

Violence resumes in Sana'a

By: Shatha Al-Harazi

SANA'A, July 20 — One protester was killed, five wounded by life ammunition and 65 exposed to tear gas on Monday in an attack against anti-government protesters, the first since the announcement of a transitional council on Saturday.

The youth who vowed to escalate and strengthen the “revolutionary action” marched on Monday demanding that the international community accept the transitional council. The council consists of 17 members, eight of which are from the south. The youth also called for the removal of what they call “the rest of the regime,” specifically meaning President Saleh's sons and nephews.

“We went out on a march. We were in the hundreds, and the Central Security stopped us at Kintaki Bridge. But then they let us continue on our way,” said Radhwan Al-Himi, one of the protesters. After the protesters passed the bridge, however, they were attacked by ‘thugs’.

Protesters managed to take a photo of the alleged killer of protester Hassan Al-Hawri that was soon was distributed on social networks. Many facebook users posted Al-Hawri's picture as their own to show their support for the cause he was killed for – the end of Saleh's regime.

“We retreated back from Kintaki bridge and again clashes started. They [thugs] hit us with rocks and fireworks, then the Central Security joined them and attacked us,” said Al-Himi.

Some youth said that although they are losing more than they are gaining from these marches, it is the price of freedom and they are willing to pay it. “Tomorrow we have another march. We are willing to sacrifice until the revolution returns to its right path. We also know that losing martyrs can also make more people show their solidarity with the revolution,” said Al-Himi.

Other pro-protest youth think that marching nowadays is not safe, and the organizers should concede that the losses outweigh the benefits. “I think marching now is only going towards death. The protesters should first gain more power from inside, rather than exposing themselves to the regime's thugs and the security forces,” said Feras Shamsan, another protester.

The first armored division, that defected from the government forces after the killing of protesters in Sana'a on March 18, have previously vowed to protect the youth from attacks forces loyal to the state. However, they no longer seem willing to back this pledge with action, and indeed, there have been reports of violence against the youth from the division since the youth started demanding a transitional council and the

removal of the remnants of the regime.

Political analyst, Ahmed Al-Zurqa, said that the violence is increasing against the protesters in these marches due to their small numbers. He says that the security forces that are spread in nearby neighborhoods will use violence against such small gatherings.

“The security forces are filled with the wrong information. They have been filled with hatred and violence,” said Al-Zurqa.

There have been divisions across the political opposition on how to deal with the developing political situation. Some have showed their support of the transitional council chosen by one of the coalitions in ‘Change Square’. Other opposition political parties who condemned the attack against the youth on Monday still do not support their demands, and do not approve of the transitional council.

“The Joint Meeting Parties [the coalition of opposition political parties] have lost its popularity, and lost the means of effective communication with the youth,” said Al-Zurqa.

According to Al-Zurqa, the political scene in Yemen is vague and getting harder predict as the number of active players increase. “The US and the European Union support the Gulf countries vision for Yemen, and the JMP have rejected the transitional council,” he said.



One protester injured in an attack on Saturday near Change Square

Protesters fear more killing in Sana'a

By: Ali Saeed

SANA'A, July 20 — Around 2,000 people marched from the Al-Zira neighborhood to a UN office on Al-Siteen on Saturday, claiming that they have lost patience with anti-government protest-

ers camped out for the last six months in ‘Change Square’ in Sana'a.

Participants in the demonstration said they have given the protesters ‘a one week deadline to leave the square. Else they we march to the square and the protesters will be responsible for

the consequences.”

“We have been patient with you for five months protesting around us. Now you have announced your transitional council and the fall of the regime, so why are you still there? You must leave or we will march to your tents and you will be responsible for what will happen,” said one of the demonstrators on Saturday.

An activist from ‘Change Square’ near the University of Sana'a, however, claimed that this was another plot by the regime to kill anti-government protesters under the guise of angry local residents. On March 18 at least 52 protesters were killed and hundreds injured by people shooting from the roofs of houses near the university.

“This is just another security scenario being plotted against protesters under the name of people living around the square,” said Khaled Al-Ansi, an activist and a member of the preparatory committee of the youth revolution in Sana'a, to the Yemen Times on Sunday. “This is not the first plot [against us]. They did the same thing on March 18 and claimed it was the people who lived around the square who killed the protesters.”

“It is clear that there is a security proposal being prepared by Saleh's gangs to kill protesters under the pretext that the violent acts are coming from people



A reverse demonstration in the capital Sana'a demanding an end to anti-regime protests on Saturday which was considered by protesters as a new crackdown strategy

living in neighborhoods around the square,” he said.

Al-Ansi who has been protesting for almost the six months against Saleh's 33-year regime, wonders why there have not been any similar demonstrations complaining about Saleh's sup-

porters who have been camped out in Al-Tahrir Square over the same period.

“The tents in Al-Tahrir Square of Saleh's supporters have become empty, and they have turned the Al-Tahrir area into a garbage dump which has paralyzed people's interests. So why there

are only demonstrations against anti-government protesters?” he asked.

“We have lived with the people near by the [change] square and no problems have occurred between us since when the regime claimed it was them who killed the protesters on the ‘Day of Dignity’ on Friday March 18. They [the local people] issued a statement declaring their denial of responsibility,” said Al-Ansi.

Hussein Al-Witary, who lives in a neighborhood around ‘Change Square’, explained to the Yemen Times that only a few of the participants in the march were really from local neighborhoods. The majority of demonstrators who demanded an end to the anti-regime protests and threatened to march on the square were from unknown areas, he said.

“We hold all Saleh's security and intelligence bodies accountable for any future deaths or attacks against the protesters, as well as those who have appeared on satellite channels threatening protesters with death,” said Al-Ansi.

He added that protesters have not taken to the streets for personal demands or issues, but that they are in the square for public issues that affect all Yemenis.

When over 52 protesters were shot dead and hundreds other wounded on March 18 in the capital Sana'a, President Saleh and his Minister of Interior, Mutahr Rashad Al-Masri, appeared in a press conference and claimed that it was the people who lived around the square that had killed the protesters.

During the same incident, pro-democracy protesters captured some of the armed men who were shooting protesters from the roofs of surrounding buildings. They were identified by protesters as professional snipers of Yemen's security forces and the Republican Guard.

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WHO warns of health crisis in southern governorates

By: Shatha Al-Harazi

SANA'A, July 20 — Violence increased last week in Taiz, Arhab, Abyan, and Sana'a due to continuing political unrest. However, the World Health Organization (WHO) representative in Yemen, Dr. Ghulam Popal, confirmed to the Yemen Times that all political parties involved in the recent events are cooperating regardless of their roles in the conflicts.

"Everything in Yemen is political, but health services are more neutral and impartial. We appreciate the assistance from all parties and the field hospitals," said Popal.

As different parties provide different information about any individual incident, the WHO has three step procedure in place to check the neutrality of any information supplied to them.

First, when an incident occurs an operation team from both the Ministry of Health and the WHO call all the hospitals to keep posted on their needs and the number of killed and injured. Second they glean information from field hospitals at the protest areas. Finally, in cases of conflicting information from hospitals and field hospitals, the representative and the health cluster coordinator go and check the situation for themselves.

In February, when the anti-government protests started, protesters complained that the government hospital were not accepting injured protesters,



Healthcare workers treat a sick child living in an IDP shelter in Aden

or if accepted that they were not treated well. Dr. Popal told the Yemen Times that this situation has now changed,

and that the Kuwait Hospital in Sana'a is treating injured protesters.

The WHO also works with internally

displaced persons (IDPs) from both south and north Yemen. According to the WHO, southern governorates in

Yemen are facing three emergency humanitarian situations simultaneously. There is an influx of IDPs within Abyan, with many others heading towards Aden and Lahj. There is also a serious outbreak of diarrheal diseases and cholera in Abyan, and finally there are incoming casualties from the conflict zones in Aden.

If the current unstable situation continues, Dr. Popal fears that IDPs will be more vulnerable to food poisoning over the up-coming Ramadan period. People usually eat a lot during the night during Ramadan, and given the shortage of power for refrigeration or cooling, food poisoning is likely to be a problem as food spoils during the daytime heat.

IDPs in Abyan complained to the Yemen Times of dirty and standing water they have to use because of a shortage of clean water. The WHO said that they cover 16 schools in order to solve this problem. The WHO is supporting two mobile health care units in Aden and one in Lahj. These mobile units are delivering health care services to IDPs living mostly in schools and with host families.

Another common complaint by IDPs is that their children suffer badly from diarrhea diseases. In response the WHO has sent a complete diarrhea disease treatment kit to Aden, which includes antibiotics, oral rehydration salts (ORH) and intravenous fluids for the management of 100 severe and 400 moderately dehydrated pa-

tients. This has been delivered to the Al-Razi Hospital which is providing inpatient treatment. The WHO has also sent one interagency emergency health kit (IEHK), which is a metric ton of medicines and supplies for primary health care – enough for a population of 30,000 for one month – to Abyan for Al-Razi hospital.

The outbreak of diarrhea has grown increasingly serious in Abyan governorate. Between April 7 and June 15, Al-Razi hospital has reported 667 patients admitted suffering diarrhea. A hospital in Shokra has also reported 75 cases. The number of cases in the population at large will be far higher, as there is no system to collect and report the cases due to security situation in Abyan. There are no figures as to how many are suffering or dying at home away from the hospital – the only place where records are kept. The situation looks as it will get worse with outbreaks spreading to the neighboring governorates of Lahj and Aden if immediate action to control the diseases are not taken now.

In addition to maintaining a supply chain of medicines and supplies, the WHO has also chlorinated 12 water wells in the affected areas to try and control the outbreak. WHO has trained volunteers from the community in Abyan as they have more access to locals there, but the security situation has still stopped the local and emergency projects from working.

“Yemen needs to build a school everyday due to population growth rate”

By: Sadeq Al-Wesabi

SANA'A, July 20 — The rate of population growth in Yemen will persist through the next two decades due to lack of strong support, social awareness and skilled demographers, according to Mujahed Al-Sha'ab, head of the media and awareness department at Yemen's National Population Council (NPC).

The council celebrated World Population Day last week, but without adequate support, new programs or projects due the current critical situation in the country.

Speaking to the Yemen Times, Al-Sha'ab said that the population strategy in Yemen needs to be developed and needs more support and actual implementation.

"We have a weak staff and limited financial support. It's difficult to tackle the population problem in Yemen," he said. "We face many difficulties when we deal with this problem."

"The government provides us with inadequate support and the international organizations provide us with a strong support but only for a limited period of time," he said.

However, he indicated that both international and government support has been suspended due to the current situation.

"The problem of the population activity in Yemen is that it depends on the foreign donations," said Al-Sha'ab. "We shouldn't rely on international donations. The government must focus on this issue and support it."

He said that the population issue in Yemen has international and national dimensions. "The population problem in Yemen is a decisive issue. We need the government to make a firm commitment to put the population issue in its list of priorities."

The population issue in Yemen has cultural, social, economic, environmental and religious dimensions. "More efforts by all Yemenis must be done to fight this complicated problem, especially in the rural areas."

However, he said that fertility and mortality rates have declined in recent years in Yemen.

According to Al-Sha'ab, about 2,000 babies are born per day in Yemen. "This number means that we need to build a school every day to keep up," he said.

He added, "Health and education sectors are under pressure to expand their facilities to meet the growing population."

"Poverty and illiteracy increase the rate of population growth in Yemen," he said, indicating that developments in health and education would help keep the rate of the population in check.

Al-Sha'ab emphasized the pivotal role Yemeni youth had in fighting the population problem. "They are the fathers of the future. If they are aware of the dangers of the population problem, they can resolve this problem."

He said that the NPC endeavors to provide school students with population curriculums that teach them the culture of the population. However, he said that the Ministry of Education lacks skilled

teachers who have knowledge about the population issue. "Unfortunately, those teachers have no strong belief in the importance of this issue."

"The NPC has many ideas and planning programs, but as I said we lack the financial support," he said.

The rate of population growth exhausts the economic, natural and environmental resources in Yemen, according to Al-Sha'ab.

He pointed out that people in rural areas in Yemen have always relied upon the environment to live. "For instance, they use trees as fuel to cook and some of these trees are rare. They make the population problem more complicated."

Al-Sha'ab highly praised the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) for its vital role in addressing the population problem in Yemen.

"UNFPA is our main and senior partner. It contributes significantly to adopting the policies of the population in Yemen and providing the NPC with experienced demographers. Moreover, it donates to many population projects,"

he said. "UNFPA has trained many Yemeni staff, planned many programs, organized several symposiums, helped us to conduct our national census and produced many publications about the population."

AIDS in Yemen

Al-Sha'ab said that the announced number of AIDS patients in Yemen is less than the real number.

"Yemen is prone to HIV infection because of its proximity to Africa and lack of blood tests," he said.

He added, "AIDS poses a threat in Yemen. Absence of awareness by people about this disease and their negligence exacerbates the problem of AIDS in Yemen. The spread of this disease in Yemen may destroy our workforce and youth."

Family planning

"Reduction of the rate of population growth is a successful investment," said Al-Sha'ab. "We should provide people with reproductive health services and raise awareness among people about

YT Photo by: Sadeq Al-Wesabi



Mujahed Al-Sha'ab

this problem."

He indicated that some affluent Yemenis have the wrong idea that they should have many children, because of their good financial situation. But, he continued, on the other side they don't

know that they destroy the health of their wives, and make it difficult for their wives to look after the children.

"I can say that the population problem is the reason for many other problems and crises in Yemen."

Yemen says int'l oil companies to resume work in Marib

SANAA, July 19 (Xinhua) — Yemen said Tuesday that the international oil companies were restarting their oil fields gradually in the northeastern oil-rich province of Marib after the authorities repaired the damaged oil export pipeline, official Saba news agency reported.

"We are preparing to restart production. This will take some time," the report cited Austrian oil company OMV as saying.

Yemen was in the grip of political conflicts triggered by six-month-long protests demanding the ouster of President Ali Abdullah Saleh.

Saba also said the United Arab Emirates had donated 3 million barrels of crude oil to Yemen to help alleviate the

country's fuel shortage crisis, a month after the neighboring top oil exporter Saudi Arabia granted 3 million barrels of crude oil to the unrest-hit country.

The oil pipeline was repaired on July 15, days after chieftains of anti-government armed tribesmen in Marib, who attacked the pipeline in March, conveyed a letter to the government, asking the latter to repair it in order to end the fuel crisis, a security official of the Interior Ministry told Xinhua.

The attack was carried out by tribesmen of Sheikh Ali Jabir al-Shabwani in mid March to revenge for the government air raid in May 2010 targeting al-Qaida militants, which mistakenly killed Ali's son, the deputy governor of Marib.

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

The **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)** invites **Yemeni Nationals** to apply for the following position with its **"Community Driven Early Recovery in Sa'ada Project"**

Post Title: Project Coordinator
Duration: one year
Duty Station: Sa'ada

Responsibilities:

- Establish coordination office in Sa'ada, including procurement of office and operational equipment.
- Build rapport and trust in Sa'ada with: Governor's office, local councils, Sa'ada Reconstruction Fund; and other partners as applicable.
- Oversee, steer, and report on the implementation of the project's work-plan in accordance to UNDP's regulations.
- Convene coordination meetings and consultations with the project's overview committee, district facilitation committees, and development partners operating in the area.
- Collaborate with the UNDP Conflict Prevention and Recovery Team in the country office for: Contracting local NGOs; developing a financial disbursement/recovery/accountability system for releasing funds to implementing partners; and developing a participatory M&E system.
- Overview community empowerment activities, and facilitate capacity building and training activities on the community level.
- Establish close working relations with District Local Councils, and collaborate with national/international partners to undertake capacity building of these District Councils for supporting early recovery activities.
- Liaise and facilitate the work of the national/international partner NGOs, the participating UN Agencies, and the District Local Councils (as feasible) and district-based Executive Branches to provide technical assistance and support to the early recovery projects of the communities
- Monitor the performance of the NGOs and communities in the implementation of their small recovery projects

Qualification:

- Bachelor's degree in relevant socio-economic fields, development administration/management, conflict prevention
- 3 to 5 years of experience in management of rural development projects with active community and local government participation
- Familiarity in Government policies, procedures and programmes, especially at local (Governorate and District) levels
- Experience in working relations and partnerships with national and international partners involved in local development and conflict transformation
- Computer skills in Microsoft Office and software relevant to monitoring and evaluation
- Fluency in written and spoken English and Arabic is required

Only online applications will be accepted

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VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

The **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)** invites **Yemeni Nationals** to apply for the following position with its **"Social Cohesion Project"**

Post Title: Project Manager
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Duty Station: Sana'a

Responsibilities:

- Responsibility for the overall coordination, management & implementation of the Social Cohesion Project.
- Work with the national counterparts, experts and the UNDP to ensure that project strategy/results are achieved and local capacities are enhanced.
- Prepare and implement annual and quarterly work plans according to the project's strategy and relevant project budget management.
- Ensure the project activities are implemented according to the annual work plan whilst maintaining the flexibility to shift priorities according to the changing context in consultation with UNDP.
- Establish functional linkage; ensuring communities and local government are working together as the primary actors in preventing to lead locally driven development.
- Provide expertise and guidance on Social Cohesion coordination mechanism to stakeholders.
- Ensure the integrity of financial management and the efficient and appropriate use of resources with consistent application of UNDP rules and regulations;
- Ensure that the cross-cutting issues are taken into account i.e. gender mainstreaming, conflict prevention, human rights, environment, HIV/AIDS.
- Supervise and guide the experts and staff under the project in as specified by UNDP in implementing the various components and activities of the project
- Assist in organizing meetings, workshops, conferences, etc. relating to facilitating co-ordination activities of the project
- Develop effective monitoring systems and build the capacity of the local authorities in livelihood development and coordination mechanism.
- Facilitate collaboration with local authorities, NGO, private sector and communities for social cohesion and conflict prevention to further Enhance existing local governance reforms that build closer interaction of local government.
- Mobilize resources for funding gaps or additional funds requirement.
- Perform other duties as deemed necessary.

Qualification:

- Advanced degree in political science, conflict prevention, community development, Social Sciences, or related discipline or equivalent experience.
- At least 6 years of extensive working experience in the area conflict prevention, community development and early recovery.
- Proven experience in social research and analysis.
- Fluency in written and spoken English and Arabic is required.

Monthly Salary for above post is approximately \$2,500

Only online applications will be accepted

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Can Yemen's opposition JMP find common purpose after Saleh's departure?

By: Mohamed Bin Sallam

Hassan Zaid, general secretary of the Al-Haq Party and a leading member of the Joint Meeting Parties (JMP), confirmed in a telephone call with the Yemen Times that serious disagreements are taking place inside the coalition of six opposition parties.

"The Islah Party and the Yemeni Socialist Party communicate and discuss autocratically with the regime and other concerned parties, in an attempt to resolve Yemen's crisis whilst ignoring the other four [JMP member] parties," said Zaid.

"There are influential tribal parties who are well-linked to a Gulf nation that directly influences the two parties and imposes upon them to negotiate directly or indirectly with the ruling party to change the GCC initiative according to their desires," he said.

He added "there is another topic which we disagree about it... related to the periodical leadership term of the JMP. The Islah and the Socialist parties take six months for each one of them, while the term of other parties does not exceed two months for each party. Therefore equal opportunity does not exist among the parties."

"The framework of the JMP has also pushed the Islah party to tolerate some wrong policies which do not match Islamic ideology. Islah sometimes falls in the opposition space of just opposing, and of converting yesterday's devils into today's angels."

Sultan Al-Atwani, general secretary of the Al-Wahdawi Nasserite Party and leading member of the JMP, denied these divisions in a telephone call with the Yemen Times. He said that there is no division among the JMP members and also denied that the Islah and Socialist parties negotiate under the name of the JMP.

"If there is any negotiation performed by the Islah or Socialist parties it is done according to the prior agreement of all parties under the JMP," said Al-Atwani.

Seven years ago, the Islah party [the Muslim Brotherhood's political organization in Yemen] decided to join the Yemeni opposition coalition which combined leftist, nationalist and non-radical Islamist groups. The coalition that emerged became the Joint Meeting Parties (JMP) and included a number of political opponents who had a history of bad relations and rivalries.

The coalition now includes the Islah Party, the Yemeni Socialist Party, the Al-Wahdawi Nasserite Party, the National Baath Party, the Al-Haq Zaydi Party, and the Popular Forces Union Party.

The gathering of these different affiliations into one political entity astonished many observers at the time, and questions were asked about its capacity to continue amidst the constant attacks

and distortion campaigns coming from the ruling GPC party.

During the summer war of 1994, the Islamists sided with Saleh's ruling party in fighting against the the Socialists. Dr. Ahmed Al-Daghashi, a Yemeni academic, says in one of his lectures: "The transition of the Islah party from the armed battles which took place in 1994 to the alliance with the most prominent member of the JMP – the socialist party – and turning the mistakes of separation into a major virtue by an irrevocable divorce from their strategic ally for several years (the GPC), leads the observer to believe that the Islamic affiliation doesn't vary from other ideological and political directions when it makes pragmatic criteria the higher decisive reference."

Mohammad Qahtan, member of the Islah Party and one of the founders of the JMP, rejected the term 'pragmatic' to describe the alliance between the Islamic Islah Party and the Socialist Party of Marxist origin. He denied the alliance is just an aptly timed tactic to access some political advantage.

"The alliance is a strategic choice for the Islah party and it is working to activate its role in political life through the coalition with all methods and by a cooperative program agreed to by all parties," Qahtan said.

However, Al-Daghashi raises some criticisms of Islah's membership within the JMP saying it negatively affects Islah's performance. In particular, aligning themselves with leftist, nationalist, and other non-Islamist parties instead of Islamic affiliations, especially moderate Salafist groups, forms a weaker coalition.

"The framework of the JMP has also pushed the Islah party to tolerate some wrong policies which do not match Islamic ideology. Islah sometimes falls in the opposition space of just opposing, and of converting yesterday's devils into today's angels."

Islamic ideology. Islah sometimes falls in the opposition space of just opposing, and of converting yesterday's devils into today's angels," said Al-Daghashi.

Al-Atwani, general secretary of the Al-Wahdawi Nasserite Party, also rejected 'pragmatic' as an adequate description of the joining of the Islamist party with the leftists. His view is that the Muslim Brotherhood organization in Yemen is different from their peers in other Arab countries.

"There is a political program and a clear scheme taking into account that Islah forms the largest party in the JMP," said Al-Atwani.

He explained that "Yemen's political opposition has surpassed ideological differences to design a joint program that takes into account the social issues of poverty and combating corruption, which is good for progress."

"This is in addition to political issues such as democracy and working towards a peaceful transfer of power. So it does not matter if you were speaking about Islamist or leftist... The crucial thing is the adoption of community social issues, and their future, and that is what makes us put our political disagreements aside," said Al-Atwani.

Another criticism of Islah joining the JMP was the perception that the party had joined the coalition with the aim of attaining power. Those leveling this criticism say that the alliance will rapidly be disconnected from their voters, who would see the leaders of Islah as doing something different to Islamic ideology. The uncomfortable choice faced by Islah under this scenario would be: to either lose people's loyalty and turn into dictators, or come back to their voters and recover the Islamic proposal, in all of its aspects, which cannot be achieved in the Western democratic way.

But, Hamoud Al-Tharhi, member of the supreme committee of the Islah party, rejects such criticisms and states that the alliance with non-Islamists is not against Islamic Sharia law.

"The Islah party keeps its Islamism inside the coalition, since the fundamental goal for Islah is to bring about change, and not only to reach power," said Al-Tharhi. "And for that, the ideological differences were not a constraint in establishing the coalition."

He explained that all Yemeni political powers met and adopted dialog. And through this dialog they agreed that Islam is a dogma, and that laws and justice, freedom and equality as pillars of socialism and nationalism, exist also in Islam. And because of these shared ideals, the JMP was created.

So coexistence between the Islamic and non-Islamic sides, whilst difficult, is still possible, according to Al-Tharhi.

Despite the many mistakes leveled against Islah for joining the JMP, there are still many benefits that Islah has gained through this alliance, according to journalist Mohammad Al-Ghawbri.

"It revealed a moderate face of the Yemeni Muslim Brotherhood by their capability to work with leftists and secularists. The importance of that came out after the Sept. 11 attacks, when accusations of terrorism have chased whoever is Islamist anywhere in the world," said Al-Ghawbri.

"The United States is leading a so called war on 'terrorism' and Islah's membership of the JMP has allowed the party to deflect such accusations," he said. "And the work of Islah by itself would make them

easy prey to the ruling party, but their existence inside the JMP has strengthened them, and decreased the chances of being them being terminated."

To conclude the above, Yemen's special political experience has contributed in one way or another to the establishment of the JMP and its continuation. The ideological differences between its different parties did not deter the coalition's creation. In addition, there is a coherent political elite who have contributed to the success of the coalition and are capable of proceeding with what they began.

The existence of Islah inside the JMP also has not harmed Islah's Islamism, even though it has suffered several weaknesses. But the strengths gained were greater, and in the end they should ultimately reach a solution that will satisfy all parties.

"There are influential tribal parties who are well-linked to a Gulf nation that directly influences the two parties and imposes upon them to negotiate directly or indirectly with the ruling party to change the GCC initiative according to their desires,"

What after Saleh?

The current political and revolutionary upheavals in Yemen lead to a plethora of new and urgent questions about the future of Yemen. The revolutionary youth are increasing their demands for the formation of a transitional council similar to Libya's. There are calls from within political parties for a change in regime and for Saleh and his family to leave power permanently. Who will rule Yemen? What will Yemen be like if Saleh's regime left?

Yemen's tangled politics and history impose many other questions about the future political map of the country, with

a great uncertainty of what will happen if the current regime left. The current political coalitions, especially the JMP, were not based on solid foundations of ideology or common aims except perhaps to confront the ruling General People's Congress.

If Saleh's regime leaves, will the Socialist Party allow the Islah Party, who has become the crucial player in the opposition scene, to autocratically rule the country? Will the Islah Party allow a role for the Socialist Party given the Muslim Brotherhood consider it as an 'atheist-communist party'?

It would be difficult for the Nasserites, who think that they deserve power more than anyone, to leave the Socialists and Islah with this right. There are also the Houthis, who according to the regime are well-known for their efforts to recover Hashemite-family rule in Yemen, and who have entered a fragile coalition with the JMP. Some observers think that the Houthis will not allow the JMP to simply take over ruling Yemen.

Then there are the National Baath Party, who will suffer less support if the Syrian regime falls, and the Al-Haq party who is close to Iran and the Houthis. And the Popular Forces Union Party, who is singing alone with Saudi agendas and waiting for any chance to gain access to Saudi wealth and subsidies that the Islah Party is already comfortable with.

Will the country descend again into civil war because each party is looking towards their own benefit and agenda? Will Yemen divide into minor states, sultanates and emirates each one ruled by its own party? Or will the parties that have been held together only by their opposition to the regime be able to find a new common ground? One that will not lead to the fracturing of Yemen and internal warfare, but that can be positive and lead to development for the nation as a whole and all Yemenis?



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Drone warfare: Costs and challenges

By: Paul Rogers

The announcement by President Obama on 22 June 2011 of substantial withdrawals of United States troops from Afghanistan by September 2012 marks an important moment in the almost decade-long war in the country. The impact of the decision will be felt on the current diplomatic calculations over the nature of a settlement that will bring the war to an end. It may also impinge on the presidential-election campaign in the US that reaches a climax in November 2012. But whatever the diplomatic or political consequences of the draw-down will be, the Afghanistan war is still far from over - and indeed, in one significant way it has in its tenth year been intensifying rather than winding down (see "Afghanistan: mapping the endgame", 16 June 2011).

This is the use of pilotless armed drones. These are employed under CIA command - a procedure chosen because the CIA's rules of engagement are less restrictive than those of the military. The continuous drone-attacks across the border in Pakistan have very destructive human effects that often reach beyond the presumed insurgent targets; the agency claims to have killed around 1,400 suspected al-Qaida and Taliban paramilitaries, but Pakistan sources

also (amid a scarcity of precise details) estimate that hundreds of civilians have also died in these operations.

These attacks have also greatly contributed to the marked deterioration in relations between Washington and Islamabad - a trend exacerbated by the US's belief that senior Pakistani officials were involved in protecting Osama bin Laden (see Karen DeYoung & Griff Witte, "Pakistan-U.S. security relationship at lowest point since 2001, officials say", Washington Post, 16 June 2011).

It is notable that the use of drones has been increasing also to other places where US forces are active, such as Yemen (see Jim Lobe, "US escalates war against al-Qaeda in Yemen", Asia Times/IPS, 14 June 2011). The key shift here is that the CIA - according to the same logic as in Pakistan - has become involved in mounting drone-attacks against those suspected of backing the movement known as Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). The attacks have even targeted Islamist paramilitaries in areas where the AQAP has little influence, and run the same risk as in Pakistan of alienating local people in a way that makes them more radical and anti-American than they may have been before (see Hakim Almasari, "US drone attacks in Yemen ignore Al Qaeda for local militants", The National, 21 June 2011).

There is every sign, however, that the US regards the use of these new weapons of war as being successful in hitting their enemies without putting their own troops (including aircraft crew) in danger. The effects on non-combatants, and the impact on Pakistani or Yemeni opinion, are largely discounted.

The drone explosion

All this makes armed-drones worthy of a closer look, not least as the escalation of the United States's use of these instruments of war is part of a broader trend that includes the European member-states of Nato, Israel and other states (see "Unmanned future: the next era of European aerospace?", International Institute of Strategic Studies [IISS], Strategic Comments, 17/24, June 2011). This trend is driven in part by a necessary response to the nature of the wars in the middle east and south Asia in the 2000s; but it also reflects extraordinary scientific and technological advances in remote-sensing, power-plant miniaturisation and sheer computing power.

There are several types of drones: from small hand-launched reconnaissance platforms to the powerful aircraft-sized Reaper, capable of launching several types of missile and bomb. Some drones, such as the Global Hawk, have an intercontinental range; others have more limited range but can loiter at low speed for hours before being used to

drop their ordnance.

In 2011 the United States had perhaps fifty drones; now it deploys around 7,000. The great majority of these are intended for observation, reconnaissance or bomb-damage assessment. But there are hundreds of armed-drones available, and the US air-force training more "remote pilots" to operate these than pilots for strike-aircraft and interceptors (see Elisabeth Bumiller & Thom Shanker, "War Evolves With Drones, Some Tiny as Bugs", New York Times, 18 June 2011).

This development suggests that the use of armed-drones will expand even further as part of the broad campaign (albeit no longer characterised as a "war on terror") against paramilitary forces seen as threats to western interests (see "America's military: failures of success", 12 May 2011). The seductive appeal of drones to military strategists and political leaders is clear. But they raise many ethical and legal questions that so far have been too little aired.

This makes all the more timely a new report - Drones Don't Allow Hit and Run (June 2011) - published by the Oxford Research Group's programme on Recording Casualties of Armed Conflicts, which in turn developed in close connection with the Iraq Body Count (see John Sloboda, "The human cost of war: name before shame", 29 July 2009).

The main author of the ORG report, which is launched on 23 June 2011 at the Geneva Centre for Security Policy, is the leading international lawyer Susan Breau, professor of international law at Flinders University in Adelaide, with the additional contribution of Rachel Joyce of King's College, London. Breau and Joyce argue convincingly that a number of conventions, charters and international customary humanitarian law combine to provide an international legal obligation on states using armed-drones to respond to certain major consequences of their actions.

These legal documents include the Geneva conventions, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, various United Nations reports and statements, and case law from European and Inter-American human-rights courts.

The legal bind

The key conclusions of Drones Don't Allow Hit and Run are simple - but their implications are huge:

- * "There is a legal requirement to identify all casualties that result from any drone use, under any and all circumstances"

- * "The universal human right which specifies that no-one be 'arbitrarily' deprived of his or her life depends on the identity of the deceased being estab-

lished as to reparations or compensation for possible wrongful killing, injury and other offences."

The words sound straightforward, but they strike right at the heart of armed-drone operations precisely because these are remote operations in which the exact identities of many of those killed are neither known nor even sought (see "The harvest of war: from pain to gain", 28 October 2010). They imply that the very unwillingness, and even the inability, of the attackers to identify the people they kill amount to infringements of international law. This judgment, moreover, applies both to a state that carries out drone-attacks and to a state that allows its territory to be used for them.

The report concentrates primarily on Pakistan and Yemen. But drones are also being used by western forces in Afghanistan and now in Libya, as well as extensively by Israel. Many other countries are likely to follow suit, which underlines the relevance and importance of the report.

There is a tendency to view drone-warfare as something close to a military panacea for problems of paramilitary violence. Now, the fundamental questions it raises are being posed. These have the capacity to hold drone-warfare to legal and moral account. This is an unexpected challenge that cannot be evaded.

Refugees need protections; not punishment

By: The Human Rights League of the Horn of Africa

The Human Rights League of the Horn of Africa (HRLHA) would like to express its deep sadness over the indiscriminate attacks against Oromo and Eritrean refugees in Sana'a, Yemen, on the 3rd of July, 2011. According to HRLHA correspondents in Sana'a, about 35 refugees have received major and minor injuries from attacks by the armed forces of the Yemeni Government.

The victims include two expecting women and two very young children. Eye witnesses have confirmed that the armed forced used tear gas, water and live ammunition; and two of the injured refugees were shot at by bullets - one around his neck and another on his leg.

HRLHA has learned that the refugees, almost all of whom were Oromos from Ethiopia, have been staging continued protest in front of the UNHCR office in Sana'a following the onset of the unrest in Yemen; and were requesting for a transfer to another country, mainly due to lack of security. As a result of the unrest, the refugees have been assaulted and robbed by local people, kicked out of their rented homes, fired from their temporary jobs without pay for what they worked, etc; and these were among the reasons that forced them to stage the protest. HRLHA has also learnt that the refugees have even named a committee, which could approach the Yemeni Government and the UNHCR on their behalf and discuss ways of transfer and for permanent solution. It is very saddening that those refugees who were following such

civilized routes of resolving a problem were met with harsh measures by a government, which is also responsible for the safety and security of the refugees. The refugees complain and claim that the Yemeni Government said the transfer is possible only if it is back to their homeland - Ethiopia, and Eritrea - where they fled in an effort to escape insecurities and extra-judicial persecutions.

HRLHA calls upon the Yemeni Government to abide by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 14 (1) "Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution," and international agreements on Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (1951) Article 33(1). - Prohibition of expulsion or return (refoulement): "No Contracting State shall expel or return ("refoule") a refugee in

any manner whatsoever to the frontiers of territories where his life or freedom would be threatened on account of his race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion," protocol that it has signed and, first of all, refrain from exposing the refugees to any form of attack; and, secondly, provide them with all kinds of protections that they deserve. HRLHA also calls upon the UNHCR to take all necessary measures to provide protections to refugees depending on the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees and also HRLHA's call extends to other similar international, regional agencies, international communities and governments to discharge their responsibilities in ensuring the safety and security of such refugees, who are helpless and defenseless.

United Arab Republic?

By: Greg Austin

The idea of the Arab nation led to the formation in 1958 of a short-lived political union between Egypt and Syria, the United Arab Republic (UAR). It may however be more correct to say that the idea of the Arab nation was used as the public justification of the union which, according to some sources, was dissolved three years later under pressure from a fellow Arab government. With political revolt and civil strife now so prevalent in the Arab world, one might ask what is the appeal today of the idea of an Arab nation? More importantly, one might ask whether the idea of an Arab nation can be a force for bringing order to the ferment.

Early in the Libyan uprising this year, the League of Arab States (or at least its Secretary General) took a strong position in defence of the rebels, holding out a glimpse of a possible

united Arab reform agenda. Any claim to Arab political consensus on this soon disappeared as member states became nervous about the spread of demonstrations to other Arab countries and as NATO countries began to intensify military operations in Libya.

In Cairo last week, a demonstration in support of the Syrian opposition could only attract some dozens of people. Also last week, the "Khaleej Times" out of the United Arab Emirates called for President Assad of Syria to implement his national unity plan and few Arab leaders were calling for him to step down.

The disunity among Arab governments on the current unrest across the region is playing out within each country as well. The proliferation of reformist and revolutionary coalitions in Egypt is natural but is beginning to be seen as a rather negative phenomenon. There is an underlying hope that political unity or at least order can emerge out of the chaos.

Europe has few options but to play to the disorder and promote the proliferation of political groups. This could be seen, in one sense, as its democratic obligation. A proposal from the incoming Presidency of the European Union, Poland, to set up an endowment for Arab democracy to promote the development of political pluralism in the region is an understandable move. Whether or not this effort can inspire the emergence of a united political force, such as the creation of Solidarity in Poland in August 1980, is yet to be seen.

Solidarity was the beginning of the end of the old order in Eastern Europe. The consequential turn of events over the next decade led first to political and economic fragmentation before there was an eventual re-commitment to political and economic integration through membership of the European Union and NATO.

Europe should commit itself to ensuring that Arab public opinion does

not lose sight of the virtue of regional economic integration that has been promoted so visibly by Arab states within their political geography and by leading thinkers of the region. Arab states have made some progress on economic integration in various formations, whether it be the Greater Arab Free Trade Area or the Council of Arab Economic Unity. The Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (known better by the acronym GCC) has a customs union and a common market.

Europe and Arab states of the Mediterranean have worked together on an integration project through the Barcelona Process, then the idea of a Mediterranean Union. Europe now needs to spend considerably more effort supporting the indigenous Arab efforts at regional economic integration in West Asia (Iraq and Syria) and the Saudi Peninsula, not least Yemen. This policy would be one way of keeping doors open to the Arab world no matter what happens politically in the next decade.

How many wars are too many?

By: H. Thomas Hayden

There seems to be a problem with math at The Washington Post, or maybe they do not count all wars that the U.S. is involved in.

Maybe they count only bad wars and the ones that are being called "good wars" do not count.

If my math is right, the U.S. is involved in five wars - count them: (1) Iraq, (2) Afghanistan, (3) Libya, (4) Yemen and (5) Somalia.

The Washington Post on June 28 referred to "two deeply unpopular wars." Maybe the others are "popular wars."

We have Yemen, where we are using drones to hunt and kill al-Qaida members who are a large part of the rebels.

We have Libya, where we are funding or providing resources to NATO, not to mention the Navy in the Mediterranean flying reconnaissance missions.

And we have Somalia, where we have clandestine engagements to include providing funds, training and resources to the national government fighting the al Shabaab jihadists.

Even Gates does it

Defense Secretary Robert Gates responded in a recent interview: "There hasn't exactly been time to be a bold visionary in the middle of two wars."

If the focus has been on two wars, who is watching the others?

In January 2007, as the first 30,000 surge troops were heading toward Iraq, Gates scheduled a September review to evaluate whether the new war strategy and additional troops were producing tangible progress. He did the same thing again in Afghanistan.

However, before we get to the next review, the U.S. has already announced its withdrawal policy.

The White House policy decision to send 33,000 to Afghanistan has generally had a positive effect on bringing

the war to a successful conclusion - no victory but possibly a successful political conclusion.

Sen. John McCain has predicted that the decision to have all surge troops out of Afghanistan before the next presidential election will result in the early exit from Afghanistan of all other coalition countries:

Drones at war

"We're going to see a domino effect here of this announcement. No elected leader of our alliance is going to tell his people they're staying when the Americans are going."

Maybe it's not fair to call it a war in Yemen because what's new is that this will be a CIA drone attack program that is a massive escalation.

Then on Libya, the administration decided it had the legal authority to continue the U.S. military campaign in Libya without congressional approval over the objections of Justice Department and Pentagon lawyers, according to a recent article in The New York Times.

In Somalia in January 2007, the U.S. militarily interceded in Somalia for the first time since the United Nations deployment by conducting airstrikes using AC-130 gunships against Islamist positions.

Also, naval forces have deployed offshore to prevent support by sea. Just last week a U.S. drone aircraft fired on a convoy in southern Somalia carrying two senior members of al-Shabaab

News reports say that an overwhelming number of voters believe the U.S. is involved in too many foreign conflicts and should pull back its troops, according to a new poll conducted for The Hill.

They report that 72 percent of those polled said the United States is fighting in too many places, with only 16 percent saying the current level of engagement represented an appropriate level. Twelve percent said they weren't sure.

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Rais Bhuiyan, victim of post-9/11 shooting spree, pleads to spare attacker's Life

By John Rudolf
for the Huffington Post

Just weeks after the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, a masked man stormed into the Dallas convenience store where Rais Bhuiyan, a Muslim immigrant from Bangladesh, worked as a cashier. He asked where Bhuiyan was from -- then shot him in the face at point-blank range before he could reply.

His attacker was Mark Stroman, an avowed white supremacist and meth-amphetamine addict, who was caught and confessed to the shooting as well as two other attacks on South Asian convenience store workers. Those men died, while Bhuiyan survived, although he was blinded in one eye and still carries 35 shotgun pellets embedded in his face.

In less than 48 hours, Stroman is scheduled to die by lethal injection at the Texas death chamber at Huntsville for the crimes. A last-ditch appeal to the Supreme Court for a stay of execution was rejected without comment in June.

But even as the clock runs down on Stroman's time on death row, an unlikely advocate is trying to spare his life: Bhuiyan, the man he casually shot

and left for dead nearly a decade ago.

Over the past several months, Bhuiyan, a devout Muslim, has mounted an aggressive campaign to convince Texas authorities to commute Stroman's sentence to life in prison without the possibility of parole. He has asked the state board of pardons and paroles to make a positive recommendation for clemency to Gov. Rick Perry, and has asked Texas prison administrators for permission to meet face-to-face with Stroman for a victim-offender reconciliation process.

After those efforts were met with no response from Texas officials, Bhuiyan filed a lawsuit against the state, arguing that his rights as a crime victim to meet with his attacker had been unjustly denied. That lawsuit was moved from state to federal court on Monday and remains unresolved.

In an interview with HuffPost, Bhuiyan said his efforts on behalf of Stroman were motivated by his Muslim faith. The Koran teaches that those who forsake retribution and forgive those who have wronged them become closer to God, he said.

"My faith teaches me that saving a life is like saving the entire human race," he said.

Bhuiyan is not alone in his efforts to save Stroman's life. He has support

from family members of the other victims, including the widows of the two murdered men, Waqar Husan and Vasudev Patel, he said.

"We decided to forgive him and want to give him a chance to be a better person," Nadeem Akhtar, Husan's brother-in-law, said in an interview.

Akhtar said that his sister, Husan's widow, had written a letter requesting that the Dallas district attorney's office support the effort to obtain clemency for Stroman. The district attorney's office declined to support the petition, however.

According to those close to Stroman, the efforts by Bhuiyan on his behalf have contributed to a change of heart in a man who called his crimes "patriotic" before his trial and who prosecutors once described as a cold-blooded killer.

In an interview last week, Stroman told Ilan Ziv, a documentary filmmaker, that he was remorseful for the crimes and was deeply moved by Bhuiyan's attempts to save his life.

"I received a message that Rais loved me and that is powerful," said Stroman, who suffered extreme abuse and neglect as a child at the hands of his alcoholic parents, according to court records.

"I want to thank him in person for

his inspiring act of compassion. He has forgiven the unforgiveable and I want to tell him that I have a lot of love and respect him," he added.

Ziv, who met with Stroman for several hours on Monday, said the condemned man had little hope that Bhuiyan's efforts would succeed in sparing his life.

"He's very realistic," Ziv said. "He knows he's got no chance."

Stroman's last bid for a reprieve will come in less than 48 hours, as the Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles weighs his petition for clemency or a stay of execution. The board has voted for clemency just once in the last 10 years, a period when the state carried out a record 231 executions. A spokeswoman for Perry's office said the governor has not expressed an opinion on the petition to the board.

Bhuiyan's request to meet face-to-face with Stroman before the execution -- a meeting that Stroman has enthusiastically agreed to -- is also unlikely to occur. Michelle Lyons, a spokeswoman for the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, said that both victims and offenders must go through months of counseling and complete other preparatory work before such a meeting can take place.



"There just is not enough time to prepare the victim and the inmate for a meeting," Lyons said.

Bhuiyan said he would have begun the mediation process long ago, but was not informed of his rights to such a meeting by the Dallas district attorney. That complaint was the basis for his lawsuit attempting to force the state to postpone Stroman's execution until the mediation meeting could take place; a state judge in Austin ruled Monday that the suit belonged in federal court.

If the suit is dismissed and Stroman's bid for clemency is denied, the execution will almost certainly go ahead as scheduled at 6 p.m. Wednesday evening.

For Bhuiyan, such an outcome would be a tragedy. "If he's given a chance, it's very likely that he can contribute to society," he said. "If he can educate one person who is full of hate, that is an achievement."

Yet at least one mind has been changed by Bhuiyan's outreach -- his attacker's.

"It is due to Rais' message of forgiveness that I am more content now than I have ever been," Stroman said in the interview with the documentary filmmaker. "If I don't make it I want Rais to carry on his work teaching people not to be prejudiced."

"We need to make sure there is not another Mark Stroman," he concluded.

Libya after Qaddafi

By: Omar Ashour
For Project Syndicate

Middle Eastern autocrats routinely warn their people of rivers of blood, Western occupation, poverty, chaos, and Al Qaeda if their regimes are toppled. Those threats were heard in Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen, Bahrain, Syria, and -- rendered in black-comedy style -- in Libya. But there is a strong belief across the region that the costs of removing autocracies, as high as they might be, are low compared to the damage inflicted by the current rulers. In short, freedom is worth the price.

In Libya, four scenarios may negatively affect prospects for democratization: civil/tribal war, military rule, becoming "stuck in transition," and partition. Given the high price Libyans have paid, those scenarios should be

prevented rather than cured.

The civil/tribal war scenario is the worst risk. Egypt's revolutionaries understood this. When sectarian violence erupted there following the removal of Hosni Mubarak, the revolutionary coalitions adopted the slogan, "You won't gloat over this, Mubarak." Repressive dictatorships cannot win free and fair elections. But they can use extreme violence to consolidate their control over the state, its people, and its institutions.

So, to win, Libya's Colonel Muammar el-Qaddafi has deliberately and successfully turned a civil-resistance campaign into an armed conflict. That will have ramifications in the post-authoritarian context. A study published by Columbia University on civil resistance has shown that the probability of a country relapsing into civil war following a successful anti-dictatorship armed campaign is 43%, versus 28%

when the campaign is unarmed.

According to the same study, which was based on 323 cases of armed and unarmed opposition campaigns between 1900 and 2006, the likelihood of democratic transition within five years following a successful armed opposition campaign is only 3%, compared to 51% when campaigns were unarmed.

Libya, of course, can survive the gloomy prospect of post-authoritarian civil war. But this requires containing tribal and regional polarization, as well as the rivalries between the Interim National Council (INC) and the Military Council (MC), and between senior military commanders. Violent polarization has developed not only between Eastern and Western tribes, but also between some of the Western tribes.

Last month, for example, armed clashes erupted between rebels in al-Zintan and the villagers of al-Rayyaniya, 15 kilometers away. Six people

were killed -- a reminder of what can happen if violent polarization continues between neighboring towns and villages. Vendetta politics is not unknown in Libya, and, in an armed society comprising more than 120 tribes -- including around 30 with significant numbers and resources -- it can become extremely dangerous.

Another negative scenario is military rule. Several figures from the "free officers" -- the group that plotted the 1969 coup against the monarchy -- are leading the INC. They include General Abd al-Fattah Younis, General Soliman Mahmoud, Colonel Khalifa Hafar, Major Mohamed Najm, and others. Those figures hold a mix of historical legitimacy, for participating in the 1969 coup, and current legitimacy, for helping the 17th February revolution. They also belong to several large tribes, guaranteeing wide tribal representation if a military council were to take power,

as in Egypt.

Unlike Egypt, however, whoever takes power in Libya will not necessarily inherit poor economic conditions that could threaten their legitimacy and undermine their popularity. This might lead a group of senior officers to rule directly, especially if victory in Libya comes militarily. A move by army officers in Tripoli against Qaddafi and his sons might end the conflict, with military commanders getting the credit -- and the political capital.

But four decades of military-based dictatorship may be enough for Libyans, a majority of whom never really benefited from their country's wealth or potential. When it comes to producing terrorists and undocumented immigrants -- two critical issues for Europe -- Arab military dictators have an inglorious record. Algeria in the 1990's is a potent reminder of this, and Western governments do not want the vicious cycle of repressive autocrats producing violent theocrats and refugees to restart.

Getting "stuck in transition" is a third possible scenario, with Libya remaining in a "gray zone" -- neither a fully-fledged democracy nor a dictatorship, but "semi-free." This means regular elections, a democratic constitution, and civil society, coupled with electoral fraud, skewed representation, human rights violations, and restrictions on civil liberties. Getting stuck in transition usually kills the momentum for democratic change, and widespread corruption, weak state institutions, and lack of security serve to reinforce a myth of the "just autocrat." Vladimir Putin's rule in Russia illustrates this

outcome.

Unfortunately, a study published in the Journal of Democracy showed that out of the 100 countries that were designated "in transition" between 1970 and 2000, only 20 became fully democratic (for example, Chile, Argentina, Poland, and Taiwan). Five relapsed into brutal dictatorships (including Uzbekistan, Algeria, Turkmenistan, and Belarus), while the rest were stuck somewhere in transition.

Given Libya's lack of democratic experience, some view this as a likely outcome in the post-Qaddafi era. But Libya is not the only country that has tried to move from dictatorship to democracy with weak institutions and strong tribal identities. Albania, Mongolia, and India successfully passed more complicated tests -- and offer some useful lessons in democratic transitions under unfavourable conditions.

The fourth scenario is partition, with the old three-province, Ottoman-style setup commonly mentioned: Cyrenaica (east), Fezzan (south), and Tripolitania (west). Cyrenaica is Qaddafi-free, Tripolitania is not, and Fezzan did not fully join the revolution. But the administrative borders of these districts were never fully established, and they have changed at least eight times since 1951. In 2007, Libya had 22 sha'biya (administrative districts), not three.

All of these scenarios will be affected by outcomes in Egypt and Tunisia. In the case of democratic transitions, a success nearby often helps at home. Either country, or both, could offer Libya successful transition models, erecting an important obstacle to military dictatorship or civil war.

Saudi maids become battleground

By: Rob L. Wagner
For the Media Line

Families in a tizzy as diplomatic tiff threatens supply of imported help

The standoff between the Saudi Arabian and Indonesian governments over the treatment of Indonesia's domestic workers has put both potential housemaids desperate for work and Saudi households desperate for help between a rock and a hard place.

Indonesia has increasingly been critical of Saudis' treatment of its workers as a steady stream of reports of housemaid abuse, and in some cases slayings, reached Indonesian authorities. Relations between the two countries reached a low point when Saudi Arabia beheaded an Indonesian maid on June 18 following her conviction for the murder of her employer. Saudi Arabia failed to notify the Indonesian ambassador in Riyadh.

Indonesia responded by issuing a moratorium on sending workers to the kingdom effective Aug. 1. Not to be outdone, Saudi Arabia slapped a ban on issue Indonesians visas starting on July 8.

In 2009, the Saudi Shoura Council, the quasi-legislative body, recommended to the Council of Ministers new protections for expatriate workers in the kingdom's labor laws. The Council has yet to approve the recommendation. But Christoph Wilcke, a senior researcher for Human Rights Watch's Middle East and North Africa Division in Berlin, says there has been no improvement in worker conditions since then..

"The Shoura Council's recommendation has had no impact at all, either as a legal situation because there is no law yet or as a signal to employers or the government to improve working conditions," Wilcke told The Media Line.

Most Saudi employers prefer documented domestic workers because they are cheaper to hire than illegals. They also have complete control over the employee. Illegals can walk off the job anytime without consequences. Perhaps most important for Saudi employers is the ability to travel abroad with their maids.

"I can hire an illegal maid any time," says Fauzia Muhammad, 47, a Saudi housewife who employs three Indonesian housemaids to help run her villa. "But I travel to Europe every year for holiday and I can't take an illegal maid with me. Hiring maids the right way is my only option to control my house."

Hiring illegal maids presents a whole new set of problems for employers, who face fines of 10,000 Saudi riyals (\$2,700) if caught.

Fatmah Al-Harbi, a 36-year-old teacher, says she never hired a documented maid because obtaining a visa is a difficult and expensive process. She doesn't want to take the risk that a maid will run away. But taking the path of least resistance comes with its own risks. "I do have problems with illegal maids," Al-Harbi says. "One was sexually harassing my child, and I only found out after she quit. I couldn't take her to court."

Saudis prefer Indonesian maids because they are devout Muslims, easy to work with and industrious. Although there are many examples where long-

time maids become an integral part of a Saudi family, a prevalent fear among many employers are maids teaching Saudi children their native language at the expense of Arabic, theft and practicing witchcraft to bring harm to the family.

Justified or not, these fears create tension between maids and their employers. It also leads to exploitation of the maid with no time off and withholding salaries.

"I have a good relationship with my madam," says one maid employed in the Muhammad household. "But I know many friends who never have free time and never see their money. One friend works all day then her madam tells her to go play with the kids, although she's exhausted."

For decades, Indonesia enthusiastically sent hundreds of thousands of women to Saudi Arabia to work as housemaids. There is no work for them at home in Indonesia and there are few jobs outside of domestic service available in Saudi Arabia. In April alone this year, Indonesian recruiters sent 58,335 workers to Saudi Arabia and 228,890 throughout 2010, according to Bank Indonesia.

Wilcke says the visa ban will have no impact on the flow of maids to Saudi Arabia. He notes that many Indonesian and Saudi recruiters develop informal procedures to get around Saudi work visas by issuing visitors visas and have laborers enter the kingdom from Dubai.

If there is ever a problem with the worker, she is not registered with the home country and has no copy of a contract or residency permits. It's hard to follow up," Wilcke says. He adds that workers arriving at shelters have dif-

ficulty receiving aid because the home country's embassy has no record of them.

Saudi Arabian authorities have also indicated that they plan to go elsewhere to recruit maids, including Bangladesh, Cambodia and Vietnam. Wilcke says these countries pose even more risks for potential housemaids because they have fewer protections from their home governments in place than does Indonesia. "There is little pre-departure training other than how to use an iron or a washing machine," he says.

Countries providing labor to Saudi Arabia wield little clout to demand that Saudis provide protection for its workers. The labor-exporting government can't agree to a minimum wage standard, and this remains the weak link in developing a coalition to create labor standards that Saudi Arabia is willing to following.

Wilcke says the Philippines wants its workers receive a minimum salary of \$410 per month. However, Vietnamese workers are willing to work for as little as \$130 per month. Countries like Indonesia want worker remittances returned home to feed laborers' families. Saudi Arabian salaries, for example, account for 44% all remittances to Indonesia.

"Salaries are tricky, but these countries could agree on some issues, such as obtaining more access to the [Saudi] courts and agree on labor protections, such as helping set up a joint labor inspection system," he said.

Wilcke also suggests that countries providing laborers should employ more labor attaches at their embassies to handle the large caseload of workers seeking protection.



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Amr Jamal



A scene of a play directed by Amr Jamal and performed on the stage of a protest square in Aden.

By: Ali Saeed

Amr Jamal is recognized by almost all Yemenis, whether pro- or anti-Saleh, because of his recent creative contributions to Yemeni drama. He is known by children, women and men as a man who entertains people, even in hard times, with messages of awareness about respecting each other's opinions, and the adoption of non-violent methods to demand the right to speak your mind.

Jamal grew up and received his primary and secondary education in Aden, a city with a multi-varied mix of cultures, races and religions. In 2007, he obtained a bachelors degree in Information and Technology from the Engineering College at the University of Aden. But his interest in drama has always dominated over his specialization in IT, and at only 28 he is

now a Yemeni drama star. He is now a director, a well-known actor, and leads his own drama band in Aden called 'The Gulf of Aden Band'.

On Feb. 16, 2011, Jamal found himself obliged to express the people's rage against the excessive force used against peaceful protesters who took to the streets of Aden demanding an end to Saleh's 33-year regime.

"After Mohammad Ali Shaym, the first martyr of Yemen's revolution, was shot at noon on Feb. 16th, my band and I went out in the evening with other youth demonstrating against the repression and violence used against protesters," Jamal told the Yemen Times on Tuesday.

From that day, Jamal has continued protesting and demonstrating with Aden's people, flavoring the protests in Aden with his funny and educational sketches on the open stage of the pro-democracy protesters.

"We performed our first play calling for the regime's removal on Mar. 8, and a large number of pro-change supporters attended," he said. Then other scattered protest camps in Aden began hosting Jamal and his band to amuse them with his drama contributions, as well as to enforce the value of choices that maintain the peaceful nature of the revolution.

His most recent art work was the reproduction of an old song performed in the 1970s by Yemeni singer Mohammad Sa'ad Abdullah, soon to be disseminated on TV channels.

Jamal believes in the role of singers, actors and drama players in speaking the people's voice and conveying that voice to decision makers via an artistic platform. "The actor and the artist have an effective technique in expressing people's thoughts, which is as strong as protests," Jamal said.

Yemen's 2011 revolution,

inspired by those in Tunisia and Egypt, was also an opportunity for hidden Yemeni talents to appear and portray to the world what Yemen has available, according to Jamal.

"The revolution was an opportunity for many youthful artists and singers to come out, and drama and song received much interest and a new revival," he said.

The director wishes the revolution to succeed and open up a space in the media for the real image of Yemen to be shown, since "this revolution has proved that Yemen has a generation who can be productive and build their nation."

Jamal thinks that the revolution has brought about a great change in people's behavior and actions. "This revolution has taught Yemenis how to be

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peaceful and stay away from violence. Despite the existence of millions of weapons in the hands of people, they [the protesters] never used them and kept their struggle peaceful," he said. "Despite many attempts to provoke the country into civil war, or trap protesters into using violence, they have stood firmly with the peaceful choice."

"The refusal to bequeath power has now also been installed in the minds of many people, and now it has become a principle among the public that power should not be simply

bequeathed by the out-going power," he said.

Another valuable accomplishment of the revolution, according to Jamal, is that people have started accepting each other's ideas. There is a new recognition of the value of freedom of expression.

"We have now been hearing utterances such as 'listen to him', or 'let him give his opinion,'" he said. The revolution seems to have sparked a new will to speak among the people, and also a new acceptance of listening to others.

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