

Yemeni Conflict Overview

After the protests broke out in the first half of February 2011, Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh made several attempts to reduce tension in the society. However, by that time a long-standing conflict between two groups of Yemenite elites – the clan of Saleh and the Ahmars clan had been very clearly festering (whereas the Ahmars controlled many important highly effective units of the Yemeni armed forces).

On February 26, 2011, several leaders of the two largest Yemeni tribal confederations, the Hashid and Bakil (grouped around the al-Ahmar clan) announced their transition to the side of the opposition. In March, one of the leaders of the tribal confederation Hashid Ali Mohsen al-Ahmar, commander of the northern military district and the first armored division (one of the most efficient in the country), announced his withdrawal from the General People's Congress – the ruling party.

The main party of moderate Islamists in Yemen, at that time, was the Yemeni Congregation for Reform frequently called "al-Islah" that has rather close links both with the Yemen Muslim Brothers, as well as salafis, and with the Ahmar clan.¹ Quite predictably this party joined the Ahmar clan in its attempts to overthrow Ali Abdullah Saleh.

On November 23, 2011, in Riyadh, a plan was signed to settle the Yemen crisis, generated by the Arab Spring. This ended the 33-year period of Ali Abdullah Saleh's rule. After Ali Saleh's resignation, Vice-President Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi took the post on the basis of the results of the uncontested elections on February 21, 2012.

Since early 2012, power in Yemen has gradually passed into the hands of the al-Ahmar family, represented by the sons of the leader of the Hashid tribal confederation Abdullah al-Ahmar, who died in 2007. At the same time, they acted in an unofficial coalition with the interim president Abd Rabbo Mansour Hadi, who increasingly emerged from the control of Saleh and strove to become the real leader of the country. Their main allies were the Islamist party Al-Islah and the Yemenite Muslim Brotherhood, which rose due to the wave of success of their ideological inspirers in Egypt².

After the failure of the National Dialogue Conference in early 2014, the main political forces in Yemen focused on two opposing camps – the General People's Congress, led by Ali Abdullah Saleh, who had been displaced during the Arab Spring and the Ahmars' camp, already led by Sadiq al-Ahmar. Already in 2011, the two forces found themselves at opposite political poles, beginning to seek allies among the other political actors in Yemen: Al-Islah and the Muslim Brotherhood rallied around al-Ahmar, while the General People's Congress joined an alliance with the Baath Party³, the "Union of Popular Forces", and also began to pursue a policy of unofficial rapprochement with the

Ansar Allah movement. Of particular interest was the secret alliance of the General People's Congress with the Houthi Islamists, which a few years ago seemed unthinkable⁴.

Therefore, the situation in which the power in Yemen gradually began to be monopolized in the hands of the coalition of Mansour Hadi, the Ahmars, Islah and their allies represented by the Muslim Brotherhood and the Salafis, put their opponents on one side of the barricades and forced them to go to extreme measures. Obviously, such prospects were categorically opposed by the Houthis, the General People's Congress, and the southerners. This predetermined the "Revolution of 21 September" in 2014, after which the Ahmars were forced to leave the country, while "Ansar Allah", pursuing their policy of concluding alliances with the Yemeni tribes, as well as members of the General People's Congress, in fact, established control over Northern Yemen.

The next aggravation of this situation occurred on January 17, 2015, when the Houthis arrested the head of the presidential administration Ahmed bin Mubarak on suspicion of an attempt to falsify the draft constitution of the country. On January 22, 2015, President Hadi filed a resignation petition and found himself under actual house arrest. Members of the government of Yemen also sent a petition to the President of the country about their resignation, and on February 6, the Houthi Revolutionary Committee was established as an interim authority in the country. By mid-February, the coalition of Houthis and forces faithful to Ali Abdallah Saleh had established control over virtually all of Northern Yemen and also a part of South Yemen. On February 15, 2015, the Houthis began their assault of Aden.

On February 21, 2015, Hadi managed to escape from Sanaa to Aden, after being under house arrest for a month. There, he managed to meet with the governors of the southern provinces and make a statement on the withdrawal of his resignation.

The revolution of September 21, 2014 – February 6, 2015, brought about a sharp rejection on the part of Saudi Arabia, other Gulf states, and a number of Arab countries, which then turned the intra-Yemeni conflict into a regional problem. The situation was further aggravated by the fact that various radical Islamist groups were already operating in Yemen, which alarmed the international community and the Gulf states.

The pressure of the Saudis in many respects forced President Hadi to abandon his abdication that he signed in January 2015, to transfer de facto his capital to Aden, to create a new government and to begin the fight against Ansar Allah.

Saudi Arabia also tried to consolidate the international community in exerting pressure on the Houthis. In particular, Riyadh demanded that its Arab neighbors support the deposed President Mansour Hadi.

On March 26, 2015, Saudi air strikes marked the start of the invasion of Yemen by the coalition forces of the Arab states led by Saudi Arabia within the framework of Operation Decisive Storm. The battle for Aden began between the Houthis who seized the city and the Saudi coalition. In July 2015, the Houthis were knocked out of the city. By August the Saudi coalition (in which an important military role was played by the UAE from the very beginning) concentrated a powerful mechanized fist in the southern Yemeni provinces and, allied with the Yemeni detachments supporting President Mansour Hadi, started advancing northward. However, the bloc of Houthis and forces supporting Ali Abdullah Saleh managed to organize a fairly effective rebuff of the Saudi coalition, and the civil war in Yemen took on a protracted character. In general, the "front line" between the two coalitions has gone quite close to the old state



border between the Yemen Arab Republic and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen. Note that the Islamists are active participants in the both coalitions. The Zaidi Islamists, in fact, led the northern coalition, and Islamists from the Islaq party joined the southern coalition. At the same time, the radical Islamists of al-Qaeda and Daesh proved to be at war with the forces of both coalitions.

At the same time, as the civil war dragged on, antagonisms began to develop within both coalitions. The aggravation of these antagonisms between the Houthis and the General People's Congress of Ali Abdullah Saleh led to the murder of Saleh by the Houthis on December 4, 2017. However (to the surprise of many observers) the Northern Coalition was able to survive even this shock.

The antagonisms in the southern coalition have worsened to an even greater degree. The fact is that the Yemeni portion of the southern coalition was initially heterogeneous. On the one hand, the moderately Islamist Ahmars – Islah block came to this coalition, fighting primarily for the overthrow the Houthi – GPC regime in Sanaa. But, on the other hand, it includes the rather secularist Southern Movement, which advocates the independence of South Yemen. At the same time, the antagonisms worsened even among the external participants of the anti-Houthi coalition. In the summer of 2017, as a result of a sharp deterioration of relations between Saudi Arabia and Qatar, Qatar withdrew from the coalition. On the other hand, relations between Saudi Arabia and the UAE in Yemen are extremely complicated, due to the Emirates pursuing their own policy in Yemen that differs very significantly from the one of the Saudis. The most important point is that the Emirates support the Southern Movement, whereas Saudis rely on the Ahmars' block. Meanwhile, on the 4th of April 2017 the Southern Movement formed the Southern Transitional Council and started taking practical steps in order to form an independent state in the South, and in late January 2018 Aden saw open fighting between the forces of the Ahmars (that are formally loyal to the President Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi) and the forces of the Southern Transitional Council.

«The Golden Victory»

On June 13, troops loyal to Mansur Hadi, with the support of coalition forces led by Saudi Arabia, announced the launch of another military operation to capture the Port of Hodeidah under the name of “Golden Victory”. In its statement, the internationally recognized government of Yemen stated:

“The liberation of the port will be the beginning of the end for the Houthi armed forces, it will provide maritime navigation in the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait and cut off the hands of Iran, which flooded Yemen with weapons that shed precious Yemenite blood”.

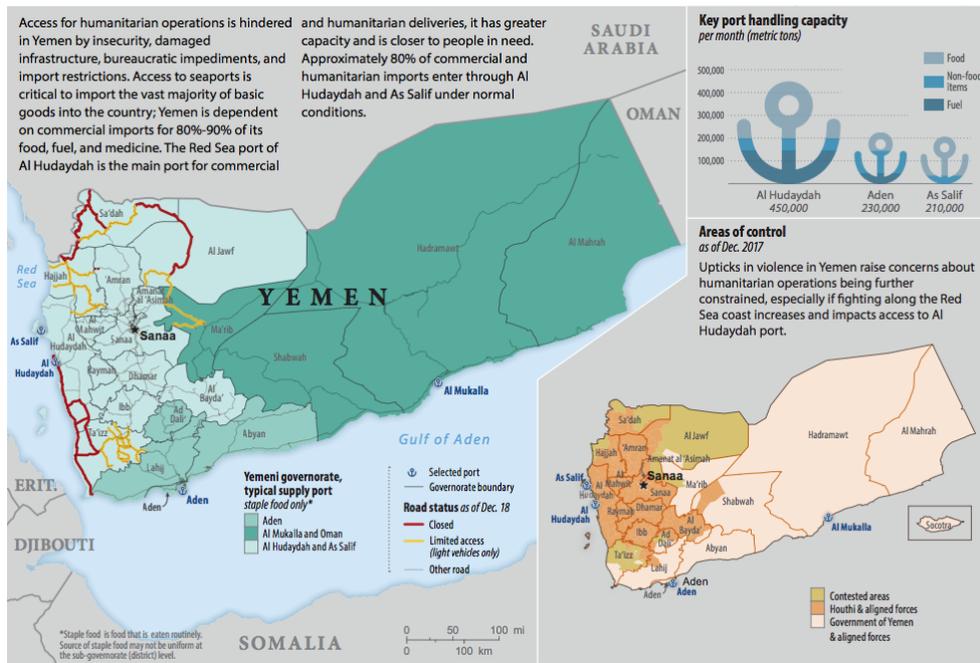
The absurdity of this statement is that the access of ships to the Red Sea through the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait and the Suez Canal is under the full control of the Coalition. As well as the Port of Hodeidah itself is blocked by the Coalition vessels, bypassing which access to the port is unlikely. This circumstance considerably complicates the supply of humanitarian aid to Hodeidah since the beginning of external intervention in Yemen, as the United Nations has repeatedly stated.

The UN Panel of Experts (who report on the sanctions regime) have never found evidence that Hodeidah has been used to smuggle weapons. United Nations Verification and Inspection Mechanism for Yemen (UNVIM) has never collected any weapons and nor have the shadow inspections conducted by the Coalition. Furthermore, UN experts suggest that most weapons were smuggled via land routes across front lines (i.e via Coalition territory)⁵. There are strong monitoring from UNVIM, Saudi and UAE, and recently the UN Panel of Expert never reported such an evidence of smuggling weapons. It also added that Houthis got all the ballistic missiles from the Hadi's Military.



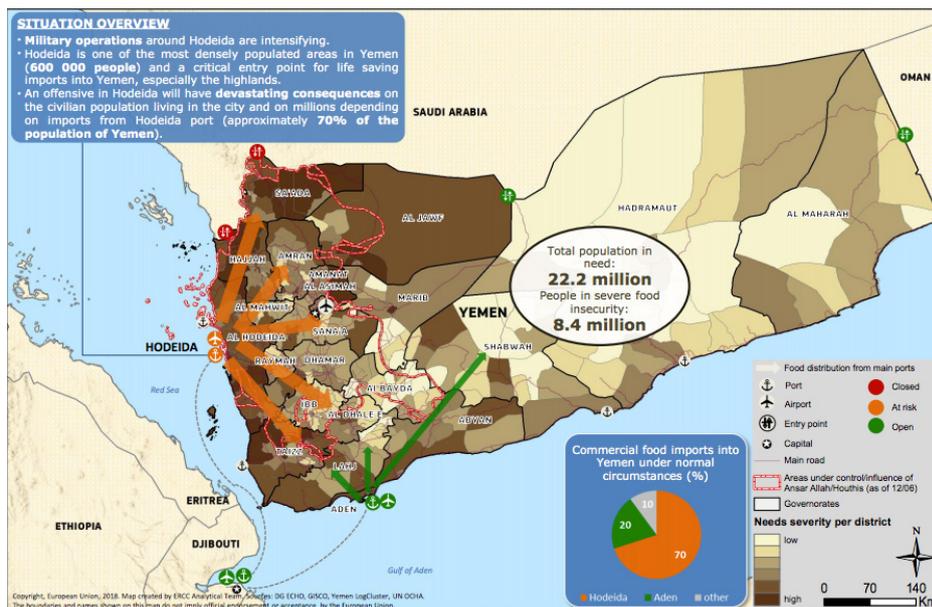
Apparently, the main task of the Coalition is to completely cut off Northern Yemen from humanitarian aid while this part of the country is controlled by the Houthis and the tribes loyal to them. To date, about 70% of the population of the whole Yemen receives aid through the port of Hodeidah (Fig. 1, 2). Consequently, its capture can significantly complicate the situation of the authorities in Sana'a as, in this case, humanitarian aid will flow into the country exclusively through the territory controlled by the opposition. It is not ruled out that under such conditions, Houthis may become more flexible in negotiations with the Saudis.

Fig. 1. Key Ports of Yemen and Areas of Control, 2017.



Source: US Department of State 2018⁶.

Fig. 2. Critical lifeline for Humanitarian Aid, 2018.



Source: EU 2018⁷.



However, the very fact of capturing Hodeidah, especially in the short term, seems unlikely. This is not the first operation to occupy this strategically important port. In early 2017, the Coalition conducted the Golden Spear Operation, the main task of which was to cut off the Sana'a authorities from the entire Red Sea coastline, through which the alliance receives 100% of humanitarian supplies and the lion's share of locally produced food. However, at that time, the simultaneous attack on Hodeidah from the south (via the port of Moha) by the forces of the Southern Movement under the command of former Defense Minister Geitham Tahir and from the north (from the city of Midi) by forces under the command of Ali Mohsen al-Akhmar was unsuccessful.

The Golden Victory Operation repeats in many respects the Golden Spear, with the only difference that unlike last year's events, where Riyadh was the main strategist, Abu Dhabi plays the leading role in the current offensive. This brought a change in the composition of the participants in the siege of Hodeidah. The troops of the Southern Movement are assisted by forces loyal to Tarek Saleh, the nephew of ex-president Ali Saleh, who was killed in 2017. However, both sides don't recognize Mansour Hadi as president and are not ready to coordinate actions with forces loyal to him. The large number of rifts within the Coalition, as well as the fundamentally diverging goals set by the forces inside Yemen (Fig. 3) give every reason to believe that the Golden Victory Operation can significantly aggravate the humanitarian situation in the country, which is already called the largest humanitarian catastrophe of the XXIst century.

Fig. 3. Belligerents in Yemeni Conflict.

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|  |  |  |
| <p>Supreme Political Council</p> | <p>Mansour Hadi Government</p> | <p>Southern</p> |
| <p><i>Ansar Allah People's General Congress Ahrar Al-Najran</i></p> | <p><i>Pro-Hadi Security Forces Al-Islah Hadramaut Tribal Alliance Republican Guard (partly after 2017)</i></p> | |
| <p>Supported by</p> | | |



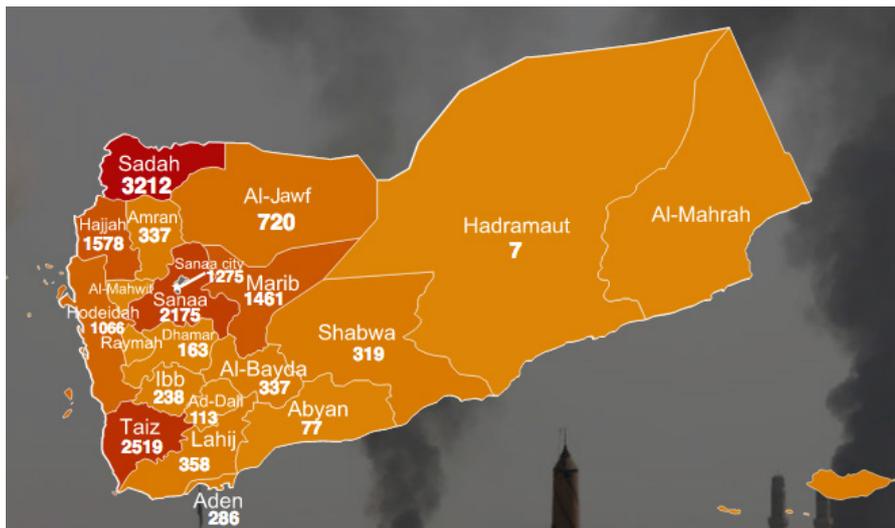
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| <p>Iran Syria Hizballah DPRK (although the level of such support is disputed, including Iran militarily – as opposed to evident UK-US support for Saudi Arabia)</p> | <p>Saudi-led Coalition: Saudi Arabia UAE Bahrain Kuwait Qatar (till 2017) Jordan Egypt Sudan Morocco (had fighter jets but recently reportedly withdrew)</p> <p>Weapons, Logistical, and Financial Support: USA United Kingdom Australia France Germany (Germany announced would stop sales) Canada Senegal Morocco Djibouti Eritrea Somalia Turkey</p> | <p>UAE</p> |
|---|--|------------|

The humanitarian catastrophe

Three years of external intervention created existential life risks for the entire Yemeni people. For three years of its presence in Yemen, the Coalition has committed more than 15,000 air raids (Fig. 4). Almost one third of all targets hit by coalition air raids, 31 percent, were non-military, with at least 1,491 air raids targeting residential areas.



Fig. 4. Air Raids of Saudi-led Coalition in Yemen, 2015-2018.

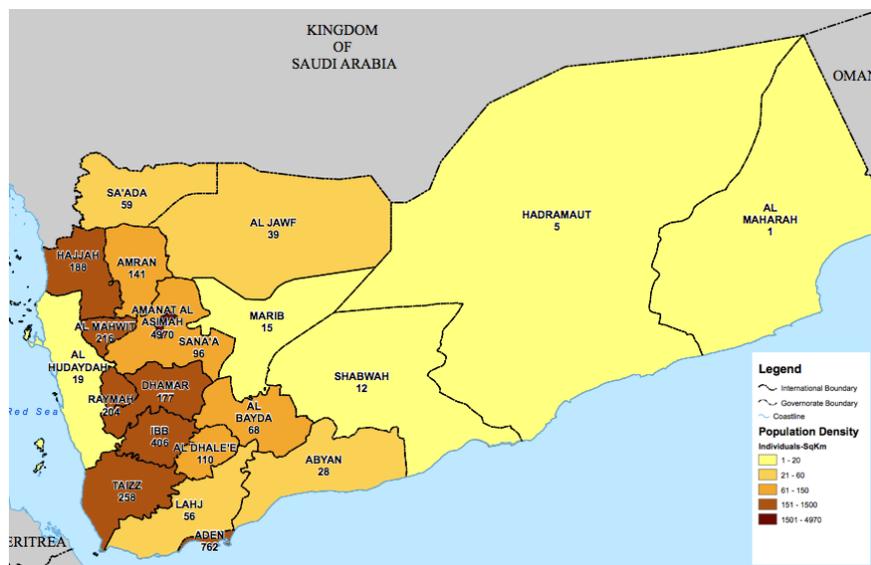


Source: Al Jazeera 2018⁸.

The reports of the UN humanitarian missions indicate that the level of poverty is the same in the North, which is located in the front zone, where about 20 million people live, and in the more peaceful South, wishing the secession from Yemen as soon as possible. The transformation of Yemen into the largest on the planet center of the humanitarian catastrophe and the de facto split of the country along the North-South line are increasingly attracting the attention of the world community to this problem, putting the task of preventing the humanitarian collapse, which in 2017 was warned by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, in the category of priority problems of world politics.

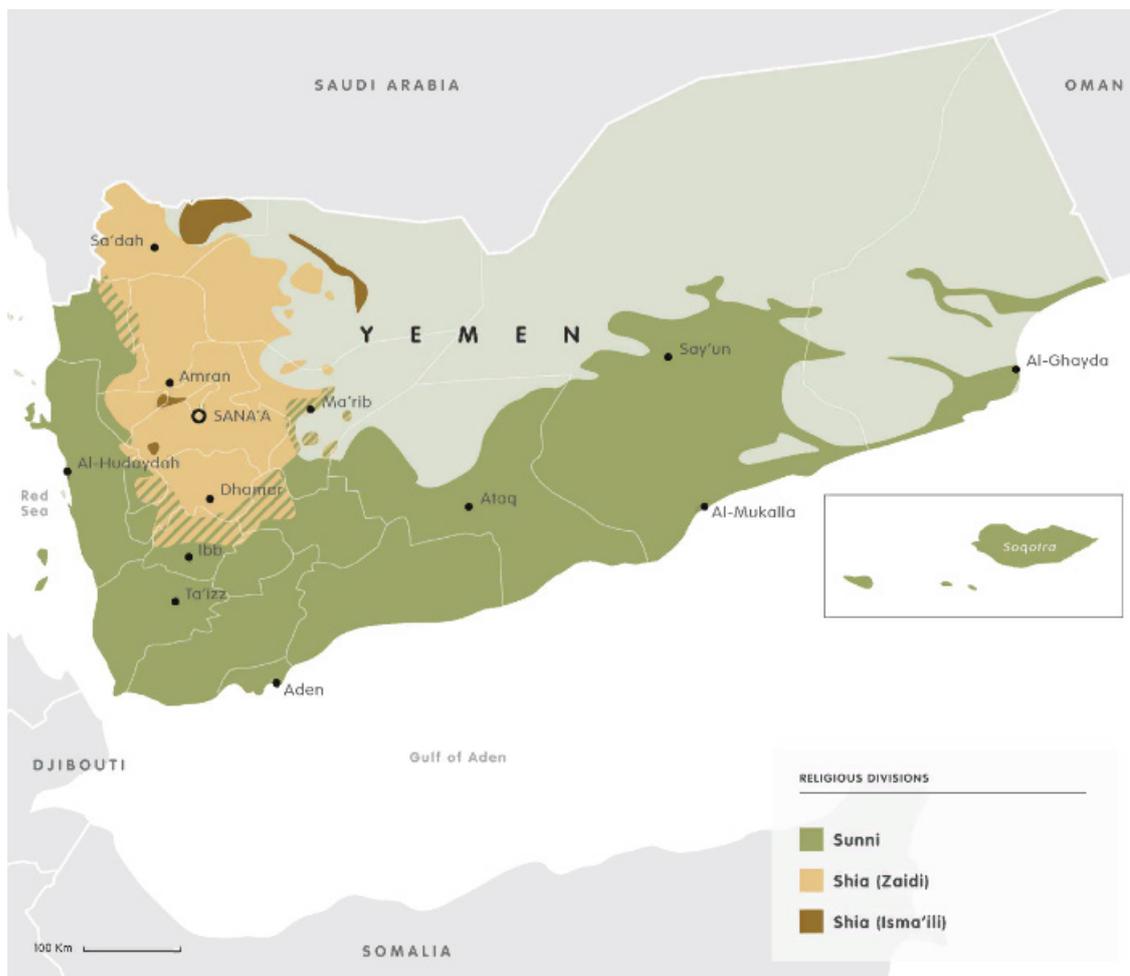
The humanitarian disaster still affects 21 million Yemenis in the province of Saada and other areas with a Zaidiyah population of up to 30% of the total population of the country (Fig. 5, 6), as well as the largest cities of Lower Yemen with Sunni population. The most difficult situation was in the war-torn Taiz, the cultural capital of the republic, and the famine-stricken Hodeidah, the most important port of Yemen. Above all these areas, there is a real threat of mass death of civilians from war and blockade.

Fig. 5. Population Density in Yemen



Source: UN OCHA 2018⁹.

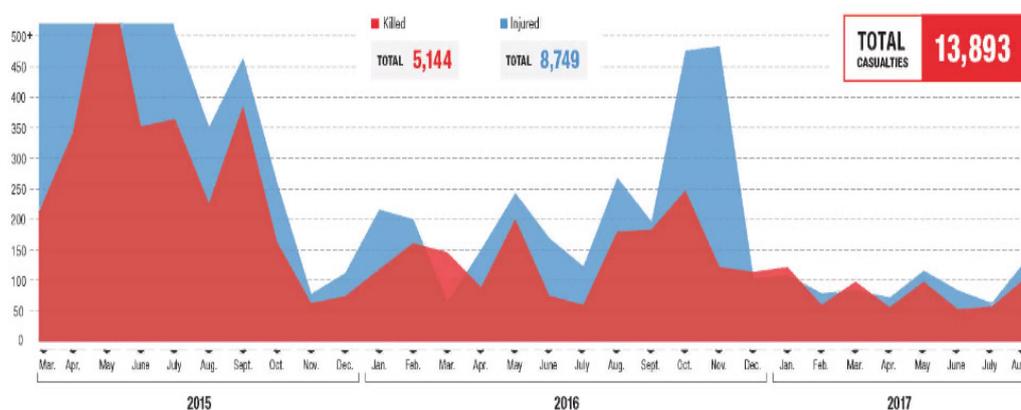
Fig. 6. Religious Divisions in Yemen.



Source: ECFR 2017¹⁰.

According to OHCHR, between 26 March 2015 and 10 May 2018, the UNHCR office in Yemen has documented a total of 16,432 civilian casualties – 6,385 dead and 10,047 injured¹¹ (Fig. 7).

Fig. 7. Civilian Casualties in Yemen, 2015-2017.

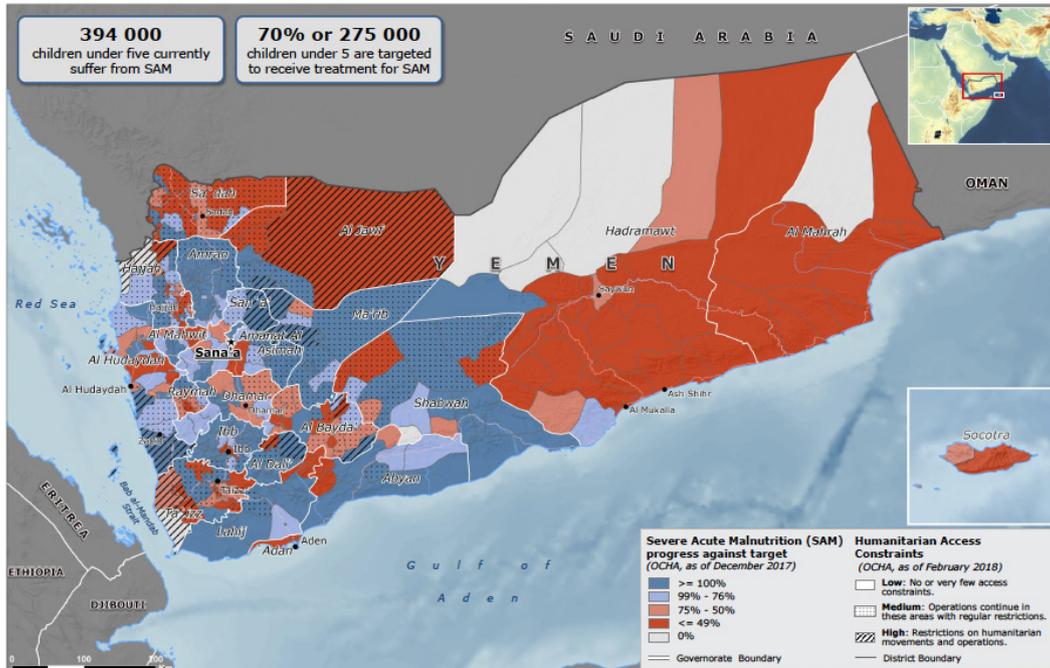


Source: UN OHCHR 2018¹².



22.2 million people, over 75 percent of the population, are in need of humanitarian and protection assistance¹³ (Fig. 8).

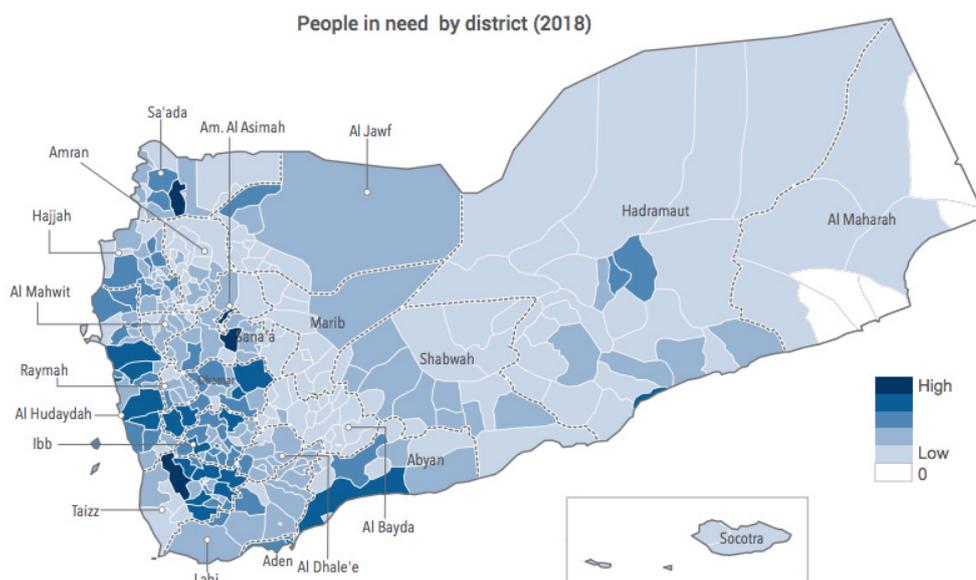
Fig. 8. Severe Acute Malnutrition Response Level (2017), and Humanitarian Access Constraints (2018) in Yemen



Source: EU 2018¹⁴.

60 percent of the population (17.8 million people) are suffering from food insecurity and malnutrition, including 8.4 million severely food insecure¹⁵ (Fig. 9).

Fig. 9. Food Security in Yemen, 2018.

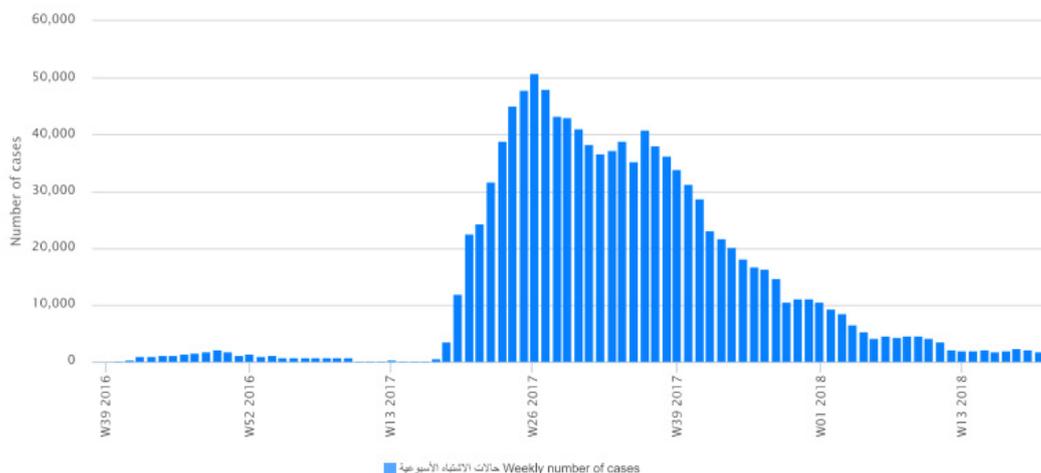


Source: UN OCHA 2018¹⁶.



A new cholera outbreak on 27 April 2017 has already led to over 1,082,330 suspected cases of cholera/ AWD in 21 out of 22 governorates of the country, with at least 2,267 associated deaths¹⁷ (Fig. 10). There has been 1,294 suspected cases of diphtheria since 15 August 2017, with at least 73 associated deaths in 20 governorates¹⁸.

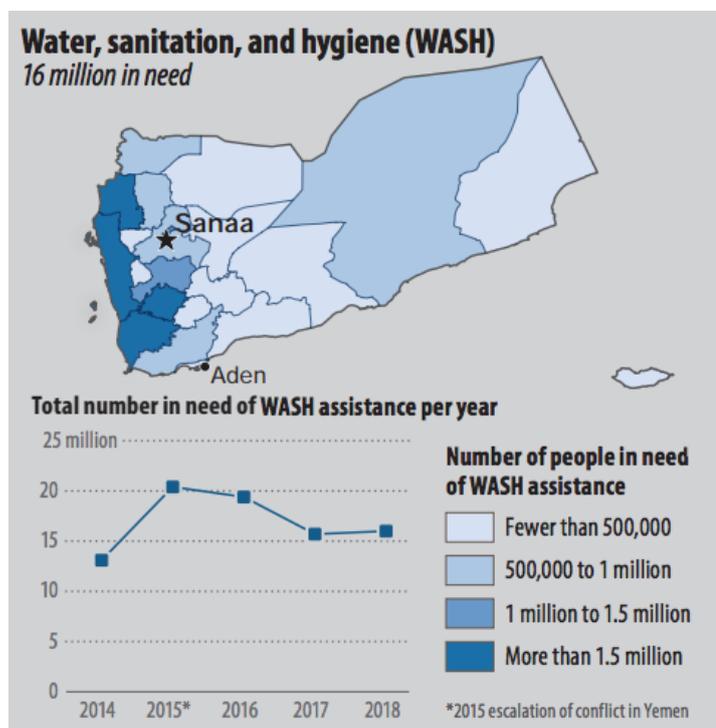
Fig. 10. Cholera Epidemic Curve in Yemen, 2016-2018.



Source: WHO 2018¹⁹.

16 million people are in need of water and sanitation assistance, including 11.6 million in acute need²⁰ (Fig. 11).

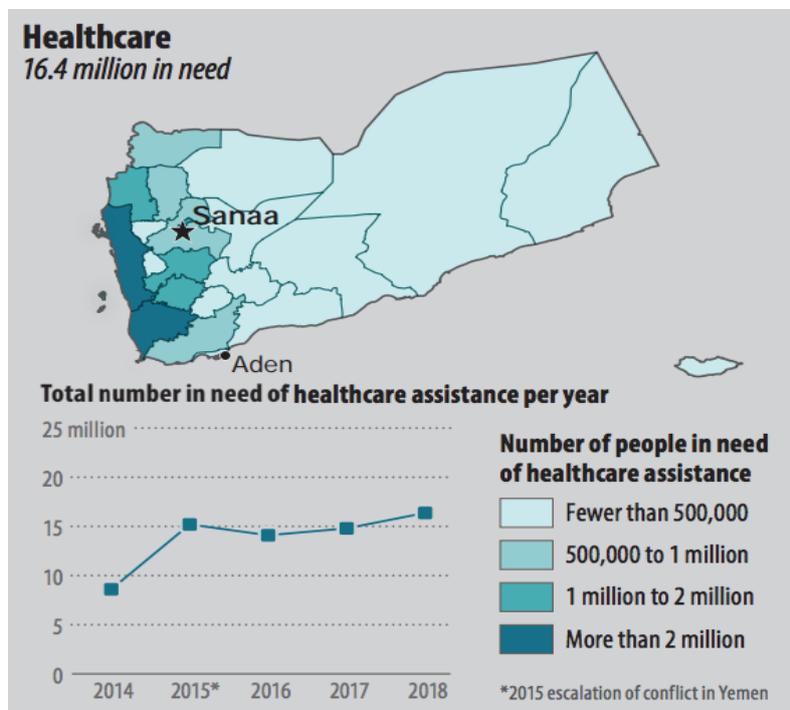
Fig. 11. Number of People in Need of Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Assistance in Yemen, 2018.



Source: UN OCHA 2018²¹.

16.4 million people lack access to basic healthcare, including 9.3 million in acute need. living in severely underserved areas. Only 50 percent of health facilities in Yemen are fully functioning²² (Fig. 12).

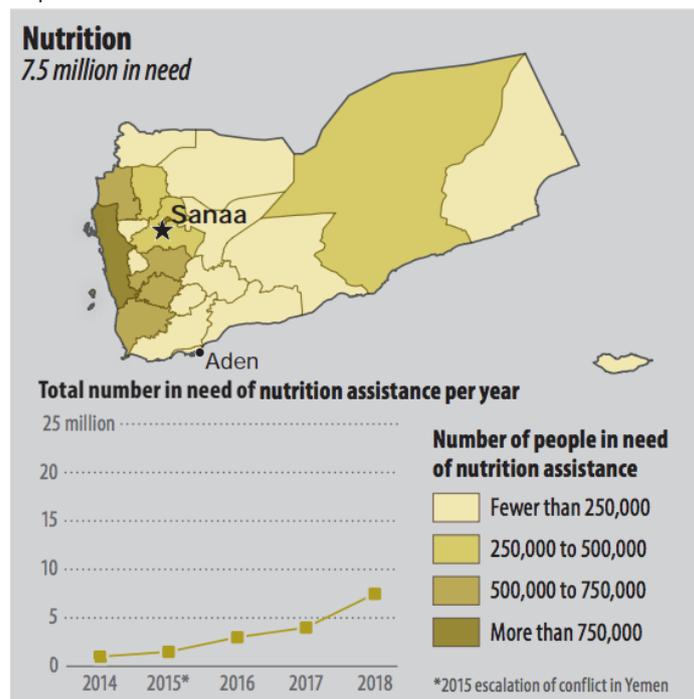
Fig. 12. Number of People in Need of Healthcare Assistance in Yemen, 2018.



Source: UN OCHA 2018²³.

7.5 million people in Yemen are in need of nutrition assistance, including 1.8 million children and 1.1 million pregnant or breastfeeding who will require treatment for acute malnutrition²⁴ (Fig. 13).

Fig. 13. Number of People in Need of Nutrition Assistance in Yemen, 2018.



Source: UN OCHA 2018²⁵.

Numerous signs of war crimes in Yemen have long attracted the attention of specialized UN committees. Al-Hussein, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, repeatedly appealed to Yemen to initiate a special investigation. But all his requests were rejected. The United Nations report on the situation of children in conflict zones, which at the beginning of June 2016 served as the basis for Saudi Arabia's blacklisting of countries killing children, suffered the same fate. It stated that 60% of the reported deaths of Yemeni children are attributable to air strikes of the Coalition. But the UN Secretary-General, who was "under pressure", had to delete the Saudi Arabia from this list in less than a week²⁶. The concealment of crimes and the obstacles created by the UN's investigation have become one of the difficulties to the speedy transfer of the crisis phase to the settlement.

By the end of 2017, the operation in Yemen, which had already entered into a political and military deadlock, created many new problems. The permanent partisan operations of the forces of the Saleh-Houthi Alliance in Asir, Najran and Jizan, the launching of ballistic missiles, modernized by the Yemenis themselves, towards military objects in the territory of the Kingdom far from the border for a distance of more than 1000 km, the sudden flowering of al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula in the South (Fig. 14), in the zone of responsibility of the Saudi Coalition, and finally, the demonstration of the political powerlessness of ex-President Mansur Hadi, who did not create a reliable state control mechanism in the South of the country, do not not exhaust this list. The unanticipated turn of the campaign created unpleasant problems for the very initiator of the intervention - Muhammad bin Salman. His bid for success in the Yemeni campaign enduring fiasco directly affects the future of his political career.

Fig. 14. Areas of Al-Qaeda Control in Yemen, 2017.



Source: ECRF 2017²⁷.



Recommendations

As the crisis in Yemen has entered a critical phase, immediate actions need to be taken on multiple levels:

To UN Security Council:

I. It is necessary to revise the provisions of UN Security Council Resolution 2216 at least in two key aspects: (1) the designation of a mandatory requirement for the establishment of unhindered and regular access of humanitarian aid to the territory of Yemen; (2) the most complete identification of all parties to the conflict and their responsibility for non-compliance with the decisions of the UN Security Council.

(1) The change in all key parameters of the Yemen crisis over the past three years calls for a serious revision of the UN Security Council resolution 2216. This is primarily due to the absolute priority of the humanitarian aspect of the conflict, as confirmed by the reports of the UN specialized bodies. The current humanitarian situation is largely connected with two fundamental omissions in the decision of the Security Council: the inadequacy of the sanctions component, which has a pronounced unilateral orientation, and the absence of a requirement to establish mandatory and regular humanitarian pauses.

(2) The current phase of the Yemen crisis has nothing to do with the initial provisions of UN Security Council resolution 2216. Its text does not reflect the full picture of the situation in Yemen, due to its propensity to simplify the conflict. Thus, the Yemeni crisis is considered by the Security Council exclusively as a confrontation of the “legitimate power” in the face of Mansur Hadi and “Houthi rebels” who committed a military coup in 2014-2015, which is absolutely irrelevant in the realities of 2018. In view of this, to this day, the actions of resolution 2216 apply exclusively to the Yemeni parties to the conflict and bypass the responsibility that external actors must bear.

II. To task UN Special Envoy to Yemen to create the necessary conditions for the formation of a government of national unity, the distribution of power between the parties to the conflict, the withdrawal of troops from Sana’a and other key zones.

To Coalition:

I. It is necessary to immediately stop the Golden Victory Operation and agree to UNVIM as the only possible and legitimate mechanism to prevent arms smuggling through the port of Hodeidah and ensure unhindered access of humanitarian aid to the people of North Yemen through it.

During the Desicive Storm and Restore Hope operations the nature of the crisis has completely changed, and the goals and motives of the leading foreign actors remain veiled. If the humanitarian crisis in Yemen is not resolved in the short term, and the Golden Victory operation is delayed (which seems very likely), this could lead to disastrous consequences for the entire region (especially the countries of the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea basin, negatively affecting the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait zone, through which a quarter of the sea freight flows of world trade pass)²⁸.

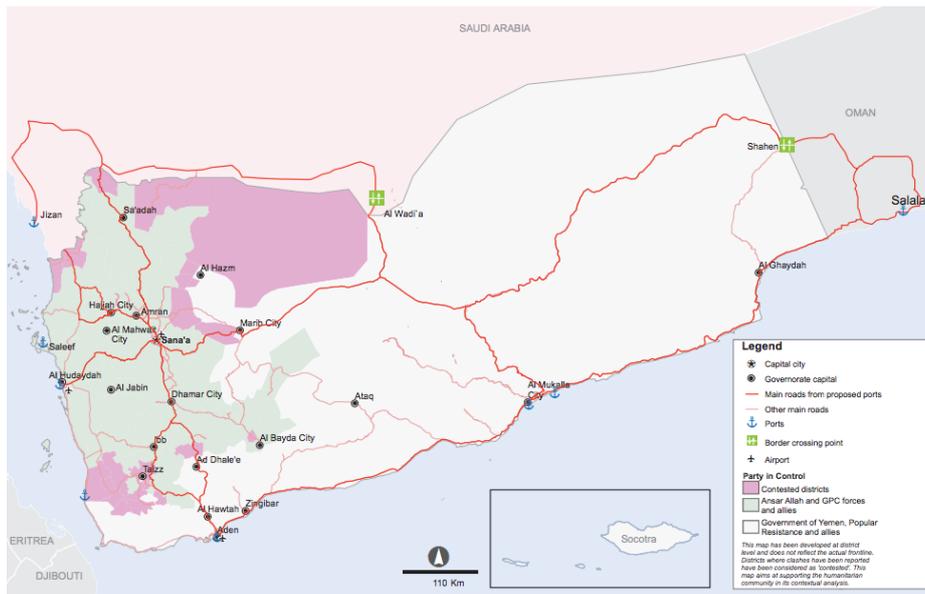
II. It is necessary to end the military operation of the Coalition under a plausible pretext (for example, the announcement of the fulfillment of the task to stop the distribution of the Houthi threat), while



simultaneously adopting a plan for a comprehensive settlement of the Yemeni conflict under international control.

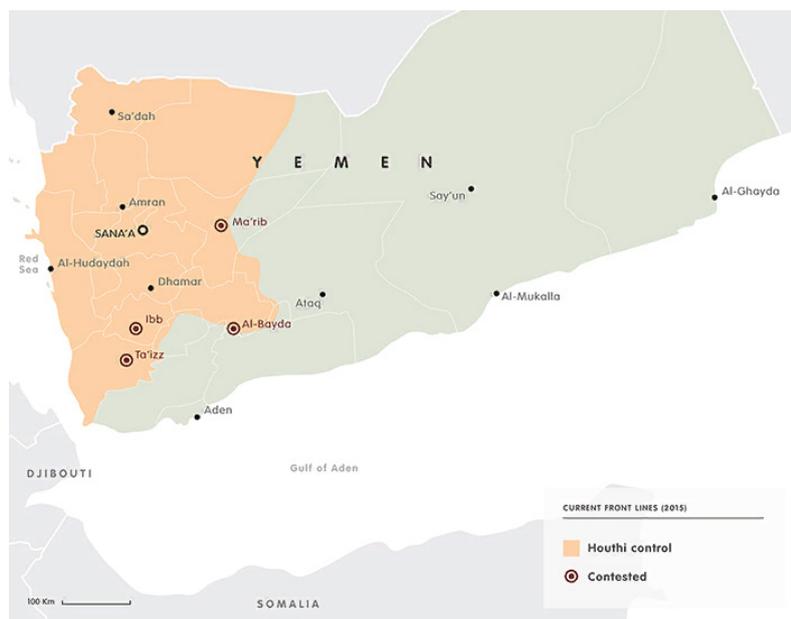
The Yemeni campaign by no means became a zero-sum game for Riyadh: on the contrary, the Saudi army managed to reach, at least, minimum results by limiting the expansion of the Houthi. However, to date, the Saudi leadership has the task of finding a way out of the conflict. Even with the total superiority in armament, the Coalition is not able to advance deep into the mountain regions of Northern Yemen. This is confirmed by the almost unchanged front line between the Sana'a government and its opponents (Fig. 15, 16) ²⁹, which has remained virtually unchanged since 2015.

Fig. 15. Areas of Control Map by District and Relative Port Location, 2018.



Source: UN OCHA 2018³⁰.

Fig. 16. Area of Houthi Control, 2015.



Source: ECFR 2017³¹.



III. In order to avoid further disintegration of the state into several parts, the UAE and Saudi Arabia should put pressure on the intra-Yemeni parties to the conflict under their control in the shortest possible time. They should also contribute to the work of the intra-Yemeni forces in the inclusive transitional entity and the renewal of their participation in the National Dialogue to determine the future of the Republic of Yemen.

An important milestone in the Yemeni crisis was the conflict between Saudi Arabia and the UAE, which has a steady trend towards strengthening. The independence in the Yemeni policy of Abu Dhabi in the beginning of 2016 ultimately led to the fact that the Coalition allies turned out to be de facto on different sides of the barricades. While Saudi Arabia relied on forces loyal to the president-exiled Mansur Hadi, under the command of his son Nasser, as well as military units controlled by Ali Mohsen al-Ahmar, the UAE relied on an alliance with the Southern Movement for the independence of South Yemen and experiencing an existential hostility towards the Al-Ahmar family and the functionaries of the al-Islah party. At the same time, during the years of military operations in Yemen, the situation has repeatedly reached almost a direct clash between the UAE and Saudi Arabia. The further split between Riyadh and Abu Dhabi will only contribute to the fragmentation of Yemeni society, leaving ever less chance of maintaining the state in its current borders.

IV. The Coalition (especially GCC) must take an active part in economical reconstruction in Yemen. This could help strengthen GCC presence in Yemen in future.

The restoration of the Yemeni infrastructure and economy will require large financial investments that can be provided by the Gulf countries, as well as by the members of the «Yemen Friends' Club». The process of economic reconstruction will create in Yemen a basis for equal cooperation of all the Gulf countries, which will improve the situation in the region and help to overcome existing fears about the appearance of dangerous and undesirable foreign actors there³².

To United States and Western Allies of the Coalition:

I. It is necessary to suspend military cooperation with the UAE and Saudi Arabia before the beginning of the negotiation process for the settlement of the Yemeni conflict under the auspices of UN Special Envoy. The effectiveness of this mechanism already gave positive results in 2016, when restrictions on cooperation with Riyadh by the West led to a decrease in the military activity of the Kingdom in Yemen, and also contributed to the beginning of the Kuwait negotiation process.

The high degree of determinism inherent in the administration of Donald Trump regarding the “Iranian threat” led first to lifting restrictions on the supply of arms to Saudi Arabia imposed under Barack Obama, and then signing in May 2017 an agreement to supply arms to the kingdom for \$ 110 bn ³³. The consequence of this was the intensification of military operations in Yemen by the Coalition, which regarded the US position as a carte blanche against the Yemeni problem. The problem, however, is that such actions on the part of Washington are not helping to Saudi Arabia's exit from the Yemeni impasse, but rather to provoke the kingdom to further involve in an extremely costly conflict with an unpredictable end for its participants (primarily Riyadh).

II. It is necessary to begin consultations between Iran and the European Union regarding Tehran's participation in the creation of a new architecture of regional security, including the Yemeni issue. A formal basis for this may be the UN Security Council resolutions adopted after the end of the Iran-Iraq war. In



accordance with them, Iran was entrusted with this obligation, and the Iranian leadership still appeals to the need for its implementation. Given the tensions that emerged after the United States withdrew from the JCPOA, both Europeans and Iranians would be interested in these consultations.

To Russian Federation:

I. Russia could facilitate the establishment of contacts between the Sana'a government and the Saudi leadership, as well as reaching a compromise on the plan of action to resolve the conflict.

Russia apparently relies on a gradual rapprochement with Riyadh in the hope of maintaining agreements on the oil issue, and if this is so, then any serious intervention by Russia in the Yemeni conflict will be regarded by the Saudi kingdom as nothing but an invasion of its zone of interests, and therefore it is unlikely. At the same time, the activation of Russia in Yemen is possible provided that Riyadh is interested in it, moreover, in recent months, Saudi Arabia, which is trying to find a way out of a protracted and very costly conflict, has repeatedly asked Moscow to contact the government in Sana'a. Russia in this regard seems to be the most profitable partner due to formal contacts with all the rival parties in Yemen. Of course, Russia's reputation in Sana leaves much to be desired (at least in view of Moscow's silent position on the most pressing issues for the government in Sana'a), but it is favorably different from the reputation of other global and regional actors.



Endnotes

- 1- It is remarkable that in the period before the Arab Spring the Yemeni moderate Islamists from the Islah Party demonstrated their high political pragmatism. For example, in 2003 it joined the left-wing Yemeni Socialist Party to form the Joint Meeting alliance (together with three other smaller leftist parties) to establish a joint opposition to that time ruling General People's Congress.
- 2- Bonnefoy L (2014) Yemen's new player. *Le Monde Diplomatique*, November 10. <http://mondediplo.com/2014/11/10yemen>
- 3- Bonnefoy L (2014) Yemen's new player. *Le Monde Diplomatique*, November 10. <http://mondediplo.com/2014/11/10yemen>
- 4- The Houthis emerged in the 2000s as radical Islamists-Zaydis but became more moderate after 2011 when they came from underground and started legal political activities (but mostly after their actual coming to power in Sanaa in September 2014). Thus, they demonstrate that work within legal political framework and the strife to come to power by legal means can impact the Islamists making them more moderate.
- 5- reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/N1800513.pdf
- 6- https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Yemen_AGrowingHumanitarianCrisis_2017Dec27_HIU_U1721.pdf
- 7- http://ercportal.jrc.ec.europa.eu/ercmaps/20180614_Yemen_DailyMap_Hodeida.pdf
- 8- <https://interactive.aljazeera.com/aje/2018/Saudi-Arabia-air-raids-on-Yemen/index.html>
- 9- <https://reliefweb.int/map/yemen/yemen-population-density-2009>
- 10- <http://www.ecfr.eu/mena/yemen>
- 11- <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=23071&LangID=E>
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- 13- https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/20180120_HRP_YEMEN_Final.pdf
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ABOUT ALSHARQ FORUM

The Sharq Forum is an independent international network whose mission is to undertake impartial research and develop long-term strategies to ensure the political development, social justice and economic prosperity of the people of Al-Sharq. The Forum does this through promoting the ideals of democratic participation, an informed citizenry, multi-stakeholder dialogue, social justice, and public-spirited research.

Address: Istanbul Vizyon Park A1 Plaza Floor:6

No:68 Postal Code: 34197

Bahçelievler/ Istanbul / Turkey

Telephone: +902126031815

Fax: +902126031665

Email: info@sharqforum.org

sharqforum.org



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