

UNSC

Study Guide

The Issue of the Yemen Civil War



PREPMUN
2022



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UNSC

Introductions



Welcome letter
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Welcome Letter

Dear delegates,

In the aftermath of a global pandemic and the rise in protectionist policies worldwide, the global economic engine that used to drive the growth of many countries is slowing. The inevitability of an economic crisis leading to a political crisis should, therefore, alarm many in the world. Be it Yemen or Pakistan or Sri Lanka, the potential for conflict in this era, ergo the threat to global peace, has never been any higher and the necessity of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) has never been more warranted.

Yet, the UNSC remains functionally hampered, with existing rivalries between the Permanent 5 members stalling potential action that can be taken. With countries like Russia or China seeking to ‘manifest their destiny’ and many others, like the US, showing signs of resistance, there is little consensus on the action that can be taken to ameliorate international conflicts. Even in the MUN circuit, a unicorn could be found more easily than a resolution that was not vetoed in the UNSC. Such as it is, we encourage delegates to justifiably evolve their countries' stances on a humanitarian crisis, so that a common consensus can be reached amidst these trying times. With that, we welcome you to the UNSC in PREPMUN 2022 and hope that you can pick up and expand upon your negotiating and problem-solving skills to ensure that the next generation of thinkers can resolve the conflicts this generation could not.

Best wishes,

Alarice, Alexander and Vignesh

Chairpersons of the UNSC

Chair Introductions

Kannan Vignesh Raj

As someone who frequents PREPMUN to feel occupied in December, with the exception of 2021, Vignesh has been associated with this conference in one way or another since 2018. Whether it be a chairperson or a delegate, crisis or non-crisis council, online or offline, he has had many memorable experiences in his years at PREPMUN. As an NSF, conversations with him would inevitably lead to his experiences in BMT, Signals Institute and his current role at “Chair Force”. However, he recognised that he needed something else to talk about, ergo his participation in PREPMUN 2022. Although a break from his newfound passion for chairing crisis councils, he appreciates the relative calm in chairing the UNSC council, because the only knives being lodged in people’s backs in UNSC are figurative, not literal.

Alexander Mark Amaraganthan

As a Year 4 triple science student who is aspiring to take full humanities next year, Alex is passionate about understanding the intricacies of international diplomacy. When he is not reading the news or attempting to pass his biology exam, Alex enjoys playing basketball or watching the occasional K-Drama. Funnily enough, Alex is also a UNSC veteran, having been assigned to the council 5 consecutive times and having to begrudgingly deal with the veto function invalidating his resolutions. He hopes that the delegates in the UNSC this year will be able to have an enlightening experience, being able to take away lessons and skills that will aid them in the rest of their MUN Journey.

Alarice Pow Ian-Ning

As an IB1 Humanities Student in HCIS, Alarice is passionate about world issues and the arts, not to mention also drowning in deadlines. She takes great comfort in her stuffed penguin and listening to Clairo. Beyond that, she occasionally ventures into the world of MUN, tackling global issues and parliamentary reform through a variety of councils, while meeting truly sensational people along the way. While diplomacy is not her strongest trait, shopping is, and MUN notably has left her cart full of WBA. She hopes the delegates of the UNSC will have a gratifying experience at PREPMUN 2022, challenging themselves to the best of their ability :)

Council Introduction

The UNSC comprises 15 member states, including the Permanent 5 (P5) nations – China, Russia, France, the United States of America (USA), the United Kingdom (UK) – and 10 other non-permanent states. Each of the permanent members is able to veto a resolution; that is, a vote against a resolution by any of these five countries will cause the resolution to fail. The geographical distribution of the non-permanent countries is as follows:

- 5 from African and Asian States
- 1 from Eastern European States
- 2 from the Latin American States
- 2 from Western European and other States

The United Nations General Assembly rotates and elects 5 new non-permanent member states annually.

Controversy has been stirred in the UN due to the inability of the P5 nations to act for the greater good, rather than for their national interests on many occasions, as seen in global crises such as the ongoing Russia-Ukraine War. Discussions on changing the structure of the UNSC remain a pertinent topic today.

According to Article 24 of the UN Charter,¹ member states of the UN agree that the UNSC acts as a representative of the UN to uphold international peace. The UNSC hence is tasked to uphold the principles, as per Articles 1 and 2 of the UN Charter.

Article 1 of the UN Charter is built upon its four main purposes: To maintain international peace and security, foster diplomatic relations between countries, and coordinate to resolve international issues to preserve the rights and equality of the people. These discussions are held through meetings at the UNSC periodically. As per Article 2 of the UN charter, the UNSC upholds the principle of “sovereign equality” for all nations. The UNSC is hence obligated to treat all states equally and adhere to the notion that the domestic affairs of one sovereign state are of no concern to that of another. Member states are discouraged from using violence, rather they are recommended to use the UNSC as a neutral mediation arbiter. While these principles have long been established, violations have still been enforced on sovereign states due to their lack of enforcement.

¹ “Chapter v: Article 24 — Charter of the United Nations — Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs — Codification Division Publications.” *Un.org*, 2016, www.legal.un.org/repertory/art24.shtml. . Accessed 24 July 2022.

The UNSC is the most powerful branch of the UN. It retains the ability to deploy military intervention, impose necessary ceasefires and impose economic sanctions in resolutions against aggressor states. The specific mandate of the UNSC is outlined in Articles 39, 41 and 42, which state that the UNSC should investigate any disruptions to international peace and, at first, provide meaningful recommendations similar to other councils in the UN. However, should that fail, the UNSC should move to implement diplomatic and economic pressures on belligerent parties to alleviate the conflict. For instance, the UNSC has implemented a sanction regime on North Korea for its failure to denuclearise, which includes measures like the authorisation of UN members to halt and search North Korean vessels for contraband². As a final resort, the UNSC is allowed to utilise military force to restore international peace. This was exemplified in the 1992 Gulf War when military force was sanctioned on Iran for its non-compliance in withdrawing troops from Kuwait.³

Discussions take place when a complaint concerning a threat to peace is brought before it. The Council's first course of action is usually to promote agreements between the involved countries through peaceful means, such as establishing principles, undertaking the necessary investigations, dispatch missions if needed and mediation measures. However, the dichotomy of preserving peace lies within this very essence of the UNSC, how does the council seek to draw the line between taking hardline measures to enact positive change and taking measures to precipitate peaceful negotiations? These two polar opposite methods of resolution are often thrown up in contention within the council and delegates are encouraged to thread the line between them carefully.

² "UN Security Council Resolutions on North Korea | Arms Control Association." 2022, www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/UN-Security-Council-Resolutions-on-North-Korea. Accessed 24 July 2022.

³ "Security Council Resolution 678 - UNSCR." *Unscr.com*, 2013, www.unscr.com/en/resolutions/678. Accessed 24 July 2022.



UNSC

The Issue of the Yemen Civil War



Topic Introduction

The Middle East is no stranger to broad international conflicts. From the Israel-Palestinian conflict to the United States' occupation of Afghanistan, there has been no shortage in the number of conflicts the region has endured. However, one stands head and shoulders above the rest in the amount of destruction and turmoil inflicted upon those involved.

The Yemeni Civil War takes the attributes of many civil wars history has seen and combines their most devastating elements, hence making it one of the most terrifying wars to this present day. This conflict started in 2014 between the official Yemeni government, controlled by then-President Saleh, and the Iran-backed Al-Houthi movement.⁴ The Houthis took over key government institutions in the capital, Saana, but they are not recognised as the official government of Yemen.

This conflict is not as black and white as World War II. It is more akin to a tag-team game of chess where it is not only opponents who are guessing the other sides' moves, but also teammates wondering what their side is doing. Many parties interested in the spoils of Yemen are allied out of necessity to defeat their opponents, despite not seeing eye to eye with each other. As a result, terrorists are fighting terrorists, Yemenis are fighting Yemenis, while the victims are the general public, who have been dragged into a proxy war between Islamic heavyweights.

⁴ Robinson, Kali. "Yemen's Tragedy: War, Stalemate, and Suffering." Council on Foreign Relations. Council on Foreign Relations. Accessed November 2, 2022. <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/yemen-crisis>.

Background

Definitions

Civil War: A violent conflict between a state and one or more organised non-state actors in the state's territory.⁵

Humanitarian Crisis: A singular event or a series of events that are threatening in terms of health, safety or well-being of a community or large group of people.⁶

Sanctions: A penalty imposed as backlash for an action undertaken by an aggressor country. Such penalties can come in the form of economic sanctions⁷, which restrict trade between countries; diplomatic sanctions,⁸ which see the severance of diplomatic ties and military sanctions, where an arms embargo is implemented.⁹

Economy

Before the war, Yemen was already rife with political and economic struggles with 28 million people crowded in this desolate desert state. With a GDP per capita of 691 USD in 2021,¹⁰ it is amongst the poorest countries in the world. This poor standard of living manifested in two ways, firstly, the political violence the people faced due to the rampant terrorism and the tepid market conditions within this state. These two factors were then further exacerbated by the Civil War, leaving thousands in desolate situations in need of international aid.¹¹ For reference, a healthy economy maintains an unemployment rate that hovers between 3 and 5 per cent while Yemen has about 4 times that number, with over 13 per cent of their population being unemployed.¹² These people live in dire straits with no hope for tangible improvements as the civil war continues to rage on.

⁵ "UNFPA Response in Yemen Situation Report Issue #1 (Jan - Mar 2022) - Yemen | ReliefWeb." Accessed July 24, 2022. <https://reliefweb.int/report/yemen/unfpa-response-yemen-situation-report-issue-1-jan-mar-2022>.

⁶ "Humanitarian Crisis and Emergencies." OHCHR, 2022, www.ohchr.org/en/taxonomy/term/878#:~:text=The%20UN%20Human%20Rights%20Office%20in%20Humanitarian%20Action&text=Humanitarian%20crises%20around%20the%20world,or%20exacerbate%20human%20rights%20concerns. Accessed 24 July 2022.

⁷ "What Are Examples of Economic Sanctions?" Yourdictionary.com, 2022, www.examples.yourdictionary.com/what-are-examples-of-economic-sanctions.html. Accessed 24 July 2022.

⁸ "Different Types of Sanctions." Europa.eu, European Council, 3 June 2022, www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/sanctions/different-types/. Accessed 24 July 2022.

⁹ "Sanctions." Government.nl, 2022, www.government.nl/topics/international-peace-and-security/compliance-with-international-sanctions. Accessed 24 July 2022.

¹⁰ "Yemen GDP per Capita 1990-2022." Macrotrends.net, 2022, www.macrotrends.net/countries/YEM/yemen/gdp-per-capita#:~:text=Yemen%20gdp%20per%20capita%20for,a%209.35%25%20increase%20from%202020. Accessed 24 July 2022.

¹¹ "Yemen Was Poor Before, but 'the War Just Finished Us.'" PBS NewsHour, PBS NewsHour, 16 May 2018, www.pbs.org/newshour/show/yemen-was-poor-before-but-the-war-just-finished-us. Accessed 24 July 2022.

¹² "Yemen Unemployment Rate 1991-2022." Macrotrends.net, 2022, www.macrotrends.net/countries/YEM/yemen/unemployment-rate. Accessed 24 July 2022.

Yemen has suffered from economic woes since the unification of the North (Yemen Arab Republic) and South (People's Democratic Republic of Yemen) in 1990. Yemen adopted a policy of neutrality in the Gulf War of 1991 that saw it pursue diplomatic solutions to the Kuwait invasion by Saddam Hussein, as opposed to Saudi Arabia's efforts to liberate Kuwait. Saudi Arabia, along with other Arab states, responded by excommunicating unified Yemen by slashing aid to it and revoking the privileges Yemenis had in Saudi Arabia, forcing the migration of over a million Yemenis across the border.¹³ Thus, even as revenues from the production of oil skyrocketed, the GDP per capita fell by 46 per cent from 1992 to 1994.¹⁴ The economy rebounded after 1995 when the recommended macro-economic package from the International Monetary Fund was implemented by the Government.¹⁵ The economy continued to progress smoothly over the next few decades, until fighting escalated in the 2010s, causing a reversal in economic growth. The tipping point was on 26 March 2015, after clashes erupted in Aden, Hadi (President of Yemen, 2012-2022) loyalists counterattacked as a Saudi-led military intervention got underway, causing their GDP to decline by a further 28 per cent, undoing the progress made over the previous decade.

Beginning with the discovery of oil in 1984,¹⁶ Yemen's government has been dependent on oil and gas resources for revenue. Once remittance and agriculture-dependent, the economy shifted over the course of the 1990s to an energy export-oriented model, with the government using oil as a key source of revenue via the publicly-owned Yemen Oil and Gas Corporation. After peaking in 2002, oil output began to decline, while the government continued to report budget deficits. The lack of supplies due to the ongoing conflict in the middle east region caused inflation to run rampant. Special PBS Correspondent Maria Briggs reported that the price of a bag of flour rose from \$10 to \$17 within the span of a few months. Furthermore, many people are below the global poverty line, families are embroiled in so much strife that child labour is often employed, being paid around 3 USD a day.

As the crisis continues to loom, Yemen's GDP per capita continues to depreciate. The war economy is closely linked with the spread of the conflict on multiple fronts. The absence of asserting political institutions has resulted in a lack of attention to the country's economic needs and has added to claims

¹³ Ufheil-Somers, Amanda. "Yemen: Unification and the Gulf War - MERIP." *MERIP*, 15 May 1991, www.merip.org/1991/05/yemen-unification-and-the-gulf-war/. Accessed 24 July 2022.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ International Monetary Fund. "Yemen in the 1990s: From Unification to Economic Reform -- IMF Occasional Paper No. 208." *Imf.org*, 2022, www.imf.org/external/pubs/nft/op/208/index.htm. Accessed 24 July 2022.

¹⁶ Easterly, Grace. "Yemen Peace Project." *Yemen Peace Project*, 16 July 2018, www.yemenpeaceproject.org/blog-x/2018/7/16/before-2014-yemens-economy-before-the-war#_ftn11. Accessed 24 July 2022.

of corruption. In a UN report published in 2021, the Houthi rebels diverted at least 1.8 billion USD in 2019,¹⁷ funds which were meant for civilian aid.

Rivalling factions in the region

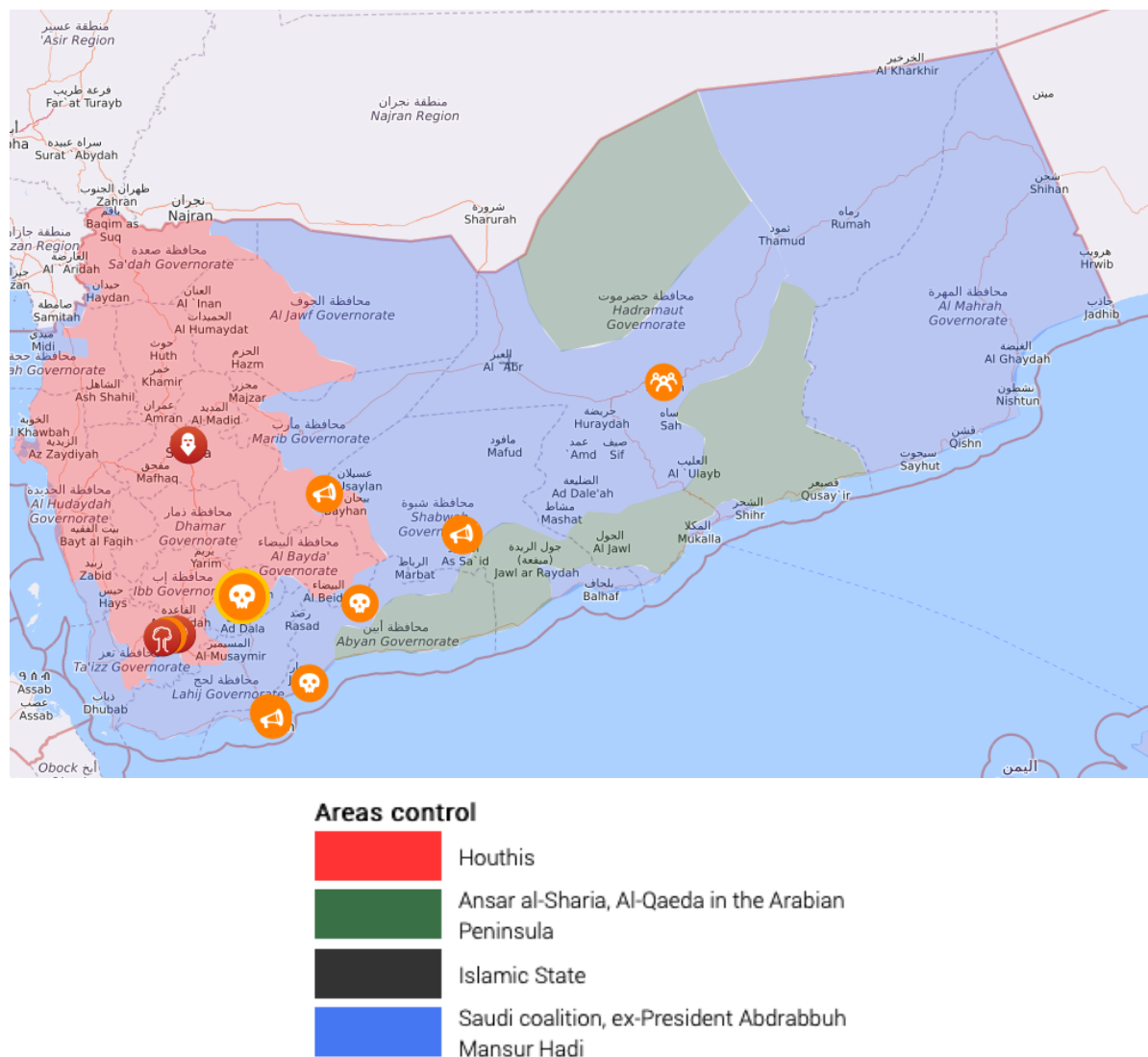


Figure 1: Map of controlled territories in Yemen. (Correct as of 2 October 2022)¹⁸

On the ground, 4 factions are wrestling for control over Yemen: The Saudi-led Presidential Leadership Council (PLC), the Al-Houthi movement, the Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) movement and the Islamic state of Iraq and Syria (ISIS).

¹⁷ "Yemen's Economic War." *Atalayar*, 17 Dec. 2021, www.atalayar.com/en/content/yemens-economic-war. Accessed 24 July 2022.

¹⁸ "Dead and Wounded in the Ranks of the Army in an Armed Ambush in Abyan and Violations of the Armistice in Marib and Taiz Marib - Interactive Map of Yemen War - Yemen News Live Map-Yemen.liveuamap.com." *Interactive Map of Yemen War - Yemen News Live Map-*, 2022, www.yemen.liveuamap.com/en/2022/22-june-dead-and-wounded-in-the-ranks-of-the-army-in-an-armed. Accessed 24 July 2022.

The Presidential Leadership Council

The PLC is the official and internationally recognised government of Yemen. This government is backed by Saudi Arabia and the UAE and contains notable figures from 2 former opposing factions: the Yemeni Government and the Southern Transition Council.

Outraged by the takeover of Southern oil fields by the government during the 1994 Civil War, along with a litany of other injustices faced by southern Yemenis and the loss of many socialist privileges they had before unification, the ‘Southern movement’ arose to aggressively promote Southern secession¹⁹. As they started protesting, the movement caught on like wildfire. Former President Saleh attempted to put down these protests with an iron fist, but they only served to fan the flames of division between the North and South.²⁰ Things did not get much better even when Saleh was ousted during the Arab Spring in 2012. The new President, Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi, was faced with a country divided along sectarian lines, with a presence of terrorists and an economy in freefall. As part of an agreement signed between the UNSC, GCC and Yemen, a National Dialogue Conference (NDC) was organised.²¹ The format of this conference was akin to a constitutional convention and was outlined in UNSC resolution 2051. The NDC was able to come up with a power-sharing arrangement between the North and the South; one that would see Yemen transition to a federation of 6 provinces, 4 belonging to the North and 2 belonging to the South. This arrangement was swiftly rebuked by Southern leaders who had advocated for a federal system consisting of 2 provinces that would have better allowed them to utilise oil fields in South Yemen.²²

This conflict eventually came to a head when in 2016, Hadi dismissed the former, but popular, governor of Aden Aidarus al-Zoubaidi, claiming that under his tenure the United Arab Emirates (UAE) had “acted like occupiers”, despite the UAE helping liberate vast swaths of Aden from Houthis.²³ In response, the UAE funded an organisation called the Southern Transition Council (STC)

¹⁹ Ulf Laessing. “In Yemen’s Aden, Anger Mixes with Nostalgia.” *U.S.*, 21 Jan. 2010, www.reuters.com/article/us-yemen-south/in-yemens-aden-anger-mixes-with-nostalgia-idUSTRE60K25220100121. Accessed 24 July 2022.

²⁰ Ghobari, Mohammed, and Mohammed Mukhashaf. “Five Killed as Anti-Saleh Protests Sweep Yemen.” *Reuters*. Thomson Reuters, February 18, 2011. <https://www.reuters.com/article/uk-yemen-protests-idUKTRE71G22Y20110218>. Accessed 2 November 2022

²¹ Alasrar, Fatima Abo, Eleonora Ardemagni, and Various Authors. “Yemen's National Dialogue.” *Middle East Institute*. Middle East Institute, September 23, 2022. <https://www.mei.edu/publications/yemens-national-dialogue>.

²² BBC News. “Yemen to Become Federation of Six Regions.” *BBC News*, 10 Feb. 2014, www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-26125721. Accessed 24 July 2022.

²³ <https://www.facebook.com/middleeasteye>. “EXCLUSIVE: Yemen President Says UAE Acting like Occupiers.” *Middle East Eye*, 2022, www.middleeasteye.net/news/exclusive-yemen-president-says-uae-acting-occupiers. Accessed 24 July 2022.

that quickly took over vast regions in South Yemen, causing the government to fight a conflict on 3 fronts. The creation of the STC marked a huge shift in the UAE's foreign policy doctrine.

After a year's worth of negotiations backed by Saudi Arabia and the UAE, the STC and the Yemeni government were able to find a compromise and form a unity government called the Presidential Leadership Council. President Hadi would step down and transfer power to this council, which consists of 8 members. These 8 members consist of leaders from the STC, advisors to Hadi and various tribal leaders. More importantly, they were not politicians, who had been contributing to the hatred among Northerners and Southerners, as it was a council created to seek a "comprehensive political solution" to end the Yemen War.²⁴ It united Northern and Southern figureheads with tribe leaders, which, in theory, allowed it to combat the rural network created by terrorist organisations. The power consolidation also allowed it to present a more united front against the Houthis, who have not shown rifts as significant as the GCC-backed government.²⁵ However, it has its shortcomings. Former UN Panel of Experts on Yemen member Gregory Johnson expressed scepticism about the unity of this coalition, owing to many individuals in the council expressing "diametrically opposing views".²⁶ It also had not enacted meaningful change in the standard of living of Yemenis since it took power in April 2022,²⁷ even though a ceasefire had been implemented at the time. Another problem that would be prominent if they are victorious in the war would be what happens afterwards. The extremely diverse coalition could fracture, much like the extremely diverse coalition that ousted former Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.²⁸ Regardless, the potential expressed by this council and the imminent threat posed by the other factions to the Yemen government provides it with a fighting chance against a streamlined opposition.

The Al-Houthi Movement

The next most notable faction in the Yemen war is the Houthis. The Houthis are a Zaidi Shi'ist Muslim movement that originated in Saada, North Yemen. Inspired by the Hezbollah Shiite

²⁴ Salem, Mostafa, and Lianne Kolirin. "Hopes of Peace in Yemen as President Hands Power to New Presidential Council." *CNN*, CNN, 7 April 2022, www.edition.cnn.com/2022/04/07/middleeast/yemen-presidential-council-intl/index.html. Accessed 24 July 2022.

²⁵ "Yemen's Presidential Leadership Council Resists Houthi Supremacy." *Al-Monitor: Independent, Trusted Coverage of the Middle East*, 21 May 2022, www.al-monitor.com/originals/2022/05/yemens-presidential-leadership-council-resists-houthi-supremacy. Accessed 24 July 2022.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ "Middle-East Arab News Opinion." *Asharq AL-Awsat*, Asharq Al-awsat English, 8 July 2022, www.english.aawsat.com/home/article/3802346/yemen-debates-presidential-leadership-council. Accessed 24 July 2022.

²⁸ "Israel's Governing Coalition Crashes, Setting Stage for New Elections." *Crisisgroup.org*, 4 July 2022, www.crisisgroup.org/middle-east-north-africa/east-mediterranean-mena/israelpalestine/israels-governing-coalition-on-crashes-setting-stage-new-elections. Accessed 24 July 2022.

movement in Lebanon and radicalised by the invasion of Iraq by the USA in 2003, the Houthis rapidly became a militant force that challenged President Saleh numerous times in his regime. Even though Saleh had assassinated their leader Hussein al-Houthi and had the backing of Saudi Arabia, he was not able to effectively suppress the Houthi movement.²⁹

The Zaidi Shiites are a minority of the Shia doctrine of Islam, which in itself a minority of Islam. Two countries that compete for the leadership of Islam, Sunni Saudi Arabia and Shia Iran, have used the sectarian divide to further their ambitions.³⁰ Iran supplies arms and ammunition to the Houthi movement to resist the ever-encroaching Saudi influence on the Saleh regime. The alliance system built up between Saudi Arabia and Iran has resulted in further escalation of the ongoing proxy conflict between the 2 nations since.

The 6-province plan that arose from the 2012 NDC saw the Zayidi-dominated North be relegated to 2 out of 4 provinces in the North.³¹ This invited criticism from the Houthis who viewed this arrangement as a dilution of the Zaydi Shiite population's power. Also, President Hadi secured a 553 million USD loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which came with some major conditions.³² To obtain the funds, he had to reduce fuel subsidies and increase the price of fuel sold by the national producer.³³ The Houthis organised a protest demanding this policy be repealed, along with the resignation of the entire administration,³⁴ likely to capitalise on a golden opportunity to oppose the government.

In this mayhem, the most unlikely of friendships formed. The ousted President Saleh and the Houthis formed an alliance called the Supreme Political Committee (SPC). This alliance had one simple goal: remove Hadi from power. With the aid of Saleh's loyalists in the Yemen Government, the Houthis steamrolled throughout North Yemen, taking over the capital Sana'a and ousting the Hadi government. Although Hadi resigned while he was forced to be under house arrest in 2015, he rescinded that resignation after escaping, declaring it "null and illegitimate".³⁵ Once the main goal of the alliance had

²⁹ Riedel, Bruce. "Who Are the Houthis, and Why Are We at War with Them?" *Brookings*, Brookings, 18 Dec. 2017, www.brookings.edu/blog/markaz/2017/12/18/who-are-the-houthis-and-why-are-we-at-war-with-them/. Accessed 24 July 2022.

³⁰

³¹ Alasrar, Fatima Abo, Eleonora Ardemagni, and Various Authors. "Yemen's National Dialogue." Middle East Institute. Middle East Institute, September 23, 2022. <https://www.mei.edu/publications/yemens-national-dialogue>.

³² International Monetary Fund. "IMF Survey: IMF Loan to Help Yemen Tackle Reforms, Attract Aid." *IMF*, 2014, www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2015/09/28/04/53/socar092414a. Accessed 24 July 2022.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ghobari, Mohammed. "Tens of Thousands of Yemeni Houthis Protest against Fuel Reform, Government." *U.S.*, 18 August 2014, www.reuters.com/article/us-yemen-protests-idUSKBN0GI1O420140818. Accessed 24 July 2022.

³⁵ Ibid.

been achieved, the alliance broke down and Saleh desired to hold unilateral meetings with the Saudi-led coalition³⁶. For his betrayal, he was killed by the Houthis.³⁷

As Hadi proceeded southwards, the Houthis followed, capturing more towns in Southern Yemen. Fearing a full takeover of Yemen by the Houthis, Saudi Arabia, along with a coalition of 9 other countries, launched an intervention in Yemen. Operation Decisive Storm, as it was called, saw the implementation of an aerial bombing campaign and naval blockade, followed by the deployment of ground militia into Yemen.³⁸ The USA and the UK, who were there to fight Al Qaeda in Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), provided logistical and intelligence support for the Saudi coalition. This operation, along with the subsequent Operation Restoring Hope,³⁹ saw an escalation in the violence and damage done to Yemen. It also saw the worst atrocities and war crimes committed on innocent civilians by both sides.

The Houthis have rejected most offers from leaders of the GCC for negotiations, calling them mercenaries. Any such negotiations are also forecasted to be in bad faith on the Houthi side, considering its hostile reaction to the formation of the PLC and negotiations from the PLC. It is likely because of the Houthi ideology that outlines that their leader should be descended from the family of Prophet Mohamed. As such, they would never seek peace with the PLC, so long as they are able to fight back.⁴⁰

AQAP vs ISIS

The last two factions to be concerned with in this war are the AQAP and ISIS. Such a complex dynamic follows the 2 main terrorist organisations holding land within Yemen: Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). On the surface, it would seem that both organisations are allies. After all, they both are fundamentalist Sunni Islamist terrorist organisations that resent the Jewish faith and the Americans and want to establish an Islamic Caliphate. Moreover, they both were able to take advantage of a weakened federal Yemen government that was more focused on keeping the country from ripping itself apart at the seams by occupying

³⁶ Faisal Edroos. "How Did Yemen's Houthi-Saleh Alliance Collapse?", Al Jazeera, 4 Dec. 2017, www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/12/4/how-did-yemens-houthi-saleh-alliance-collapse. Accessed 24 July 2022.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ "Operation Decisive Storm | Saudi History | Britannica." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 2022, www.britannica.com/event/Operation-Decisive-Storm. Accessed 24 July 2022.

³⁹ "Operation Decisive Storm Ends, Operation Renewal of Hope Begins - Operation Decisive Storm." *Operation Decisive Storm*, 21 April 2015, www.operationrenewalofhope.com/operation-decisive-storm-ends-operation-renewal-of-hope-begins/#sthash.Y6KI60y.JXh6Mlmd.dpbs. Accessed 24 July 2022.

⁴⁰ Arabia, Inside. "Yemen's New Presidential Leadership Council Faces Challenges." *Inside Arabia*, 19 April 2022, www.insidearabia.com/yemens-new-presidential-leadership-council-faces-challenges/. Accessed 24 July 2022.

regions in southern Yemen. However, the existence of one is a threat to the legitimacy of the other, as both seek to be the de facto representative of a militant Islamic sect.⁴¹

Although the AQAP and ISIS occupy land in Yemen, the latter received more international attention from 2016 to 2020. A surge of ISIS forces in the region had ignited, not only the conflict between it and the government but also, the conflict between it and the AQAP. Between 2018 and 2020, both terrorist organisations were hostile to one another to the point where ISIS defectors testified that they were taught that the AQAP were the most prominent target, as opposed to the Houthis or the government.⁴² In turn, nearly two-thirds of AQAP's operations have been targeted by ISIS.⁴³

Even though there have been many weaknesses on the AQAP side, such as division and defections among the top brass, they are recognised as a more potent threat in this war than ISIS. This is potentially due to the disastrous effect of Covid-19 and the assassination of ISIS leader Abdullah Qardash in February 2022,⁴⁴ which may have forced ISIS to scale down its operations and reduce its operations in Yemen. The international crusade against ISIS, a carryover from President Obama's and President Trump's administrations, obliterated ISIS in Yemen. While ISIS activities have demonstrably fallen, it remains to be seen if either the threat of ISIS is truly gone or if they have retreated underground to regroup and revitalise their forces.

While it may have damaged them, the Covid-19 pandemic has also provided a period of respite for them. Considering that 80 per cent of Yemen's population requires humanitarian assistance, most of which comes from foreign countries and organisations like the WHO, a shortfall in funding from them would cripple the average Yemeni's standard of living. This is alarming because there have been reports of shortfalls in funding Yemen, like in 2020 when a Saudi Arabian-led UN donor conference ended up raising 1.35 billion USD, as opposed to the targeted 2.41 billion USD. When standards of living drop, the populace becomes a ripe breeding ground for extremist ideologies, like those

⁴¹ Byman, Daniel L., and Jennifer R. Williams. "ISIS vs. al Qaeda: Jihadism's Global Civil War." *Brookings*, Brookings, 24 Feb. 2015, www.brookings.edu/articles/isis-vs-al-qaeda-jihadisms-global-civil-war/. Accessed 24 July 2022.

⁴² Jaffery, Minna. "ISIS in Yemen: Caught in a Regional Power Game - NewLines Institute.", 21 July 2020, www.newlinesinstitute.org/isis/isis-in-yemen-caught-in-a-regional-power-game-2/. Accessed 24 July 2022.

⁴³ Raghavan, Sudarsan. "With the ISIS Caliphate Defeated in Syria, an Islamist Militant Rivalry Takes Root in Yemen.", *The Washington Post*, 13 Apr. 2019, www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/with-the-once-declared-caliphate-of-isis-defeated-in-syria-an-islamist-militant-rivalry-takes-root-in-yemen/2019/04/13/d54148a6-34d3-4a67-a40a-9dc4f783338e_story.html. Accessed 24 July 2022.

⁴⁴ Jazeera, Al. "Deadly Al-Qaeda Attack Targets Yemen's Southern Separatists.", *Al Jazeera*, 6 2022, www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/9/6/al-qaeda-attack-kills-yemeni-forces-in-abyan-southern-army-says. Accessed 24 July 2022.

espoused by the AQAP and ISIS⁴⁵. With a steady supply of disenfranchised Yemenis, it becomes more possible for terrorist organisations to expand their operations and continue the conflict.

As such, both terrorist groups remain a significant threat to the current Presidential Leadership Council due to their capacity to undermine its authority and the inability of humanitarian aid to be delivered to Yemeni citizens in captured areas. ISIS, in 2015, killed the Governor of Aden through a car bombing and has attempted a similar assassination on the current governor, albeit unsuccessfully⁴⁶. Both AQAP and ISIS thrived on the instability of the civil war by boosting their membership and solidifying their gains. Hence, it is in their best interests to find a way to exacerbate the divisions in Yemen to entrench their positions in the country, inevitably worsening the civil war.

The Arab Spring

The Arab Spring is a collection of uprisings that occurred in the Middle East that aimed to end much autocratic leadership and replace them with democratically-elected governments. Although the goal was noble, it produced varied results across the region. For instance, Tunisia was able to transition from an autocratic nation to a democracy with free elections, however flawed it may be.⁴⁷ However, except for Israel, it remains the only fair democracy in the region.⁴⁸ Countries like Libya, Iraq and Syria slid into a civil war that ravaged the regions and gave rise to international threats like the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).

The Yemeni revolution, an offshoot of the Arab Spring in Yemen, saw Pro-Democracy protests that demanded an end to the 33-year autocratic rule of President Saleh. However, he only responded with economic concessions and not a complete resignation. The Houthis, unlike the opposition al-Islah Party, were quick to publicly support the protest movement and openly call for the downfall of the regime⁴⁹. They radicalised the youth and mobilised them to try and overthrow Saleh once and for all. By March 2011, tensions on the streets of the capital city, Sana'a, resulted in protesters dying at the hands of Saleh's security forces. The violence was so outrageous that the Commander of the 1st Armoured Division, Major General Ali Mohsen al-Ahmar decried the violence perpetrated on the

⁴⁵ Covid-19 and Conflict in the Middle East, Mick Mulroy, Eric Oehlerich & Amanda Blair, January 2021, <https://www.mei.edu/sites/default/files/2021-01/COVID-19%20and%20Conflict%20in%20the%20Middle%20East.pdf>. Accessed 24 July 2022.

⁴⁶ "Nobody Wants to See This War End." *POLITICO*, 16 June 2022, www.politico.com/news/magazine/2022/06/16/biden-saudi-arabia-yemen-00039578. Accessed 24 July 2022.

⁴⁷ Dworkin, Anthony. "The Battle for Tunisia's Democracy." *ECFR*, 5 April 2022, www.ecfr.eu/article/the-battle-for-tunisias-democracy/. Accessed 24 July 2022.

⁴⁸ The Economist. "Global Democracy Has Another Bad Year." *The Economist*, The Economist, 22 January 2020, www.economist.com/graphic-detail/2020/01/22/global-democracy-has-another-bad-year. Accessed 24 July 2022.

⁴⁹ Combating Terrorism Center. "Yemen's Huthi Movement in the Wake of the Arab Spring – Combating Terrorism Center at West Point.", 23 Aug. 2012, www.ctc.usma.edu/yemens-huthi-movement-in-the-wake-of-the-arab-spring/. Accessed 24 July 2022.

protestors and indicated that the Army was in full support of the protestors, promising that they would be protected.

Eventually, a deal was inked between Saleh and mediators in the International community that would see Saleh transfer his Presidential powers to then-VP Hadi, who would then form a government of national unity with the opposition, paving the way for general elections in 2012. In exchange, Saleh and his family were granted immunity from prosecution by authorities⁵⁰. Although the Arab Spring toppled the Yemeni dictatorship, the conflict between the government and protestors enabled terrorist organisations to enter Yemen and utilise it as a terrorist hub. It also gave power to a weak and corrupt federal government with weak and corrupt institutions that were unable to consolidate power throughout Yemen after the fall of a strongman dictator, enabling the Houthis to launch an effective coup in Saana.

⁵⁰ BBC News. "Yemeni President Saleh Signs Deal on Ceding Power." *BBC BBC News News*, 23 Nov. 2011, www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-15858911. Accessed 24 July 2022.

Key Issues

The Humanitarian Crisis in Yemen

8 years into the war, Yemen remains the world's most devastating humanitarian crisis. 6 million people have lost their homes, with more than 23 million still requiring dire humanitarian assistance.⁵¹ Estimates report that the highest civilian casualties were recorded in October and December 2021. Violation of the UN Charter and International Humanitarian Law will continue to bring harm to the country's infrastructure and its people.

Despite the conflict remaining largely political in nature, it has resulted in the loss of civilian lives, ballooning into a large humanitarian crisis with the lack of international aid and hampered access to it. The hazardous climate in Yemen continues to aggravate the crisis, with torrential flooding causing further deaths, displacements and destruction of infrastructure. With the current state of disaster relief systems being largely ineffective, there have been calls by both the international community and humanitarian rights groups to upgrade and retool them.

This calls for a large-scale reassessment of the relief mechanisms that have been sent into Yemen. With the advent of Covid-19, More than 80 per cent of the country's population is at risk of hunger and disease. The pandemic is set to exacerbate the humanitarian crisis, with estimates predicting that 17 million people require humanitarian assistance and 19.8 million people are without adequate healthcare.⁵² As mentioned earlier, the breakdown of public services and lack of humanitarian aid make recruitment easier for AQAP and ISIS as well.

Funding for water delivery and hospitals running out by the end of November, with aid for food, health, water, sanitation and hygiene programmes only receiving a fraction of the required funding.⁵³ The international community has to implement more streamlined and effective mechanisms to resolve this brewing crisis, lest it balloon to a point where no more solutions are viable.

Concerning Articles 34 and 36 of the UNSC Charter, the UNSC has the responsibility for investigating any dispute, or any situation which might lead to international friction or give rise to a dispute and consequently recommending appropriate procedures or methods of adjustment. The humanitarian crisis in Yemen remains the centrepiece of the Yemeni conflict, causing national parties

⁵¹ "Yemen Crisis Explained." *Unrefugees.org*, 2015, www.unrefugees.org/news/yemen-crisis-explained/. Accessed 24 July 2022.

⁵² "\$4.3 Billion Needed to Help over 17 Million People across Yemen | 1UN News." United Nations. United Nations. Accessed November 3, 2022. <https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/03/1114032>.

⁵³ Ibid.

to be embroiled in a never-ending conflict and giving leeway for international terror groups to expand their support and power base. Thus, to preserve international peace and security, this matter is expected to be debated during council sessions.

Challenges to the Provision of Humanitarian Aid

The devaluation of the Yemeni rial (YER) continues to worsen exponentially for Yemen's economy, further increasing the prices of essential sustenance such as food, fuel and healthcare. Yemeni Rial fell by 57 per cent from January to December of 2021,⁵⁴ reaching an all-time low. In principle, currency depreciation causes inflation due to the increase in the prices of imports. Accompanied by the lack of supply, this has rapidly increased the number of impoverished citizens. The economic instability of the country is closely linked with its humanitarian crisis, with the decrease in people's purchasing power affecting their access to necessary goods and services. Hence, with humanitarian support crippled internally, Yemen relies heavily on unsustainable foreign aid amidst the onerous sanctions put on it by foreign nations.

Even in times of crisis, corruption and squandering of much-needed funds are carried out from both ends - the recognised government and the AQAP. Transparency International's 2021 Corruption Perception Index ranks the country in 174th place out of 180 countries evaluated. A high ranking such as Yemen's corresponds to a widespread perception of corruption in the country's public sector.⁵⁵ These practices have adversely affected access to much-needed commodity supplies for Yemenis. In January 2018, a 2 billion deposit by Saudi Arabia to the Central Bank of Yemen to fund credit for Yemenis in strengthening food security and evening domestic prices were used in a money-laundering scheme, with public corporations receiving a windfall of \$423 million.⁵⁶ On the other hand, the Iranian-backed Houthis have diverted an estimated \$2 billion worth of taxes and state revenue to fund their war economy,⁵⁷ resulting in increasing military strength and tensions between both ends. The unruly practices from both ends have exploited the needs of its Yemeni citizens to advance their political agendas, while human rights violations, starvation and lack of shelter continue to taunt its people.

Moreover, the Houthis have largely hindered humanitarian efforts by the UN and the rest of the international community. With most of the Yemeni population under their control they have increasingly seized humanitarian aid before it reaches those for which it is intended. Furthermore,

⁵⁴ "Yemen Humanitarian Needs Overview 2022 (April 2022) [EN/AR] - Yemen." *ReliefWeb*, 19 April 2022, www.reliefweb.int/report/yemen/yemen-humanitarian-needs-overview-2022-april-2022 Accessed 24 July 2022.

⁵⁵ "Yemen", Transparency.org, (n.d.), <https://www.transparency.org/en/countries/yemen> Accessed 24 July 2022.

⁵⁶ "UN Report Accuses Yemen's Warring Sides of Corruption." *Occrp.org*, 2021, www.occrp.org/en/daily/13745-un-report-accuses-yemen-s-warring-sides-of-corruption Accessed 24 July 2022.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

weak government institutions have obstructed the efficient movement of aid into Yemen.⁵⁸ Conflict arose between the Houthis and the World Food Programme (WFP) and the Houthis as they threatened to suspend humanitarian aid in 2018, after discovering that food donated to Houthi-controlled areas had been diverted away.⁵⁹ The WFP has stated that humanitarian workers were denied access to the starving civilians, with transport convoys being blocked and local Houthi authorities interfering with the distribution of food.

Escalation of Conflict

Arms Sales and Chicanery

Many western countries such as the USA, UK and France have publicly supported and supplied Saudi Arabia with weaponry and arms. According to Opensecrets, 43 per cent of US arms exports are being distributed in the Middle East, of which, Saudi Arabia has received nearly a quarter of exports.⁶⁰ On 2 August 2022, the Biden administration approved 3.05 billion USD in sales of the Phased Array Tracking Radar to Intercept on Target MIM-104E Guidance Enhanced Missile-Tactical (PATRIOT MIM104-E GEM-T) surface-to-air missiles and a separate 2.245 billion USD sale of Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) missiles and control stations.⁶¹ Arms of such calibre are at the disposal of the Saudi military and have been utilised in its various military operations across the middle east, especially in Yemen.

Across the pond, the United Kingdom has officially sold £7.1 billion to the Saudi coalition since the start of its Yemen campaign.⁶² However, the Campaign Against Arms Trade (CAAT), which was able to successfully sue the government to temporarily halt arms exports to Saudi Arabia from 2018 to 2020,⁶³ has estimated that number to be close to £25 billion.⁶⁴ Of which, £2.7 billion was dedicated to the shipment of aircraft, helicopters and drones, while an additional £2.5 billion was dedicated to grenade bombs, and missiles, among other countermeasures.⁶⁵ France has also sold dozens of Rafales

⁵⁸ UN Press. "Failure in Delivering Aid for Yemenis 'the Worst International Response to a Humanitarian Crisis', Civil Society Briefer Tells Security Council." *Un.org*, 14 October 2021, www.press.un.org/en/2021/sc14661.doc.htm. Accessed 24 July 2022.

⁵⁹ "World Food Programme Begins Partial Suspension of Aid in Yemen | World Food Programme.", 20 June 2019, www.wfp.org/news/world-food-programme-begins-partial-suspension-aid-yemen. Accessed 24 July 2022.

⁶⁰ "Capitalising on Conflict: How U.S. Arm Sales Fuel the Humanitarian Crisis in Yemen." *OpenSecrets*, 2021, www.opensecrets.org/news/reports/capitalizing-on-conflict/yemen-case-study. Accessed 24 July 2022.

⁶¹ Hansler, Jennifer. "Biden Admin Approves Potential Multibillion-Dollar Arms Sales to Saudi Arabia and UAE." *CNN*, CNN, 2 August 2022, www.edition.cnn.com/2022/08/02/politics/us-saudi-uae-proposed-arms-deal/index.html. Accessed 24 July 2022.

⁶² Campaign against Arms Trade." *Caat.org.uk*, 2013, www.caat.org.uk/data/exports-uk/overview?region=Saudi+Arabia&period=yemen-bombing-2015. Accessed 24 July 2022.

⁶³ Ibid

⁶⁴ Ibid

⁶⁵ Ibid

fighter jets to the United Arab Emirates, one of the prominent members of the GCC leading the war in Yemen.⁶⁶

On the other hand, the Houthi Rebels are widely supported by the Iranians. The USA, in unison with Saudi Arabia, has since presented physical evidence of Iranian arms transfers to the Houthi Rebels.⁶⁷ UN experts note that resources like fuel and munition have been shipped illegally from Iran to Yemen to help the Houthi rebels, a move which has enabled the Houthis to overcome the UN sanctions against Yemen.⁶⁸ The Houthis achieve this through a complicated smuggling network that extends from Yemen to Somalia and the Gulf of Aden.⁶⁹ As mentioned earlier, the geographical advantage that Yemen provides Iran is a key reason why Houthi Rebels allied with Iran are largely funded by them. Their prominence in the region was also fuelled by the power plays from the Saudi-supported Saleh on his political opponents.

The pursuit of foreign countries' goals within the region of the Horn of Africa is the reason why both sides are flooded with weapons that are significantly more technologically advanced than the region itself. The local militia are supplied with these weaponry which are capable of causing destruction on a larger scale, not only killing innocent civilians but also rendering the progress made by humanitarian aid ineffective. The Yemeni human rights organisation Mwatana for Human Rights has documented at least 800 airstrikes and 700 ground offensives that have resulted in the deaths of over 3,000 civilians and injuries to at least 4,000 others. Many of these airstrikes would not have been possible without European armaments. To this day, European governments and companies continue to support the coalition by exporting bombs, weapons and spare parts, as well as maintenance and training services. Furthermore, these weapons have been used to carry out war crimes in the region, killing thousands of innocent civilians.

Within the USA, there have been numerous bipartisan attempts to stop the sale of arms to Saudi Arabia. In 2021, Senators Bernie Sanders (I-VT), Mike Lee (R-UT) and Rand Paul (R-KY) proposed halting the sale of 650 million USD worth of weapons to Saudi Arabia, with Sen. Sanders remarking, "As the Saudi government continues to wage its devastating war in Yemen and repress its people, we

⁶⁶ "France Should Stop Selling Arms to the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia." *Human Rights Watch*, 2 Dec. 2021, www.hrw.org/news/2021/12/02/france-should-stop-selling-arms-united-arab-emirates-saudi-arabia. Accessed 24 July 2022.

⁶⁷ Stewart, Phil. "In First, U.S. Presents Its Evidence of Iranian Weaponry from Yemen." *JP*, 14 Dec. 2017, www.jp.reuters.com/article/usa-iran-arms-idINL1N1OD2W2. Accessed 24 July 2022.

⁶⁸ Lederer, Edith M. "UN Experts: Fuel from Iran Is Financing Yemen Rebels' War." *AP NEWS*, Associated Press, 19 January 2019, www.apnews.com/article/b406265e1c6642fd9a614416270263b6. Accessed 24 July 2022.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

should not be rewarding them with more arms sales.”⁷⁰ However, this measure, along with similar measures in countries like the UK and France, has failed because of the fear of unilateral disarmament in the war against the armed Houthi rebels.⁷¹ Considering that the Houthis are insurgents who toppled a democratically elected government and possess many ways to obtain arms and the Saudi-led “problematic ally” coalition is fighting them to restore the prior democratic government, it explains why some western countries that are concerned with human rights support Saudi Arabia in this quest. However, for some countries like Germany and Spain⁷², such allies are too problematic to work with after the state-sanctioned assassination of reporter Jamal Khashoggi along with the significant anti-democratic and anti-egalitarian track record of these middle eastern nations. This situation presents the UNSC with a crossroad. Should the UNSC stand up for democracy and if it should, is it doing so by supporting anti-democratic states fighting to restore a democratic government in the face of insurrectionists or if it removes support from such anti-democratic states?

Given that the interests of the UNSC lie in the mediation of conflict and its commitment to human rights, it would be within the purview of its mandate to discuss the severity of the issue of arms trade and the means to meaningfully combat it.

⁷⁰ Mike Stone, Patricia Zengerle. “U.S. Senators Move to Block \$650 Mln Arms Sale to Saudi Arabia.”, Reuters, 18 Nov. 2021, www.reuters.com/markets/asia/us-senators-move-block-650-mln-arms-sale-saudi-arabia-2021-11-18/. Accessed 24 July 2022.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Dudley, Dominic. “Why More and More Countries Are Blocking Arms Sales to Saudi Arabia and the UAE.” *Forbes*, 7 Sept. 2018, www.forbes.com/sites/dominicdudley/2018/09/07/why-more-and-more-countries-are-blocking-arms-sales-to-saudi-arabia-and-the-uae/?sh=26c0f241580a. Accessed 24 July 2022.

Geographical Significance of Yemen

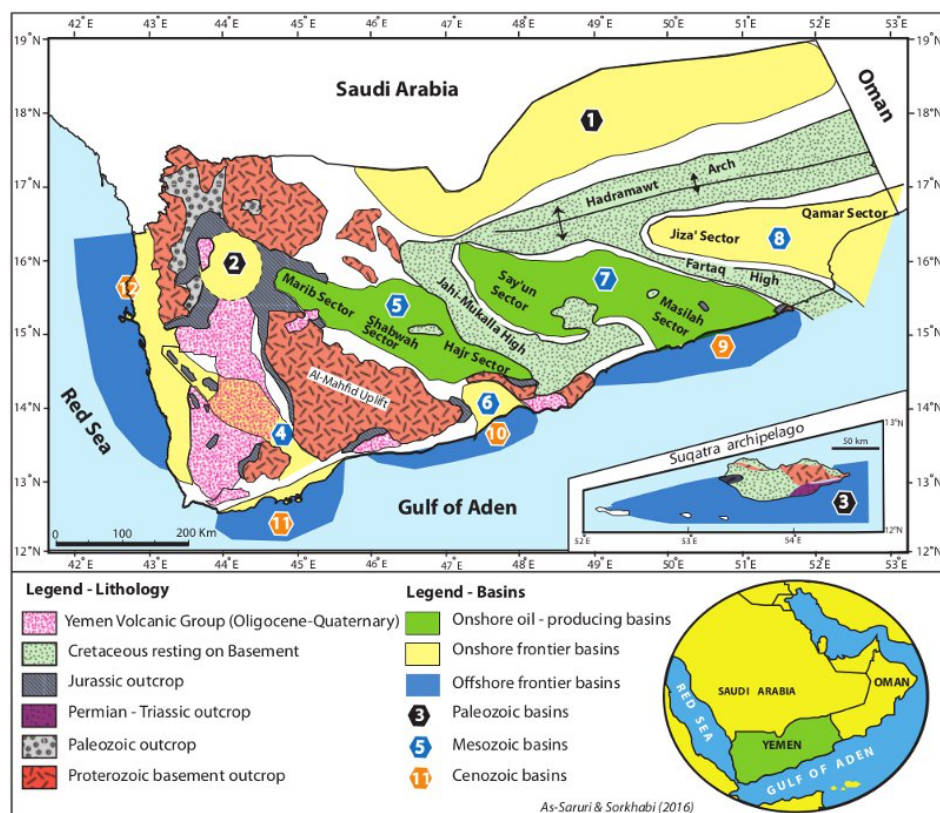


Figure 2: Map of oil fields in Yemen⁷³

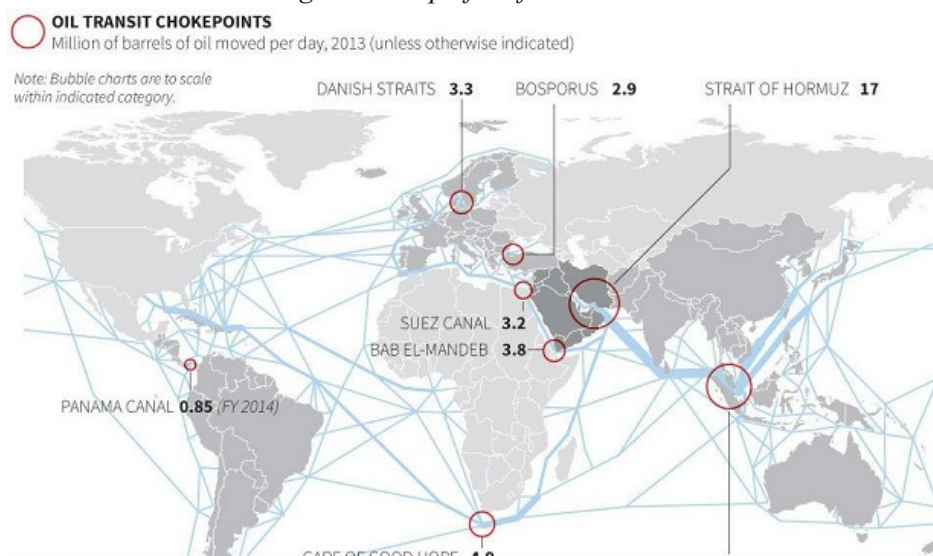


Figure 3: Map of world oil shipping routes⁷⁴

A reason why international players have a stake in this war is that Yemen is endowed with vast natural resources and a prime location along the Gulf of Aden. As exemplified by figure 2, Yemen is home to

⁷³ Mustafa. "Petroleum Basins of Yemen." *GEO ExPro*, 7 April 2016, www.geoexpro.com/articles/2016/04/petroleum-basins-of-yemen. Accessed 24 July 2022.

⁷⁴ The Maritime Executive. "Yemen Puts Major Shipping Route at Risk." *The Maritime Executive*, The Maritime Executive, 28 Mar. 2015, www.maritime-executive.com/article/yemen-puts-major-shipping-route-at-risk. Accessed 24 July 2022.

vast oil reserves, along with minerals like gold, iron ore, nickel and zinc.⁷⁵ Before the war, it was estimated that Yemen had 3 billion barrels of oil, exporting 40 per cent of its production overseas. This amounted to 715 million USD in oil exports in 2015 alone. Considering its current consumption, Yemen has 137 more years to deplete its oil reserves, which has gathered the attention of multinational oil companies, the Houthis and Al Qaeda alike.⁷⁶ When Al Qaeda took over the coast of Hadramout, it was able to effectively utilise intermediaries to sell oil to countries like China. The funds derived from sales subsequently went into its terrorist operations, along with fortifying its gains in the region. The Houthis similarly benefit from the large oil fields, like in 2017, when the state-owned Safer Exploration and Production Operations Company reported that the security forces assigned to protect Yemen's largest oil fields in the Marib region were stealing the oil and transporting it to the Houthis.⁷⁷

Yemen is also involved in the production of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) - natural gas that has been condensed to a liquid to facilitate transportation through a pipeline and storage - in its Balhaf facility. The Balhaf facility is run by a raft of multinational oil companies in conjunction with the state-owned Yemen Oil and Gas Corporation including French-based TotalEnergies, and US-based Hunt Oil.⁷⁸ Although expatriates sent to Yemen to assist in the extraction of natural gas have been moved back to their respective countries, it is likely that once the war concludes, the plant would become fully functional. Given the price of LNG has quadrupled in 2021, compared to 2020, the potential revenues that can be derived from the export of LNG prove too valuable a resource. Another potential reason of interest for foreign governments in Yemen's LNG industry would be the need to replace Russia as a source of LNG in near future. Russia's war on Ukraine has forced many European nations, like Germany, to switch to other LNG providers, like the UAE.⁷⁹ If Yemen can return to pre-war production levels, it may be able to cater to such needs, reducing reliance on Russian oil. The combined factors of the price of LNG and Russia would, therefore, be an incentive for foreign intervention in the conflict to end it.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ "Yemen Oil Reserves, Production and Consumption Statistics - Worldometer." *Worldometers.info*, 2016, www.worldometers.info/oil/yemen-oil/. Accessed 24 July 2022.

⁷⁷ Wang, Herman. "Promising Signs for Yemen's Oil Industry, but Civil War Rages." *Spglobal.com*, S&P Global Commodity Insights, 23 January 2020, www.spglobal.com/commodityinsights/en/market-insights/latest-news/natural-gas/012320-promising-signs-for-yemens-oil-industry-but-civil-war-rages. Accessed 24 July 2022.

⁷⁸ "Yemen LNG Update." *TotalEnergies.com*, 2019, www.totalenergies.com/media/news/press-releases/yemen-lng-update. Accessed 24 July 2022.

⁷⁹ Kerr, Simeon. "UAE Agrees LNG Deal with Germany as Berlin Looks to Replace Russian Gas.", *Financial Times*, 25 September 2022, www.ft.com/content/0065dfcc-4519-41b6-9883-92e7ff13777d. Accessed 24 July 2022.

Apart from its resources, Yemen has strategic value to foreign countries due to its strategic location on the Bab el-Mandeb strait. It is a strait that links to the Suez Canal, an artificial water passage that connects the Mediterranean sea to the Indian Ocean, allowing for an effective shipping route between Asia and Europe. As such, the closure of the Bab el-Mandeb strait would lead to the automatic closure of the Suez canal, even though the Suez canal is managed by Egypt. A temporary closure of the Suez Canal in March 2021 owing to a blockage caused by a ship lodged in the channel caused weeks of delay and cost 400 million USD per hour in delayed goods.⁸⁰ If the Bab el-Mandeb strait were to be closed due to excessive fighting in Yemen, it could worsen existing supply shortages and cause prices of commodities and consumer goods to skyrocket. Closure of the strait can also impede humanitarian efforts as food, shelter, and clothing, among other resources cannot be transported into Yemen.⁸¹

The Suez Canal is also the primary shipping oil route for middle eastern oil-producing nations to western nations. As such, when the Iran-supported Houthis approached the southern region of Yemen bordering the Bab el Mandeb strait in 2015, there was a rapid scramble from the UAE and the rest of the GCC to neutralise the threat. While the PLC can control the strait via the port of Al-Mokhay,⁸² the Houthis control key ports in the strait, like Hodeidah and Salif. As such, both sides are capable of using the strait as a battleground, which has the potential of closing it. Hence, if the Houthis can establish control of the strait, Iran could determine what goods can flow through the Suez canal. Hence, the scales of world power would tip immensely to Iran as many economies are reliant on the Suez canal for quick transportation of goods, like the United Kingdom and many Eastern countries.⁸³

⁸⁰ Dzhanova, Yelena. "The Suez Canal Has Been Blocked and Closed Several Times since Opening." *Business Insider*, Insider, 28 March 2021, www.businessinsider.com/the-suez-canal-blocked-and-closed-several-times-since-opening-2021-3. Accessed 24 July 2022.

⁸¹ Reuters. "Saudi-Led Coalition Says Houthi Actions Turn Yemen Ports into Legitimate Targets." *Reuters*, Reuters, 8 January 2022, www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/saudi-led-coalition-says-houthis-actions-turn-yemen-ports-into-legitimate-2022-01-08/. Accessed 24 July 2022.

⁸² Helal Aljamra. "Bab-El-Mandeb, Gateway to the Red Sea: The World's Most Dangerous Strait." *Inside Arabia*, August 2019, www.insidearabia.com/bab-el-mandeb-gateway-to-the-red-sea-the-worlds-most-dangerous-strait/. Accessed 24 July 2022.

⁸³ Taweel, A. el. (2018, July 16). *Analysis - Economic Trends*. Future Center - Containing Threats in Bab al-Mandab. Retrieved November 2, 2022, from <https://futureuae.com/m/Mainpage/Item/4083/the-strait-containing-threats-in-bab-al-mandab> Accessed 2 November 2022

Scope of Debate

Deescalation of Conflict

Considering the extent of damage that has been caused by this war, coming up with means to ensure long-term peace would benefit the region. Understanding the advantages and disadvantages of foreign intervention in the conflict, delegates need to decipher the extent of foreign intervention necessary in the deescalation of the Civil War while looking at the multi-faceted aspects that contribute to it.

In 2011, the GCC Transition Initiative was implemented to protect the political transition launched then which saw the Yemeni people demonstrate their will and vote in Abdo Rabo Mansour Hadi as the transitional president of Yemen against an armed resurrection.⁸⁴ However, with the rise of the Houthi insurrection in the proceeding years, this initiative also failed. Additionally, in 2016, an attempt to achieve a comprehensive resolution of the conflict (ultimately unsuccessful) was carried out in Kuwait. In those talks, the only parties at the table were the Houthis and the government.⁸⁵ Other stakeholders were not directly engaged in the negotiations, although they were present. The international community should work towards more inclusive discussion and create more concrete conflict resolution mechanisms.

One of which is the option to end the proxy war. The UNSC, as a body with the authority to bring together regional powers to the negotiating table, can either force the smaller players in this conflict to negotiate or engage larger regional players to negotiate peace terms. More specifically, the UNSC can bring together the financiers of both sides to negotiate: the GCC and Iran. Although Iran and the GCC have their differences, both wish to see a quick end to the conflict.^{86,87}

That can only be achieved if there is an assurance from both countries that they (or their allies) would not engage in the funding of militias in Yemen, shrivelling the militias' main source of funding, and causing the fighting to eventually die out. This also has the added benefit of shrinking the arms trade in Yemen, considering the weapons traded are produced by Iran and GCC allies. However, it is likely that any such peace treaties signed by such parties would not last long, primarily due to efforts to renege from their promises. This is best exemplified by the conflict in the West Bank, between Israel

⁸⁴ "Agreement on the implementation mechanism for the transition process in Yemen in accordance with the initiative of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)" 12 May, 2011. McAuley. https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/YE_111205_Agreement%20on%20the%20implementation%20mechanism%20for%20the%20transition.pdf

⁸⁵ Yemen: Ending the War, Building A Sustainable Peace, Gerald M. Feierstein, March 2022, <https://www.mei.edu/sites/default/files/2022-03/Yemen%20-%20Ending%20the%20War%2C%20Building%20a%20Sustainable%20Peace.pdf> Accessed 24 July 2022.

⁸⁶ Reuters. "Iran Welcomes Yemen Truce, Urges Political Solution." *Reuters*, Reuters, 2 April 2022, www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/iran-welcomes-yemen-truce-urges-political-solution-2022-04-02/. Accessed 24 July 2022.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

and Palestine, where armed conflict still rages on⁸⁸, even though treaties like the Camp David Accords and the Oslo Accords aimed to mediate peace via power-sharing agreements were signed. The treaty would have to ensure compliance amongst the different parties, while ensuring their commitment to the terms laid out. Hence, the UNSC would have to think outside the box to make sure that a meaningful resolution passes.

The plan to eradicate terrorism in the region also needs to be discussed. Considering that terrorists can take advantage of a weakened Yemen to recruit more soldiers for their cause and target both PLC and Houthi activities, a combined offensive against them would help unify both warring factions and stamp out terrorist activities in Yemen as it is being rebuilt. Although the Houthis have ruled out attempts to work with the PLC, Iran and its close ally Al Qaeda are also interested in eradicating ISIS.⁸⁹ While the negotiations to reorient factions that have been itching at each other's throats for the past decade would be tough, they are not impossible. Hence, the UNSC must pull out all stops to make sure that the resolve of the GCC and Iran bends enough to strengthen Yemen and concentrate militaristic efforts on combatting terrorism. Both actions require delegates to explore the use of foreign intervention as a means for resolving the conflict, whether in the short or long term.

Provision of Humanitarian Aid

Another aspect of foreign intervention which delegates need to consider is the aspect of external foreign aid. Given the introduction of the unprecedented Covid-19 pandemic, this has led to an ever-increasing need for healthcare. Currently, 21.9 million people require critical health services.⁹⁰ The highest level of vulnerability is present among children and women. This stems from the lack of water sanitation and hygiene services which has led to the outbreak of infectious diseases and malnutrition and is estimated to further increase. To achieve adequate country-wide protection against COVID-19, 70 per cent of Yemeni adults are required to be vaccinated. Yet, as recorded from 12 May 2022, only a total of 886 664 adults have been vaccinated, despite its population of over 29 million.⁹¹ With the ever-increasing need of attention paid to medical needs, the access for basic goods and services such as food and amenities also need to be channelled into affected Yemeni citizens. In this aspect, Yemen requires aid from external countries and organisations, but lasting long-term and sustainable solutions in order for aid to be transported should be discussed correspondingly. Donors

⁸⁸ "Israeli-Palestinian Conflict | Global Conflict Tracker." *Global Conflict Tracker*, 2015, www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/israeli-palestinian-conflict. Accessed 24 July 2022.

⁸⁹ Tabatabai, Ariane. "Cooperating with Iran to Combat ISIS in Iraq." *Belfer Centre for Science and International Affairs*, 2017, www.belfercenter.org/publication/cooperating-iran-combat-isis-iraq. Accessed 24 July 2022.

⁹⁰ "WHO Project to Boost COVID-19 Vaccination Coverage in Yemen - Yemen." *ReliefWeb*, 17 June 2022, www.reliefweb.int/report/yemen/who-project-boost-covid-19-vaccination-coverage-yemen. Accessed 24 July 2022.

⁹¹ Ibid.

can look towards new strategies of providing the necessary support for development aid, which can in the long run address the structural problems which have vastly contributed to human suffering. An active partnership between international humanitarian and development agencies can then rule out the underlying causes of humanitarian issues, predominantly food insecurity and malnutrition to its maximum effectiveness.⁹²

Yet, foreign intervention likewise has brought up complications in regards to the illicit trading of weapons and arms across countries. The arms sales from external countries have skyrocketed over the years, with countries supplying military aid to both factions in the conflict. As countries continue to publicly express their support for Saudi Arabia and the Houthis have resulted in the further escalation of conflict, increasing the inevitability of violence in the region, resulting in loss in civilian injuries and casualties in the region. The implication of human loss due to respective foreign countries' involvement in the conflict needs to be assessed by the delegates in council, while keeping their respective countries' stances and beliefs in mind.

War Crimes

At the Geneva Conventions, anti-war crime declarations were created to protect the lives of innocents and prevent the unfair treatment of soldiers. From that point on, although the situation has improved slightly, there still have been many breaches with war crimes being committed in many small-scale and large-scale civil wars. One such scenario is the Yemeni Civil War, where the lack of consideration of human rights remains ubiquitous, with many war crimes being committed by both the GCC and the Houthis.

The GCC committed indiscriminate air bombings, sent in armed hostile forces, arbitrary detention, sexual and gender-based violence in Yemen. The military coalition led by Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates in Yemen has killed thousands of civilians in airstrikes, tortured detainees, raped civilians and used child soldiers as young as 8.⁹³ Yet, these heinous actions are continually supported by the allies of the GCC. This is made worse by the fact that intelligence provided by them has been used to bomb hostile forces with innocent casualties. This raises questions about the suitability of the new government being helmed by them after the overthrowing of the Houthis. However, that is not to say that the Houthi side is free from its share of controversy. The UN Human Rights Watch reported that Houthi forces have used banned antipersonnel landmines, recruited

⁹² Sharaf, Nabil. "The Flaws and Failures of International Humanitarian Aid to Yemen." *Arab Center Washington DC*, 24 Oct. 2022, www.arabcenterdc.org/resource/the-flaws-and-failures-of-international-humanitarian-aid-to-yemen/. Accessed 28 October 2022

⁹³ Ibid.

children, and fired artillery indiscriminately into cities such as Taizz, killing and wounding civilians, and launched indiscriminate ballistic missiles into Saudi Arabia.⁹⁴

Considering both standpoints, delegates are encouraged to discuss more on how war criminals involved in the Yemeni civil war can be held accountable for the war crimes committed and the correlating judicial precedents on other human rights issues in the future. The issue of the death of innocents is a pertinent one, disrupting the peace and security of the entire Middle Eastern region as a whole. With war crimes being among the gravest in international humanitarian law, exploration into the effective use of persecution can be discussed among delegates. The persecution of war crimes and criminals are commonly carried out by the ICC, and can occur anytime, no matter how long it has been since the atrocities were committed. However, it is to note that the jurisdiction of these crimes can only be dealt with by the ICC if they as long as hitting the requirements of a war crime.⁹⁵ After gathering sufficient evidence, a series of trials are carried out to determine the corresponding consequences. Delegates should also consider the means through which such war crimes are investigated and come up with appropriate punishments for the type of crimes committed to send a strong message that, even in war, the right to life is never undermined.

Enhancing Past UNSC Actions

From 2014 to the present, the United Nations as a whole has passed many resolutions regarding the Yemeni Civil War and has called for various changes to be enacted regarding the situation in Yemen. These actions have enabled a suite of effective sanctions and travel bans to be implemented against the Houthi regime and other pro-Houthi parties.

Some key UNSC resolutions passed include Resolution 2201,⁹⁶ demanding that all parties in Yemen cease all armed hostilities against the people and the legitimate authorities of Yemen and relinquish the arms seized from Yemen's military; and 2216,⁹⁷ imposing a targeted arms embargo against individuals or entities designated by the Committee and encouraging resolution through bilateral discussions. However, Ali al-Dahab, a Yemeni researcher and military affairs analyst has labelled

⁹⁴ "World Report 2020: Rights Trends in Yemen." *Human Rights Watch*, 12 Dec. 2019, www.hrw.org/world-report/2020/country-chapters/yemen#:~:text=Houthi%20forces%20have%20used%20banned,ballistic%20missiles%20into%20Saudi%20Arabia. Accessed 24 July 2022.

⁹⁵ Al Arabiya English. "Explainer: What Are War Crimes and How Are They Prosecuted?" *Al Arabiya English*, 18 May 2022, www.english.alarabiya.net/features/2022/05/18/Explainer-What-are-war-crimes-and-how-are-they-prosecuted-. Accessed 24 July 2022.

⁹⁶ UN Security Council Resolution 2201. Adopted 15 February, 2021. http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_res_2201.pdf.

⁹⁷ UN Security Council Resolution 2216. Adopted 14 April, 2015. http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_res_2216.pdf.

UNSC resolutions as merely affirmative action due to their inability to resolve the conflict. According to him, “The resolution has only an honourable impact of [...] supporting the regional intervention in Yemen.”⁹⁸ Article 1 of resolution 2216 demands that the Houthis essentially recognised the authority of the government of Yemen, without recognising its lack of legitimacy to the other warring parties.⁹⁹

Furthermore, reports have indicated that sanctions have been ineffective and potentially even worsened the situation in Yemen. Evasion of sanctions by Iran and the Houthis have contributed to the inefficacy of sanctions - Iran has been noted to be actively smuggling weapons to the Houthis. The “imbalanced sanction programme” has also pushed the Houthis to be “less willing to negotiate in good faith.”¹⁰⁰ Additionally, the harshness of the penalties for violating sanctions could result in critical businesses, such as food importers, to suspend operations in Yemen.¹⁰¹

These issues demonstrate a need to relook at the direction of past UNSC resolutions and actions in Yemen. For instance, delegates may consider whether “humanitarian carveouts”, similar to those in resolution 2615, can be implemented to lessen the impact on the humanitarian crisis. Delegates may also wish to consider how other issues that have previously been ignored by UNSC resolutions can be better addressed. This could include the issue of Saudi airstrikes on civilian targets or supporting parts of the aviation industry that could bring in aid.¹⁰²

⁹⁸ “War in Yemen Is 'Model' for Success or Failure of UNSC: Expert.” Anadolu Ajansı. Anadolu Ajansı. Accessed November 3, 2022. <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/war-in-yemen-is-model-for-success-or-failure-of-uns-c-expert/2563215>.

⁹⁹ “The UNSC Should Not Repeat Its Yemen Errors in Ethiopia.” Reinventing Peace. Reinventing Peace, November 8, 2021. <https://sites.tufts.edu/reinventingpeace/2021/10/25/the-uns-c-should-not-repeat-its-yemen-errors-in-ethiopia/>.

¹⁰⁰ Sana’a Center. “UN Experts Detail Abuses in Yemen; Security Council Shrugs.” Sana’a Center For Strategic Studies. Sana’a Center For Strategic Studies, January 13, 2021. <https://sanaacenter.org/publications/analysis/9339>.

¹⁰¹ “Yemen: Sanctions Resolution*.” Security Council Report. Security Council Report. Accessed November 3, 2022. <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/whatsinblue/2022/02/yemen-sanctions-resolution.php>.

¹⁰² Sana’a Center. “UN Experts Detail Abuses in Yemen; Security Council Shrugs.” Sana’a Center For Strategic Studies. Sana’a Center For Strategic Studies, January 13, 2021. <https://sanaacenter.org/publications/analysis/9339>.

Potential Solutions

An Indefinite Ceasefire

A ceasefire refers to the suspension of active hostilities.¹⁰³ As of October 2022, there have been 4 ceasefires enacted in Yemen, each one granting a short lease of life to the impoverished Yemeni civilians. The longest one lasted from April 2022 to October 2, 2022, and according to the International charity Save the Children, the truce had led to a 60 per cent decrease in displacement and a 34 per cent drop in child casualties in Yemen.¹⁰⁴ Furthermore, fuel imports into the port of Hodeidah have also quadrupled, leading to drastic improvements in their standards of living.¹⁰⁵ However, following each side blaming the other for its breakdown, there has not been a renewal of this ceasefire agreement. Having a renewal of this ceasefire would result in a host of benefits for both sides, working to improve the humanitarian situation in Yemen itself, that being said, it in itself is not without its flaws.

A good example of an effective ceasefire would be the demilitarised Zone between North and South Korea. Since its enactment in 1953, the only breaches have been the construction of a few incursion tunnels by the North Korean sides, but it has proved effective in stopping the violence between both sides. If such a zone were to be established in Yemen, it would provide a moment of peace and stability for the region that would reduce the amount of death temporarily. During the previous 6-month-long ceasefire, the number of civilian deaths declined by 60 per cent, and displacement nearly halved, according to the UN.¹⁰⁶ If a longer, more permanent ceasefire were to be implemented, the lives of Yemeni civilians can improve and stabilise. Furthermore, this change would enable the provision of humanitarian aid by the UN or by other third parties. This is of utmost importance considering that the price of flour has increased by 3000 per cent since 2010, which would lead to famines as flour is a staple in the Yemeni diet. For example, in the Tigray war, the humanitarian truce called upon by the Ethiopian government enabled the UN to send aid to more restricted parts of their country, raising the number of people who were able to receive aid from 7000 in some places to more than a 100 thousand. Yemen should learn from their example and likewise, extend its humanitarian ceasefire.¹⁰⁷ Lastly, it would also allow for the government or Houthis to focus on eradicating AQAP,

¹⁰³ “Merriam-Webster Dictionary.” *Merriam-Webster.com*, 2022, www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/cease-fire. Accessed 5 October 2022

¹⁰⁴ Jazeera, Al. “Does the End of Yemen’s Truce Mean Return to Full-Blown Fighting?”, Al Jazeera, 3 October 2022, www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/10/3/is-fighting-about-to-return-to-yemen-explainer. Accessed 5 October 2022

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Jazeera, Al. “Yemen War Deaths Will Reach 377,000 by End of the Year: UN.” Al Jazeera, 23 November 2021, www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/11/23/un-yemen-recovery-possible-in-one-generation-if-war-stops-now. Accessed 5 October 2022

¹⁰⁷ Al Jazeera Staff. “End of Yemen’s Truce Leaves Civilians Afraid Dark Days Are Back.” Al Jazeera, 7 Oct. 2022, www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/10/7/end-yemen-truce-leaves-civilians-afraid-dark-days-back. Accessed 5 October 2022

rather than fighting amongst themselves. This would further raise the standard of living for Yemeni civilians as instead of expending vital resources in fighting a civil war, they could instead be diverted to curb the oppression of the innocent public and to secure necessities for them.

However, this approach does not come without its flaws. One drawback could be that the peace allows for the Houthi rebels to regroup and go on the offensive once the ceasefire expires. Historically, there have already been examples of this with the ceasefire between the KMT and the Communist party in the 1950s China enabled the communist to build up their forces and carry on with a bloody civil war.¹⁰⁸ In Yemen itself, the Houthi rebels have threatened to attack oil companies operating in Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Yemen. Houthi military spokesman, Yahya Saree, said the group was ready for another round of fighting after using this long ceasefire to regroup.¹⁰⁹ If given more time, the Houthi rebels could build up even more troops and forces and may even break the ceasefire at a time that is optimal for them, enabling them to gain control over the region. More importantly, the pressing issue with this solution is that the ceasefire does not solve the issue of split control over territory in the country itself and does not serve as an adequate conclusion to the issue. With different parts of Yemen being under the control of the Houthis and the Yemeni government, they will be subject to different standards of living and governance, making it impossible for effective humanitarian aid to be rendered to them. For example, the continued Houthi blockade of Yemen's third-largest city Taiz reduces the feasibility of potential aid efforts. A foreseeable problem would be the message sent by an indefinite ceasefire. Considering that an indefinite ceasefire halts all fighting, it would suggest that the PLC and GCC have ceded the lands lost to the Houthis, like the country's capital Sana'a. In that event, this would be viewed as a victory for the Houthis as this concession may empower them to declare independence from Yemen as a sovereign state, albeit one which may not be recognised by other countries. This may result in further conflicts down the line, i.e border disputes.

It is to be noted the differences between a ceasefire and a peaceful resolution - a ceasefire is a temporary peace truce, whereas a peaceful resolution is often characterised by establishing a set of mutually attainable goals in the long run that preserves peace via a treaty. While an indefinite ceasefire is beneficial in the short term, countries should work towards finding a more concrete long-term solution that specifies peace terms and aligns with the stances of the relevant blocs.

¹⁰⁸ "The Chinese Revolution of 1949." U.S. Department of State. U.S. Department of State. Accessed November 3, 2022. <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1945-1952/chinese-rev>.

¹⁰⁹ "End of Yemen's Truce Leaves Civilians Afraid Dark Days Are Back." Al Jazeera. Al Jazeera, October 12, 2022. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/10/7/end-yemen-truce-leaves-civilians-afraid-dark-days-back>.

War Crimes Tribunal

As previously mentioned, multiple disgraceful war crimes have been committed during the course of this conflict and there likely are more that have gone unreported. As per the UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights, war crimes go against the fundamental right of the individual to not be subjected to arbitrary detention.¹¹⁰ In such a scenario, the United Nations needs to intervene to stop such crimes and hold perpetrators accountable. The United Nations Security Council can intervene in this matter by creating an international criminal tribunal to oversee the war crimes perpetrated in Yemen as enshrined in Article 41 of the UN Charter.¹¹¹

There is precedent for the UNSC in creating such courts. In the aftermath of the 1994 Rwandan Genocide and the 1991 Yugoslav wars, the UNSC created the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) and the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY).¹¹² Both had the simple aim of prosecuting war crimes committed during their respective conflicts and bringing the perpetrators to justice. They were bodies of the UN that possessed their prosecutors, judges and detention facilities that aided in the investigation of said war crimes.

Such courts were able to bring those who were considered to have impunity in committing war crimes to justice. The ICTY was able to successfully indict the sitting President of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Slobodan Milošević on 66 counts of crimes against humanity for his role in instigating genocide, and sexual assault among other crimes committed in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina.¹¹³ It was also able to successfully prosecute many Bosnian Serb army officers on account of rape as torture.¹¹⁴ Moreover, it was able to end the ambiguity surrounding the Srebrenica massacre, which was later classified as an unequivocal genocide.¹¹⁵ How these cases were handled set the precedent for the prosecution of war crimes as they were able to enact the idea that nobody was above the law.

However, the courts were ultimately a product of the UNSC and the member states within them. The ICTR was notorious for its limitations in practicality and its deliverance of justice for victims. Firstly, the ICTR was infamously biased towards one side of the conflict, despite both sides committing serious war crimes. They did not prosecute war crimes that were committed by the Rwandan Patriotic

¹¹⁰ United Nations. "Universal Declaration of Human Rights | United Nations." *United Nations*, United Nations, 2022, www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights. Accessed 5 October 2022.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² "International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia: United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia." International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia . United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. Accessed November 3, 2022. <https://www.icty.org/>.

¹¹³ "Indictments | International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia." *Icty.org*, 2017, www.icty.org/en/content/indictments. Accessed 5 October 2022.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ "ICTY Remembers: The Srebrenica Genocide (1995 - 2015)." *Irmct.org*, 2015, www.irmct.org/specials/srebrenica20/index.html. Accessed 5 October 2022

Front (RPF), the rebels who would later form the Rwandan Government after overthrowing the existing Hutu government that was enacting genocide on Rwandans.¹¹⁶ They failed to hold the leader of the RPF, the subsequent head of state, to account due to the USA's desire to forge strong ties with Rwanda after the genocide.¹¹⁷ This problem is commonly known as victor's justice and it may happen in Yemen should either side win. After all, it is unlikely that states, especially those with a spotty human rights track record, would choose to implicate themselves in something as grave as war crimes when they could, instead, focus on the crimes committed by their enemies. Given that such countries influenced the death of the Yemen war crimes watchdog in the UN Human Rights Council,¹¹⁸ it would be likely that any proposal involving such a court of law would be voted down unless said courts were perhaps watered down.

Another potential limitation would be the long procedures that it would take to implicate war criminals. Both the ICTR and ICTY were created in the early 1990s, but both were still actively prosecuting war criminals in the early 2010s. Even after the closure of the respective tribunals, a separate UN mechanism called the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals (MICT) is handling cases related to the ICTR and ICTY. This limitation is natural, considering the large amount of evidence needed to be collected from regions ravaged by war to implicate war criminals who may possess the powers of the state.

Regardless, a system to deliver justice and accountability is needed in Yemen, because a nation liberated by human rights violations would not be uncomfortable in committing them in the future. The council has to weigh its options to pursue justice for those wronged by war crimes from its more ambitious option, i.e a criminal tribunal, to more practical alternatives, e.g referral to the International Criminal Court.

Economic Relief

With the number of people displaced and in dire need of food and resources, humanitarian aid is crucial in the region of Yemen as the crisis continues. Relief packages are one of the most common methods of humanitarian aid in large-scale crises. As of 2022, at the 9017th Security Council Meeting, Under Secretary General of Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator Martin

¹¹⁶ Haskell, Leslie, and Lars Waldorf. "The Impunity Gap of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda: Causes and Consequences." *UC Hastings Scholarship Repository*, 2018, www.repository.uchastings.edu/hastings_international_comparative_law_review/vol34/iss1/2/. Accessed 5 October 2022.

¹¹⁷ Reydam, Luc. "Let's Be Friends: The United States, Post-Genocide Rwanda, and Victor's Justice in Arusha." *SSRN Electronic Journal*, 2013, <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2197823>. Accessed 5 October 2022.

¹¹⁸ "UN Human Rights Council Member States' Abject Failure to Renew Yemen Investigation Is a Wake-up Call - Yemen." *ReliefWeb*, 14 Oct. 2021, www.reliefweb.int/report/yemen/un-human-rights-council-member-states-abject-failure-renew-yemen-investigation-wake. Accessed 5 October 2022.

Griffiths introduced on 7 April, after discussions with the GCC, a \$3 billion economic aid package to set Yemen on the path of economic growth.¹¹⁹ The use of economic relief packages can stabilise the economy, and increase the value of Yemen currency. By channelling sufficient relief to affected civilians in Yemen, it can help to stem the humanitarian crisis and stabilise internal conditions as well.

Yet, it poses challenges where economic relief alone would not be enough to oversee infrastructure developments which had been destroyed by the conflicts, as more immediate attention would be put on supplying essentials such as food and water. Another risk is that aid from relief packages may not necessarily go to the civilians in dire need of it due to 2 reasons, the rampant corruption existing in Yemen, and the possible confiscation of resources from terrorist-controlled areas. The Houthis have been notorious for preventing the delivery of humanitarian aid, for instance, the blockage of the Hodeida port containing Personal Protective Equipment from the World Health Organisation (WHO) due to the outbreak of Covid-19 in 2020.¹²⁰

Another concern that middle eastern nations, in particular, would have regarding receiving humanitarian assistance from western countries would be the potential for deception. In 2011, the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) used a fake Hepatitis B vaccination project as a cover to gather intelligence on Osama Bin Laden's whereabouts in Pakistan.¹²¹ While intelligence proved key to eliminating the notorious Al Qaeda terrorist, it decimated the trust that people in the region had in humanitarian projects, especially medical ones.¹²² Given that the Houthis' motto is 'God is great, death to the US, death to Israel, curse the Jews, and victory for Islam',¹²³ it is highly likely that the people whom they have spent almost a decade radicalising would be unreceptive towards humanitarian aid from US-allied nations. Hence, the council must also consider ways to deliver humanitarian aid in a manner where the people would be willing to accept it. Otherwise, the council would be wasting

¹¹⁹ "Truce Offers Chance to Steer Yemen in 'New Direction', Special Representative Tells Security Council, Cautions Parties against Backslide into Conflict - Yemen.", 14 Apr. 2022, www.reliefweb.int/report/yemen/truce-offers-chance-steer-yemen-new-direction-special-representative-tells-security. Accessed 5 October 2022

¹²⁰ "Deadly Consequences." *Human Rights Watch*, 14 Sept. 2020, www.hrw.org/report/2020/09/14/deadly-consequences/obstruction-aid-yemen-during-covid-19. Accessed 5 October 2022

¹²¹ "CIA Organised Fake Vaccination Drive to Get Osama Bin Laden's Family DNA." *The Guardian*. Guardian News and Media, July 11, 2011. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/jul/11/cia-fake-vaccinations-osama-bin-ladens-dna>.

¹²² "The Spies Who Sabotaged Global Health." *Scientific American*, no. 5, Apr. 2013, pp. 12–12, <https://doi.org/10.1038/scientificamerican0513-12>. Accessed 5 October 2022

¹²³ Abdulelah Taqi. "Houthi Propaganda: Following in Hizballah's Footsteps." *The New Arab*, 2015, www.english.alaraby.co.uk/opinion/houthi-propaganda-following-hizballahs-footsteps. Accessed 5 October 2022

significant amounts of money on food, medical supplies and other resources that could be better used elsewhere.

Questions A Resolution Must Answer (QARMA)

1. How can the UNSC deescalate violence in the region to prevent its spreading across borders?
2. How can the UNSC control the arms sales in Yemen to prevent the proliferation of weapons and its possible ramifications?
3. How should perpetrators of war crimes in Yemen be punished, if they are punished?
4. To what extent should foreign intervention play a role in the de-escalation of the conflict?
5. How can the UNSC ensure the effective provision of humanitarian aid?

Conclusion

The UNSC has the unenviable task of brokering peace in a region that is controlled by 3 main warring factions, i.e the Saudi-backed incumbent government, the Iran-backed Houthi insurgents and Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula. The inability to compromise between the Houthis and the Yemeni government shows that ceasefires have merely kicked the proverbial can down the road. The UNSC can choose to broker peace as a neutral arbiter or as a partisan ally to one of the parties. Ultimately, it is the job of the council to debate the merits of the ideas presented on whether they would preserve peace in the region or worsen the conflict. It does not have to limit itself to the proposals listed in this study guide, as these proposals are suited for ideal circumstances where cooperation is guaranteed and parties honour their promises. Therefore, if the council wants to end this conflict, it has to learn how to “dance on the heads of serpents”.

To effectively combat the humanitarian crisis in Yemen, a sense of pluralism between the Houthis and other political actors is needed to ensure that peace is obtained. This political peace is at the heart of the humanitarian crisis as when the political actors are embroiled in their struggle for power, innocent civilian lives are lost in the whirlwind that ensues. Suitable intervention measures should be undertaken to ensure the propagation of a pluralistic society in Yemen so that the people can live peacefully, without fear of violent infightings, air strikes or raids by rival parties. This underscores the need for a comprehensive negotiated political settlement that should restore the functioning of State institutions and pave the way for economic recovery and development, thereby resolving the crisis in the long term.¹²⁴

¹²⁴ Failure in Delivering Aid for Yemenis ‘the Worst International Response to a Humanitarian Crisis’, Civil Society Briefer Tells Security Council, 14 Oct. 2021, www.press.un.org/en/2021/sc14661.doc.htm. Accessed 5 October 2022

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- BBC News. "Yemen National Dialogue Conference Begins." BBC News, 18 Mar. 2013. Accessed 24 July 2022. www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-21828527.
- BBC News. "Yemeni President Saleh Signs Deal on Ceding Power." BBC BBC News News, 23 Nov. 2011, Accessed 24 July 2022. www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-15858911.
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Annex A - Simplified timeline summary of the war

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| June-September 2004 | Saleh's government begins arresting hundreds of Houthi members and issues a reward for Hussein Badreddin al-Houthi's arrest. Fighting continues until al-Houthi is killed in September. |
| March-June 2005 | Fighting between the Houthis—now led by Hussein's brother, Abdul-Malik al-Houthi—and government forces surges, leaving hundreds dead. Fighting ceases after the sides reach an agreement, resulting in the surrender of the Houthis' top military commander. |
| January-June 2007 | Early in 2007, the Houthi rebels and Saleh's government again found themselves at odds. Fighting continues for five months until Abdul-Malik al-Houthi reaches a ceasefire agreement with Saleh with the help of Qatar. |
| April-July 2008 | The ceasefire had not turned a year-old when more fighting broke out between the government and the rebels. By July, Ali Abdullah Saleh declared an end to the fighting in the Houthi-dominated Saada governorate. |
| 2009-2010 | The Yemeni military launched Operation Scorched Earth to crush the Houthi rebellion in Saada. At this point, Houthi rebels begin fighting with Saudi forces in cross-border clashes. |
| 2011 | In the Yemeni Revolution, protests in Sana'a initially concentrated on corruption and economic hardships. Demands for widespread government changes grow, fueled in part by casualties from the heavy-handed government response. |
| 2011-2012 | As part of the GCC initiative, Saleh receives immunity from local prosecution and Hadi runs unopposed for a two-year term as transitional president |
| 2014 | The NDC outcome is released and praised inside and outside Yemen as a model of compromise and of inclusive representation. |

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| | Among other things, the NDC document extends Hadi's term for a year to oversee conclusion of the transition and multi-party elections, gives 50-50 representation between north and south in a legislative body, and guarantees freedom of religion and a non-sectarian state. |
| February 2015 | Hadi and his cabinet, after briefly being held hostage by the Houthis, flee to Saudi Arabia, leaving the Houthis in practical, if not legal, control of the institutions of the state |
| April 2015 | While not endorsing military action itself, the UN Security Council adopts Resolution 2216, endorsing the political goals of Houthi military surrender and return to UN-facilitated political talks. |
| April 2016 | The United Nations sponsors talks between the Hadi government and the coalition of Houthis and former President Saleh's General People's Congress. |
| October 2016-May 2017 | Both sides of the conflict allegedly break ceasefires. The United Nations and others try to broker peace talks and political resolutions. The Houthis claim responsibility for firing missiles into Saudi Arabia, including at the capital, Riyadh. |
| January 2018 | In a firefight, the Southern Transitional Council (STC), the United Arab Emirates-backed separatist movement seeking a revival of the formerly independent South Yemen, seizes control of Aden, Yemen's main southern city and government headquarters. By March, 22 million Yemenis require humanitarian aid. |
| 2018-2021 | During this time period much conflict existed between the STC, Hadi government and the Houthis, resulting in many attacks within themselves. In early 2021, the Trump Administration designates the Houthis as a foreign terrorist organization (FTO). However, Houthis are still able to consolidate control over 70-80 per cent of the Yemeni population and threaten Marib, a stronghold near the northeast corner of their control zone. |
| April 2022 | Formation of the Yemen Presidential Leadership Council, succeeding President Hadi |

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| April to October 2022 | Implementation of a national temporary truce between the Houthis and Yemen Government ¹²⁵¹²⁶ |
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¹²⁵ Sharaf, Nabil. “A Timeline of the Yemen Crisis, from the 1990s to the Present.” *Arab Center Washington DC*, 24 May 2022, www.arabcenterdc.org/resource/a-timeline-of-the-yemen-crisis-from-the-1990s-to-the-present/. Accessed 5 October 2022.

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