



SC: Security Council

Student Officer: Bahri Çağrı Toygar

Issue: The Ongoing Conflict and Humanitarian Crisis in Yemen

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I. Introduction

The Republic of Yemen, or widely recognized as Yemen, is a nation in the Middle East that is located in Southern Arabia. It borders the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the north, Oman to the northeast, the Arabian Sea to the east, the Gulf of Aden to the south, and the Red Sea to the west. Being situated in a region that is widely known as one of the most tumultuous regions of the contemporary world, it has long suffered poverty, corrupted governance, tribal divisions and conflicts, and international pressure. The location of the country is unfortunate, considering the rich and fruitful resources of the Middle East and the specific region in which Yemen is located.



Image 1: Map of the Republic of Yemen

Consequently, it is not unusual for the nations in the region to face international disagreement or coercion, mainly aimed at exploiting the resources of the countries in the Middle East.

Few conflicts in the 21st century have illustrated the intersection of local atrocities, regional conflicts, and international consequences as sharply as the ongoing war in the Republic of Yemen. With it now entering its second decade, the conflict has reduced one of the region's least economically developed countries into a segregated and desperate warzone. Similar to other conflicts in the Middle East and various parts of the Asian continent, the Yemeni Civil War has indirectly been a proxy conflict, reflecting the benefit of various countries that hold stakes in the region of Middle East region. Fundamentally, the crisis in Yemen demonstrates the fragility of state institutions and the lack of democratic governance over the country that has suffered economic crises on top of violent armed conflicts.



The problem, at its core, can be perceived as a domestic struggle between parties within Yemen. With this statement being correct, there is more to the escalation of the crisis. Regional and international powers have intervened militarily, politically, and economically, which has incrementally transformed Yemen into a stage for proxy competition. The conflict surrounding the political unrest has caused the destruction of infrastructure, displaced millions of citizens, and left the civilian population of Yemen bearing the overwhelming weight of conflict dynamics over which they have minimal control. More than 19,200 civilians, including over 2,300 children, have been killed or maimed as a result of coalition airstrikes alone (Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect, 2025).

Alongside the destructive effects that the conflict has had on natural resources, infrastructure, military structures of nations, and political communication between involved states, the Yemeni Civil War has had a tremendous impact on the humanitarian conditions of civilians. Access to clean water, electricity, and basic needs for human life has become a luxury for the vast majority of the Yemeni population.



Image 2: Image demonstrating the destructive humanitarian consequences of the war

These conditions are not solely a result of the violent conflict, but also are derived from the deliberate strategies of blockade, siege, and diversion of humanitarian aid. Citizens find themselves in the midst of not only rival military forces but also between conflicting narratives of sovereignty and political dispute.

II. Key Vocabulary

Proxy War: A proxy war is a military conflict in which one or more third parties directly or indirectly support one or more state or nonstate combatants in an effort to influence the conflict's outcome and thereby to advance their own strategic interests or to undermine those of their opponents. Third parties in a proxy war do not participate in the actual fighting to any significant extent, if at all. Proxy wars enable major powers to avoid direct confrontation with each other as they compete for influence and resources. Direct means of support by third parties consist of military aid and training, economic assistance, and sometimes limited military operations with surrogate forces. Indirect means of support have included blockades, sanctions, trade embargoes, and other strategies designed to thwart a rival's ambitions (Britannica, 2025)



Blockade: “A blockade is an act of war whereby one party blocks entry to or departure from a defined part of an enemy’s territory, most often its coasts. Blockades are regulated by international law and custom and require advance warning to neutral states and impartial application” (Britannica, 2025).

Humanitarian Corridor: A humanitarian corridor is a type of temporary demilitarized zone intended to allow the safe transit of humanitarian aid in, and/or refugees out of a crisis region. Such a corridor can also be associated with a no-fly zone or no-drive zone.

Ceasefire: “Ceasefire is a total cessation of armed hostilities, regulated by the same general principles as those governing armistice. In contemporary diplomatic usage the term implies that the belligerents are too far apart in their negotiating positions to permit the conclusion of a formal armistice agreement” (Britannica, 2025).

Internally Displaced Person (IDP): “Internally displaced people (IDPs) have been forced to flee their homes by conflict, violence, persecution or disasters, however, unlike refugees, they remain within their own country” (UNHCR, 2025).

Civil War: “Civil War is a violent conflict between a state and one or more organized non-state actors in the state’s territory. Civil wars are thus distinguished from interstate conflicts (in which states fight other states), violent conflicts or riots not involving states (sometimes labeled intercommunal conflicts), and state repression against individuals who cannot be considered an organized or cohesive group, including genocides, and similar violence by non-state actors, such as terrorism or violent crime” (Britannica, 2025).

Food Insecurity: “Food insecurity is the limited or uncertain access to nutritious food, which also includes limitations on the ability to obtain nutritious food in ways that are socially acceptable. Approximately 2.4 billion people worldwide (some 29.6 percent of the human population) experience moderate or severe food insecurity. Although food insecurity does occur in developed countries, the overwhelming majority of food-insecure people are concentrated in developing countries in Central and South America, Asia, and sub-Saharan Africa” (Britannica, 2025).

Maritime Security: “Maritime security refers generally to measures taken for protection against unlawful acts such as piracy, armed robbery, terrorism and maritime violence” (European Maritime Safety Agency, 2024)



III. Involved Countries and Organizations

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Since 2015, Saudi Arabia has spearheaded the Saudi-led coalition's military efforts to cope with the Houthi rebels to reimburse the Yemeni government into the global slate of governments. Saudi Arabia sees the Houthis as one of the Iranian proxy soldiers, which poses a security as well as an ideological challenge to the country. Saudi airstrikes, along with the blockade of Yemeni ports, have had a decisive impact in shaping the conflict. Saudi Arabia continues to maintain the position that its military intervention into the conflict stems from a legitimate collective defense request by Yemen's internationally recognized government. While Riyadi has on the record stated to be in favor of a political resolution, as in many other cases, the kingdom has put forth a prerequisite that the Houthis must disarm and withdraw from the captured territories.

Islamic Republic of Iran

The United Nations (UN), the United States of America (US), and Gulf states have all accused Iran of providing the Houthis with weapons, funding, and military training, although Iran claims it does not have any direct involvement. What one can observe is Iran's political and diplomatic support, branding the Houthis "resistance" fighters against Saudi aggression. Iranian drones, missiles, and other sophisticated weaponry have been used by the Houthis to attack Saudi and Emirati cities, which reinforces suspicions of Iran's involvement in the conflict. Tehran's propaganda, as well as its media and diplomatic outlets, portray the Iranian-led coalition's airstrikes against Houthis as a coalition of oppressors, branding Iran as a protector of Yemen's civilians. Tehran refers to the Saudi-led coalition as the aggressors and demands that the coalition lift the blockade placed over Yemeni ports.

Iran further states that the military intervention of the coalition, along with the blockade, does not solve any issues and calls for a Yemeni comprehensive political dialogue where the Houthis are respected as a primary authority. In addition to the abovementioned tactics, the Iranian regime seeks to surpass Saudi Arabia as a regional power while simultaneously opposing US policies in the region. By doing so, Iran reinforces its so-called "axis of resistance", which includes militias in Iraq and Syria and Hezbollah in Lebanon.

United States of America

The United States has a dual role in Yemen, where it provides arms to and supports Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) with intelligence and coalition aircraft refueling operations, and at the same time, provides Yemen with the largest amount of humanitarian aid and scaled military involvement in



Yemen after Biden took office. The US has also undertaken Yemen based counter terrorism operations, viewed in the US as one of the deadliest global terrorist organizations.

Both sides of Washington have had some changes over the years. The Trump-backed Saudi coalition has been brought to a standstill with the Biden administration halting Saudi offensive arms sales and pushing arms sales with the US Special envoy for Yemen. The US policy framework, still compliant, calls for a political agreement under the UN, but still condemns Houthi bombardments on Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and international shipping, as well. The US also emphasizes the importance of aid access, admitting that the coalition air strike and the Houthi side tactics have been immensely elevated based on civilian suffering.

United Arab Emirates

At first, the UAE played a significant role in the Saudi-led coalition by supporting it with air and ground forces. Abu Dhabi's direct involvement has decreased since 2019, but it still plays a significant role behind the scenes by aiding the Southern Transitional Council (STC) and other militias in the region. Securing control over Yemen's southern ports, islands, and the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, all of which are vital for international trade routes, is one of the UAE's partially strategic interests. The UAE has shifted its approach by supporting separatist organizations in the south, despite its formal alignment with Saudi Arabia. Critics contend that it is also pursuing its own geopolitical and economic interests, but it defends this by citing the necessity of combating terrorist organizations like Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP).

Houthi Movement (Ansar Allah)

The Houthi movement, known as Ansar Allah, emerged in the 1990s as a political and religious revivalist group in Yemen's Zaydi Shia minority located in the northern Saada province. While the group started as a cultural response to perceived marginalization, it became militarized as a result of several clashes with the Yemeni government in the 2000s. Taking advantage of political uncertainty after the Arab Spring, the Houthis seized the capital Sana'a in 2014 and gained control of northern and western Yemen, forcing President Hadi's government into exile. The Houthis have since established themselves as the de facto governing authority in Yemen's major population centers, including Sana'a, Hudaydah, and adjoining provinces.

The Houthis actively engage in military confrontations with the Saudi-led coalition. They conduct cross-border drone and missile attacks into Saudi Arabia and the UAE, and since 2023, they have targeted international ships in the Red Sea. The Houthis have also set up parallel government structures to administer their controlled territory. They are accused of human rights violations, including oppression, forced conscription, and active disruption of the distribution of humanitarian relief. In addition to these, they also collect taxes and manage checkpoints in enforcing and spreading their ideology.



Internationally Recognized Yemeni Government (Presidential Leadership Council, PLC)

In April 2022, President Hadi delegated his executive powers to an eight-member council known as the Presidential Leadership Council, with Rashad al-Alimi as the chairman. He is now the internationally recognized head of the country. The PLC is based in Aden, works alongside the Saudi-led coalition, attempts to unify the anti-Houthi factions while managing tensions with the Southern Transitional Council (STC), and attempts to curb STC expansion. It is also responsible for managing the economy after the Houthis' strikes on oil infrastructure reduced revenue and demands maritime security to prevent attacks on the Red Sea. The PLC portrays the Houthis as “Iran-backed terrorists” and contends that the political solution must be Yemeni-led, based on the UN references, including the relevant UNSC resolution. It also claims that the attacks on the Red Sea are a risk for international trade and the future recovery of Yemen.

IV. Focused Overview of the Issue

The Yemeni Civil War and the conflicts surrounding it are not simple events. They are a convergence of the collapse of political institutions, regional proxy rivalries, economic devastation, and humanitarian catastrophe.

1. Political and Historical Roots

The issue dates back to the unification of the country in 1990. The conflict and the devastating conditions in Yemen can only be understood by diving into the historical roots of the region that shape its identity. Before 1990, Yemen had two parts: South Yemen and North Yemen. This division has carved an invisible divide between the peoples and the groups in the two regions, paving the way for possible unrest between groups that do not want to live together under the same country, that is, the unified Yemen. After the unification, the civil war of 1994 and continued southern grievances left deep scars. Calls for autonomy and separation continued in the region, especially in Southern Yemen. The country has also experienced a scheme of weak governance and a corrupt ruling class. President Ali Abdullah Saleh ruled over Yemen for over 30 years. All the years he ruled included more corruption, patronage, and tribal unrest. Because of this immense amount of uncertainty in the governance and politics of Yemen, the country was fragile, and state institutions were extremely weak and unprepared. After Saleh stepped down, the country was hit by the Arab Spring. The initiatives following these changes promised changes, but the transitional government led by Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi was also corrupt. The Houthi movement, however, benefited from this discontent created by the politics of the country.

2. Regional and Geopolitical Dimensions



An internal political crisis quickly escalated into a regional conflict. Supported by a coalition of Arab states, Saudi Arabia commenced a military intervention in 2015, allegedly to safeguard the legitimate government of Yemen and to stop Iranian encroachment near its borders. The Houthis, for their part, had received Iranian support to some degree. With the help of Iranian drones and missiles, they were able to strike deep into Saudi territory. While the United Arab Emirates fought alongside Saudi Arabia, it had its own objectives in supporting the Southern Transitional Council and seizing control of strategic southern ports and islands. The coalition received arms and intelligence support from the US and the UK, and also conducted counterterrorism operations against AQAP. Oman, by and large, remained outside the conflict but provided some mediation and hosted Yemen peace talks, facilitated talks, and organized prisoner exchanges. Yemen became a proxy battleground in the Saudi–Iran rivalry, as local issues became intertwined with the politics of regional power.

3. Humanitarian Crisis

As a result of the ongoing war, the United Nations has declared it the largest remaining humanitarian crisis in the world. Approximately 24 million people, 17 million of whom suffer from food insecurity, require aid. Over 4.5 million Yemenis are internally displaced. War-related consequences, starvation, and lack of healthcare have resulted in 377,000 deaths since 2015. Yemenis are especially prone to the war's consequences. UNICEF states that malnourished healthcare workers lead to the death of a child every 10 minutes. The healthcare system, too, is in dilapidation. Over 50% of doctors' offices are shut down. The last cholera outbreak devastated over 2 million people, making it the worst outbreak in history. The humanitarian crisis worsens due to the Saudi Arabia aid convoys' blockage, Houthi-Tamil taxation, and the Houthi blockade of aid. Therefore, a large portion of the population continues to suffer the loss of food, fuel, untreated injuries, and medicine, while the remaining population starves as entire cities are turned into bargaining tools.

4. Authority Issues

Yemen's war is more complicated than a conflict with two opposing sides. The Houthis have taken control of Sana'a as well as much of the northern and western regions. The internationally recognized government, now based in Aden and supported by Saudi Arabia, is ruled by the Presidential Leadership Council. The STC, which the UAE backs, controls the southern region and advocates for southern independence. Rural areas are governed by tribal militias, while extremist groups take advantage of the lack of governance in the area. The fragmentation of Yemen's war makes the peace process much more difficult, as the two-sided conflict needs an even greater balance of multi-sided negotiations. It is still uncertain whether the country will remain unified, adopt a federal structure, or split into two regions again.



The Yemen conflict has persistently degenerated over the years despite the ongoing international mediation efforts and proposed ceasefires. There are many issues that further complicate and intensify the struggle and opposing views, including proxy wars vying for territorial dominance, raging animosity, and longstanding political rivalries among the at-odds factions. Additional players in the conflict, including lexicon characters such as the Saudi regime, Iran, and the UK, further complicate the disintegrating prospects for peace by viewing Yemen as a stage on which to further their strategic objectives. The overflowing hopelessness is coupled with a region devolving into further despair due to shattered economies. Politics has hindered humanitarian efforts the world over, Yemen in particular. The Zahra agreement is the most recent example in a series of failed attempts to resolve the conflict. There is an abdication of responsibility by the players in Yemen who do not only intercede, there is intervention, fragmentation and ignore the disintegration of Yemen. Yemen remains entrapped in suffering and violence due to the unending cycle of violence and suffering.

V. Important Events & Chronology

Date (Day/Month/Year)	Event
22/05/1990	Unification of North and South Yemen into the Republic of Yemen.
27/04/1994 – 07/07/1994	Yemeni Civil War between the central government and southern secessionists; northern forces prevail, but tensions remain.
2004 – 2010	Six rounds of war between the Yemeni government and Houthi rebels (known as the “Saada Wars”).
27/01/2011	Protests erupt in Yemen as part of the Arab Spring, demanding President Ali Abdullah Saleh’s resignation.
03/06/2011	President Saleh injured in an assassination attempt; power begins to weaken.
23/11/2011	Saleh signs the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) deal, stepping down; Vice President Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi becomes acting president.
21/02/2012	Hadi was elected president in a one-candidate vote, beginning a two-year transitional period.
21/09/2014	Houthi rebels seize the capital, Sana’a, and later place President Hadi under house arrest.



22/01/2015	President Hadi resigns under Houthi pressure, later fleeing to Aden.
25/03/2015	Saudi Arabia launches Operation Decisive Storm with a coalition of Arab states to restore Hadi's government.
14/04/2015	The UN Security Council passes Resolution 2216, demanding Houthi withdrawal and imposing an arms embargo.
26/03/2016	One year into Saudi-led intervention; UN reports thousands of civilian deaths and humanitarian catastrophe.
08/10/2016	Saudi-led coalition airstrike hits a funeral hall in Sana'a, killing more than 140 civilians.
13/12/2016	The UN reports Yemen experiencing the largest cholera outbreak in modern history.
04/12/2017	Former President Ali Abdullah Saleh killed by Houthi forces after breaking alliance with them.
13/12/2018	The Stockholm Agreement signed between Houthis and the Yemeni government under UN mediation; includes Hudaydah ceasefire.
14/05/2019	Houthi drone strikes damage Saudi oil facilities, signaling escalation of cross-border attacks.
29/06/2019	UAE announces withdrawal of most of its troops from Yemen, though it continues backing southern separatists.
29/01/2020	US drone strike kills AQAP leader Qasim al-Raymi.
25/04/2020	Southern Transitional Council (STC) declares self-rule in Aden, deepening political fragmentation.
10/12/2020	The UN warns famine conditions could affect millions due to blockade and conflict.
04/02/2021	US President Joe Biden announces end to US support for Saudi-led "offensive operations" in Yemen.
08/03/2021	UN Special Envoy Martin Griffiths reports to the Security Council that Yemen is "teetering on the brink of full-scale famine."



07/04/2022	President Hadi transfers power to the Presidential Leadership Council (PLC), chaired by Rashad al-Alimi.
02/04/2022	A UN-brokered truce begins between Houthis and coalition, halting major fighting for six months.
02/10/2022	The truce formally expires; although violence resumes, the intensity of the war decreases compared to pre-truce years.
17/01/2022	Houthis carry out drone and missile attacks on Abu Dhabi, UAE, killing civilians.
21/11/2022	The UN reports more than 23.5 million Yemenis in need of humanitarian aid.
2023	Houthis increase Red Sea attacks on commercial vessels, linking operations to regional conflicts.
11/12/2023	US and UK warships intercept dozens of Houthi drones and missiles over the Red Sea.
12/01/2024	US and UK conduct airstrikes on Houthi targets in Yemen after attacks on shipping.
23/01/2024	Second wave of US–UK strikes on Houthi sites following continued attacks.
19/02/2024	EU launches Operation ASPIDES, a naval mission to defend shipping in the Red Sea.
April 2024	Houthi missile attacks target Saudi and government oil facilities, worsening economic collapse.
July 2024	The UN warns that 17 million Yemenis are facing acute food insecurity.
15/08/2024	The UN reports over 4.5 million internally displaced people in Yemen.



06/10/2024	Saudi Arabia and Houthi representatives meet in Oman for direct peace talks, though no breakthrough achieved.
15/07/2025	UN Security Council renews mandate for the UN Mission to support the Hudaydah Agreement (UNMHA).

VI. Past Resolutions and Treaties

[S/RES/2014 \(2011\)](#)

The resolution supports the GCC, encouraging political action after protests against President Ali Abdullah Saleh.

[S/RES/2140 \(2014\)](#)

This resolution by the UN introduces the Yemen sanctions regime (asset freezes, travel bans) against people defying the political transition.

[S/RES/2216 \(2015\)](#)

This is an important resolution created after the Houthis' takeover of Sana'a. It demanded Houthi withdrawal, return of seized heavy weapons, and imposed a targeted arms embargo.

[S/RES/2451 \(2018\)](#)

This resolution endorses the Stockholm Agreement, which included a ceasefire around Hudaydah, prisoner exchanges, and humanitarian measures.

[S/RES/2624 \(2022\)](#)

The resolution effectively expanded the arms embargo to apply to the Houthis as a group.

[S/RES/2722 \(2024\)](#)

This resolution condemns the Houthis' attacks in the conflict.

[Gulf Cooperation Council \(GCC\) Initiative \(2011\)](#)

Brokered Saleh's resignation and transfer of power to Hadi. Still referenced as the framework for Yemen's transition.

[Stockholm Agreement \(2018\)](#)

It reduced fighting around Hudaydah, but implementation stalled.

[Riyadh Agreement \(2019\)](#)



Saudi-brokered deal between the government and the Southern Transitional Council (STC) to reduce southern clashes and form a power-sharing cabinet.

UN-Brokered Truce (April–October 2022)

Nationwide ceasefire that allowed fuel shipments into Hudaydah and limited commercial flights from Sana'a. Fighting decreased, though the truce collapsed after six months.

Ottawa Treaty

Yemen signed and ratified. Important because both Houthis and coalition forces have been accused of laying mines.

VII. Failed Solution Attempts

There have been attempts to resolve the issue at hand concerning the Yemeni Civil War and the proxy war surrounding it. The attempts, however, have been unsuccessful in achieving a long-lasting impact, making the conflict one of the oldest remaining conflicts in the region. Due to the political unrest that is present in the region, these attempts to ameliorate the situation have been largely affected by external factors such as the political tensions in the international arena, bilateral disagreements, and diplomatic conflicts concerning the stakes and resource management in the region.

Some military interventions by outside parties have been implemented. However, expectedly, these attempts have failed. Since the Yemeni Civil War is partly affected by proxy conflicts, it is safe to say that any intervention that is either violent or involuntary from outside parties would not only fail to solve the issue but potentially aggravate it. A Saudi-led coalition was launched to restore President Hadi's government and fight against Houthi gains. The mission was backed by the UAE, Bahrain, Egypt, and other nations that support the recognized government of Yemen against the Houthis. The intervention gained logistical support from the United States and the United Kingdom.

Diplomatic talks regarding the gravity of the situation and a possible solution have also been executed in various areas of the world and were brokered by different states. A National Dialogue Conference was launched to draft a new constitution and address grievances. In 2016, the Kuwait Talks were executed. This was a series of UN-led peace talks where Kuwait supported a power-sharing agreement. This plan, however, failed because of the resistance of both parties to let go of power and to demand full authority.

The Stockholm Agreement has also been an important point in history where an important endeavor has been made towards peace in Yemen. This agreement brokered a ceasefire in Hudaydah and allowed



both parties to do prisoner exchanges and humanitarian corridors. This showed that diplomacy is absolutely a solution to the issue; however, the efforts weakened over time, hence making the mission unsuccessful.

VIII. Possible Solutions

In order to propose a viable solution to the issue at hand, delegates should first elaborately understand the conditions that make the Middle East what it is today. Solutions that are only applicable in a region with better dynamics between state and non-state actors and less tensions between international actors have a high possibility of failing in the Middle East, especially in Yemen.

Power-sharing agreements between the states have been proven to aggravate the situation or not contribute to the solution in any way. Delegates should consider solving the issue by finding solutions to the core matters that both parties want out of the Yemeni Civil War. It has become clear to the international community that if both parties are not satisfied, the issue cannot be solved. In other words, the solution to the issue should at least be bilateral, if not multilateral.

However, if the solution to the issue does not include ways to restrict foreign involvement in the region, the war is likely to escalate again. This is very evident since the past agreements and proposed solutions failed because the proxy war and high stakes in the region continued to plague the peace negotiations that were intended to eliminate the tension in the first place. Consequently, delegates should consider solutions that satisfy both parties while also achieving full independence of the Yemeni people and politics.

IX. Useful Links

[Security Council Report Publications on Yemen](#)

[Yemen | OCHA](#)

[Yemen | World Food Programme](#)

[Yemen crisis | UNICEF](#)

[Yemen | International Crisis Group](#)

[The New Humanitarian news about Yemen](#)

[Yemen | Country Page | World | Human Rights Watch](#)



<https://www.rulac.org/browse/conflicts/non-international-armed-conflict-in-yemen>

[Yemen: Why is the war there getting more violent? - BBC News](#)

[Aljazeera News](#)

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