



Arab League (ARAB)

MUNUC 34



TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAIR LETTER.....	3
CRISIS DIRECTOR LETTER.....	5
SENSITIVITY LETTER.....	6
COMMITTEE STRUCTURE & MECHANICS.....	7
TOPIC: YEMENI CIVIL WAR (2014-PRESENT).....	9
Statement of the Problem.....	9
History of the Problem.....	17
Past Actions.....	24
Possible Solutions.....	26
Bloc Positions.....	28
Glossary.....	31
Bibliography.....	32

CHAIR LETTER

Hello Delegates,

Welcome to the Arab League! I am Zane Khader, a second-year at the College, and your Chair for MUNUC 34. I am majoring in Economics with minors in Neuroscience and Near Eastern Languages & Civilizations. Beyond MUNUC, I am also involved in ChoMUN, The Blue Chips Investment Club, UChicago Private Equity, and International Leadership Council: Finance. In my free time, I can be found walking/running around campus, emphatically lifting weights in the Gerald Ratner Athletics Center, singing pop songs in the dorm shower, and managing my hedge fund startup.

I am originally from Greenwich, CT (where I was a part of my school's Model United Nations, Student Government, Football, Powerlifting, Squash, and Rugby organizations), and I am primarily of Palestinian and Syrian ancestry—with other Mediterranean ethnicities being mixed into my family line. As such, I tend to gravitate strongly towards topics pertaining to the Middle East & North Africa region and enjoy discussing the development & implementation of more unorthodox solutions to these (sometimes) decades-old conflicts.

The issue of the Yemeni Civil War (2014–present) presents an opportune learning experience to gain exposure to the broader regional politics of the Middle East (which we hope to simulate within the dynamic of the Arab League), while also enabling vigorous discourse pertaining to nuanced country-specific issues that range from historical intra-country regional tension to devastating health crises. I believe the variety of issues offered by the Yemeni Civil War will enable a satisfying balance between sweeping, high-level legislation and narrow, issue-specific policy to yield an overall enriching experience for delegates.

I understand that, for many of you, this may be your first exposure to Model United Nations or to a committee of this type. Bearing this in mind, I encourage you to reach out with any questions you may have about the topic, Model United Nations procedure, committee structure, or anything else.

Zane Khader

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CRISIS DIRECTOR LETTER

Salam Alaikum Arab League Delegates.

I'm JJ Abu-Halimah, a second-year Biochemistry major who's also Premed. I obviously am having a blast at this great Institution- fun indeed does die. I'm a Palestinian-American and a fan of great food. My go-to snack in the Middle East is 5 Shawarma sandwiches, which is plainly just chef's kiss. I am also in ChoMUN and am the CoDirector of Finance of the UChicago Global Health Alliance. Additionally, I enjoy anime and other otaku-related endeavors. I am from a suburb of Nashville, but I despise country music.

As your Crisis Director, I will be preparing brief crisis breaks to which you will respond. These acts, while they will deal with serious issues, will also make committee more fun, and hopefully enhance your experience. While I look forward to your creativity, I do implore that delegates do not engage in heinous acts such as murder, genocide, and biological warfare. These are not solutions to stop the deaths of the Yemeni people, and will make things worse. Please also be respectful of, and do not misuse or disrespect, Islam.

I'm looking forward to a great committee and hopefully solutions to the very unfortunate Yemen situation!

If you have any questions (or memes), feel free to contact me at jaabuhalimah@uchicago.edu

Best,

JJ Abu-Halimah

SENSITIVITY LETTER

Salam delegates,

Although we plan to have a lot of fun and energy in our committee, we do want to acknowledge the sensitivity of the topic being discussed. There are religious, political, social, and economic disputes to consider, and these issues must be approached with caution. We will not tolerate ethnic cleansing, purposely harming and/or killing people, or discriminating against others. You are more than encouraged to speak out against and criticize governments, but please keep any such criticisms separate from the people, as that can perpetrate nationality-based discrimination. Moreover, while we encourage that you embrace the character of the nation which you are representing, you must still maintain a standard of conduct characterized by equality and tolerance.

Again, you are dealing with a humanitarian crisis, and we want to lower, not heighten, the amount of casualties and animus, so please act accordingly. If you ever lose your way, remember the saying, "You're not you when you're hungry." If at any point you feel uncomfortable, or are unsure whether something would or would not be acceptable, feel free to speak with us!

Salam,

JJ, Zane, and Nina

COMMITTEE STRUCTURE & MECHANICS

Overview

The Arab League is an intergovernmental regional body of 22 Arab countries (Algeria, Bahrain, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen) formed on March 22nd, 1945 in response to post-WWII regional tensions and growing anti-Zionist sentiment.¹ Syria's membership has been suspended since 2011, but in our committee Syria's delegation will be reinstated. There are five observer states as well (Armenia, Brazil, Eritrea, India, Venezuela).²

Since then, the purpose of the Arab League has expanded to “draw closer the relations between member states and coordinate collaboration between them, to safeguard their independence and sovereignty, and to consider in a general way the affairs and interests of the Arab countries.”³ Since its inception, the Arab League has served as a medium for geopolitical, social, and economic cooperation on the tasks of broader regional development and conflict resolution. It is particularly notable that the Arab League is somewhat notorious for internal disagreements between member states and an inconsistent record with regard to enforcing unilateral resolutions.⁴

This committee is a regional body that mainly contains traditional Model United Nations parliamentary procedure. However, on occasion, the committee will be presented with time-sensitive crisis-style updates that will require deft resolution. Because of this, we may amend the boundaries of parliamentary procedure as needed. For our intents, Syria will be reinstated as a member of the committee, and observer states may vote on resolutions and crisis directives—

¹Council on Foreign Relations, “The Arab League,” accessed August 8, 2021, <https://www.cfr.org/background/arab-league>.

²Cable News Network, “Arab League Fast Facts,” CNN, March 29, 2021, <https://www.cnn.com/2013/07/30/world/meast/arab-league-fast-facts/index.html>.

³The Avalon Project, “20th Century Documents: 1900 - 1999,” accessed August 8, 2021, https://avalon.law.yale.edu/subject_menus/20th.asp.

⁴ACW Research and Analysis Unit, “The Arab league’s Many Failures,” Arab Center Washington DC, accessed August 8, 2021, <https://arabcenterdc.org/resource/the-arab-leagues-many-failures/>.

because resolutions are non-binding, it would be illogical to prevent observers from fully participating in this simulated committee. The crisis elements are described later in this section.

Crisis Mechanics

Our committee will not include classical crisis mechanics. However, fear not, as we won't delve into quantum either...

Back to the point. Usually, crisis committees involve a backroom responding to notes and crisis breaks to which delegates have to react. However, we will not have a backroom at all, and so there will be no note writing. If you do want to write us a joke or a serious note regarding concerns about the committee, do feel free to write that.

We will be performing crisis breaks, and we will have a couple of breaks each session. These will mimic real life crises that suddenly arise. You will be tasked with working together to write smaller resolutions, known as directives, to take actions to mitigate these crises. We will, in turn, work to respond to your actions in other breaks that will reveal the relative success of your plans.

The Yemeni situation is a very serious, very sad crisis, and we believe that delegates should focus on it in the front room to better focus on addressing the crisis and facilitating multinational cooperation, rather than have individuals work alone in a backroom setting. We believe that by utilizing crisis break mechanics, we can present you with dangerous and sudden situations that mimic real life threats so that our committee can closely simulate actual circumstances and issues. We hope that through such mechanics, we can all grow in our response time to crises and teamwork capabilities.

TLDR: No backroom notes; we have crisis breaks; short resolutions (directives) to respond to breaks; help Yemen

TOPIC: YEMENI CIVIL WAR (2014-PRESENT)

Statement of the Problem

Introduction to Statement of the Problem

The Yemeni Civil War is a multi-sided conflict that, in the first several years of the conflict prior to 2017, was primarily fought between the Yemeni government, led by Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi, and the Houthi armed movement. After the declaration of the Southern Transitional Council (a secessionist organization in the country's southern regions) by former Governor of Aden Aidarus al-Zoubaidi, the war has fragmented into many more spillover conflicts with Arab League nations backing different sides.

The roots of this civil war lie in Hadi himself; he is a generally weak and inept leader. Under his leadership, corruption, famine, separtist movements, and attacks flourished. Among this chaos, the Houthi movement rose to power, taking over the Saada province, the capital Sana'a, and many other surrounding areas. To combat these developments and uphold the Yemeni government, many member states in this regional body engaged in air raids to suppress the Houthi movement.⁵

However, these efforts were futile. Yemen is now experiencing a humanitarian crisis characterized by famine and death. Moreover, the instability in Yemen has led to other militant organizations seeking to broaden their influence by also trying to take over Yemeni land. Approximately 100,000 have died in this war, and many, many more have perished as a result of related famine and illness.⁶ People are homeless, hungry, at bodily risk, and trapped. It is the aim of this committee to cease this suffering. The subsequent sections will expand on the humanitarian, economic, and political crises in Yemen.

⁵BBC News, "Yemen crisis," BBC, June 19, 2020, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-29319423>.

⁶Sulz, Matthias J., "Over 100,000 Reported Killed in Yemen War," ACLED, December 3, 2020, <https://acleddata.com/2019/10/31/press-release-over-100000-reported-killed-in-yemen-war/>.

Humanitarian Crisis

Yemen is currently undergoing the 'world's worst humanitarian crisis.' 13 million Yemeni people are in famine, and 23.2 million Yemeni people (80% of the population) need humanitarian aid.⁷ Many people are starving, are sick, and lack access to this humanitarian aid.

Flooding

Yemen has also fallen victim to many natural disasters. In the spring of 2020, heavy flooding led to the displacement of around 100,000 Yemenis. Flooding continues to occur, including incidents such as in April and May of 2021, which killed 13 people, collapsed various buildings, and affected over 22,000 individuals. Cholera outbreaks have also been allowed to flourish under such flooding conditions, as cholera is spread through the transmission of affected fluids.

Water Crisis

Yemen, like most of the Middle East, is primarily desert. As is commonly known, there isn't much water in the desert. Thus, the scarcity of water in Yemen is another devastating crisis. Currently, 18 million Yemenis from the country's population of 29.16 million lack adequate access to water.⁸

Thus, approximately 61.73% of the Yemeni population are in great need of water. According to American University, "there are five key causes of Yemen's water crisis: (1) high population growth, (2) misguided agricultural development and policies, (3) the use of water to grow qat, (4) a lack of law enforcement to regulate water use, and (5) a high vulnerability to climate change."⁹ Many of the causes of such issues are relatively self explanatory. Yemen is in a desert, and thus it is hot, and since it is very hot, there is little water. This lack of water access heightens issues of climate change and adds to the difficulty of regulating water and its agricultural use.

⁷Center for Disaster Philanthropy, "Yemen Humanitarian Crisis," accessed August 8, 2021. <https://disasterphilanthropy.org/disaster/yemen-humanitarian-crisis/>.

⁸UNICEF, "Water, Sanitation and Hygiene," accessed August 8, 2021, <https://www.unicef.org/yemen/water-sanitation-and-hygiene>.

⁹Glass, Nicole, "The Water Crisis in Yemen," *Global Majority E-Journal* 1, no. 1 (June 2010): 17-30, https://www.american.edu/cas/economics/ejournal/upload/glass_accessible.pdf.

Sanitation and Hygiene

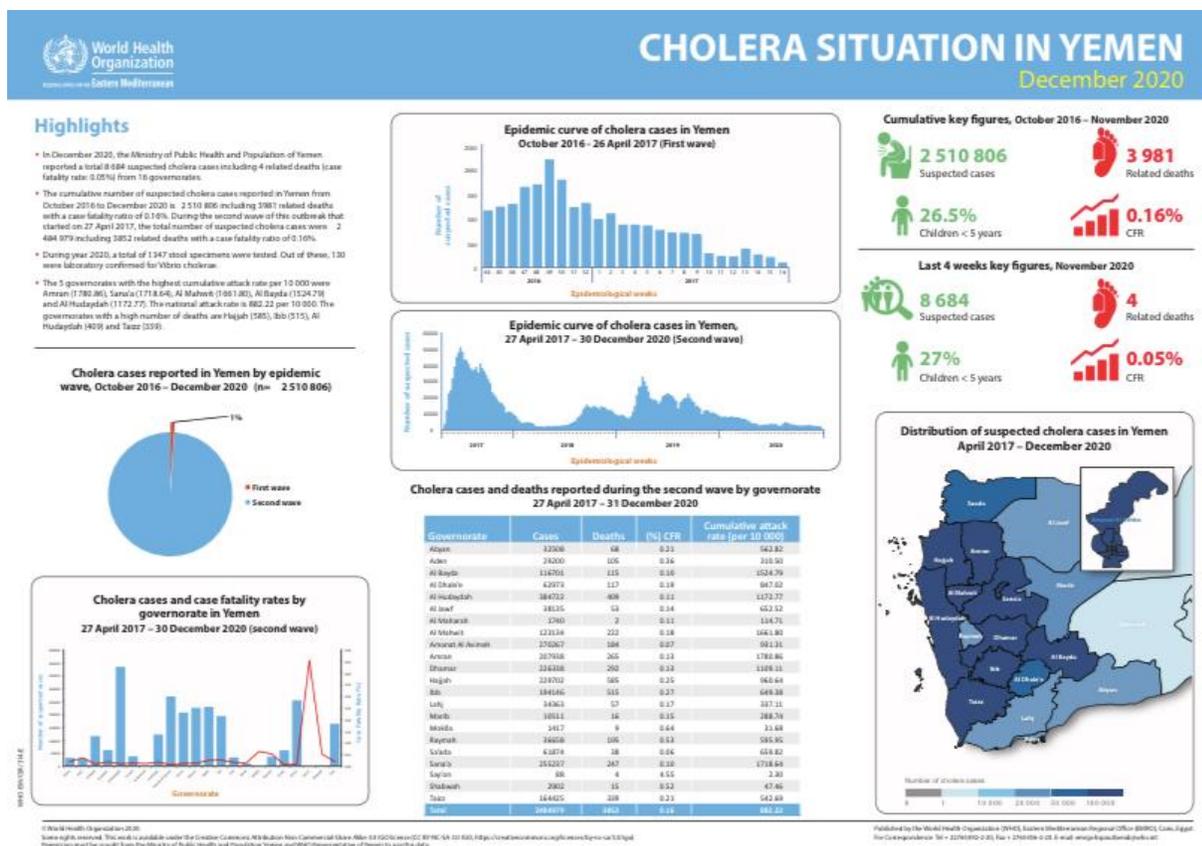
According to UNICEF, “The disruption of public services, especially in the health and WASH sectors, large-scale displacement and the wide spread of deadly diseases, such as cholera, has made the population even more vulnerable. Overall, only one third of Yemen’s population is connected to a piped water network.”¹⁰ Moreover, access to not just water itself but to clean water specifically is already limited. Water infected with cholera and acute watery diarrhea poses a great public health risk. The lack of adequate sanitation and access to clean water are themselves a public health catastrophe and contribute to a high death toll in Yemen.

Cholera Outbreaks

Moreover, the cholera outbreaks in Yemen have already been prevalent. The following infographic details two waves of cholera outbreaks: the first from October 2016 to April 2017 and the second from April 2017 to December 2020. Essentially, there were over 2.5 million suspected cases of cholera between these two waves.¹¹

¹⁰UNICEF, “Water, Sanitation and Hygiene,” accessed August 8, 2021, <https://www.unicef.org/yemen/water-sanitation-and-hygiene>.

¹¹Data Commons, “Yemen,” accessed August 8, 2021, https://www.american.edu/cas/economics/ejournal/upload/glass_accessible.pdf.



Economic Crisis

Economic Overview

As is typical of any large-scale conflict, economic and political stability tend to go hand-in-hand.¹³ A robust political system creates the foundation for financial stability, which creates attractive investment and financing opportunities. Similarly, a well-functioning economy creates trust in the government's ability to provide for the people as well as builds nationalistic morale. Without either political or economic stability, it is impossible to solve the crisis. Furthermore, when identifying the state of the economic crisis, note that its impacts are deeply connected with the outstanding political, social, and humanitarian crises.¹⁴

¹²ReliefWeb, "Cholera Situation in Yemen, December 2020," accessed August 8, 2021, <https://reliefweb.int/report/yemen/cholera-situation-yemen-december-2020>.

¹³The News Now, "Does economic and political stability really go hand in hand?," accessed August 8, 2021, <http://www.thenewsnw.co.in/newsdet.aspx?q=110643>.

¹⁴UN World Food Programme, "Yemen teeters on the brink as conflict and economic crises grind on," accessed August 8, 2021, <https://www.wfp.org/news/yemen-teeters-brink-conflict-and-economic-crises-grind>.

Poor Oil Allocation

Despite being an Arab nation on the oil-rich Arabian peninsula, Yemen does not share in the prosperous oil-driven wealth of the neighboring Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, which include the likes of Oman and Saudi Arabia. While Yemen is reported to have 3,000,000,000 barrels of proven oil reserves (thereby ranking 29th in the world), it ranks 79th in oil production and 93rd in oil consumption with approximately 22,000 and 60,000 oil barrels per year, respectively (as of 2016).¹⁵ This underutilization, which existed prior to the conflict, can largely be attributed to decades of mismanagement spawning from rampant corruption and inefficient bureaucracy within the supply chain.¹⁶ The wasted oil reserves also provide an incentive for the conflict itself, in a manner that has created region-wide interest from other large oil players like Iran and Saudi Arabia.

Failing Water Infrastructure

The country's resource mismanagement extends far beyond the oil industry; elitist policy and disruptive regulation have formed the recipe for inequality in all facets of life. Consider, for instance, the basic necessity of access to clean water, a resource which over 20.5 million Yemeni people live without.¹⁷ Furthermore, even in the areas where drinking water is available, the rates of consumption far outpace the rate of production. In the capital city of Sana'a, for example, the rate of water consumption outpaces water production by a factor of 3:1—and the quality of the water itself is not reliable.¹⁸ Even in areas where the infrastructure for water exists, it is common to find decaying structures and inefficient systems that tend to waste substantial amounts of water.

¹⁵Worldometer, "Yemen Oil," accessed August 8, 2021, <https://www.worldometers.info/oil/yemen-oil/>.

¹⁶World Bank, "The World Bank in Yemen: Overview," accessed August 8, 2021, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/yemen/overview>

¹⁷"Ibid."

¹⁸Mohamed I. Al-Hamdi, *Competition for Scarce Groundwater in the Sana'a Plain, Yemen. A Study of the Incentive Systems for Urban and Agricultural Water Use* (Rotterdam: Balkema, 2000).

An Impoverished Populace

With respect to food allocation, Yemen has, for the last several years, relied extensively on the United Nations' Food Programme to assist with the humanitarian crisis.¹⁹ The result, however, has been significant supply shortage-driven inflation (the Yemeni Rial, the nation's currency, has depreciated by 70% since the war began). Food prices increased substantially as a result, in addition to a steep decline in the number of foreign currency reserves that can be used for food imports. For instance, to import food from France, a country would have to hold a certain amount of Euros in order to pay for the imports, since French companies have no interest in owning the Yemeni dollar, unless Yemen also exports to them, too. To make matters worse, Yemen's competing political factions abuse this shortage by promising young families food, water, and money if they enlist their children in the war.²⁰ Ultimately, an impoverished populace without basic needs is incapable of attracting foreign investment, allocating resources properly, and building an economic machine for the future.

Political Crisis

The current economic and humanitarian situation in Yemen is a direct result of the Yemeni Civil War. This ongoing proxy war has roots that date back to the country's formation. Founded in 1990, Yemen is the result of the unification of the Yemeni Arab Republic, which was backed by the US and Saudi Arabia, and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY), which was backed by the USSR. Ali Alluah Saleh, a northern military official, took power of the state, but stability didn't last long as portions of the south successfully seceded for a handful of months in 2007, the Houthi movement rose up a multitude of times, and militant groups captured territory throughout the nation.

Ultimately, Saleh was forced to step down in 2012 after human rights groups found corruption in his government to be an endemic problem and the Arab Spring protests expanded to Yemen. Although

¹⁹UN World Food Programme, "Yemen teeters on the brink as conflict and economic crises grind on," accessed August 8, 2021, <https://www.wfp.org/news/yemen-teeters-brink-conflict-and-economic-crises-grind>.

²⁰Lynsey Alexander, Jennifer Phillipp, and Borgen Project, "Poverty In Yemen," The Borgen Project, January 18, 2020, <https://borgenproject.org/tag/poverty-in-yemen/>.

Saleh's vice president, Abd Rabbu Mansour Hadi, took power and a National Dialogue Conference had convened to make a constitution suitable for all factions, no solution was reached to establish distribution of powers. This failure led to the formation of a weak government, vulnerable to the same factionalism that contributed to the end of Saleh's power.

Hadi's government was eventually toppled by the Houthis, a nationalist and religious movement with its belief system stemming from the Zaydi branch of Islam.²¹ This takeover initiated a proxy war between a Saudi coalition supporting the reinstatement of Hadi's government and the Houthi movement backed primarily by Iran.²² Although Saudi Arabia asserts that the Houthi movement is a proxy for Iran in the region, many scholars and analysts are skeptical of Iran's level of involvement.²³

Within the Saudi Alliance (a group of states with a Sunni majority including Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, Qatar, Sudan, the United Arab Emirates, Eritrea, and Pakistan), there has been a fair share of infighting, primarily regarding the inclusion of the Yemeni southern transitional government, the southern transitional council (STC), in the distribution of power.²⁴ Although that dispute was resolved when Hadi agreed to share power equally with the STC postwar, the Saudi coalition still risks losing Western backers of the alliance.²⁵ Recently, western entities like the US have experienced pushback from lawmakers and the general public due to their involvement in weapon sales to the Saudi Alliance.²⁶ Specifically, the use of these weapons in air campaigns that have killed civilians and the risk of these weapons falling into the hands of militant groups such as Al-Qaeda have sparked outrage amongst the public and government officials.²⁷ President Biden himself has signaled he will stop supporting this coalition and freeze weapon sales, signaling a possible turn in the tide for the Saudi Alliance.

There is no lack of conflict on the tribal side of the dispute, as the Houthi and other neighboring tribes also fight among themselves. Recently, the Houthis took control of Hajjah, an important

²¹Maysaa Shuja al-Deen, "The Houthi-Tribal Conflict in Yemen," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, accessed August 8, 2021, <https://carnegieendowment.org/sada/78969>.

²² Council on Foreign Relations, "Yemen's Tragedy," accessed August 8, 2021, <https://carnegieendowment.org/sada/78969>.

²³Ibid."

²⁴Ibid."

²⁵Ibid."

²⁶Ibid."

²⁷Ibid."

strategic region bordering Saudi Arabia, after the war of Hajor.²⁸ Although Saudi Arabia, an ally of Hadi's government and an enemy of the Houthis, tried to intervene by providing supplies to the enemy tribes, local fighting over who would get the supplies ultimately sabotaged these efforts.²⁹

²⁸"Ibid."

²⁹"Ibid."

History of the Problem

Ottoman Rule

Yemen Eyalet

In 1517, the Ottomans launched their first conquest of Yemen, capturing a variety of western cities and eventually converting Zabid into its headquarters for the Yemen Eyalet.³⁰ The Yemen Eyalet was the administrative unit of the Ottoman empire, as 'eyalet' means province or state. Initially, the Ottomans held little control in the northern regions of the country, instead concentrating their power in the southern coastal regions.³¹ Between 1552 and 1560, Ottoman general Özdemiş Pasha took Sana'a, a northern city, putting Yemen under Ottoman control.³² Eventually, in 1565, the Ottomans split Yemen into two provinces: one in the north and the other in the south.³³

However, widespread Ottoman control did not last long, as Imam al-Mutahhar united local tribes against Ottoman rule, pushing them out of Sana'a, the modern day capital of Yemen. This rebellion lasted until about 1583, but by 1634, Imam al-Mansur al-Qasim and his son, Al-Mu'ayyad Muhammad, were forced to push the Ottomans out of Yemen again.³⁴ Most of Ottoman rule in Yemen is marked by a similar trend of uprisings, symbolic of a constant push and pull for control.

Yemen Vilayet

In 1872, the Ottomans established Sana'a as the capital of the Yemen Vilayet after a series of land reforms in the empire.³⁵ A vilayet is another term used for administrative districts, and in this case is used to refer to the later organization of Yemen under Ottoman rule where most of Ottoman power was concentrated in large cities. Yemen was divided up into four administrative units called sanjaks

³⁰Outb al-Din al-Nahrawali, *Lightning over Yemen a History of the Ottoman Campaign (1569 - 71)*, translated by Clive Smith (London: Tauris, 2002).

³¹Jane Hathaway, *A Tale of Two Factions* (Albany: State University of New York, 2003).

³²Halil Inalcik and Donald Quataert, *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire, 1300-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

³³"Ibid"

³⁴Abdul Ali, *Islamic Dynasties of the Arab East* (New Delhi: M D Publications, 1996).

³⁵Bruce Masters, *The Arabs of the Ottoman Empire, 1516-1918* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

in order to better manage the area.³⁶ This administrative strength, however, did not make the maintenance of stability in Yemen any less difficult. The presence of the Zaidis (a Shia sect of Islam in Yemen) in the north sparked many uprisings, eventually causing the Ottomans to yield aspects of their control and restore sharia law in place of Ottoman civil codes.³⁷ This was particularly significant as sharia law is a form of religious law that stems from sources such as the Quran and Ottoman civil codes and contains ideas such as rule of law and constitutionalism.

However, with the establishment of the Suez Canal in 1869, the Ottomans were weary of British encroachment in the region. Eventually, the Violet Line was established in 1914, creating a boundary between the Ottoman Yemen Vilayet and the British Aden Protectorate.³⁸ The British, however, were not the Ottomans' greatest obstacle; rather, the Ottomans were pushed out of the north by a series of rebellions from northern tribes. The highly organized Ottoman government and military ended up being no match for the tactics of the northern tribes. 1918 marked the end of the Vilayet, as the Ottomans were pushed out, leaving Imam Yahya ibn Mohammed in control.³⁹

Post WW1 Yemen

Imam Yahya was recognized as the King of Yemen in 1926 by the Italian Empire, posing a threat to British interests in the region (namely the Aden protectorate, which consisted of parts of South Arabia). He aimed to recapture the lands of his ancestors, putting him into conflict with the British as well as local occupants such as the Zaidis. The Zaydi Imam in particular saw both the British and the Ottomans as foreign occupants of Yemen and thus refused to acknowledge the Violet Line. After multiple struggles over land claims with the Idrisids (and eventually Ibn Saud, the founder of Saudi Arabia), he eventually ceded three provinces to Ibn Saud and recognized British authority over the Aden Protectorate.⁴⁰

³⁶Caesar E. Farah, *The Sultan's Yemen* (London: Tauris, 2002).

³⁷Nikshoy C. Chatterji, *Muddle of the Middle East* (New Delhi: Abhinav Publications, 1973).

³⁸Bat-Zion Eraqi Klorman. *The Jews of Yemen in the Nineteenth Century* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1993).

³⁹Eugene L. Rogan, *Frontiers of the State in the Late Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

⁴⁰Raymond A. Hinnebusch and Anoushiravan Ehteshami, *The Foreign Policies of Middle East States* (Roulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2002).

WW2 to 1994 (end of 1st Yemeni Civil War)

North Yemen

Yahya was assassinated in 1948 after many Yemenis were displeased with the government, and a coup occurred.⁴¹ However, Ahmad, the son of Yahya, was able to overthrow the coup. In doing so, he stated his intention to combat the many crises in Yemen at the time, even promising economic and social change. However, his policy ultimately resembled that of his father, and the loyalty of the tribes that put him into power began to waver.

In 1962, a coup overthrew the rule of Ahmad's son, Muhammad Al-Badr, and the Yemen Arab Republic was established.⁴² Al-Badr rallied tribes together and received aid from Saudi Arabia to try to retake his power. Meanwhile, the Yemen Arab Republic asked for and received aid from Egypt.

A civil war occurred in North Yemen until 1970, with many different countries supporting either of the two sides. Ultimately, Egypt and Saudi Arabia agreed to the Compromise of 1970. These terms established a republican government, provided loyalists with government positions, and sent the Imam and his family into exile.⁴³ However, economic growth became exceedingly slow. The cabinet was dismissed by the military and tribes, and Ibrahim Al-Hamdi headed a military-led Council. This new government sought to modernize Yemen through the creation of updated governmental institutions.⁴⁴ However, people were angry at the government's power and influence and assassinated two presidents within a few years. Eventually, Col. Ali Abdullah Saleh was chosen to lead the People's Constituent Assembly in 1978. The General People's Congress party was then formed in the 1980s and pushed Yemen to grow in the oil trade.⁴⁵

⁴¹*Encyclopedia Britannica*, "The Age of Imperialism," accessed August 8, 2021, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Yemen/The-age-of-imperialism>.

⁴²*Ibid.*"

⁴³*Ibid.*"

⁴⁴*Ibid.*"

⁴⁵*Ibid.*"

South Yemen

There was also political conflict in South Yemen over the policies of the two ruling Imams and over loyalty to either the British or the other tribes. Ultimately, 17 of the South Yemen protectorate states joined Britain's Federation of South Arabia. When Britain stated its withdrawal from Southern Arabia around 1965, violence broke out over who would lead the soon-to-be independent South Yemen.

The people of South Yemen were now increasingly eager for independence, especially after the Arab Yemen Republic had formed in the north. The Front for the Liberation of (Occupied) South Yemen (FLOSY) sought aid from Egypt in their quest for independence; however, not all Yemenis were in favor of an affiliation with Egypt.⁴⁶ Thus, the National Liberation Front (NLF) formed, a group which sought Yemeni independence without the aid and influence of Egypt. Thus, the NLF and FLOSY fought against each other, with the NLF eventually winning and receiving control of South Yemen from the British on November 30, 1967. This new republic received a lot of aid from the Soviet Union and thus became heavily marxist, renaming itself the People's Republic of South Yemen in the early 1970s.⁴⁷

North and South Conflict

The North became market-oriented, while the South was more socialist; this difference led to some tensions between the two. Thus, border wars occurred in both 1972 and 1979. The result of both conflicts was a weak agreement of unity. South Yemen developed a more moderate government in 1986 after violence occurred which resulted in the deaths of South Yemeni leaders. As a result, South Yemen was better equipped to enter negotiations for Yemeni unity.

Unity

Essentially, when oil was discovered, the Soviet Union stopped supporting European countries that financially supported South Yemen.⁴⁸ The two republics decided to unify together at the lead of

⁴⁶"Ibid."

⁴⁷"Ibid."

⁴⁸"Ibid."

North Yemen in November 1989, and the constitution for the new Republic of Yemen was implemented on May 22, 1990. A democracy was established, with the political capital in Sana'a and economic capital in Aden. The economy, however, started to tank in the early 90s, in part due to Yemen's stance of opposing Saudi Arabia and the US, which caused them to lose a lot of aid from gulf countries in the Persian Gulf War.⁴⁹

War of Secession (Civil War): 1993-1994

A civil war broke out in 1993 as the economy tanked and political tensions between northern and southern leaders heightened. The result of this conflict was a peace agreement signed by the leaders of the North and South on February 20th, 1994 in Amman, Jordan.⁵⁰ The South formally declared defeat and many Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP) leaders fled Yemen. At that point, Yemen was essentially in the hands of the northern political parties, and in particular President Saleh and the GPC-Islah coalition (a coalition between Northern Yemen GPC leaders and the Islah party). However, the GPC held increasing power in this coalition, which strained the relationship with Islah. The civil rights of many Yemenis were abused and violated as a result of this political chaos.⁵¹

1994 to Present Day

Early Risings of Terrorism

President Ali Abdullah Saleh, the emerging winner from the 90s Civil War, won Yemen's first democratic election in 1999 with 96.2% of the vote; his opponent was the son of the former President of South Yemen (which, at this time, was obviously a point of particular shame).⁵² Yemen's post-war reconstruction, however, was cut short as Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) became more and more prominent. They began to commit terrorist attacks against the United States on Yemeni soil, with the most notable example being the bombing of the USS *Cole* in Aden's

⁴⁹Ibid."

⁵⁰Ibid."

⁵¹Ibid."

⁵²The New Humanitarian, "In eleventh-hour reversal, President Saleh announces candidacy," The New Humanitarian, January 10, 2016, <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/news/2006/06/25/eleventh-hour-reversal-president-saleh-announces-candidacy>.

harbor during a routine refueling.⁵³ Moreover, after the events of September 11th, Saleh used the chaos to consolidate power and extend his rule.

Shia Insurgency, Arab Spring, and Yemeni Revolution

The events which would become the current civil war largely began in 2004, when Hussein Badreddin al-Houthi, the leader of a local Shia sect in Northern Yemen, led an insurgency against the Yemeni government. Although the movement began with religious connotations (and received backing from Iran as a result, beginning what would become one of the world's most prominent proxy wars), the combination of poor economic conditions, political corruption, and outstanding dictatorial actions taken by President Saleh spawned the foundations for a massive political movement marked by widespread protests, military defections, and renewed anti-government sentiment.⁵⁴ The result of these developments was a weakened central government which could not fend off threats from Houthi and AQAP rebels or tribal federations that sought autonomy from the Yemeni government.⁵⁵ Following defeat at the Battle of Sana'a at the hands of the Alliance of Yemeni Tribes and other anti-government parties, assembled by Sheikh Sadiq al-Ahmar, President Saleh resigned and yielded power to Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi, the former Vice President. Saleh named Hadi the acting President for a transitional period until a rightful leader was chosen.⁵⁶ After an election on February 21, 2012 that was largely unrecognized by the Houthis and Southern Secessionists (which trace their roots back to the 1994 Civil War), Hadi was officially sworn in as President of Yemen.⁵⁷

The Modern War

Following fuel subsidy cuts and a disastrous proposal to federalize Yemen into six distinct federal regions, the Houthi rebels took control of the capital in Sana'a and forced the resignation of the

⁵³BBC, "USS Cole Bombing," BBC, February 13, 2020, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-51487712>.

⁵⁴BBC, "Yemen," BBC, June 19, 2020, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-29319423>.

⁵⁵57onews, "Yemen's president vows to resist 'failed state' as tribes press offensive against regime," accessed August 8, 2021, <https://web.archive.org/web/20110928061849/http://www.57onews.com/news/world/article/231160--yemen-s-president-vows-to-resist-failed-state-as-tribes-press-offensive-against-regime>.

⁵⁶BBC, "Yemeni President Saleh signs deal on ceding power," BBC, November 23, 2011, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-15858911>.

⁵⁷Laura Kasinof, "Yemen Gets New Leader as Struggle Ends Calmly," The New York Times, February 25, 2012, https://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/25/world/middleeast/yemen-to-get-a-new-president-abed-rabu-mansour-hadi.html?_r=0.

ruling government, and Hadi formally yielded power in January 2015.⁵⁸ The Houthis dissolved the parliament and formed a Revolutionary Committee to rule over the country, although the committee was unrecognized by the UN. Hadi remained under house arrest for a month until slipping away to his home city of Aden in the south, formally declaring the takeover invalid and rescinding his resignation. Hadi, now supported by Saudi Arabia, attempted a ceasefire agreement known as the Omani Initiative in May 2015, but this effort was ultimately unsuccessful in securing lasting peace.⁵⁹ Fighting has continued for the last six years on multiple fronts, with Houthis (backed by Iran), AQAP, the Southern Transitional Council (supported by UAE) and the Hadi-led government (backed by Saudi Arabia, UAE, Sudan, Morocco, Qatar, and NATO) clashing frequently, with alliances being drawn and destroyed often.⁶⁰ So far, there have been over 100,000 estimated deaths due to the conflict, with over 50,000 additional deaths (in 2018 alone) the results of widespread famine and water shortages.⁶¹

⁵⁸ Ibid.”

⁵⁹ Ibid.”

⁶⁰ Ibid.”

⁶¹ Ibid.”

Past Actions

Humanitarian

Humanitarian aid, including food, water, and health supplies, has been provided to Yemen in the past. As with the majority of humanitarian aid to conflict zones, these efforts have had limited long-term effectiveness. Aid requires careful administration in order to ensure that it is received by the appropriate parties and that it manages to staunch short-term difficulties.

Economic

Multiple different tactics have been employed to bring about economic stability to Yemen, most of which have been unsustainable, incredibly expensive, and outright ineffective. Currently, in order to solve the food shortage, the Yemeni people rely heavily on the United Nations World Food Programme to provide essential supplies.⁶² These supplies, however, are notorious for being confiscated by Houthi rebels, who utilize them to drive up their recruitment efforts. As a result, supplies have only reached approximately 30-40% of their intended Yemeni recipients in major cities.⁶³

From a more traditionally economic perspective, when the Hadi moved the Central Bank of Yemen from Sana'a (following its capture by the Houthis) to Aden in 2016, instead of having the intended destabilizing effect on the Houthis, the result was a severe famine in Sana'a and a rise of price discrepancies across the country (a common effect from decreasing liquidity in food markets and easing regulation). Millions of public workers were then left unpaid by the government, with their deficit placed into the hands of the Houthis.⁶⁴

⁶²UN World Food Programme, "Famine alert," accessed August 8, 2021, <https://www.wfp.org/stories/what-is-famine>.

⁶³Staff, "UN threatens to suspend aid to Yemen amid theft by Houthi rebels," The Telegraph, December 31, 2018, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2018/12/31/un-threatens-suspend-aid-yemen-amid-theft-houthi-rebels/>.

⁶⁴Stacey Philbrick Yadav, "Yemen Dispatch," Middle East Research and Information Project, January 30, 2018, <https://merip.org/2018/01/yemen-dispatch/>.

Political

Interestingly, there have not been many actions taken by either the Houthi rebels, the Southern Transitional Council, or the Saudi-backed Hadi-led government to de-escalate the political conflict. Most pressure for de-escalation has come in the form of ineffective cries from the United Nations General Assembly through non-binding resolutions that seek to condemn (but not implement enforcement against) the actions of the Saudi coalition, particularly regarding their role in exacerbating the humanitarian crisis for the Yemeni people.⁶⁵

In 2018, there were global efforts to negotiate a ceasefire between the Houthis and the Hadi-led government in order to alleviate the suffering from the crippling humanitarian crisis. In December 2018, a ceasefire was signed regarding the port city of Hudayah.⁶⁶ The ceasefire agreement called for the withdrawal of troops from both sides in favor of United Nations' affiliated peacekeepers.

⁶⁵Oliver Daum, "War in Yemen (1)," *Junge Wissenschaft*, accessed August 8, 2021, <https://www.juwiss.de/43-2018/>.

⁶⁶BBC, "Yemen war," BBC, December 13, 2018, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-46555059>.

Possible Solutions

Note: please do not restrict yourself to the following solutions. We encourage you to use your creativity to create even better solutions to the Yemeni crisis.

Humanitarian

Humanitarian solutions encompass a wide variety of possible actions. For example, in response to a water crisis, one could improve irrigation systems. With regard to famine, send food aid and set up food banks. To prevent death and displacement, send medical supplies, pursue ceasefire agreements, and establish regional relationships to support refugees. In order to succeed, humanitarian solutions must go beyond simply supplying materials; instead, try to establish long-lasting infrastructure to support and expand aid for the present and future.

Economic

Solving an economic crisis that is so closely embedded within a political crisis is rarely an easy task. Thus, it would be wise to approach the economic solution set as consisting of two subsequent stages: stabilization policy and long-term development. Why is this distinction important? Because whereas an electronic Yemeni stock exchange might add value in the *long run*, it will likely not directly alleviate the immediate food shortage that exists within the country. As such, it would be wise to prioritize stabilization policy before long-term development. Unsurprisingly, this stabilization policy will tend to coincide with stabilizing political initiatives that will create a foundation upon which Yemen can prosper.

When considering solutions, it is most helpful to start with the problems that must be solved and their most intuitive solutions. For example, food shortages generally require responses that include food distribution. We have established that the UN World Food Programme is primarily responsible for alleviating food insecurity, but, generally, their support is not sustainable.⁶⁷ Thus, it would be helpful to consider utilizing the Arab League's collective resources to extend a short-term alleviation program (that supplements the UN program), while also building out a framework for newer and

⁶⁷"Ibid."

more long-lasting partnerships that will enable Yemen to eventually phase out of these short-term agreements.

It would also be worthwhile to consider the geographical advantages that Yemen possesses and which weaknesses it would need to address in any theoretical trade agreement. Yemen, for instance, has a large amount of untapped oil reserves that could be utilized following the construction of more sophisticated resource-harvesting infrastructure. Yemen also has attractive and strategic seaport access to the Red Sea, acting as an intermediary between the West and the East before the Suez Canal, which could also be utilized as economic leverage for future agreements.

Political

In tandem with the above points, political solutions must inherently coincide with economic stabilization policy. Otherwise, any politically-intensive ceasefire or other temporary solution will quickly fall into disarray. A good political framework, then, should similarly divide up the solution set: first, conflict mediation must be enacted. Only when all sides are brought to the bargaining table can agreements truly be made.

While the Arab League will mostly favor one bloc in this particular conflict, we encourage delegates to get creative about solutions that might enable an end result that seeks to appease the major demands of all parties. Implied within that is the notion that simply finding solutions for the Houthis and Hadi-led government is likely impossible, especially with other parties like AQAP and the Southern Transitional Council playing significant roles in the conflict. Because AQAP is designated as a terrorist group by the United States, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the United Nations at-large, we will not entertain any negotiations with AQAP in committee.

Beyond the not-so-simple task of conflict resolution, long-term political stability can only be achieved through an overhaul of the political process. Will the new Yemen be secular or sectarian? Islamic or agnostic? Sunni or Shia? A democracy or monarchy? How will this structure interact with the cultural north/south divide? All of these are relevant questions to be asking in your search for solutions.

Bloc Positions

Arab League Voting Members

Algeria, Bahrain, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen

Observer States

Armenia, Brazil, Eritrea, India, Venezuela

Introduction to Bloc Positions

The following are the general political affiliations of Arab League members with regard to the Yemeni conflict. We fully expect that delegates in committee will take stances based on the goals of promoting general welfare, encouraging economic development, and mediating conflict resolution. By no means are these the only possible stances that you can adopt in our committee, but they delineate some already established perspectives within the region. We highly encourage creativity in your partnerships by moving past traditional bloc stances.

Pro-Hadi

Saudi Arabia created a coalition of states to combat the Houthis, and these states for the most part follow Saudi Arabia. Jordan participated in Saudi-led air strikes against Houthi forces in the past.⁶⁸ Egypt also fights the Houthis with Saudi Arabia, and Mauritania has joined in with the Saudis and have sent troops to fight the Houthis in the past. The UAE openly supports the Hadi-led government, but also finances and provides political support to the Southern Transitional Council in an effort to deter Iran and the Houthi-affiliated political groups.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ Reuters. "Jordan Participates in Saudi-Led Operation in Yemen."

⁶⁹ Crisis Group. "Yemen's Southern Transitional Council."

Pro-Houthi

Generally, the Houthis do not have much support outside of their own group, although the alignment of Iran with the Houthis is hotly debated among scholars of the region.

Ambiguous/Tertiary Groups

Palestine has many of its own problems, so it has been hard for them to be very active in this conflict. However, both Hadi and the Houthis support Palestine.⁷⁰ Similarly, Iraq and Syria have many of their own problems which have prevented them from becoming truly involved in the conflict. Hadi has accused Lebanon of supporting Iran and the Houthis, but their loyalty is uncertain. They too have their own problems, most notably a collapsing economy.⁷¹ Oman has preferred to remain uninvolved, while Algeria has avoided inquiries from Saudi Arabia and the UAE for their support.⁷² Finally, Libya's own recovery from wartime has prevented them from substantially contributing to either side.

The Importance of Oil

Countries rich in oil such as Saudi Arabia, UAE, Kuwait, Algeria, Iraq, Qatar, and Libya are more likely to work together due to OPEC ties. Money is power; oil is gold. Such oil rich countries may wish to further develop their oil supplies and power by working together to sneak in shares of Yemeni oil. Essentially, these countries can use Yemen to gain more money and establish better oil ties with each other.

Geography and Proximity

Countries that are in their own geographical areas (such as the Gulf States, Balad al Sham, and Northern Africa) are also more likely to work together. They are more likely to do so because neighboring countries usually have pre-existing cultural and diplomatic ties. The economies of such

⁷⁰ AA. "Yemen's View on Palestine 'Unchanging, Nonnegotiable.'"

⁷¹ CFR. "Yemen's Tragedy."

⁷² Giorgio Cafiero, "Algeria in Yemen," LobeLog, November 2, 2016, <https://lobelog.com/algeria-in-yemen-combatant-or-mediator/>.

countries also tend to be similar, and thus they often work together to make each other better, whether that be through competition or direct cooperation. Geography can imprint many national similarities between such countries, and they thus can have similar ideologies. This can be exploited to get such neighboring countries to work together to aid Yemen.

Glossary

Foreign Currency Reserves: The reserves of foreign currencies held on a central bank's balance sheet. A country is generally limited to importing goods from countries whose currency reserves it possesses. Refer to the example of France, where Yemen would have to hold a certain amount of Euros in order to pay for the imports, since French companies have no interest in owning the Yemeni dollar, unless Yemen also exports to them, too.

Gulf Cooperation Council: An intergovernmental organization comprising Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates created for the purpose of greater cooperation in economic development, monetary and fiscal policy, and regional pricing power.

Imam: A title given to leaders in the Islamic community.

People's Constituent Assembly: A group of elected representatives established to create a constitutional style document.

Proxy War: A war between factions that are generally backed by two larger powers and, therefore, act as a proxy of a conflict between those two larger powers.

Qat: A narcotic plant.

Subsidy: A sum of money granted by a government to consumers or producers in order to lower costs and encourage fair and competitive pricing.

Yemen Vilayet (1872-1918): An administrative district of the Ottoman empire containing large portions of modern day Yemen, established to replace the Yemen Eyalet after the Tanzimat reforms (a series of modernization reforms meant to help strengthen the Ottoman empire).

WASH sectors: Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene sectors

Yemen Eyalet (1517-1636) and (1849-1872): An administrative district of the Ottoman empire containing large portions of modern day Yemen.

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