Zaidism. During the time of Saleh-US cooperation, the Houthis were the target of YAF attacks justified as counter-terrorism efforts against Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula.

When the Houthi movement in Yemen reached Tehran's sphere of influence, the Iranian capital city established contact with the rebels (Al-Muslimi, 2017). However, Tehran's backing

for the Houthis was less substantial than her proxies in Iraq and Syria. The Saudi Arabian stance on the Iran-Houthi alliance and the 'Decisive Storm' operation bolstered ties between the two countries. The policy that isolated the Houthis internationally pushed the group under more sphere of influence of Iran than neutral, as stated by Baron, Alhariri, and Biswell (2017). The Houthis' ties with Iran are more political than religious. At first, regional and major power involvements sidetracked the peaceful movement that accompanied the Arab Spring. The Houthis are an ethnic group from north Yemen who are marginalized in the country's political system.

Four countries in west Asia, including Yemen, proved to be especially fruitful for the Arab Spring. In the 2011 uprising, the Houthis demanded the right to vote and a more significant say in government. However, they were met with the swift intervention of Saudi Arabia, other Gulf states, and the United States using the Yemen model. Even though they officially recognized Mansoor Hadi's government and had him take Abdullah Saleh's place as President, this was not a permanent solution. The Houthis' demands were ignored as mediators brought Abdullah Saleh's vice president, Abd Rubbah Mansoor Hadi, from Southern Yemen, to take over as President (Al Dosari & George, 2020).

Aside from the Houthis, the regional mediators gave control of the situation to the other parties involved. The political deal was called the "Yemen model," but it was not sustainable. After the Houthis refused to participate in the 2012 referendum on a single candidate, the government called for a National Dialogue Conference (NDC), to which 565 delegates eventually showed up. The delegates' job is to get all the parties to sign off on a draft that will set the course of Yemen's future. However, NDC members failed to formally establish a draft acceptable to all parties (Singh, 2018), leading to the NDC's dissolution in January of that year. Following the NDC's

demise, President Hadi proposed a federal plan to divide Yemen into a federation of six regions (Issaev & Zakharov, 2021) where Sanaa had special status; however, the Houthis rejected this proposal because the Azaal region was landlocked and resource-poor. For the Houthis, the President's plan is a snare designed to sap their resources and diminish their influence. Isolation from the state on both the political and economic fronts led to the rise of the Houthi movement. Within a short time frame, between 2005 and 2010, Houthis fought six wars against the Saleh regime. After the street revolt in Yemen under the shadow of the Arab Spring and Riyadh's quick response, the Houthis were accused of cooperating with Iran by the Saleh regime and KSA. However, in the initial phase, their cooperation was limited to rhetorical speech and criticism of the Saleh government.

In 2014, the Houthis again rose to prominence alongside the coalition that had deposed President Abdullah Saleh. Three leaders of the Houthi movement and the former President of Yemen, Abdullah Saleh, and Saleh's eldest son, were among the five Yemenis sanctioned by the United Nations. Instead of weakening and becoming more domestically influential due to the U.N. sanctions, their cooperation has strengthened. Since the Houthis had no overseas holdings, they were unaffected by U.N. sanctions. However, the U.N. did freeze Saleh's overseas holdings, which only helped the Houthis and Saleh strengthen their alliance and advance in Yemeni politics. On March 15, 2015, Saudi Arabia launched "Operation Decisive Storm," intending to install Mansoor Hadi as President of Yemen. Sanaa, Taiz, Hodeidah, and Aden were the initial targets of the Saudi-led coalition forces' offensive against Houthi and Saleh forces in Yemen.

Iran began providing the Houthis with military, economic, and energy support after they took over the Yemeni capital of Sanaa (Gupta, 2018), while Saudi Arabia received support from

the United Kingdom and the United States. Saudi Arabia claimed she had to intervene to save Yemen from Iranian control (Darwich, 2018). It was reported in January of 2022 that Houthis were using short and medium-range missiles to strike at Saudi Arabia's border regions. The Houthis acquired the necessary equipment and parts for these missiles and other weapons through the underground Iranian arms trade. Multiple times per week, missiles of the Quds and Zulfiqar types were launched at the city (Juneau, 2022). A UN report on the Crisis in Yemen claims that Houthis have killed many shaykh from 40 tribes that were loyal to them. While the mushrifeen (supervisors) led by the Houthis are responsible for mediating disputes and conflicts, these "mushrifeen" regularly flout social norms and regulations. During the Houthi conflict, many members of several tribes were killed. The northern tribes are on the front lines but lack a political identity. It's gotten worse for Yemen's tribes under Houthi rule, and that's because their tribal shaykhs and leader have all been humites.

Pro-Saleh Group

Former Yemeni president Ali Abdullah Saleh was removed from office in 2011 due to widespread protests mediated by the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states led by Saudi Arabia. Saleh's loyal supporters did not warmly embrace the new President, and he did not support the change in power. The 2011 demonstrations demanded political and economic changes that would benefit everyone (Schmitz, 2014). The political unrest in Yemen escalated, prompting the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and other members of the Gulf Cooperation Council to intervene and ultimately leading to the overthrow of President Ali Abdullah Saleh without instituting any reforms or dividing power. They came up with a short-term fix, but supporters of Saleh eventually joined the demonstrations when the political transition was poorly handled. The pro-Saleh faction allied with

them when Houthis took over Sanaa in 2014 (Ali, 2021). During "Operation Decisive Storm," coalition forces led by Saudi Arabia struck both pro-Saleh forces and the Houthis.

The Saleh group consisted primarily of the Yemeni armed forces members, though some government officials and tribal Shaykhs were also included (Yıldırım & Üzümcü, 2021). As a result of Saleh's backing, the Houthis were able to achieve great success in the Yemeni civil war and win the support of the vast majority of Yemenis. After the Saleh faction's alliance with the Houthis collapsed in late 2016, Abdullah Saleh condemned them and labeled them rebels (Nevola & Shiban, 2020). The other accused both of contributing to the violence and death in Yemen. Then, amid a conflict in December 2017, Saleh lost his life.

Pro-Hadi Group

Since the Houthis' takeover of Sanaa, the country's population has been split into three major factions, each of which has done its part to keep the war going. The Pro-Hadi faction is one of the three main warring parties in the Yemeni civil war and is widely regarded as the most powerful. The pro-Hadi faction consists of supporters of the deposed former President Mansoor Hadi, whom the Houthis ousted in 2015. They want to bring back Hadi's government in Yemen, and most of them are from the South. Together, the Saudi-led coalition forces and the GCC states share a common goal: the return of the Hadi government to Yemen (Robinson, 2022). Since the Crisis began, only the pro-Hadi faction has been actively resisting and fighting against the Houthis. Most of these fighters are citizens who joined the fight against the Houthis to bring back Hadi's government. "Popular Resistance" was the original name of the group. However, in 2016 the Yemeni army merged it with the army, bringing al-Islah along for the ride ("Tensions heighten between pro-Hadi groups in Yemen's Taiz," 2018). According to a report in

"Middle East Eye," both the Houthis and the pro-Hadi group are doing the same to humiliate civilians, and neither side wants to end the Crisis in Yemen (Al Dosari & George, 2020). Since the crisis began, the United Nations Security Council has attempted several peace talks. U.N. report from 2021 says Yemeni parties are showing interest in negotiations; however, various think tanks have advocated for approaching the Crisis in Yemen as a multi-party rather than a bi-party conflict. Now the Crisis is considered the worst ongoing Crisis, but instead of finding a solution, the warring parties seem to be in full swing (Robinson, 2022). The regional and global powers are more to blame than the various Yemeni factions for the conflict's persistence.

Major Peace Negotiation

The Yemen conflict causes a devastating humanitarian crisis, and the international community is working hard to end it. Key initiatives taken by significant powers under the banner of the UNO to bring peace to Yemen are as follows.

Stockholm Agreement

On December 13, 2018, parties to the conflict in Yemen signed the Stockholm agreement in Sweden. There was a peaceful resolution to the conflict that broke out in 2015, and it reached in Stockholm, Sweden, between STC and the internationally recognized government (IRG) (Dijkstal, 2019). There had never been an agreement between warring parties before the Stockholm accord. The Hodeidah Agreement, the Taiz understanding, and the prisoner exchange agreement all came together to form the final version of the agreement. Fighting has ceased in Saif and Ras Issa, as well as in the city of Hodeidah and its port. Both sides have agreed to redeploy their forces. As a bonus, they resolved to allow aid and humanitarian coordination through these ports. More than 15,000 prisoners and hostages agreed to be released as part of the

third-party prisoner exchange agreement (Lackner, 2020a). The United Nations Security Council largely drove this agreement to address the world's gravest humanitarian Crisis. The UN-backed peace process has been slow, but the warring parties are ready to de-escalate, according to a report by the Council on Foreign Relations (Robinson, 2022).

Only a few hundred prisoners were swapped with the help of tribal mediators and the Red Cross, so the third and final part of the agreement, the prisoner exchange, was not very effective. A better outcome reached with the Hodeidah agreement. The agreement led to an improvement in Hodeidah's situation and a decrease in the number of conflicts (Lackner, 2020b). The redeployment of forces, especially at three ports, is still pending as the Houthis have refused to completely withdraw their forces. However, the United Nations has deployed observers at five key locations in Hodeidah city (Jalal, 2020).

Riyadh Agreement

The agreement reached in Riyadh marks a significant turning point in the ongoing Crisis in Yemen by attempting to resolve the question of power-sharing between the various warring parties. After United Arab Emirates (UAE) forces withdrew from Yemen on November 5, 2019, the parties involved signed the agreement. Mansour Haddi's (Saudi-backed) government and the UAE-backed Southern Transitional Council (STC) signed a power-sharing agreement that, most importantly, divides authority between the South and the North of Yemen ("The Riyadh Agreement on Yemen: Arrangements and Chances of Success," 2019). The political, economic, and security issues, as well as the reformation of state institutions, are addressed in the agreement's three annexes. Political and economic arrangements are spelled out in Annex 1 of the agreement. There will be a 24-member cabinet, with the north and South each having a half share (Brehony, 2020). The security

arrangements are defined in annex 3, and the military arrangements are stated in Annex 2. Even though STC and the Haddi government agreed to divide the portfolios per the Riyadh agreement, the transition has not yet occurred. There has been no substantial relocation of forces affiliated with STC and the Yemeni government, and the agreement has not succeeded in restoring the military status quo, as stated in the U.N. Security Council report for 2021. There were three main reasons why the agreement didn't work: first, it was only signed between the IRG and the STC, but there are other separatist parties in the South that aren't part of the agreement; second, the UAE announced its withdrawal from the Yemen crisis shortly after the agreement was signed; and third, the governorates that had gained control of oil-related income weren't willing to handover that income to the IRG (Lackner, 2020b).

Joint Declaration

It was the result of talks between the Houthis and the Yemeni government, held under the auspices of the U.N., in an effort to reach an agreement on the division of power and the distribution of resources. Talks are centered on a nationwide ceasefire, economic and humanitarian measures, and the restart of political processes to permanently end the conflict. The special envoy will negotiate with the Houthis to settle their fair share of hydrocarbons and other revenues and secure free access to ports, particularly for humanitarian assistance and aid, as per the joint declaration (Jalal, 2021). However, international mechanisms are needed to monitor the openness of ports and airports, and inspections will take place outside of Houthi-controlled areas. In addition, the parties concurred to create a neutral and open system for dividing up oil and gas earnings.

Conclusion

The humanitarian situation in Yemen is one of the worst in modern times. The political marginalization of northern Yemeni societies and foreign involvement in Yemeni politics are two of the most prominent and vital reasons for the Crisis. Although the history and causes of the Yemeni crisis date back to before South and northern Yemen were united, the current Crisis is marked as the result of the Arab Spring, which has given the Yemeni people renewed hope. They inspired them to call for political and economic reforms. The people of Yemen called for political change and Ali Abdullah Saleh's removal from power in 2011. Saleh's deputy, Mansoor Hadi, was elected President of Yemen with promises of political reforms after Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states stepped in to mediate a peaceful resolution to the conflict. The Mansoor Hadi administration's biggest challenge was the country's dire economic situation and the enduring loyalty of ex-president Saleh among government officials. Jihadist groups emerged in Yemen because of the country's poor economy and nascent political transition, leaving a void in Yemeni society.

In 2014, the Houthis took control of Saada province and eventually seized control of Sanaa, making them the most powerful force opposing the Hadi government (the capital of Yemen). Hadi left Yemen in 2015, fleeing to Saudi Arabia because of the growing danger and persistent resistance from the Houthis. Yemen's Hadi government was overthrown by the Houthis, prompting a Saudi-led coalition to launch an air campaign. Allies like the United States, Britain, and France backed the Saudi-led coalition. It was the growing influence of Iran in the Arab region that most concerned Saudi Arabia, and she was interested in halting the thawing of relations between the Houthis and Iran. Because of foreign intervention, the protest quickly escalated from peaceful to crisis proportions. Due to the tribal diversity in Yemen, the Houthis allied with the Saleh group, and

several factions emerged into the Crisis. Later in 2017, Houthis killed Saleh, giving them more power. After six months of fighting, both sides agreed to a ceasefire after the pro-Saleh group in Yemen joined the coalition and began an air campaign against the Houthis to retake control of Hudaydah, as its port is the lifeline of the Houthis.

As a result of Iran's diplomatic and military support for the Houthis, the Houthis are still engaged in combat with the Saudi-led coalition. Aramco's oil facility in Jizan was one of many strategic targets in the United Arab Emirates and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Marib is an oil-rich province that saw fighting between Houthi and Hadi forces, backed by KSA, in 2021. Fighting in Marib has also contributed to a more significant humanitarian crisis and more significant numbers of internally displaced people. The Saudi-led coalition has been relentlessly targeting the Houthis. The Houthis have been launching ballistic missile attacks on oil installations in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates regularly. Despite accusations from Saudi Arabia and the United States, Tehran denies supporting the Houthis or engaging in arms smuggling. After thousands of civilian deaths from Saudi airstrikes in Yemen, the country is no closer to returning to its pre-crisis state.

War is still raging in Taiz, Sadaa, Aden, Marib, Hudaydah, and Amran, and the Houthis control most Yemeni territory. The Saudi-backed Hadi government is unable to wrest control of the country from the UAE-backed Southern Transitional Council (STC). Even though the Saudi-led coalition has not successfully restored the Hadi government or broke the Houthi-Iranian cooperation, they are continuing air strikes in Yemen. The internationally recognized government is still based in the southern port city of Aden. More than 80% of Yemen's population needs humanitarian aid and protection due to the ongoing Crisis. An already severe food shortage and the United Nations aid program to Yemen

will be exacerbated by the current Crisis in Ukraine.

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