

ISARMUN 2019



Study Guide



Negotiations to solve the Yemeni War and Crisis

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Welcome Letter

We'd like to offer you a warm welcome to this year's IsarMUN Yemen Peace Negotiations committee. Let us introduce ourselves: We are Luca, Kiril, and Michael, from Switzerland, Russia and Germany, respectively.

As the committee's name suggests, we will be dealing with the situation in Yemen. While the current civil war has been going on for 4.5 years, modern Yemen has never truly been without conflict – armed or not. How can one solve such a problem, in a country where a large portion of the population has never really known peace? The task is daunting, no doubt, but it must be done. The wars that have ravaged Yemen over the last four decades are taking a toll unlike any other. No side is near absolute victory – in fact, the war now isn't anymore a mere two-sided conflict – three, four, or even more national parties are fighting each other, many with support from abroad. This internationalization of the war has merely intensified the fighting, and as it slowly grinds on, civilians are paying the highest price. Deaths as a direct result of the fighting, but also due to malnutrition or sickness that could have been prevented if even the most basic infrastructure were available are unfortunately a daily occurrence in Yemen. A solution must be found that will allow Yemenis to live in peace.

At these Peace Negotiations, you have the opportunity to take part in a unique simulation unlike most other MUN committees. You will, for the most part, be representing Yemeni individuals that hold high stakes in the conflict. Despite not being a crisis, this will undoubtedly create a very interesting dynamic. Furthermore, the small size of the committee will allow for a fast-paced experience. In any case, all three of us are very much looking forward to chairing the YPN at IsarMUN 2019 and are excited to get to know all of you during committee sessions and over some good Münchner Lager!

Your chairs,

Luca, Kiril, and Michael

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Introduction to the Committee

As this committee will be simulating a peace negotiation, the goal and the scope of these discussions are rather clear. The goal is to find the best possible outcome for the people of Yemen, which will be represented by the different fractions (which we will go into detail later). From a humanitarian perspective, the best outcome is peace and access to aid for the communities who have been neglected in the last decade during the war. From the Houthi or Pro-Hadi forces' perspectives, these best outcomes might be somewhat different, but nonetheless, some sort of peace still seems in their interest. In order to solve this challenge comprehensively, additional parties and international negotiators have been invited to help aid a productive discussion.

The scope of this discussion is limited to the allocation of territory to certain parties (should a splitting of the country occur again), to potential reparation payments from one party to another and limited to the promise or arrangement of actions after peace is in effect. This could be the arrangement of aid, autonomy, etc. Not inside the scope of this committee are sanctions or directives towards actors outside of the direct conflict as these fall under the Security Council's mandate. This is also not a crisis, and it will not be possible to change anything about the situation as a delegate.

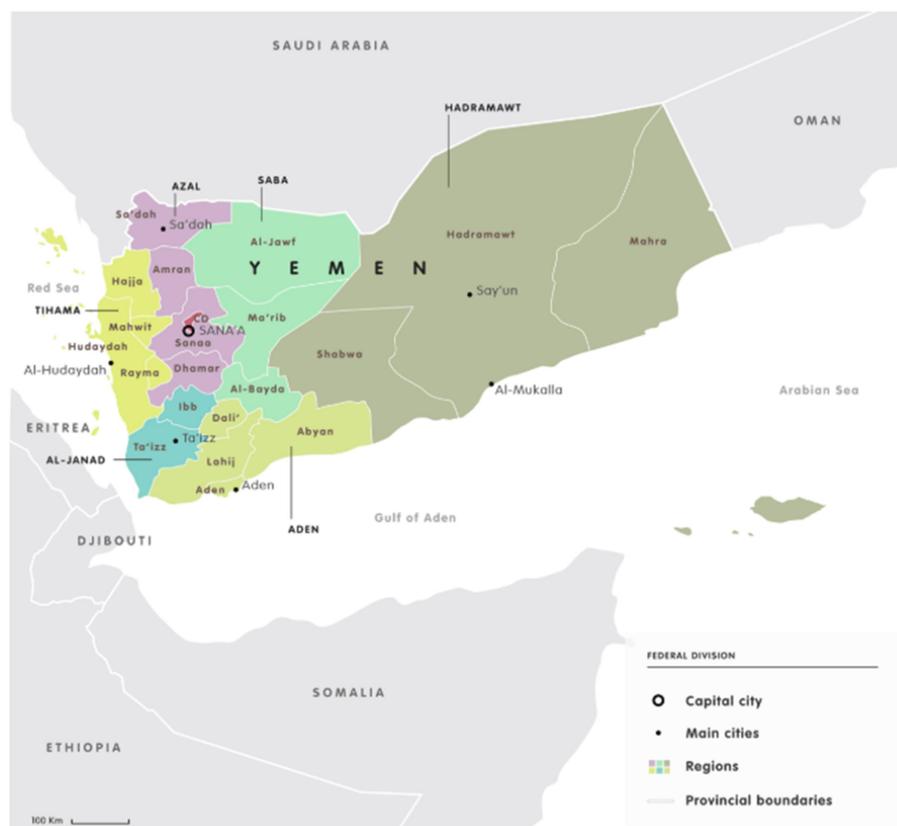
We as chairs felt like the normal Rules of Procedure would not perfectly aid this kind of discussion so we have adapted the ROPs a bit. You can find them in the appendix of IsarMUNs ROP paper which you will receive soon. The changes are rather small and we look forward to a fresh style of MUN discussion.

Finally, we would like to point out that the discussion will be taking place in real time, i.e. in November 2019. Since this guide was written in September, it does not include the most recent events. Thus, we expect you to follow the current media and research the events of the last few months. In the case of any additional uncertainties, please approach us via email.

Background Information

History and Geography

Yemen is located on the southern end of the Arabian Peninsula. It is the second most populous country of the region, with a rich cultural history dating back 3000 years to the high culture of the Sabaean traders. Since then, Yemen was home to various empires and dynasties and always played an important role as a trading center due to its optimal location.¹ The past few hundred years saw an increasing variety of such dynasties ruling over the region. However, none ever truly consolidated power over the people – Yemen has always been notoriously difficult to rule due to the highly complex nature of tribal divisions, which in turn is accentuated by varied geography. This consists of mountains in the northwest, lush coastal regions along the western and southern coastlines, and vast eastern deserts. As a result, tribes developed distinct ways of life, and those who aspired to rule over all Yemenis often could not do so without dealing and negotiating with leaders of the different tribes and families. Such familial ties have always been of high importance in Yemeni society and remain one of the most important determinants of power in the country.² Tribal divisions have been reinforced not only by the region's geography but also religion and interference from abroad, the latter becoming increasingly important today.



Federal division by the European Council on Foreign Relations

¹ <https://www.cs.nmsu.edu/~fmohamed/ancient-ye.html>

² Day, Stephen W. (2012): *Regionalism and Rebellion in Yemen: A Troubled National Union*.

Since the regions and cities, as well as infrastructure and industrial hotspots of Yemen, are essential to the explanation and peace talks, we have provided helpful maps.

The authors of this map also have a series of other maps which are very helpful to understand the conflict, including a map on religious divide and key fronts!

Current situation

It is within this (simplified) context that we can begin to understand the conflict that ravages a nation of 30 million. There is no definite answer to when it started; this often depends on who one asks. Responses vary from March 19th, 2015 to May 4th, 1994 or even beyond, back to when Yemen existed as two states – the Yemen Arab Republic in the north and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen in the south – and was pulled into the Cold War. What is clear, though, is that the nation has been in turmoil for decades and that as a result, a whole generation has grown up knowing only conflict, corruption, and instability, and the toll inflicted upon Yemen's civilian population has only grown worse over the years. Thanks to the tireless work of Yemeni citizens, aided by international humanitarian organizations as well as several states and UN agencies, the consequences have been kept somewhat in check.

But the longer the war rages on, the harder helping gets as even more infrastructure gets reduced to rubble, more areas are mined, and more Yemenis are killed or die of thirst, starvation, and sickness. Despite the best efforts of all those helping people in need, casualties have probably exceeded 100.000 over the past four years.³ According to estimates by Save The Children, over 85.000 children have died in said time period from malnutrition alone.⁴ Estimates vary wildly from source to source, but the fact remains that at least tens of thousands of civilians have died and millions more displaced. In February of this year, UN Secretary-General António Guterres backed up the statement of many NGOs and the UN's OCHA that the conflict in Yemen remains "the world's worst humanitarian crisis".⁵ The situation in Yemen is as far as it possibly could be from good. But it could get even worse. Fighting in and around the port city of Hodeida in September endangered the majority of vital food, water, and aid shipments. It is imperative that a solution is found as soon as possible; even just a ceasefire that is adhered to would alleviate a huge amount of pressure and suffering.

The rest of this guide will focus primarily on today's conflict in Yemen and the events leading up to it. Sections on key players and a more in-depth presentation of the humanitarian crisis will follow. We hope that despite the conflict's gravity and severity, you enjoy preparing for this very interesting and highly relevant topic.

³ <https://www.arabstates.undp.org/content/rbas/en/home/library/crisis-response0/assessing-the-impact-of-war-on-development-in-yemen.html>

⁴ <https://eu.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2018/11/21/yemen-children-hunger/2076683002/>

⁵ <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/speeches/2019-02-26/remarks-pledging-conference-for-yemen>



Topic Explanation

20th-Century Yemen

Yemen has seen much armed conflict over the past six decades. One might consider modern Yemeni history to have begun with the almost simultaneous uprisings in the north and the south. In 1962, war broke out in North Yemen between Zaidi royalists under the Mutawakkilite banner, supported by Saudi Arabia and the United Kingdom, and republicans, supported by Egypt and the Soviet Union. A republican victory led to the founding of the Yemen Arab Republic (YAR) in 1970. In the south, the British Empire fought and lost the “Aden Emergency” against a Yemeni rebellion supported by Egypt, North Yemen, and the Soviet Union. This led to the establishment of South Yemen as the People’s Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY) in 1967.⁶

By 1970, two Yemeni countries stood in the place of what had been a monarchy and a colony just ten years earlier. In the years that followed, several brief conflicts erupted between the YAR and the PDRY. The governments of the two countries united in 1990 under the pretense of shared power. Ali Abdullah Saleh, former president of the YAR, became president of the new, united Yemen, and Ali Salim al-Beidh, former president of the PDRY, became vice-president. However, tribal dynamics and power being concentrated in the hands of North Yemenis was cause for much unhappiness among southerners. Continued ignorance

⁶ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Modern_history_of_Yemen

of southern grievances led to a secession war in May 1994. Northern unionist forces defeated the southern army in just over two months. Saleh then consolidated northern power, and a large number of socialists were exiled, imprisoned or executed. This set the stage for tensions that would eventually bubble over into open conflict in the 21st century.

Fractions in the Conflict and 21st-Century Yemeni Civil War

Introduction of participating fractions

To set the stage, we will briefly introduce the fractions participating in this negotiation. We go into detailed motivation and history of each fraction below but think that a short overview, including the amount of delegates at IsarMUN, will be helpful.

The main three fractions in this conflict are the three Yemeni fractions consisting of four Houthi representatives, four (pro Hadi) government representatives, and two Southern Secessionist Movement representatives. These are the core participants of the discussion and without their full involvement a good solution seems unlikely.

Since this is not a crisis we do not expect any roleplaying or in-depth character building, but would encourage you to understand the history and motivation of your character and act in accordance to their values.

To further aid the discussion and prevent any outside involvement to hamper the peace process, three international negotiating supporters and three involved actors will participate. This will include the UN Special Envoy for Yemen, Oman, and Sweden as well as Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Iran. The latter three may be part of a final contract and are thus equally important participants.

Please refer to the annex in the Rules of Procedure and pay attention to the importance of the Yemeni parties!

The al-Houthi Movement and the Houthi Insurgency

In 2004, Hussein Badreddin al-Houthi was killed for allegedly attempting to subvert the Yemeni government with his Zaidi revival movement by establishing himself as Imam (religious leader) in the northern Sa'ada governorate. The Zaidi movement's rapid emergence and quick growth was fuelled by local fears of Sunni encroachment from the South. Al-Houthi had enormous clan backing and was popular as the head of the Zaidi movement, and his death sparked the emergence of the so-called Houthi Insurgency in the mountainous north. Both of Yemen's largest tribal confederations, Hashid and Bakil, followed Abdul-Malik Badreddin al-Houthi (Hussein's brother) in a rebellion against President Saleh's government in Sana'a. Up until a ceasefire agreement in 2010, the Yemeni military fought hard to keep the Houthis at bay. Saudi Arabia became involved as well, striking at Houthi positions with their air force. However, the Houthis ended up coming out on top, humiliating

Saleh and Saudi Arabia. While fighting was at first mostly limited to Houthi mountain strongholds, it soon spread to the northern areas of Amran and western areas of al-Jawf.⁷

As if just in time for the Houthis, the Arab Spring reached Yemen in 2011. The Houthis gained control of Sa'ada province during the unrest. This was an opportunity for the Houthis



to increase pressure on the Yemeni government, still with the backing of the two large tribal confederations in the northern, mountainous region of the country. The 2011 popular uprising eventually saw the abdication of Saleh as president, who handed power to his second-in-command, Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi, on February 27th, 2012. Hadi attempted to implement a number of political and military reforms in Yemen. However, his proposed plan to divide Yemen into six decentralized regions was

rejected by the highland tribes; they perceived it as a way to curb their power and influence.

In 2014, the ousted Saleh formed an alliance with the Houthis, bringing along a large number of security forces still loyal to him. The Houthi rebellion spread, reaching other provinces over the course of the year. In September, Houthi forces clashed with the army in Sana'a, Yemen's capital. Within a few days, they took over the city on September 14th, forcing Hadi to agree to a power-sharing deal. They pressed their advantage, expanding their control southwards to Ibb and westwards to al-Hodeidah. On January 22nd, 2015, Hadi was forced to resign from the presidency, ceding power to the Houthis. Less than a month later, though, Hadi announced from his hometown Aden that the Houthi takeover was illegitimate and affirmed his own position as rightful president of Yemen. All the while, Houthi soldiers advanced further south, reaching Abyan and Lahij. On February 19th, 2015, Hadi loyalists defeated security forces who refused to recognize Hadi's legitimacy as president at Aden Airport. This event marked the onset of the ongoing "Yemeni Civil War". Hadi named Aden Yemen's capital – this was swiftly rebuked by the Houthis in Sana'a.⁸

Houthi forces pushed further south, eventually reaching Aden. This prompted Hadi to flee the country – he remains abroad with his government today. After a three-month battle, the Houthi assault was repelled with the help of the Saudi-led coalition. In late 2017, the alliance between Saleh and the Houthis started deteriorating. In early December, Saleh called on his

⁷ <https://ctc.usma.edu/houthi-war-machine-guerrilla-war-state-capture/>

⁸ <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/08/yemen-houthis-hadi-protests-201482132719818986.html>

supporters to take back the country (from the Houthis). Two days later, on December 4th, 2017, he was assassinated by Houthi gunmen while attempting to flee the nation's capital.⁹

While the Houthis and their allies have largely been forced out of the southernmost provinces, they remain entrenched in the country's most populated areas and northern highlands, having now consolidated their hold on the latter. Local militias have expelled the Houthis from large sections of Ta'izz, Yemen's third largest city, but have failed to break the fighters' siege. Along the Red Sea



coast, a military offensive formerly spearheaded by the United Arab Emirates grinded to a halt after reaching the key port of Hodeidah. Meanwhile, the coalition has consolidated its hold on most of the province of Marib, though fighting continues in Sirwah. Progress on the Nihm front – key for the breach of Sanaa – has remained static.¹⁰

There have been a number of allegations that Iran, North Korea and Hezbollah have intervened to aid the Houthis. The Saudi and Yemeni governments both accuse Iran of helping the Houthis. Iran, they say, has secretly landed arms on the Red Sea coast. Furthermore, they say that religious (Shiite) circles and groups in Iran are providing aid to the Houthis. However, Iran has repeatedly denied such accusations.

In recent weeks, deep divisions within the counter-Houthi alliance have surfaced and the prospect of a coalition victory appears faint. It is becoming clear that Houthis are positioned to remain a significant power in northern Yemen for the foreseeable future.

To institutionalize their power, the Houthis have established a government under the so-called Supreme Political Council in August 2016, which has since then experienced international de-facto recognition only by Iran. Although Hadi currently is in exile, his cabinet is still recognized by the international community as the legitimate government of the Republic of Yemen, until recently being based in the interim capital in the port city of Aden. Its alliance with the Al-Islah party, considered a branch of the Muslim Brotherhood in

⁹ <https://edition.cnn.com/2017/12/04/middleeast/yemen-former-president-ali-abdullah-saleh-killed-intl/index.html>

¹⁰ <https://yemen.liveuamap.com/>

Yemen, allegedly displeased the government's former allies in the south and the United Arab Emirates, causing a rift within the Saudi-led coalition.¹¹

Foreign Intervention

On March 26th, 2015, Saudi Arabia launched a bombing campaign named Operation Decisive Storm in support of Hadi.¹² This campaign never received a UN-mandate, but was nonetheless supported by a number of Arab allies, as well as the United States, the United Kingdom, and several African nations. On April 22nd, Operation Decisive Storm turned into Operation Restoring Hope, which was meant to be a short involvement to restore Hadi and push Houthi forces back north to Sa'ada. At the time of writing this guide (September 2019), the Saudi-led intervention in Yemen has been going on for over four years and five months. A number of countries have backed out and the UAE, arguably the second-most important player in the coalition, appears to have all but turned its back on its former ally Saudi Arabia.¹³ The UAE, who in the past were arguably the most important power on the ground, decided to pull troops out of Hodeidah and other parts of Yemen as of July 2019. Furthermore, they now support southern separatist forces that are fighting the Saudi-backed government and its army. The Saudi's campaign has effectively grinded to a halt, with Houthi forces still control Sana'a and large parts of North Yemen and fighting remains bitter on the frontlines.¹⁴

Southern Transitional Council

In a falling-out between Hadi and a number of southerners, the Southern Transitional Council (STC) was announced in April 2017 and then formed on May 11th, 2017. It is a formalization of al-Hirak, the Southern Movement, which emerged during Saleh's presidency in 2007. Since its inception, the STC has seized control of parts of Aden, Dhale, Shabwah, and Socotra governorate – but in the meantime also lost a number of strongholds. It is now openly supported by the United Arab Emirates, and has called for Southern secession multiple times.¹⁵



Important Individuals and International Players

As mentioned earlier, Yemen has never been a truly united country. This is reflected when looking at who plays what role in the conflict. It is important to know some key Yemeni personalities that have been and still are involved.

¹¹ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/oct/01/yemen-adens-changing-alliances-erupt-into-four-year-conflicts-newest-front>

¹² <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-32061632>

¹³ <https://www.ft.com/content/48f44b08-caa5-11e9-a1f4-3669401ba76f>

¹⁴ <https://yemen.liveuamap.com/>

¹⁵ <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/yemen-war-who-are-southern-transitional-council>

Ali Abdullah Saleh was killed in 2017 but played an enormously important role during his almost 30 years as president after Yemeni unification in 1990. His strategy to rule such a fragmented country consisted of repression, restricting freedom of speech, and playing actors off against one another to keep them weak.¹⁶ Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi is currently internationally recognized as Yemen's president. He used to be Saleh's right-hand man in the government. After Saleh stepped down in 2011, Hadi continued his predecessor's fight against the Houthis and was eventually forced to flee the country. He currently resides in Saudi Arabia. Besides Hadi, the most important actors on the side of the official government include the vice president, Ali Mohsen Saleh al-Ahmar, the prime minister, Maeen Abdulmalik Saeed, and the chief of staff of the army, Major Gen. Mohamed Ali al-Makdashi.

On the side of the Houthis, Hussein Badreddin al-Houthi was the most important figurehead of the group until his death in 2004. He founded the movement in the northern province of Sa'ada in 1992. After his death, his brothers Abdul-Malik al-Houthi and Yahia Badreddin al-Houthi took over, with Abdul-Malik as the primary leader. He was a vocal critic of the government, accusing them of sidelining the Zaidi community, which makes up about half of the country's Muslim population. Abdul-Malik al-Houthi rarely appears in public and has been targeted many times by Saudi and government attacks and air strikes.¹⁷ After the Houthis took control of Sana'a in 2014, the UN announced a travel ban for al-Houthi. The Houthis set up a parallel government after taking Sana'a, calling into life the Supreme



Revolutionary Committee and eventually the Supreme Political Council. The former was established as an interim government which eventually handed over some of their power to a new body, the SPC. The SRC is headed by Mohammed Ali al-Houthi, while Mahdi al-Mashat leads the SPC.

The Southern Transitional Council (STC), a political faction that grew

out of al-Hirak, the Southern Movement, currently claims to control parts of southern Yemen, as detailed above. It is headed by Aidarus al-Zoubaidi, who was fired as governor of Aden by Hadi in April 2017. His vice-president, Hani Bin Breik, is the Number 2 of the STC. Its founding is based on long-standing grievances South Yemenis have with the central

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<https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/110b9b8888fdfa61f083c2a9dda05407.pdf>

¹⁷ <https://fanack.com/yemen/faces/abdel-malek-al-houthi/>

government in Sana'a, but al-Zoubaidis firing was the tipping point that led to its formal establishment.¹⁸ A further very important character in the story of southern Yemen is Ali Salem al Beidh, the leader of al-Hirak. He was an important figure during the unification process in the 1980s and 1990s and remains influential as a senior member today.¹⁹

Internationally, Saudi Arabia has a vested interest in keeping Yemen united under a government that sides with the Saudis. It is for this reason, as well as the fact that the Houthis destabilize the northern border regions and belong to a Shia denomination of Islam that the Saudis have poured so many resources into the conflict. They lead the coalition against the Houthis and provide the government with important military support, primarily in the form of air strikes and bombardment. The United Arab Emirates was Saudi Arabia's primary ally in the conflict. They are now known to support the STC (which calls for southern secession), and they have already shown commitment by redeploying troops out of the port city of Hodeidah.

The Houthis are supported by Hezbollah, a Shia paramilitary group based in Lebanon.²⁰ Many have accused Iran of supporting the Houthis as well, but Iran has constantly refuted these claims. However, Irani involvement is in fact plausible, especially considering the regional Saudi Arabia vs. Iran power struggle.

Oman, Yemen's neighbor, has been referred to as "the Switzerland of the Middle East." Oman's population consists mostly of Ibadi Muslims, which are neither Shia nor Sunni. Furthermore, under Sultan Qaboos' rule, the country has gained a reputation as a neutral mediator in several conflicts in the Middle East.²¹ Oman actively tries to advance the peace process and has granted refuge to political refugees such as Ali Salem al-Beidh or family members of the late president Ali Abdullah Saleh.²²

Terrorism has unfortunately not ignored Yemen; the opposite is actually true. In 2009, the Yemeni and Saudi Arabian Al-Qaeda branches merged to form Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP).²³ They oppose the Saudi monarchy and operate mostly in Yemen and Saudi Arabia. Al-Qaeda's founder, Osama bin Laden, had family ties in Yemen; as a result, the terrorist organization still enjoys support from a number of tribes in Yemen today. They control parts of the (mostly desert) Hadhramaut governorate, as well as enclaves throughout the south-western region of Yemen.

¹⁸ <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/south-yemen-officials-form-breakaway-council-defy-hadi>

¹⁹ Day, Stephen W. (2012): *Regionalism and Rebellion in Yemen: A Troubled National Union*.

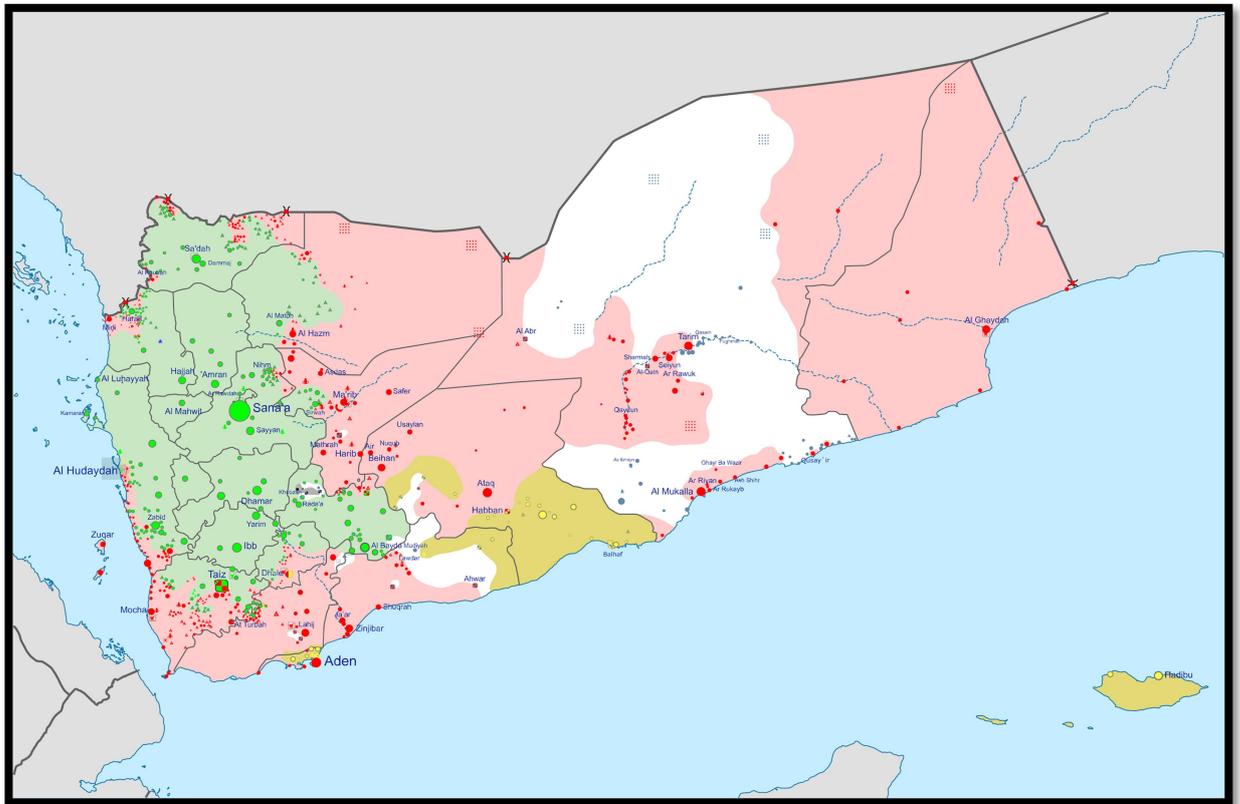
²⁰ <https://lobelog.com/the-houthi-hezbollah-surrogate-nexus/>

²¹ <https://www.straitstimes.com/world/middle-east/oman-the-switzerland-of-the-gulf-feels-the-strain-of-a-troubled-region>

²² <https://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/news/2017/12/23/oman-grants-refuge-to-salehs-family-from-yemen>

²³ <https://cisac.fsi.stanford.edu/mappingmilitants/profiles/al-qaeda-arabian-peninsula>

So, who controls what?



Effectively, Yemen is currently divided up between four main players with complex relations to one another. The Houthis (green) control a large part of the most populous parts of the country, in North Yemen, including the capital Sana'a, and are at war primarily with Hadi and the Saudi-led coalition. Forces loyal to Hadi (red) control the largest land-mass. They are allied with the Saudi-led coalition and are primarily fighting the Houthis and AQAP but are also at odds with the STC. The STC (yellow), in turn, focuses most of its efforts on holding on to what it has and tries to promote Southern secession, but has been pushed back substantially by government forces in recent weeks. It enjoys support from many Yemeni citizens living in former South Yemen and is supported from abroad by the UAE. Finally, AQAP (grey) finds support with certain tribes, primarily in Hadhramaut. They oppose everyone, especially the Saudis and thus Hadi and his government.

Past and Present UN Action

The Yemeni crisis is highly relevant in a number of UN bodies and programs. At the Human Rights Council and the Security Council it is discussed regularly, for example. The UN Development Programme, the UN Refugee Agency, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the World Food Programme are examples of institutions that have been for some time now directly involved in combating hunger, sickness, and homelessness throughout the country.

In December 2018, talks were held in Stockholm between representatives of the warring parties in Yemen. On December 13th, the Stockholm Agreement was formalized.²⁴ This agreement called for parties to withdraw their forces from Hodeidah, a very important port city that acts, in a way, as Yemen's life-line due to the very high amount of shipments of humanitarian aid that go through it. A month later, in January 2019, the UN Security



Council passed Resolution 2452 (S/RES/2452), establishing a new Special Political Mission, namely the UN Mission to support the Hodeidah Agreement (UNMHA).²⁵ This Mission is mandated with oversight and leadership of the Redeployment Coordination Committee, calling for all parties to withdraw from the city. It took several months but in early May, the Houthis started withdrawing their forces from Hodeidah. Already in June, though, fighting in and around Hodeidah resumed, calling into question the Houthis' commitment to the Hodeidah Agreement. On July 17th, the UNSC met again to discuss progress made by UNMHA and decided to extend its mandate by another six months. Despite the ceasefire, though, violence has continued intermittently throughout September 2019.

Humanitarian Crisis

As already mentioned, Yemen has fallen into a deep humanitarian crisis. Presently, one of the most worrying developments is the potential for renewed fighting around Hodeidah.²⁶ This crucial port is where most of the country's aid shipments pass through. Infringing on this does nothing but hurt those most susceptible: families and children that aren't involved in the fighting. But the biggest problem is the lack of water. Yemen's water supplies are dwindling as a result of heavy fighting, occupation of land, and, perhaps most importantly, the

²⁴ <https://osesgy.unmissions.org/full-text-stockholm-agreement>

²⁵ <https://dppa.un.org/en/mission/unmha-hudaydah-agreement>

²⁶ <https://www.thenational.ae/world/houthi-shelling-halts-distribution-of-salvaged-grain-from-hodeidah-s-red-sea-mills-1.901873>

production of khat. Khat is a stimulant that increases talkativeness and reduces hunger while providing no nutritional value. And to top it off, its production uses up huge parts of Yemen's available water. It is estimated that most of the population uses it, and that enormous amounts of money are spent on the drug. A country-wide phenomenon has emerged that severely impacts the availability of food and water, as well as having a negative impact on Yemenis' health.²⁷



Furthermore, a large-scale cholera outbreak has riddled Yemen's civilian population since 2016. The amount of people affected increases every year, with over 400.000 cases in the first half of 2019 alone, according to Save the Children.²⁸ A disease that is otherwise easily dealt with has become a massive problem as the prolonged war causes the loss of infrastructure vital to medical aid, such as clinics and hospitals, but also roads and distribution centers, and clean water supply.

Water is essential to all forms of life and Yemen is running out of it, fast, while high levels of food insecurity continue to persist. Air, rocket, and artillery strikes from not only the government and Saudi coalition but also the Houthis directly injure or kill civilians, or indirectly impact them by destroying important infrastructure. Internal displacement leads to an uneven distribution of stress on natural and social resources throughout the country. Some would even go so far as to say that almost all territorial disputes in Yemen have to do with access to the country's dwindling water supply. For any viable long-term situation, it is imperative to solve the water problem Yemen faces. Water purification and perhaps even

²⁷ <http://content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1917685,00.html>

²⁸ <https://reliefweb.int/report/yemen/save-children-more-cholera-related-cases-first-half-2019-whole-last-year>

water imports are necessary to make sure that access to clean water does not remain a luxury but remains a basic human right.

Concluding Remarks

The current conflict in Yemen is laden with historical, regional, cultural, and religious factors. It is an incredibly complex conflict that only increases in complexity as it continues. Tens of thousands – mostly civilians – have been killed, and millions more are extremely exposed to disease and famine. Yemen's geographic location is also of considerable value to some international players, adding yet another dimension to any Model UN discussion. When attempting to solve the conflict, one must take into account all past and present factors and consider the implications that any proposed solutions will have on the ground. Tribes and tribal connections play an incredibly important role in Yemen's power structures and alliances can shift very quickly. The example of Saleh going from war against the Houthis to war with the Houthis and back again within a few short years, ultimately leading to his death, is a very good example of how quickly alliances can break down. A sustainable solution must do its best to circumvent such possibilities!

Finally, we would like to remind you of the slightly adapted ROPs and hope to see a respectful and fruitful discussion, even though the parties involved may be at great odds.

Questions to be addressed

1. How can one make sure that all parties to the conflict adhere to a ceasefire agreement or peace treaty?
 2. What would a fair division of resources, particularly water, look like?
 3. What should Yemen's future look like, geographically? Should unity be promoted or is it too dangerous and prone to falling apart again shortly?
 4. How can Yemen's humanitarian crisis be reined in and eventually solved?
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