

Haileybury MUN

Research report



Human Rights 2

The question of Yemen

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Definitions/Key people:

Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi

Current President of Yemen. However, he doesn't reside in the presidential palace as the Houthi rebels reside there instead.

Ali Abdullah Saleh

Former president of Yemen. President of the north of Yemen before the unification in 1990.

Civil War

A war between the citizens of the same country.

Arab Spring

A series of anti-government protests, and uprisings that began in Tunisia in 2010 and slowly spread across the Middle East.

Humanitarian Crisis

An 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. Humanitarian crises can either be natural disasters, man-made disasters or complex emergencies.

Shia" and Sunni

The two major denominations of Islam.

Introduction:

It can be seen that Yemen has been undergoing civil war since the 2000's, due to the tensions between the north and south. However, it was only named a civil war in 2015 after the new President of Yemen, Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi, was appointed. Yemen was originally two states till its unification in 1990 to become the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, but there has always been a divide due to religion. Yemen's former President, Ali Abdullah Saleh, was forced to pass on his power in 2011 after the Arab Spring of 2010. President Hadi had struggled with many issues as he failed to keep the various rebel groups (Jihadists, AQAP, Houthis, IS) under control. The Houthi movement, Yemen's Zaidi Shia group based in the north, had attempted to take over the country with the former Presidents support. Essentially, the Houthis are backed by Iran while President Hadi and his government are backed by Saudi Arabia and eight, mostly Sunni, Arab states. The war in Yemen has caused one of the greatest humanitarian crisis's of all time as the World Food Programme (WFP) has classified seven of Yemen's 22 provinces as being at

"emergency" level - one step below famine on the five-point Integrated Food Security Phase Classification scale.

Key Issues:

Food and water insecurity/poverty

Up to two thirds of the Yemeni population, 20 million, are food insecure due to this civil war. Around 14.4 million people lack access to safe sanitation and clean water. Due to this there have been outbreaks of Cholera in early 2017 causing tens of thousands of people dying. Additionally, 14.8 million lack access to basic healthcare. Many humanitarian groups have tried to help but many of their facilities have been destroyed by either Houthi rebels or by Saudi Arabia.

Houthi rebels want Yemen under their rule

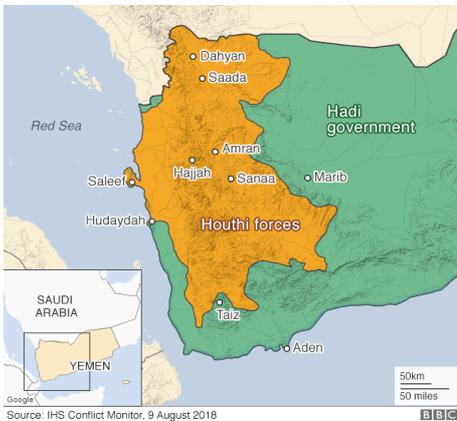
The Houthi movement is adamant to take over Yemen and make it an official Islamist state under their rule. They continue to launch missiles into various places in Saudi Arabia as well as continuing to seize land in the southern parts of Yemen.

Refusal of peace talks

Iran refuses to discuss any peace talks where Saudi-Arabia is included. This is due to past experiences Iran has had with Saudi Arabia. Iran has always backed Shia groups and countries whereas Saudi Arabia has always supported Sunni groups and countries.

Importance of territory

Areas of control in Yemen



Houthi rebels have land facing the Red Sea which is a risk to countries in the Middle east that use the sea as a method of shipment of crude oil and other important resources. Saudi Arabia had to temporarily suspend all crude shipments going through the strait of Bab al-Mandab due to a recent attack on two oil tankers. This recent attack was by Houthis which is why Saudi Arabia had a temporary blockade on imports to Hodeidah (largest northern port in Yemen) as well as continuous airstrikes.

Major Parties involved:

Yemen	A country formed in 1933 who has been in civil war since 2015 due to the divide of the north and the south.
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<i>Saudi-Arabia</i>	<i>An ally to the USA. Saudi-Arabia initiated the coalition with the Arab States in order to intervene in the war and support Yemen's president. This coalition has provided army, weaponry and has launched airstrikes against the Houthis.</i>
<i>Houthi rebels</i>	<i>An Islamic religious-political armed movement that formed in the north of Yemen in the 1990's. Known as the 'Revolutionary Committee' due to their rebellious forces. Backed by Iran, they fight the existing government run by President Hadi.</i>
<i>United States of America</i>	<i>The USA is an ally to Saudi Arabia and Yemen as the US aims to gather information on the Islamist rebel group Al-Qaeda who have bases in Yemen. The US provided financial aid and has sent out military.</i>
<i>Al-Qaeda in the Arab Peninsula (AQAP)</i>	<i>Al-Qaeda is a militant Sunni Islamist multi-national organization founded in 1988, and are known as a network of Islamic extremists. They are opponents of Houthis as Houthis are affiliated with the Shia sector of Islam.</i>
<i>Iran</i>	<i>Iran is an ally of the USA, but has been supporting Houthis since 2004 in the form of money, weapons, and military training. Iran</i>
<i>Other Arab States</i>	<i>Countries involved in the coalition made by Saudi Arabia: Morocco, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, The United Arab Emirates, and Sudan.</i>

Timeline of events:

<i>Date</i>	<i>Description of Event</i>
<i>1990</i>	<i>The two states of Yemen (north and south) are unified under the president Ali Abdullah Saleh.</i>
<i>1994</i>	<i>Civil war as the north and south want to divide but the President Saleh prevents this from happening.</i>
<i>2004</i>	<i>Military troops fight against Houthi rebels, where hundreds of troops are killed. The leader of the Houthi rebels, Hussein-al-Houthi, is killed by military troops.</i>
<i>2006-2008</i>	<i>President Saleh is renewed as president. New Houthi leader, Abdul-Malik-Al-Houthi, appointed.</i>
<i>2011</i>	<i>President Saleh hands over his power to his deputy Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi. Arab Spring protests intervene in Saleh's ruling which leads to splits in the army as AQAP move into the east of Yemen.</i>
<i>2014</i>	<i>President Hadi fires his entire cabinet and raises fuel prices. This creates anti-government protests and gives Houthis the opportunity to seize Sanaa with the help of Saleh.</i>
<i>2015</i>	<i>President Hadi announces a federal constitution. He then flees the country as the Houthis attempt to take control of Yemen. This forces Saudi Arabia to</i>

	<i>intervene with the support of the Arab states. Many months later Houthis had been driven out of Aden and parts of Sanaa (capital of Yemen, based in the south).</i>
2016	<i>AQAP establish their own state in the east of Yemen called Mukalla. The coalition imposes a partial blockade on all imports due to speculations that missiles are being smuggled, via food imports, to Houthis from Iran.</i>
2017	<i>The Houthis launch missiles into Saudi Arabia, including Riyadh. Former president Saleh killed due to his attempts to leave the Houthis.</i>
2018	<i>Coalition sends more troops to block the Red Sea coast against the Houthis. Houthis aim to take the port of Hodeidah (the largest port in the north of Yemen)</i>

Possible solutions:

Houthis rebels have already expressed interest in ending the war as they gave their support to the British-drafted UN resolution for peace talks but demanded to take part. Some examples of possible solutions:

- Stop Saudi- Arabia and the Arab states from firing airstrikes and destroying more of Yemen's land as it has a greater impact on the people than the Houthis.
- Remove all blockades as well as allow imports to continue as this may influence the Houthis to stop firing missiles into Saudi Arabia.
- Engage in peace talks with the Houthis as well as Saudi Arabia and Iran.
- Encourage Arab States to accept Yemenis, as refugees, as they are fleeing conflict in Yemen.

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