

# THE WAR REPORT 2017

## THE ARMED CONFLICT IN YEMEN: A COMPLICATED MOSAIC



OCTOBER 2017 | SARI ARRAF

Although the conflict in Yemen is widely presented as being between two distinct blocs – a Houthi–Saleh alliance against forces loyal to the internationally recognized president of Yemen, Abdrabbo Mansour Hadi, backed by a Saudi-led coalition – this description can be misleading. Neither camp is cohesive as both feature armed groups or regional players with divergent ideologies and political goals. From secessionists in the south, to Salafists in Taiz and Aden and tribal leaders in the north, there are smaller groups in Yemen who are not necessarily under the control of Hadi or the Houthi–Saleh alliance.<sup>1</sup> Even states participating in the Saudi-led coalition seem to have different agendas in Yemen, as evidenced recently in mounting tensions between Hadi and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) over the latter’s alleged support for secessionist groups in South Yemen who operate quite independently from Hadi.<sup>2</sup> In addition, the presence of al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and Islamic State (IS) in Yemen render the Yemen conflict mosaic more complicated.

## THE PRELUDE TO THE CONFLICT

In early 2011, Yemeni protesters took to the streets of major cities in Yemen calling on the then president, Ali Abdullah Saleh, to step down from office after more than 30 years in power.<sup>3</sup> The protests appeared to have been

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organized and directed by a coalition of Yemeni opposition parties (the Joint Meeting Parties, or JMP).<sup>4</sup> Saleh was pushed to make several economic concessions and political promises, yet his moves did not succeed in placating the protests. Several casualties were reported as the security forces’ response to the protests was heavy-handed.

On 18 March 2011, at least 45 persons were killed after Saleh loyalists dressed as civilians fired on an anti-government rally in Sana’a. This episode marked a shifting point in the protests as it prompted General Ali Mohsin al-Ahmar, commander of the First Armoured Division and commander of the northwestern military zone, to break away from Saleh two days later, and announce his support for the opposition and vow to defend protesters.<sup>5</sup> In effect, Mohsin’s announcement split the military–security apparatus. In addition to the First Armoured Division and the northwestern military zone, he also brought with him many other regular army and air force commanders, including the eastern region commander, Mohammed Ali Mohsin. Nevertheless, powerful military–security forces that were historically devised to be loyal to Saleh remained largely intact, most notably the Presidential Guard – the biggest and best-equipped unit in the Yemeni army – and the Central Security Forces.<sup>6</sup>

On 23 November, after stalling and renegeing on his announcements several times, Saleh signed an agreement proposed by the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) to step down from power.<sup>7</sup> Under the agreement, Saleh would transfer power to his then deputy, Abdrabbo Mansour Hadi, in exchange for immunity from prosecution. The agreement was supplemented by a UN-sponsored implementation mechanism for the transition period, which revolved around three principal tasks: holding a national dialogue with the goal of addressing the country’s political issues and producing a new constitution; addressing issues of transitional justice; and reforming the armed forces into a unified military.<sup>8</sup> On 21 February, being the only candidate



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1 P. Salisbury, Yemen: Stemming the Rise of a Chaos State, Chatham House, 25 May 2016, p 4, <https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/files/chathamhouse/publications/research/2016-05-25-yemen-stemming-rise-of-chaos-state-salisbury.pdf>.

2 S. A. Seche, ‘Shaping the South: The UAE in Yemen’, The Arab Gulf States Institute in Washington, 4 May 2017, <http://www.agsiw.org/shaping-south-uae-yemen>.

3 Saleh served as president of northern Yemen (officially, the Yemen Arab Republic, YAR) from 1978 until 1990, when unification with southern Yemen occurred. He then served as president of the Yemen Republic from 1990 until 2012.

4 R. Burrowes and M. Wenner, ‘Mounting Challenge to the Saleh Regime’, Encyclopedia Britannica, 6 April 2017, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Yemen/Mounting-challenge-to-the-Salih-regime>.

5 ‘Top Army Commanders Defect in Yemen’, Al Jazeera, 21 March 2011, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/03/2011320180579476.html>.

6 International Crisis Group, Yemen’s Military–Security Reform: Seeds of New Conflict?, 4 April 2013, p 12, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/middle-east-north-africa/gulf-and-arabian-peninsula/yemen/yemen-s-military-security-reform-seeds-new-conflict>.

7 B. Whitaker, ‘Yemen’s Ali Abdullah Saleh Resigns – But It Changes Little’, The Guardian, 24 November 2011, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2011/nov/24/yemen-ali-abdullah-saleh-resigns>. The agreement was brokered by the former UN Secretary-General’s Special Envoy to Yemen, Jamal Benomar.

8 Crisis Group, Yemen’s Military–Security Reform, supra fn 6, p 1. For the English version of the Agreement on the Implementation Mechanism for the Transition Process in Yemen in

on the ballot, Hadi was elected as President of Yemen with 99.6 percent of the vote.<sup>9</sup> The Houthis and members of the Southern Movement (Hirak) had announced earlier that they would be boycotting the elections.<sup>10</sup>

## A FAILED TRANSITIONAL PERIOD

The GCC initiative did not succeed in restoring stability to the country. In fact, the agreement was perceived by many as a power-sharing deal between Yemen's political elites that ignored local dynamics and historically marginalized groups and neglected to address the decrepit economic situation of the country.<sup>11</sup> With the collapse in social services and the scarcity of basic goods, local conflicts crystallized in the security void that resulted from the fracturing of the old regime, and this in turn led to a weakened sense of national identity.<sup>12</sup> Consequently,

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marginalized groups such as the Houthis, Hirak and tribes in resource-rich parts of the country were able to effectively challenge the central government.<sup>13</sup> AQAP, and to a lesser extent IS, also benefitted from the security void in the country, and the former went on to seize and exert control

Accordance with the Initiative of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), see [http://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/YE\\_111205\\_Agreement%20on%20the%20implementation%20mechanism%20for%20the%20transition.pdf](http://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/YE_111205_Agreement%20on%20the%20implementation%20mechanism%20for%20the%20transition.pdf).

9 M. Jamjoom, 'Yemen Holds Presidential Election with One Candidate', CNN, 22 February 2012, <http://edition.cnn.com/2012/02/21/world/meast/yemen-elections/index.html>.

10 A. Saeed and M. Bin Sallam, 'Houthis and Southern Movement to Boycott February Election', Yemen Times, 30 January 2012, <http://www.yementimes.com/en/1542/news/246/Houthis-and-Southern-Movement-to-boycott-February-election.htm>.

11 Salisbury, Yemen, supra fn 1, p 4.

12 Ibid, p 3.

13 Ibid, p 13.

over territories in southern Yemen.<sup>14</sup>

On top of this, the agreement did not manage to dislodge Saleh from the political scene. Although he stepped down as president, he continued to act as head of Yemen's leading party, the General People's Congress (GPC), and enjoyed the loyalty of powerful units in the army. Indeed, one of the major undertakings of Hadi during the transitional period was the reforming and restructuring of the army. This step was in the natural order of things given that Hadi arrived at his presidency as a fairly weak figure lacking a wide support base, either political or military, whereas the Saleh network was still operative and powerful.<sup>15</sup> Hadi tried to curb Saleh's influence by first moving Saleh loyalists and family members from key positions in the military–security apparatus, mainly the command of the Presidential Guard and Special Security Forces. Although he removed Ali Mohsin from his position as commander of the First Armoured Division as well, he was still believed to be quietly empowering the latter's network and Ali Mohsin retained an influential position as a military adviser despite his formal demotion.<sup>16</sup> By late 2014, Hadi would order the disbandment of both the Presidential Guard and the First Armoured Division.<sup>17</sup>

By 2014, Yemen's political transition was buckling under the weight of political infighting.<sup>18</sup> Although the National Dialogue Conference (NDC) concluded on 25 January 2014 with a final document outlining its results and paving the way for a new constitution, the accord was never implemented.<sup>19</sup> Notably, the document's recommendation to organize the country around a federation composed of six regions was ill-received by members of Hirak as well as the Houthis.<sup>20</sup> Another contentious point in the document was the extension of Hadi's term in office by one year in order to allow for government reforms and drafting a new

14 International Crisis Group, Yemen's al-Qaeda: Expanding the Base, 2 February 2017, p i, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/middle-east-north-africa/gulf-and-arabian-peninsula/yemen/174-yemen-s-al-qaeda-expanding-base>.

15 Whitaker, 'Yemen's Ali Abdullah Saleh Resigns', supra fn 7.

16 Salisbury, Yemen, supra fn 1, p 25.

17 'Yemen's President Shakes up the Army', Al Jazeera, 20 December 2012, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2012/12/2012122053621353659.html>.

18 Crisis Group, Yemen's al-Qaeda, supra fn 14, p 8.

19 For the original text in Arabic, see [http://www.ndc.ye/ndc\\_document.pdf](http://www.ndc.ye/ndc_document.pdf).

20 Y. Bayoumy, 'Yemen's Federal Plan a Bold Idea, but Many Hurdles Remain', Reuters, 23 February 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-yemen-politics-analysis/yemens-federal-plan-a-bold-idea-but-many-hurdles-remain-idUSBREA1M05720140223>. See also 'Yemeni Factions Hold National Dialogue', Al Jazeera, 26 January 2014, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/01/yemen-wraps-up-thorny-national-dialogue-2014125152420400484.html>.

constitution.<sup>21</sup>

The transition period saw important military gains for Houthi forces against Sunni Islamists and tribal opponents in the country's north, as well as the emergence of an alliance between Houthis and Saleh loyalists who felt marginalized by the ongoing transition.<sup>22</sup>

In June 2014, the government's decision to cut fuel subsidies set off a wave of protests.<sup>23</sup> This led Abdulmalek al-Houthi, leader of the Houthi forces, to issue a public warning to the government that if it did not go back on its decision, he would call for an uprising to overthrow it.<sup>24</sup> On 18 August, thousands of Houthi supporters flocked to the capital protesting the cut in fuel subsidies and calling on the government to step down.<sup>25</sup>

Tensions in Sana'a rose over the following weeks, and on 19 September fighting broke out on the outskirts of the capital between Houthi forces and military units under the command of Ali Mohsin. On 21 September, Houthis took control over Sana'a after Mohsin's troops stood down under instructions from the ministry of interior.<sup>26</sup> On the same day, the government signed a UN-brokered peace agreement with the Houthis – the Peace and National Partnership Agreement (PNPA) – which envisaged the formation of an inclusive government and the appointment of Houthi and Hiraq representatives as presidential advisers. In addition, the agreement called for reforms in the security and economic sectors, including the reinstatement of fuel subsidies.<sup>27</sup> The seizure of Sana'a by Houthi forces, backed by Saleh loyalists, sounded the death knell for the transition period.

21 A. I. Al-Moshki, 'National Dialogue Conference Concludes', Yemen Times, 28 January 2014, <http://www.yementimes.com/en/1750/news/3398/National-Dialogue-Conference-concludes.htm>.

22 Crisis Group, Yemen's al-Qaeda, supra fn 1, p 8.

23 'Yemen Fuel Subsidy Cut Drives Poorest Deeper into Poverty', The Guardian, 26 August 2014, <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2014/aug/26/yemen-fuel-subsidy-cut-drives-poorest-poverty>.

24 Salisbury, Yemen, supra fn 1, p 21.

25 'Houthis Push into Yemeni Capital amid Rallies', Al Jazeera, 20 August 2014, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/08/houthis-push-into-yemen-capital-amid-protests-2014820191016804628.html>.

26 M. Transfeld, 'Capturing Sanaa: Why the Houthis Were Successful in Yemen', Muffah, 27 September 2014, [https://muffah.org/houthis-successful-yemen/#WasnpdGx\\_IW](https://muffah.org/houthis-successful-yemen/#WasnpdGx_IW).

27 M. Transfeld, 'Houthis on the Rise in Yemen', Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 31 October 2014, <http://carnegieendowment.org/sada/57087>; see also A. Longley Alley, 'Yemen's Houthi Takeover', International Crisis Group, 22 December 2014, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/middle-east-north-africa/gulf-and-arabian-peninsula/yemen/yemen-s-houthi-takeover>. For the translated text of the PNPA, see [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2014\\_2019/documents/darp/dv/darp20141204\\_05\\_/darp20141204\\_05\\_en.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2014_2019/documents/darp/dv/darp20141204_05_/darp20141204_05_en.pdf).

## THE OUTBREAK OF THE CONFLICT

Following the signing of the PNPA, stability was initially restored in the capital and Houthis were integrated into the security establishment.<sup>28</sup> However, the situation

quickly deteriorated on 17 January 2015 following the presentation of a draft constitution that envisaged the introduction of a federal system with six regions.<sup>29</sup> The Houthis were aggravated by the proposal and occupied the Presidential Palace with support from military units

loyal to Saleh.<sup>30</sup> Hadi was virtually put under house arrest, and on 22 January he submitted his resignation, along with prime minister, Khaled Bahah, and the rest of his cabinet.<sup>31</sup> In early February, the Houthis completed their takeover of power by announcing the dissolution of the parliament and setting up an interim authority, the Supreme Revolutionary Committee (SRC), which would be in charge of forming a new parliament that would in turn establish a five-member presidential council to replace Hadi.<sup>32</sup> On 21 February, one month after resigning under pressure, Hadi managed to escape house arrest in Sana'a and fled to Aden, where he announced that he was still president and declared all political decisions made since September invalid.<sup>33</sup> Several Gulf states announced the relocation of their embassies to Aden in order to bolster Hadi's claims.<sup>34</sup>

On 19 March 2015, the situation of violence escalated as fighting erupted between military units loyal to Saleh and Hadi-aligned forces in Aden, and Hadi's residence in the city was bombed.<sup>35</sup> On the next day, Sana'a witnessed suicide bombings at two Zaydi mosques in the capital,

28 Salisbury, Yemen, supra fn 1, p 24.

29 The Houthis do not reject the introduction of a federal system per se, but rather the division of the country's north into three different federal regions, which they seek to control. See M.-C. Heinze, 'The Primacy of Stability over Real Change', Qantara.de, 30 January 2015, <https://en.qantara.de/content/the-crisis-in-yemen-the-primacy-of-stability-over-real-change>.

30 Ibid.

31 Security Council Report, 'February 2015 Monthly Forecast', 30 January 2015, [http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2015-02/yemen\\_13.php](http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2015-02/yemen_13.php).

32 H. Häggglund, 'Yemen's Houthi Rebels Announce Government Takeover', The Guardian, 6 February 2015, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/feb/06/yemen-houthi-dissolves-parliament>.

33 H. Almasmari, 'Protests Support Yemeni President After He Escapes House Arrest', CNN, 23 February 2015, <http://edition.cnn.com/2015/02/22/world/yemen-unrest/index.html>.

34 K. Fahim, 'Houthi Rebels Release Detained Yemeni Ministers', The New York Times, 16 March 2015, <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/03/17/world/middleeast/houthi-rebels-release-yemeni-officials-from-house-arrest.html>.

35 'Soldiers Loyal to Yemen's Former President Storm Aden Airport', The Guardian, 19 March 2015, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/mar/19/soldiers-loyal-former-yemen-president-aden-airport-dead>.

which reportedly killed 137 people. Islamic State claimed responsibility for the attack, which was the first to be carried



out by the group in Yemen.<sup>36</sup> The IS branch in Yemen had been announced earlier in mid-November 2014, and unlike AQAP, its members are largely drawn from non-Yemenis.<sup>37</sup> Following the attack, Abdulmalek al-Houthi announced, on 21 March, the mobilization of the armed forces for a campaign in Yemen's south under the guise of fighting AQAP and its affiliates – among whom he counts Hadi.<sup>38</sup> On the same day, Hadi declared Aden the temporary capital of the country.<sup>39</sup>

As the Houthi–Saleh alliance advanced further south, on 24 March the Hadi government asked the GCC for a military intervention in order to protect the country from the Houthi incursion.<sup>40</sup> When Houthi–Saleh forces reached the outskirts of Aden the next day, Hadi fled to Saudi Arabia.<sup>41</sup> Shortly afterwards, the Saudi-led coalition of nine Arab countries (Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, Qatar and Sudan) announced the beginning of Operation Decisive Storm to counter the Houthis and restore Hadi to power.<sup>42</sup>

36 Security Council Report, May 2015 Monthly Forecast, 1 May 2015, [http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2015-05/yemen\\_16.php](http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2015-05/yemen_16.php).

37 Crisis Group, Yemen's al-Qaeda, supra fn 14, pp 17–19.

38 Security Council Report, May 2015 Monthly Forecast, supra fn 36; see also K. Al-Karimi, 'Southerners Prepare for Houthi Invasion', Yemen Times, 23 March 2015, <http://www.yemen-times.com/en/1870/news/4994/Southerners-prepare-for-Houthi-invasion.htm>.

39 'Yemen's President Hadi Declares New "Temporary Capital"', Deutsche Welle, 21 March 2015, <http://www.dw.com/en/yemens-president-hadi-declares-new-temporary-capital/a-18332197>.

40 'UN-led Talks on Yemen to Begin in Doha as Saudi Arabia Backs Hadi', Middle East Eye, 24 March 2015, <http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/un-brokered-yemen-talks-begin-doha-1864580777>.

41 A. Al-Haj and M. Michael, 'Yemen's President Flees Aden as Rebels Close in', The Star, 25 March 2015, <https://www.thestar.com/news/world/2015/03/25/yemen-president-hadi-flees-aden-palace-as-houthi-rebels-near-officials-say.html>; see also K. Abdallah and S. Aboudi, 'Yemeni Leader Hadi Leaves Country as Saudi Arabia Keeps up Air Strikes', Reuters, 26 March 2015, <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-yemen-security/yemeni-leader-hadi-leaves-country-as-saudi-arabia-keeps-up-air-strikes-idUSKBN0ML0YC20150326>.

42 Security Council Report, May 2015 Monthly Forecast, supra fn 36.

Although the intervention of the Saudi-led coalition against the Houthis was supposedly aimed at countering a perceived Iranian influence by portraying the group as an Iranian proxy in the Arab Peninsula, critics point out that these allegations have been exaggerated. While the Houthis do receive some support from Iran, this has remained marginal and mostly political with minimal financial and military assistance.<sup>43</sup>

Despite the airstrikes conducted by the Saudi-led coalition, by early April the Houthi–Saleh alliance made major gains in Aden, notably by seizing Aden's central Crater neighbourhood.<sup>44</sup> Besides military units under the command of Hadi, other groups with different ideologies fought against the Houthi incursions in the south. These included the so-called 'Popular Committees' – militias mobilized by Hadi before the war to defend his home governorate Abyan – southern secessionists, local tribesmen and AQAP.<sup>45</sup> In the midst of this chaos and power vacuum, AQAP succeeded in early April in seizing the port city Mukalla, the fifth largest city in Yemen and the capital of the Hadhramaut governorate.<sup>46</sup> This was also due to the fact that the fighting was largely concentrated against the Houthis.

On 14 April 2015, the UN Security Council adopted a resolution that reaffirmed its support for the legitimacy of Hadi and demanded that the Houthis withdraw from all the areas they had seized. Importantly, it established an arms embargo against the Houthis and forces loyal to Saleh, as well as imposing sanctions against Abdulmalek al-Houthi and the former president's son, Ahmed Ali Abdullah Saleh.<sup>47</sup> By July, the war scene changed as Hadi loyalists and southern forces managed to retake Aden, aided by the deployment of ground troops from the UAE and Saudi Arabia. Subsequently, Hadi forces turned their eyes towards other cities that separate southern Yemen from Sana'a.<sup>48</sup> However, the security

### **On 28 July 2016, Saleh and Abdulmalek al-Houthi reached a power-sharing agreement that saw the establishment of a ten-member Supreme Political Council (SPC) with equal representation for both camps.**

43 M. Transfeld, 'Iran's Small Hand in Yemen', Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 14 February 2017, <http://carnegieendowment.org/sada/67988>.

44 M. Mukhashaf, 'Yemen's Houthis Seize Central Aden District, Presidential Site', Reuters, 3 April 2015, <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-yemen-security-aden/yemens-houthis-seize-central-aden-district-presidential-site-idUSKBN0MT0G820150403>.

45 Security Council Report, May 2015 Monthly Forecast, supra fn 36; see also Salisbury, Yemen, supra fn 1, p 27.

46 S. Al-Batati and K. Fahim, 'Affiliate of Al Qaeda Seizes Major Yemeni City, Driving Out the Military', The New York Times, 3 April 2015, <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/04/world/middleeast/al-qaeda-al-mukalla-yemen.html>.

47 UNSC Res 2216, 14 April 2015, [http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B6B5F9C-F9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s\\_res\\_2216.pdf](http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B6B5F9C-F9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_res_2216.pdf).

48 M. Knights and A. Mello, 'The Saudi–UAE War Effort in Yemen (Part 1): Operation Golden Arrow in Aden', The Washington Institute, 10 August 2015, <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/the-saudi-uae-war-effort-in-yemen-part-1-operation-golden-arrow>.

situation in the city and the wider south remained fragile, as evidenced by several IS attacks that hit the city after its recapture.<sup>49</sup>

## INSTABILITY CONTINUES IN 2016

Almost one year after the group initially seized the city, Al-Qaeda fighters were driven out of Mukalla, at the hands of Hadi-aligned forces aided by UAE ground troops in late April 2016.<sup>50</sup> Yet, AQAP is far from defeated and continues until today to exert control over certain territories in southern Yemen, in the governorates of Hadhramaut, Shabwa and Abyan. In the same month, UN-brokered peace talks started in Kuwait between Yemeni parties with the aim of reaching an agreement to end the violence.<sup>51</sup> Throughout the talks there were several breaches of agreed ceasefires, and the peace process eventually collapsed in August as fighting intensified.<sup>52</sup>

On 28 July 2016, Saleh and Abdulmalek al-Houthi reached a power-sharing agreement that saw the establishment of a ten-member Supreme Political Council (SPC) with equal representation for both camps.<sup>53</sup> Subsequently, the Supreme Revolutionary Committee handed power to the SPC which came to be presided over by Salah al-Sammad.<sup>54</sup> On 19 September, Hadi fired the Central Bank governor and announced the relocation of the bank to Aden, thus destabilizing an already crumbling economic system and complicating the process of a negotiated settlement with the Houthi–Saleh alliance.<sup>55</sup> On 28 November, the SPC announced the formation of a government under Abdelaziz Bin Habtour, an active General People’s Congress (GPC) member affiliated to Saleh.<sup>56</sup> This

in-aden.

49 Salisbury, Yemen, supra fn 1, pp 33–34.

50 T. Joscelyn, ‘Arab Coalition Enters AQAP Stronghold in Port City of Mukalla, Yemen’, FDD’s Long War Journal, 25 April 2016, <http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2016/04/arab-coalition-enters-aqap-stronghold-in-port-city-of-mukalla-yemen.php>.

51 ‘Make Peace Your Choice’ Urges UN Envoy, as Yemen Talks Begin in Kuwait’, UN News Centre, 21 April 2016, [http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=53750#Waw2fNGx\\_IU](http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=53750#Waw2fNGx_IU).

52 ‘Yemen Peace Talks Collapse as Fighting Intensifies’, Al Jazeera, 7 August 2016, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/08/yemen-peace-talks-collapse-fighting-intensifies-160807042106210.html>.

53 UNSC, Final Report of the Panel of Experts on Yemen, UN doc S/2017/81, 31 January 2017, para 20, <https://undocs.org/S/2017/81>.

54 ‘SRC Hands Over Authority to SPC’, Saba News, 15 August 2016, <http://sabanews.net/en/news437023.htm>.

55 International Crisis Group, ‘Central Bank Crisis Risks Famine in Yemen’, 29 September 2016, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/middle-east-north-africa/gulf-and-arabian-peninsula-yemen/central-bank-crisis-risks-famine-yemen>.

56 UNSC, Final Report of the Panel of Experts, supra fn 53, para 21.

event marked a further tightening of the Houthi–Saleh alliance on the political level, although military units loyal to Saleh and Houthi forces remain largely distinct. The alliance between the two camps is often described as an ‘alliance of convenience’ which is unlikely to endure until the end of the conflict.<sup>57</sup>

## DEVELOPMENTS IN 2017

In January, the Saudi-led coalition announced the launch of Operation Golden Arrow aimed at retaking the western coast and cutting off a key Houthi–Saleh alliance supply line.<sup>58</sup> By the next month, pro-Hadi forces managed to capture the strategic port of Mocha.<sup>59</sup>

### **On 15 June, the UN Security Council adopted a presidential statement on the importance of keeping all Yemen’s ports functioning, including Hodeida port, as a critical lifeline for humanitarian support and other essential supplies.**

Meanwhile, in late January US special forces conducted a ground operation in the Yakla area of the Al-Bayda governorate in Central Yemen for the purpose of intelligence gathering against AQAP. The operation drew strong criticism as it led to the death of around 30 civilians and fell short of achieving its declared goals.<sup>60</sup> Reportedly, the Yemeni government withdrew permission for the US to run ground

missions against suspected terrorists in Yemen following the raid.<sup>61</sup> On 25 March, a court in Sana’a sentenced Hadi and six other government officials to death in absentia for high treason.<sup>62</sup>

By late April, tensions intensified between Hadi and the UAE over the latter’s support to southern pro-secession groups that seek a different agenda to that of the internationally recognized president. After an earlier armed standoff between UAE-backed Security Belt forces and forces loyal to Hadi in Aden, on 22 April the so-called Inclusive Hadramout Conference was held by pro-secession

57 Ibid, para 47.

58 Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies, Operation Golden Arrow: The Prospects for a Resolution to the Yemeni Conflict in 2017, 8 March 2017, [https://www.dohainstitute.org/en/PoliticalStudies/Pages/Operation\\_Golden\\_Arrow\\_the\\_Prospects\\_for\\_a\\_Resolution\\_to\\_the\\_Yemeni\\_Conflict\\_in\\_2017.aspx](https://www.dohainstitute.org/en/PoliticalStudies/Pages/Operation_Golden_Arrow_the_Prospects_for_a_Resolution_to_the_Yemeni_Conflict_in_2017.aspx).

59 ‘Gulf-backed Yemeni Forces Capture Red Sea Coast City’, Reuters, 7 February 2017, <http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-yemen-security/gulf-backed-yemeni-forces-capture-red-sea-coast-city-agency-idUKKBN15M2LU>.

60 S. Osborne, ‘Yemen Raid that Killed 30 Civilians and US Navy SEAL Uncovered “No Actionable Intelligence”, Officials Say’, The Independent, 2 March 2017, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/uspolitics/yemen-raid-us-navy-seal-30-civilians-killed-donald-trump-first-operation-no-intelligence-actionable-a7607181.html>.

61 D. Sanger and E. Schmitt, ‘Yemen Withdraws Permission for U.S. Antiterror Ground Missions’, The New York Times, 7 February 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/07/world/middleeast/yemen-special-operations-missions.html>.

62 ‘Pro-Houthi Court Sentences Yemen President to Death for Treason’, Reuters, 25 March 2017, <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-yemen-security-court/pro-houthi-court-sentences-yemen-president-to-death-for-treason-idUSKBN16W0UF>.

local governor, Ahmad Bin Braik, under the implicit patronage of the UAE, calling for greater autonomy for the province.<sup>63</sup> This aggravated Hadi who responded on 27 April by dismissing a number of UAE-linked officials in the south, most notably the governor of Aden, Aidarous al-Zubaidi, and Minister of State Hani Bin Braik who also commands the Security Belt forces.<sup>64</sup>

Hadi's decision to dismiss al-Zubaidi and Bin Braik sparked wide protests across southern Yemen. On 4 May, the factions of Hiraik released the 'Aden Historic Declaration', which denounced Hadi's decision and entrusted al-Zubaidi with establishing a leadership for governing and representing southern Yemen.<sup>65</sup> Consequently, on 11 May al-Zubaidi announced the formation of the Southern Transitional Council, effectively creating a third government in Yemen. The Transitional Council is presided over by al-Zubaidi himself whereas Hani Bin Braik serves as his vice-president.<sup>66</sup> Challenged by the announcement, Hadi rejected the move and considered the formation of the council an act that 'targets the country's interests, its future and social fabric'.<sup>67</sup> The GCC backed Hadi on his position and rejected the move as well.<sup>68</sup> By 31 May, the UAE reportedly came to exert indirect control over Aden International Airport after clashes erupted between the airport's UAE-backed security director, Saleh al-Amri, and his deputy, al-Khader Kurdah, who supports the Hadi government.<sup>69</sup>

In the wake of the Qatari diplomatic crisis that broke out in early June, the repudiated emirate was expelled from the Saudi-led military coalition.<sup>70</sup> On 15 June, the UN Security Council adopted a presidential statement on the importance of keeping all Yemen's ports functioning, including Hodeida port, as a critical lifeline for humanitarian support and other essential supplies.<sup>71</sup>



The statement came against the backdrop of the Saudi-led coalition plans to launch an offensive on Hodeida, raising fears of catastrophic humanitarian consequences of famine and a cholera outbreak as the city's port receives 70 percent of humanitarian aid and commercial goods imported into the country.<sup>72</sup>

In a very recent development, fighting broke out in Sana'a on 26 August between a convoy carrying Saleh's son and Houthi forces that stopped it at a checkpoint.<sup>73</sup> The incident left at least two people dead and took place against the background of mounting tensions in the Houthi-Saleh alliance. Saleh had rallied thousands of supporters in Sana'a on 24 August in a show of force a day after Houthi fighters decried him as 'evil' for having earlier described them as a 'militia'.<sup>74</sup> On 31 August, the GPC released a statement that stressed the need to heal the rift between the Houthis and Saleh supporters and maintain a united alliance against their opponents.<sup>75</sup>

Nowadays, the Houthi-Saleh alliance is active or in control in the northern highlands and the western coast of the country, including the governorates of Sana'a, Ibb, Dhamar, Hodeida, Amran and Sa'dah. Taiz is still contested, while Marib was largely retaken from the Houthi-Saleh alliance. The Hadi-aligned forces control large parts of southern Yemen, although AQAP still has a presence in the region.

63 Sana'a Center for Strategic Studies, 'Yemen at the UN – April 2017 Review', 7 May 2017, <http://sanaacenter.org/publications/yemen-at-the-un/99>. The conference was convened with the sponsorship of Bin Braik and under the protection of the UAE-aligned Hadrami Elite forces. See Seche, 'Shaping the South', supra fn 2.

64 Seche, 'Shaping the South', supra fn 2.

65 ليثويتو قرادال متسايزرب هي سياسي هاديق نال عاب «يديديزل» ضوفسي «يخيبرائلا ندع نال عاب» لال شول, Almasdar Online, 4 May 2017 <http://www.almasdaronline.com/article/90915> (in Arabic).

66 S. Uqba, 'Yemen's "Third Government" Emerges in Southern Yemen', The New Arab, 11 May 2017, <https://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/indepth/2017/5/11/Yemens-third-government-emerges-in-southern-Yemen>.

67 'GCC Rejects Formation of Yemen Transitional Council', Al Jazeera, 13 May 2017, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/05/gcc-rejects-formation-yemen-transitional-council-170513141733873.html>.

68 Ibid.

69 اولفكش هيلسيتو «هي حرس ميل» دب تفحصرو شادح ا دعب ندع راطم يلغ اعترطيس ملكيت تاراملال» لال شول, Mareb Press, 31 May 2017, [http://marebpress.net/mobile/news\\_details.php?sid=128573](http://marebpress.net/mobile/news_details.php?sid=128573) (in Arabic); see also B. Carpowich, M. Farrukh and T. Nocita, 'Gulf of Aden Security Review', Critical Threats, 31 May 2017, [https://www.criticalthreats.org/briefs/gulf-of-aden-security-review-gulf-of-aden-security-review-may-31-2017](https://www.criticalthreats.org/briefs/gulf-of-aden-security-review/gulf-of-aden-security-review-may-31-2017).

70 Sana'a Center for Strategic Studies, 'Yemen at the UN', supra fn 63.

71 UNSC, Statement by the President of the Security Council, UN doc S/PRST/2017/7, 15 June 2017, [http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF-96FF9%7D/S\\_PRST\\_2017\\_7.pdf](http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF-96FF9%7D/S_PRST_2017_7.pdf).

72 Security Council Report, July 2017 Monthly Forecast, 30 June 2017, [http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2017-07/yemen\\_29.php](http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2017-07/yemen_29.php).

73 M. Al Qalisi, 'Pro-Saleh Colonel Killed in Fighting with Houthi Allies in Sanaa', The National, 26 August 2017, <https://www.thenational.ae/world/mena/pro-saleh-colonel-killed-in-fighting-with-houthi-allies-in-sanaa-1.623118>.

74 'Houthis and Saleh Forces Clash in Sanaa, at Least Two Dead', Reuters, 26 August 2017, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-yemen-security/houthis-and-saleh-forces-clash-in-sanaa-at-least-two-dead-idUSKCN1B60OG>.

75 B. Carpowich, C. Neafsey and M. Morton, 'Gulf of Aden Security Review', Critical Threats, 31 August 2017 [https://www.criticalthreats.org/briefs/gulf-of-aden-security-review-gulf-of-aden-security-review-august-31-2017](https://www.criticalthreats.org/briefs/gulf-of-aden-security-review/gulf-of-aden-security-review-august-31-2017).

## THE HUMANITARIAN CRISIS

According to figures presented by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights on March 2017, since the beginning of the Yemeni conflict in March 2015, at least 4,773 civilians have been killed and another 8,272 injured by the violence.<sup>76</sup> Food insecurity has reached critical levels as 17 million people (around two-thirds of the population) are estimated to be severely food insecure, among whom 7 million are close to famine.<sup>77</sup> The country witnessed a cholera outbreak in October 2016, which has since led to at least 1,740 deaths with a further 320,000 suspected cholera cases.<sup>78</sup> Cholera flourished amidst a collapsing health care system and around 16 million people not having access to adequate water, sanitation or hygiene.<sup>79</sup>

**According to figures presented by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights on March 2017, since the beginning of the Yemeni conflict in March 2015, at least 4,773 civilians have been killed and another 8,272 injured by the violence.**



## ALLEGATIONS OF WAR CRIMES

According to Human Rights Watch, Saudi-led coalition military operations in Yemen, supported by the US and UK, against Houthi forces and Saleh-aligned forces since March 2015 might amount to war crimes, as the coalition has unlawfully attacked homes, markets, hospitals, schools, civilian businesses and mosques, in violation of international humanitarian law (IHL) rules on the conduct of hostilities.<sup>80</sup> The UAE was also alleged to be running

76 UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, 'Over 100 Civilians Killed in a Month, Including Fishermen, Refugees, as Yemen Conflict Reaches Two-Year Mark', 24 March 2017, <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=21444&LangID=E>.

77 UNSC, Security Council Meeting, UN doc S/PV.7999, 12 July 2017, p 6, [http://www.security-councilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s\\_pv\\_7999.pdf](http://www.security-councilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_pv_7999.pdf).

78 Ibid, p 4.

79 Ibid.

80 Human Rights Watch, 'Yemen: No Accountability for War Crimes', 12 January 2017, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/01/12/yemen-no-accountability-war-crimes>.

secret detention facilities in Yemen where detainees are subjected to torture.<sup>81</sup> Similarly to the Saudi-led coalition, the Houthi–Saleh alliance is also believed to be implicated in violations of IHL.<sup>82</sup>

## THE MAIN ACTORS INVOLVED IN THE CONFLICT

**Saleh-aligned forces:** The Saleh network has three main components: tribal, political and military. The tribal element is centred on his Sanhan tribe, whereas the political component revolves around the GPC, which he still heads today. The military component is the most important for Saleh's continued influence on the political scene, as he still enjoys

the personal loyalty of several high-ranking officers whom he appointed during his presidency.<sup>83</sup> Despite Hadi's efforts to reform the army during the transitional period, many military units have remained loyal to Saleh.

**The Houthis (also called Ansar Allah):** a Zaydi Shia insurgent group operating in Yemen. The group takes its name from Hussein Badreddin al-Houthi, their former commander, who was reported killed by Yemeni army forces in September 2004. The Houthis were engaged in six rounds of conflict against the Saleh regime between 2004 and 2010 (commonly referred to as the Six Wars), and participated in the uprisings in early 2011 that called for him to step down. The power vacuum created by Yemen's uncertain transitional period has drawn more supporters to the Houthis.

Later, the Houthis struck an alliance with their old foe and took hold of the capital in September 2014. Although their political alliance with Saleh seems to have tightened over the course of the last year, military units loyal to Saleh and Houthi forces remain largely distinct.<sup>84</sup> Militarily, the Houthis rely on a network of militias which rotate frequently through areas under Houthi control, as well as former military units who broke away from Hadi and joined the Houthi movement. Many, though certainly not all, of these officers are Zaydis from Sayyid families.<sup>85</sup> The Houthi–Saleh alliance is often described as an 'alliance of

81 M. Michael, 'In Yemen's Secret Prisons, UAE Tortures and US Interrogates', Associated Press, 22 June 2017, <https://apnews.com/4925f7f0fa654853bd6f2f57174179fe>.

82 UNSC, Final Report of the Panel of Experts, supra fn 53, p 3.

83 Ibid, para 42.

84 Ibid, para 47.

85 Ibid, para 50.



convenience’.

**Hadi-aligned forces:** Since March 2015, several military units have remained loyal to the former president or have defected to join the Houthis. In February 2016, Hadi appointed Ali Mohsin, Saleh’s former ally, as deputy supreme commander of the armed forces in an attempt to gather support from local tribes and military leaders.<sup>86</sup> Mohsin is an influential figure in Yemen with a wide network of allies, and he is reported to also have strong ties with the Islamist Islah party. On the other hand, Hadi does not enjoy the full allegiance of forces fighting under the banner of the Yemeni military or security forces. This is arguably the case for the Security Belt forces and Hadrami Elite forces, which are nominally under the control of the Yemeni government but are actually under the operational control of the UAE.<sup>87</sup> Here, it should be noted that although Hadi hails from the southern governorate of Abyan, many southerners are distrustful of him in view of his role in the 1994 Yemeni Civil War, during which he fought on the side of the northern army.<sup>88</sup>

**Al Qaeda in the Arab Peninsula (AQAP):** The group emerged in January 2009 through a union of the Saudi and Yemeni branches of al-Qaeda in the Arab Peninsula.<sup>89</sup> During the uprising, AQAP evolved from a primarily internationally focused jihadist organization to one with a significant local insurgency component that seeks to establish territorial control. Consequently, in 2011 it created a parallel group, Ansar al-Sharia, to widen its domestic appeal and separate its local component from its international brand.<sup>90</sup> Capitalizing on the security vacuum, during 2011 the group took control over territories in the south and started its own experiment in local governance.<sup>91</sup> Although AQAP was driven out from Mukalla in 2016, it is far from defeated and is still present in the governorates of Hadhramaut, Shabwa and Abyan.

**Islamic State (IS):** The Islamic State branch in Yemen was announced on 13 November 2014. Unlike AQAP, its leadership consists mainly of non-Yemenis and its members appear to have been fighting with IS in Syria and Iraq.<sup>92</sup> The

86 ‘Yemen President Appoints Ali Mohsin as Deputy Supreme Commander’, *The New Arab*, 23 February 2016, <https://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/news/2016/2/23/yemen-president-appoints-ali-mohsin-as-deputy-supreme-commander>.

87 UNSC, Final Report of the Panel of Experts, supra fn 53, para 132; see also R. Goodman and A. Moorehead, ‘UAE, a Key US Partner in Yemen, Implicated in Detainee Abuse’, *Just Security*, 15 May 2017, <https://www.justsecurity.org/40978/uae-key-partner-yemen-implicated-detainee-abuse>.

88 N. Al-Dawsari, *Breaking the Cycle of Failed Negotiations in Yemen*, POMED – Project on Middle East Democracy, May 2017, [http://pomed.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Policy-Brief\\_Nadwa\\_170505b-1.pdf](http://pomed.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Policy-Brief_Nadwa_170505b-1.pdf).

89 Crisis Group, *Yemen’s al-Qaeda*, supra fn 14, p 4.

90 *Ibid.*, p 6.

91 Salisbury, *Yemen*, supra fn 1, p 13.

92 Crisis Group, *Yemen’s al-Qaeda*, supra fn 14, p 19.

group claimed responsibility for the bomb attacks on Sana’a mosques on 20 March 2015.

**Salafi militias:** Opportunistic alliances forged by the Saudi-led coalition to fight the Houthi incursion into the south have propelled Salafis to prominence. In Aden, they act with UAE support as state-sponsored, irregular security forces.<sup>93</sup> Since December 2016, Salafi and other resistance militias have nominally been integrated into the Yemeni army while remaining separate in reality.<sup>94</sup>

## FOREIGN INVOLVEMENT

**The Saudi-led coalition:** formed in late March 2015 with the declared goal of countering Houthi forces and restoring Hadi to power. It was originally made up of nine Arab countries (Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, Sudan and Qatar); however the latter was cast out from the coalition on June 2017 following the Qatari diplomatic crisis. The military operations of the coalition are spearheaded by Saudi Arabia and the UAE, although these two states seem to have divergent agendas in Yemen. The coalition’s air operations are under the operational control of a joint headquarters led by Saudi Arabia and based in Riyadh.<sup>95</sup> As for ground operations, Saudi Arabia retains operational control in Marib while the United Arab Emirates has control over ground operations in Aden and the vicinity of Mukalla.<sup>96</sup> The Saudi-led coalition is believed to be implicated in widespread violations of IHL in Yemen.<sup>97</sup>

**The United States:** With a virtual *carte blanche* from the Hadi government, the US has continued to pursue its air and drone campaign against AQAP targets in Yemen, which dates back to Saleh’s era.<sup>98</sup> Following a controversial ground operation in Yemen in early 2017, the Hadi government was reported to have withdrawn its permission for the US to run ground missions against suspected terrorists in the country.<sup>99</sup> The US has been supplying weapons on a large scale to Saudi Arabia, including cluster bombs which pose a particular threat to civilians.<sup>100</sup> In addition, it has been providing logistic and intelligence support to the Saudi-led

93 *Ibid.*, p 20.

94 *Ibid.*, p 21.

95 UNSC, Final Report of the Panel of Experts, supra fn 53, para 30.

96 *Ibid.*

97 ICRC, ‘Yemen: Airstrikes Against Civilians Are an Alarming Trend’, 8 August 2017, <https://www.icrc.org/en/document/yemen-airstrikes-against-civilians-are-alarming-trend>; see also *Ibid.*, paras 119–134.

98 Crisis Group, *Yemen’s al-Qaeda*, supra fn 14, p 7.

99 See supra fns 60–61.

100 J. Mechanic, ‘The Ongoing U.S. Role in the Decimation of Yemen’, *The Huffington Post*, 18 February 2017, [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/the-ongoing-us-role-in-the-decimation-of-yemen\\_us\\_58a65d82e4b026a89a7a2913](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/the-ongoing-us-role-in-the-decimation-of-yemen_us_58a65d82e4b026a89a7a2913).

coalition, as well as refuelling the coalition's fighter jets that conduct air strikes in Yemen.<sup>101</sup>

**The United Kingdom and France:** both countries have been supplying weapons and military equipment to the Saudi-led coalition on a large scale. Since the coalition's military campaign began in March 2015, the UK has licensed over £3.3 billion of arms and military equipment despite evidence of repeated breaches of IHL by the coalition.<sup>102</sup> A legal challenge to the UK government's arms sales to Saudi Arabia was dismissed by the High Court in London last July.<sup>103</sup> France has reportedly provided training to Saudi fighter pilots in addition to stepping up its arms and military equipment sales to the Saudi-led coalition after March 2015.<sup>104</sup> Officers from the UK and France, as well as other countries, are present at the joint headquarters that oversees the coalition's air operations in Yemen.<sup>105</sup>

**The Islamic Republic of Iran:** Claims led by the Saudi-led coalition and the Hadi government about Iran's role in Yemen are often seen as exaggerated. While the Houthis do receive some support from Iran, this has remained marginal and does not shape their decision-making as much as local alliances and conflict dynamics do.<sup>106</sup> The military support provided to the Houthis since 2011 has largely been limited to training, mostly channelled through Hezbollah.<sup>107</sup> According to the UN Panel of Experts on Yemen, there is no sufficient evidence to confirm any direct large-scale supply of arms from the Iranian government given the coalition's tight grip on Yemen's air and maritime spaces.<sup>108</sup> Following the Houthis takeover of Sana'a, there has been an intensification of sectarian rhetoric, which tends to describe the Houthis as Iranian-backed Shias in Yemen. However, Zaydi Shiism – the faith followed by Houthi members – is very different from the Twelver Shia tradition predominant in Iran, and is actually much closer in practice to Sunni Islam.<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> Ibid; see also O. Pawlyk, '2 Years Into Yemen War, US Ramps Up Refueling of Saudi Jets', Military.com, 15 February 2017, <http://www.military.com/daily-news/2017/02/15/2-years-yemen-war-us-ramps-up-refueling-saudi-jets.html>.

<sup>102</sup> Campaign Against Arms Trade, 'UK Arms Sales to Saudi Arabia', 3 February 2017, <https://www.caat.org.uk/campaigns/stop-arming-saudi/arms-sales>.

<sup>103</sup> Amnesty International, 'Court Ruling over UK Arms Sales to Saudi Arabia a "Deadly Blow" to Yemeni Civilians', 10 July 2017, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2017/07/court-ruling-over-uk-arms-sales-to-saudi-arabia-a-deadly-blow-to-yemeni-civilians/>.

<sup>104</sup> W. Mohamed and T. Fortin, 'Exposed: France's Arms Dealers Making a Killing in Yemen', The New Arab, 19 September 2017, <https://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/comment/2017/9/19/exposed-frances-arms-dealers-making-a-killing-in-yemen>.

<sup>105</sup> UNSC, Report of the Panel of Experts, *supra* fn 53, para 30, fn 20.

<sup>106</sup> Transfeld, 'Iran's Small Hand in Yemen', *supra* fn 43.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid. For a detailed analysis of Iran's role in Yemen, see F. Al-Muslimi, 'Iran's Role in Yemen Exaggerated, but Destructive', Sana'a Center for Strategic Studies, 29 May 2017, <http://sanaacenter.org/publications/analysis/4348>.

<sup>108</sup> UNSC, Report of the Panel of Experts, *supra* fn 53, para 62.

<sup>109</sup> Transfeld, 'Iran's Small Hand in Yemen', *supra* fn 43.

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