



**FOREIGN INTERVENTION IN THE
YEMENI CIVIL WAR**

Forum: Security Council

Agenda Item: Foreign Intervention in the Yemeni Civil War

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Position: Deputy Chair

General Overview

Yemen's early history is shaped by ongoing conflicts and political instability. During the 1960's the country was divided into two parts. The northern part, which was ruled by a group of Imams, and the southern part, which was a British colony at that time.

However, the modern Republic of Yemen was born in 1990 when traditional North Yemen and communist South Yemen presidents decided upon the joint governing of Yemen. Since the unification of both sides, Yemen has been slowly modernising and opening up to the world, but still retains much of its tribal character.

A short civil war in 1994 ended in defeat for separatist southerners, but regional tensions re-emerged in the summer of 2009 when government troops and Houthi rebels from the Shia Zaidi sect clashed in the north, killing hundreds and displacing more than a quarter of a million people.

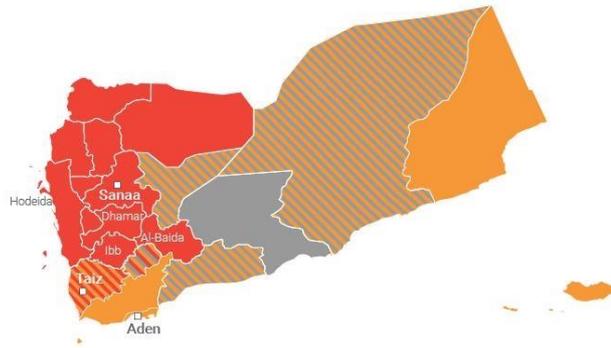
Yemen was hit by more serious political upheaval early in 2011 when protesters - inspired by the Arab Spring uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt - rallied against the three-decades-old rule of President Saleh.

He stepped down as part of a deal brokered by neighbouring countries at the end of the year, ushering in a transitional period of political reforms.

YEMEN: A COUNTRY CONTESTED

Since they took the capital Sanaa in September, the Houthis have spread to other regions such as Ibb, Al-Baida, Dhamar and Hodeida.

President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi and his government are now in the coastal city of Aden, which is only about 150kms from the Houthi-held Taiz.



Government controlled Contested: Government/Houthis
Houthi controlled Contested: Government/Al Qaeda
Al Qaeda controlled Contested: Government/Houthis/Al Qaeda

Source: Al Jazeera, AFP, Yemen Times



Timeline

A chronology of key events:

1918 - Ottoman empire dissolves, North Yemen gains independence and is ruled by Imam Yahya.

1948 - Yahya assassinated, but his son Ahmad beats off opponents of feudal rule and succeeds his father.

1962 - Imam Ahmad dies, succeeded by his son but army officers seize power, set up the Yemen Arab Republic, sparking civil war between royalists supported by Saudi Arabia and republicans backed by Egypt.

1962 - South Yemen formed

1978 - Ali Abdallah Saleh becomes president of North Yemen.

1979 - Fresh fighting between two Yemens. Renewed efforts to unite the two states.

1986 - Thousands die in south in political rivalry. President Ali Nasser Muhammad flees the country and is later sentenced to death for treason. New government formed.

1986 - North and south unite

1990 May - Two Yemens united as Republic of Yemen with Mr Saleh as president, as Soviet bloc implodes. Tension between former states endures.

1993 April - Coalition government formed, made up of ruling parties of former north and south.

1993 August - Vice-President Ali Salim al-Baid withdraws to Aden, alleging that south is being marginalised and southerners are being attacked by northerners. Attempted split.

1994 May-July - Al-Baid declares independence of Democratic Republic of Yemen. Northern forces capture Aden, southern leaders flee abroad and are sentenced to death in absentia.

Al-Qaeda attacks

2000 October - US naval vessel USS Cole damaged in al-Qaeda suicide attack in Aden. Seventeen US personnel killed.

2004 June-August - Hundreds die as troops battle Shia insurgency led by Hussein al-Houthi in the north.

2004 August - Court sentences 15 men on terror charges, including bombing of Limburg tanker in 2002.

2004 September - Government says its forces have killed dissident cleric Hussein al-Houthi, the leader of a revolt in the north.

2005 March-April - More than 200 people are killed in a resurgence of fighting between government forces and supporters of the slain rebel cleric Hussein al-Houthi.

2005 May - President Saleh says the leader of the rebellion in the north has agreed to renounce the campaign in return for a pardon. Minor clashes continue.

2006 September - President Saleh wins another term in elections.

2007 January-March - Scores are killed or wounded in clashes between security forces and al-Houthi rebels in the north.

2007 June - Rebel leader Abdul-Malik al-Houthi accepts a ceasefire.

2008 January - Renewed clashes between security forces and rebels loyal to Abdul-Malik al-Houthi.

2008 April - Clashes with troops as southern Yemenis protest against alleged northern bias in

state job allocation. One man killed.

2008 March-April - Series of bomb attacks on police, official, diplomatic, foreign business and tourism targets. US embassy evacuates all non-essential personnel.

2008 September - Attack on US embassy in Yemeni capital Sana'a kills 18 people, including six assailants. Six suspects arrested.

2008 October - President Saleh announces arrest of suspected Islamist militants allegedly linked to Israeli intelligence.

Demands for reform

2008 November - Police fire warning shots at Common Forum opposition rally in Sanaa. Demonstrators demand electoral reform and fresh polls. At least five protesters and two police officers injured.

2009 February - Government announces release of 176 al-Qaeda suspects on condition of good behaviour.

2009 August - The Yemeni army launches a fresh offensive against Shia rebels in the northern Saada province. Tens of thousands of people are displaced by the fighting.

2009 November - Saudi Arabia says it has regained control of territory seized by Yemeni rebels in a cross-border incursion.

2009 December - Yemen-based branch of al-Qaeda claims it was behind failed attack on US airliner. The government calls on the West for more support to help it combat the al-Qaeda threat.

2010 February - Government signs ceasefire with Houthi northern rebels, which breaks down in December.

2010 September - Thousands flee government offensive against separatists in southern Shabwa province.

2010 October - Global terror alert after packages containing explosives originating in Yemen

are intercepted on cargo planes bound for the US.

2011 January - Tunisian street protests encourage similar demonstrations in other countries, including Yemen. President Saleh pledges not to extend his presidency in 2013 or to hand over to his son.

2011 June - After months of mounting protests, President Saleh is injured in rocket attack and flown to Saudi Arabia, returning home in September.

2011 September - US-born al-Qaeda leader Anwar al-Awlaki is assassinated by US forces.

Unity government, growing violence

2011 November - President Saleh agrees to hand over power to his deputy, Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi. Unity government including prime minister from opposition formed.

2012 February - Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi inaugurated as president after uncontested elections.

2012 November - A Saudi diplomat and his bodyguard are shot dead in Sanaa. Security officials say the assailants, who opened fire on the diplomat's convoy, were dressed in police uniforms.

National dialogue

2014 January - National Dialogue Conference winds up after ten months of deliberation, agreeing a document on which the new constitution will be based.

2014 February - Presidential panel gives approval for Yemen to become a federation of six regions as part of its political transition.

2014 August - President Hadi sacks his cabinet and overturns a controversial fuel price rise following two weeks of anti-government protests in which Houthi rebels are heavily involved.

Houthi takeover

2014 September - Houthi rebels take control of the most of capital Sanaa.

2015 January - Houthis reject draft constitution proposed by government.

2015 February - Houthis appoint presidential council to replace President Hadi, who flees to Aden southern stronghold.

2015 March - Islamic State carries out its first major attacks in Yemen - two suicide bombings targeting Shia mosques in Sanaa in which 137 people are killed. Houthi rebels start to advance towards southern Yemen. President Hadi flees Aden. Saudi-led coalition of Gulf Arab states launches air strikes against Houthi targets and imposes naval blockade.

2015 June - Leader of Al-Qaeda in Arabian Peninsula, Nasser al-Wuhayshi, killed in US drone strike in Yemen.

2015 September - President Hadi returns to Aden after Saudi-backed government forces recapture the port city from Houthi forces and launch advance on Aden.

2016 April - Start of UN-sponsored talks between the government on one side and Houthis and former President Saleh's General People's Congress (GPC) on the other.

2016 May-June - Islamic State group claims responsibility for a number of attacks, including a suicide car bombing that killed at least 40 army recruits in Aden.

2016 October - Airstrike by Saudi-led coalition hits a crowded funeral in Sanaa, killing 140 mourners and injuring 500. Both sides of the conflict allegedly break a UN-sponsored 72-hour ceasefire declared amid ongoing peace talks.

2017 January - A US raid kills several suspected Al-Qaeda militants and civilians in America's first military action in Yemen under President Donald Trump.

2017 May - Houthis continue firing missiles into Saudi Arabia, claiming to have fired one at the capital Riyadh.

2017 June-November - Outbreak of cholera kills 2,100 and affects almost 900,000 others, medical agencies say.

2017 December - Former president Ali Abdullah Saleh is killed after fierce fighting in the capital Sanaa.

2018 January - Southern Yemeni separatists - backed by the United Arab Emirates - seize control of Aden.

Foreign Interventions:

Houthi:

Called themselves as Ansar Allah (Supporters of God). “The Houthis” is a Shia-led social political movement that came up from Sa’dah (capital of Yemen) Tension between the Houthis and the Yemeni central government steadily grew in the 1990s, and war broke out in 2004 with the group's founder, Hussein Badreddin al-Houthi, leading a rebellion against then Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh. As of 2017 the group is led by Abdul-Malik al-Houthi, brother of the first leader, who was reportedly killed by Saleh's Yemeni army forces in 2004. In late 2014 Houthis repaired their relationship with the former president Ali Abdullah Saleh, and with his help, they took control of the capital and much of the north.



Iranian Support to the Houthis

Although Houthi militia forces are likely not solely dependent on Iran for armaments, financing, and manpower, after three years of war, most observers agree that Iran and its Lebanese ally Hezbollah have aided Houthi forces with training and arms shipments. In 2016, one unnamed

Hezbollah commander interviewed about his group's support for the Houthis remarked " After we are done with Syria, we will start with Yemen, Hezbollah is already there.... Who do you think fires Tochka missiles into Saudi Arabia? It's not the Houthis in their sandals, it's us." In repeated public statements by high - level Saudi officials, Saudi Arabia has cited Iran's illicit support for the Houthis as proof that Iran is to blame for the Yemen conflict. In many ways, this has become a self - fulfilling prophecy; as the war has continued, there have been more frequent reports and allegations of Iranian involvement in Yemen. Overall, while Iranian aid to the Houthis does not match the scale of its commitments to proxies in other parts of the Middle East, such as in Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq, it would seem to be a relatively low -cost way of keeping Saudi Arabia mired in the Yemen conflict. At the same time, Iran had few institutionalized links to the Houthis before the civil conflict broke out in 2015 , and questions remain about the degree to which Iran and its allies can control or influence Houthi behavior.

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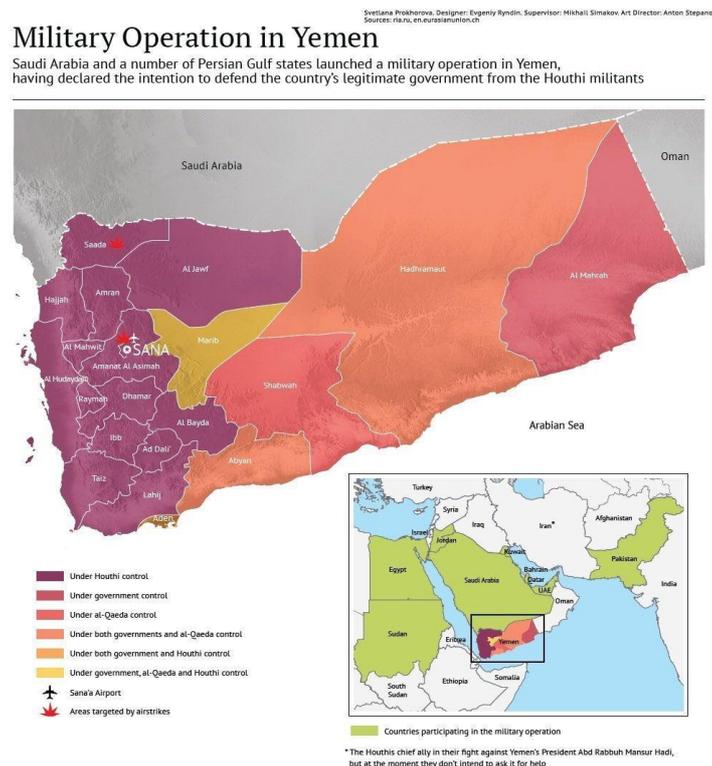
Al-Qaeda in action (AQAP)

Government crackdown against al-Qaeda cells began in 2001, and reached an escalation point on January 14, 2010, when Yemen declared open war on al-Qaeda. And since then, AQAP is considered as one of the most important and active terrorist groups in Yemen. Here is the timeline of the events for you to observe carefully.

- 1992 December - Bombers hit hotel in Aden formerly used by US marines - first known al-Qaeda attack in Yemen.
- 2000 October - Suicide attack on destroyer USS Cole in Aden.
- 2002 October - French tanker Limburg (pictured) damaged by bomb-laden boat.
- 2007 July - 8 Spanish tourists, 2 local drivers killed by car bomb.
- 2008 September - 16 killed in car bombings outside US embassy.
- 2009 January - Saudi, Yemeni al-Qaeda branches merge to form al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP).
- 2009 August - AQAP bomber dies in failed bid to kill Saudi deputy interior minister.
- 2009 December - 'Underwear bomber' Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab tries to down US airliner in plot claimed by AQAP.
- 2010 October - Parcel bombs, thought to have been made by al-Qaeda and dispatched in Yemen, found on US-bound cargo planes.
- 2011 May - AQAP fighters take control of southern city of Zinjibar.
- 2011 September - Al-Qaeda-linked, US-born cleric Anwar al-Awlaki killed in US air raid.
- 2012 February - Suicide attack on presidential palace kills 26 Republican Guards on day that President Hadi is sworn in. AQAP claims responsibility.
- 2012 May - 96 soldiers are killed by suicide bomber in Sanaa. AQAP claims the attack.
- 2012 June - Army retakes Zinjibar from AQAP after month-long offensive.

Saudi Arabian led-Intervention in Yemen

A military intervention was launched by Saudi Arabia in 2015, leading a coalition of nine African and Middle East countries, to influence the outcome of the Yemeni Civil War in favour of the government of President Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi. Code-named **Operation Decisive Storm** intervention initially consisted of a bombing campaign on Houthi Rebels and later saw a naval blockade and the deployment of ground forces into Yemen. The Saudi-led coalition has attacked the positions of the Houthi militia and loyalists of the former President of Yemen, Ali Abdullah Saleh, allegedly supported by Iran (See Iran–Saudi Arabia proxy conflict), in response to a request from the internationally recognized government of President Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi. The perception that Iran is directly controlling the Houthis is contradicted due to a statement made in April 2015, by National Security Council spokeswoman Bernadette Meehan: "It remains our assessment that Iran does not exert command and control over the Houthis in Yemen”



United States of America

Since 1990s, the presence of USA has become more obvious and distinct because Yemen was also a key point of Strait of Hormuz and transportation of oil from the Arabian Peninsula.

What we can say about this situation is, United States of America has fully supported Saudi led-intervention in Yemen from the beginning. US navy has made their existence the way that can be easily seen, and with this way, they have tried to prevent Iran which sends help to Houthis.

While U.S. officials have supported the continued defense of Saudi Arabia against Houthi missile and rocket strikes, they also have openly called on coalition members to use air power judiciously to minimize civilian casualties. In the meantime, as the Saudi - led coalition's campaign against the Houthis continues , and Yemen fragments, the United States not only has sustained counterterrorism operations against Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and various affiliates of the Islamic State, but it has markedly increased the tempo of strikes.

FURTHER READINGS:

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