

Military plan to attack Abyan, returnees flee again

By: Fuad Mused

ABYAN, Feb. 29 — Clashes have continued between the Yemeni army and what is known as Ansar Al-Sharia ('supporters of sharia') in Abyan governorate, particularly in its capital, Zunjubar, the central battlefield and site of intermittent bloody clashes.

A number of internally displaced persons camped in Aden decided last January to return to their homes in Zunjubar, but found themselves faced with many challenges: the destruction of their homes, a lack of services, the outbreak of sporadic

clashes and bombardments of the city.

Wajdi Abdu, a Zunjubar local, said those people who returned to Zunjubar faced challenges that forced them to leave for Aden again.

One supporter of the Ansar Al-Sharia group told the Yemen Times that the militants had provided returnees with essential services that could have allowed them to live in peace and safety, but that the renewal of military bombardments forced them to flee again to Aden and Jaar, the latter the town that the militants re-named "Qar Province."

Contrary to what has been reported by media outlets about the attacks carried out by the militant groups and their existence in Zunjubar and neighboring areas, followers of Ansar Al-Sharia said the situation has not changed and that they still completely control the city.

One such follower told the Yemen Times that the group still has fighters, and that it is able to recruit new followers.

Concerning a military statement which said the city will be taken over within a week, he said they have gotten used to hearing such statements, and alleged that the military would not hesitate to take over the city one day if only it had the ability.

He further added that shells are continuously being launched by the army, and pointed out that followers of the group are prepared to face any confrontations and that they enjoy high morale.

The military, engaged in endless conflicts with armed men since last May, threatened this week to free the city through attacks that increased lately. It launched fierce strikes on Ansar Al-Sharia positions east and north of the city.

A Defense Ministry source told the Yemen Times that new president Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi discussed with Defense Minister Mohammad Nasser Ahmed a plan to invade Abyan and evacuate militants in order to enable displaced people to return to their homes.

According to local sources, doz-

ens of militants were left dead or wounded after violent shelling, artillery, and Katyusha rockets struck Ansar Al-Sharia positions.

For its part, the Ansar Al-Sharia group redeployed its forces in the city in preparation for possible confrontations. This came in light of recent developments, particularly the presidential palace incident in which over 20 soldiers were killed on Saturday. The incident came hours after Hadi vowed to fight Al-Qaeda. That raised concern amongst the armed group and pushed it to prepare for oncoming military operations.

Local efforts were made in February to mediate between the authorities and Ansar Al-Sharia with the aim of easing the situation and enabling displaced persons to return, but those efforts failed due to disagreements concerning the management of security in areas controlled by the militant group.

Ansar Al-Sharia asked that security management be put under their control, but, according to local sources, the authorities refused.

Followers of Ansar Al-Sharia have tightly controlled the towns of Zunjubar and Jaar in Abyan governorate, as well as Shabwa's Azzan area, since last June.

Local sources mentioned that Ansar Al-Sharia had executed three persons in two weeks - two Saudi nationals and one Yemeni, charged with betrayal and spying for the United States and Saudi Arabia.

The Ansar Al-Sharia "Waqar" court sentenced the three men to



The 2,500 of Abyan's displaced people who returned home two months ago have fled this week again fearing new war between the militants and the army.

death. Other persons have been executed on charges of targeting followers of the group. On Tuesday, local sources from the town of Jaar told the AFP that the group flogged four other persons after the Waqar court issued sentences against them for drinking alcohol. The sentences were carried out in a public square in the town.

Back deported

The Egyptian newspaper Almasri Alyawam said that Yemeni authorities arrested six Egyptians two weeks ago as they attempted to join Al-Qaeda in south Yemen, and said that they had then been deported.

Sources told Almasri Alyawam that Yemeni authorities arrested six Egyptians as soon as they arrived at Aden Airport, having come from Saudi Arabia. It was also stated that they were arrested after authorities

suspected they were attempting to join Al-Qaeda in Abyan.

The sources added that Yemeni authorities had contacted the Egyptian Consulate in Aden and that the six persons were at once deported to Cairo.

For his part, Egyptian Ambassador to Yemen Ashraf Aqal declined to comment on details, but affirmed that the embassy sometimes deports Egyptians accused of security cases without spelling out anything further.

Aqal told Almasri Alyawam that about 200 Egyptians had been deported in 2011 after being found attempting to illegally enter Yemen from Saudi Arabia, and pointed out that the law stipulates the imprisonment of such people for 1-2 years. He added that he had agreed with Egyptian officials to charge \$250 fines rather than imprison the men.



The Abyan's governorate's office is still damaged and under the control of the armed men.

Can Yemen replace qat with the bio-diesel producing Jatropha tree?



One ton of Jatropha's seeds can produce up to 600 liters of bio-diesel with proper management.

By: Nadia Haddash & Ali Saeed

SANAA, Feb. 29 — As the global community has grown more aware of the potential to substitute renewable energy sources for depleting oil resources, the Jatropha tree has become recognized as a productive and efficient producer of bio-diesel.

The World Bank says Yemen may run out of oil by 2018 if no new oil explorations are made. However, this tree may alleviate the problem only if Yemenis consider replacing the qat plant, which occupies

around 141,000 hectares of land - ten percent of Yemen's arable land.

The Jatropha Tree does not require more than 250 mm of water per a year and, as it can produce fuel, presents one such possibility for Yemen's growing demand on diesel.

Farmers in west Yemen's Tehama region - the country's food basket - told the Yemen Times that ongoing fuel shortages translate into a food crisis for Yemen.

In the second half of 2011, hundreds of farms were shut down or damaged due to a lack of diesel, a

basic requirement for crops irrigated by water pumped up using

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Jatropha Curcas is an inedible, oil seed-bearing tree that is often used to produce bio-diesel fuel. Originating in South America and in dry, tropical areas, the Jatropha Tree is a hardy shrub that grows well in semi-arid conditions, in areas with low rainfall and dry soil. Its seeds contain an inedible oil that can be converted into bio-diesel fuel. One ton of Jatropha Curcas seeds from a properly-managed tree can produce up to 600 liters of bio-diesel fuel.

The past year of revolution and crisis in Yemen led to a rise both in fuel prices and demand. Oil minister Hisham Sharaf said, "Yemen consumes 260 thousand tons of diesel per month, at a cost of \$280 million."

Continued on page 10



The diesel shortage has been damaging crops, farmers say.

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Two journalists receive death threats in Hadramout

By: Saleh Al-Batati

AL-MUKALLA, Feb. 29 — Two independent journalists from Hadramout governorate received death threats via SMS last Thursday.

Sanad Ba-Yashoot, editor-in-chief of Mukallatoday.com, and Ali Salim Al-Yazeedi, a journalist at the same news website, received text message threats that they would be killed "if they did not change their views."

Al-Yazeedi said that unknown persons had demanded in the text message that he stops writing for the independent website and that if he didn't, he would lose his life.

The threat arrived after he wrote articles hailing what he called the "victorious day of the south" - in reference to the boycott of the election by some members of the Southern Movement in southern governorates - including Hadramout, Aden, Lahj, Al-Dhala and Shabwa - on February 21.

Al-Yazeedi had also criticized foreign media coverage, accusing Al Jazeera in particular of presenting a false image of Election Day in the south. The threat message included the following words: "Mr. Yazidi, if you don't stop writing for Mukkalla



Left: Ali Al-Yazeedi, right: Sanad Ba Yashoot

Today, you will be killed and must prepare your shroud."

On the same day and prior to the threat sent to Yazidi, Sanad Ba-Yashoot, editor-in-chief of Mukallatoday.com, received a similar threat. The source of the two messages was the same number: 003859811555. The second message threatened not only the editor but the entire staff at the news website.

The words in the message sent to Sanad were "You and your staff members will be killed unless you stop producing your farcical news."

Both journalists called on local authorities and the security services to uphold their responsibility to protect journalists. They also affirmed that the threats wouldn't prevent them from working in accordance with high journalistic standards.

The Hadramout and Al-Mahra branches of the Yemeni Journalist Syndicate (YJS) strongly condemned the text message threats. The union issued a statement expressing solidarity with the threatened journalists, calling such acts "cowardly."

Invitation to establish development institutions in Yemen

By: Yemen Times Staff

SANA'A, Feb. 29 — The only way to guarantee that any donor-led intervention succeeds in supporting Yemen's economy is through donor countries establishing their own development institutions in Yemen, according to (Yemeni?) Prime Minister Mohammed Salem Baseundwah.

"This way we can avoid wasting time and money on projects. Doing it this way, the fate of the upcoming donor's conference will be different from the 2006 (conference?) in London," the prime minister told Yemen Times.

Saudi Arabia has offered to co-host a new donors' conference in Riyadh next month.

The conference will deal with the pending issues resulting from the last conference in London along with new strategic development needs.

In its ministerial meeting on Tuesday, the cabinet (which one?) approved the creation of an eight-member committee

headed by Baseundwah himself to prepare for the Riyadh meeting.

Moreover, in his inauguration speech the newly elected president, Abd Rabo Mansour Hadi called on the international community on Monday to deliver their funding to Yemen pledged in 2008.

Only 10 percent of the \$ 4.8 billion committed by donors in 2006 was actually released. Donors explain that the money could not be delivered because of the lack of adequate planning on Yemen's side, a statement that was confirmed more than once by Yemen's Minister of Foreign Affairs Abu Bakr Al-Qirbi.

Already the kingdom of Saudi Arabia has provided Yemen with at least 500,000 tons (not gallons?) of fuel in the last two months and promised to support Yemen with emergency fuel in the coming few months, as Yemen's oil production, which contributes to around 70 percent of the GDP, has been decreased by half.

Protesters announce new struggle

By: Sadeq Al-Wesabi

SANA'A, Feb. 29 — Despite the perceived success of the recent presidential election and the departure of Ali Abdullah Saleh, thousands of youths continue to camp out at 'Change Squares' in Sana'a and other governorates.

They say they are determined to stay until all aims of the revolution have been achieved. However, a number of youths and protesters have withdrawn from the squares over the past few months.

Ali Mohsen, a pro-democracy protester in Sana'a, told the Yemen Times that it will be better for protesters to stay longer at Change Square, as it will help them to monitor whether the new president and the newly-formed government will act.

"Currently, they are asked to do nothing but play roles in which they monitor government performance and to apply political pressure," he said.

He indicated that a long-standing settlement in the squares will push the new president - along with the international community - towards meeting the revolution's aims as soon as possible will help in avoiding further standoffs.

For more than one year, many protesters have lived in the camp near Sana'a University. They are provided with food and support by some tribal and military men.

Over the past few months, Sana'a's Change Square has witnessed clashes and disagreements between political entities - especially between members of

the Islah Party and Houthis.

Human rights activist Wadhah Al-Jalil rejects the idea of the youths staying at the Change Squares.

"Their staying in change squares is pointless these days," he said. "They must organize themselves well and find other ways to struggle, rather than just staying in their tents."

Mohammed Al-Samie, a journalist said that there are still many youths at Sana'a's Change Square, but he pointed out that they have started to feel bored and want to leave the square.

Al-Samie expects that protesters who belong to opposition political parties will leave the square, while independent youths will remain because they object to the idea of the early presidential election.

"Many of those protesters thought seriously about leaving the square, especially after the presidential election," he said. "But they are worried about the improvement of basic services and the restructuring of the army."

For his part, Adnan Al-Rajehi, a youth activist and one of the anti-regime protesters who joined the revolution at its beginning, said the continued presence of the protesters at Change Squares has a real aim. "Their staying puts pressure on political parties to make changes and guarantees that the aims of the revolution will be realized," he said.

Al-Rajehi said the political settlement between the regime and opposition may fail if youths leave



Revolutionaries in the Change Square in Sana'a vow to continue their struggle until achieving all their aims

the change squares.

"It's necessary to stay at the change squares to achieve a complete revolution - not a half one," he said.

Huge demands

A recent report showed that the most important demands of youths at the Change Squares are the creation of job opportunities, the building of a civil state, a revived economy, improved education, the restoring of looted

properties, and trials for those involved in killing protesters.

The report, carried out by the Abaad Studies & Research Center, stated that the youths' other priorities are the restructuring of military divisions and a solution of the Southern Movement issue.

Yet other priorities exist for the revolution's youth. They've stressed the importance of the formation of a new constitution and the providing of care for wounded protesters and the fami-

lies of slain protesters.

The Abaad report indicated that the biggest challenges that will face Yemen and president Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi are the Houthis, the Southern Movement, Al-Qaeda, and remnants of ousted president Saleh's regime.

According to the report, the negative legacy left behind for Hadi by Saleh's regime includes corruption, bribery, wars, bids for revenge, sectarian intolerance and the killing of innocent people.

Yemen to change governors, security officials

By: Yasser Ezzi

SANAN'A, Feb 29 — Discussions are underway to make wide-ranging changes of local authorities that will include governors, their deputies and security chiefs, sources from the Yemeni opposition told the Yemen Times.

The sources said that some members of the General Peoples Congress attempted to hinder such moves under the pretext that the implementation mechanism of the GCC-mediated power transfer deal did not provide such amendments.

The opposition source pointed out that United Nations special envoy to Yemen Jamal Benomar supports such amendments, de-

spite the fact that the deal does not directly stipulate changes of governors and their deputies.

Akhbar Al-Yawm Newspaper, which has close links with major general Ali Mohsen, quoted sources close to the senior leader of the General People Congress, Dr. Abdul-Karim Al-Eryani, as saying that all sides signed on to the GCC deal agreed on a reconciliation plan to make wide-ranging changes with the local authorities of all Yemeni governorates.

The sources affirmed that the move will simultaneously come with the replacement of security officials, especially officials from those governorates that witnessed high levels of insecurity and lawlessness.

Media sources said that newly-elected president Abd Rabbu Mansour Hadi will hold a meeting with leaders from the Joint Meeting Parties (JMP) to discuss the priorities of the up-coming stage, which should include the reconstruction of the military and security services and preparations for an inclusive national dialogue conference.

Meanwhile, Assistant Secretary-General of the GPC Sultan Al-Barakani said the GCC deal only dictates the formation of a government partnership, but that it does not mention other things.

In remarks to Yemeni media outlets, Al-Barakani - designated by the opposition to be among the GPC's "hawks" - said governors

and local council officials must be elected according to the law.

Minister of Local Authorities Ali Al-Yazidi stated two weeks ago that governors would be appointed under a mutual reconciliation in May.

Some members of parliament have meanwhile demanded the election of a President's Board of Parliament, pointing out that the legal period for the past board has expired.

Al-Barakani, who is also the head of the GCC parliamentary bloc and one of the closest officials to former President Ali Abdullah Saleh, objected to opposition demands, saying that the transition stage did not require changes to the current board.

Meanwhile, media sources said that aides close to Saleh left Yemen after Hadi's election, citing that former security chief of Taiz Abdullah Qairan, charged with committing crimes in Taiz, left for Cairo, and that chief of the Armed Forces Moral Guidance Department Ali Al-Shater went to Dubai.

While news report have stated that Saleh would leave for Ethiopia in the coming days, officials from the GPC have said that Saleh will stay in Yemen for the long-term.

What has been called the "revolution of institutions" has hit many public authorities and resulted in the ouster of many Yemeni officials, with employees insisting on their firing.

The Latest Buzz

By: Nadia Al-Sakkaf

- ▶ The Yemeni Journalists Syndicate denounced the attack on Akhbar Al-Youm newspaper. Unknown armed men opened fire on the paper's branch in Aden while in the past few days the newspaper was confiscated and burned at several checkpoints.
- ▶ A demonstration in Shabwa governorate in the south of Yemen, organized by the revolution's youth, announced the continuation of their revolution and their support to the revolution in Syria.
- ▶ A training course organized by the statistical department on computer literacy concluded in Sa'ada governorate after 86 trainees from the military and government offices received training for six months.
- ▶ The Parliament continued its sessions which commenced this week with the swearing in of the new president. The most pressing item on the Parliament's agenda this week is to organize its coming sessions and create a more efficient and orderly system, so as to enable smoother parliamentary operation.
- ▶ An official report by a ministerial committee created to investigate corruption in the Electricity Office's Second Zone, whose director was removed a few weeks ago, disclosed numerous corruption cases. The cases were related to embezzlement and bribery, creating a total of over YR 4.5 billion in unpaid bills, mostly from rich and influential people living in this zone.
- ▶ An environmental greening project started in Ibb this week, where 500 saplings were planted on the occasion of Tree Day March 1. The project, under the title "For a Prettier Yemen" was organized by local councils and the (local education office.
- ▶ Armed groups from the Bani Hushaish tribe of Sana'a have started gathering in Mawia village in Taiz (Governate?) demanding revenge against the killer of one of its members. The killing was caused by a dispute over an underground well.
- ▶ The Qatari embassy (in Sana'a) recommended its activities after suspending operation for approximately eight months due to political tensions between Yemeni protesters and former president Saleh's regime.
- ▶ Students of Tawr Al-Baha College of Aden University held a protest on Tuesday against repeated attacks by armed gangs against the faculty and administrative staff, which disrupted programs at the College.
- ▶ The Libyan embassy in Sana'a held a celebration marking the first anniversary of the February 17 revolution. The celebration was attended by a number of officials and diplomats.
- ▶ The Under 18 football championship will be delayed due to problems in the applications of participating clubs, according to Aden Football Union Branch manager, Ali Saleh.
- ▶ Minister of Sports and Youth, Moamar Al-Eryani, awarded pioneering and distinguished female Yemeni athletes at the conclusion of the Third Annual Women's Sports Festival, which concluded on Tuesday.



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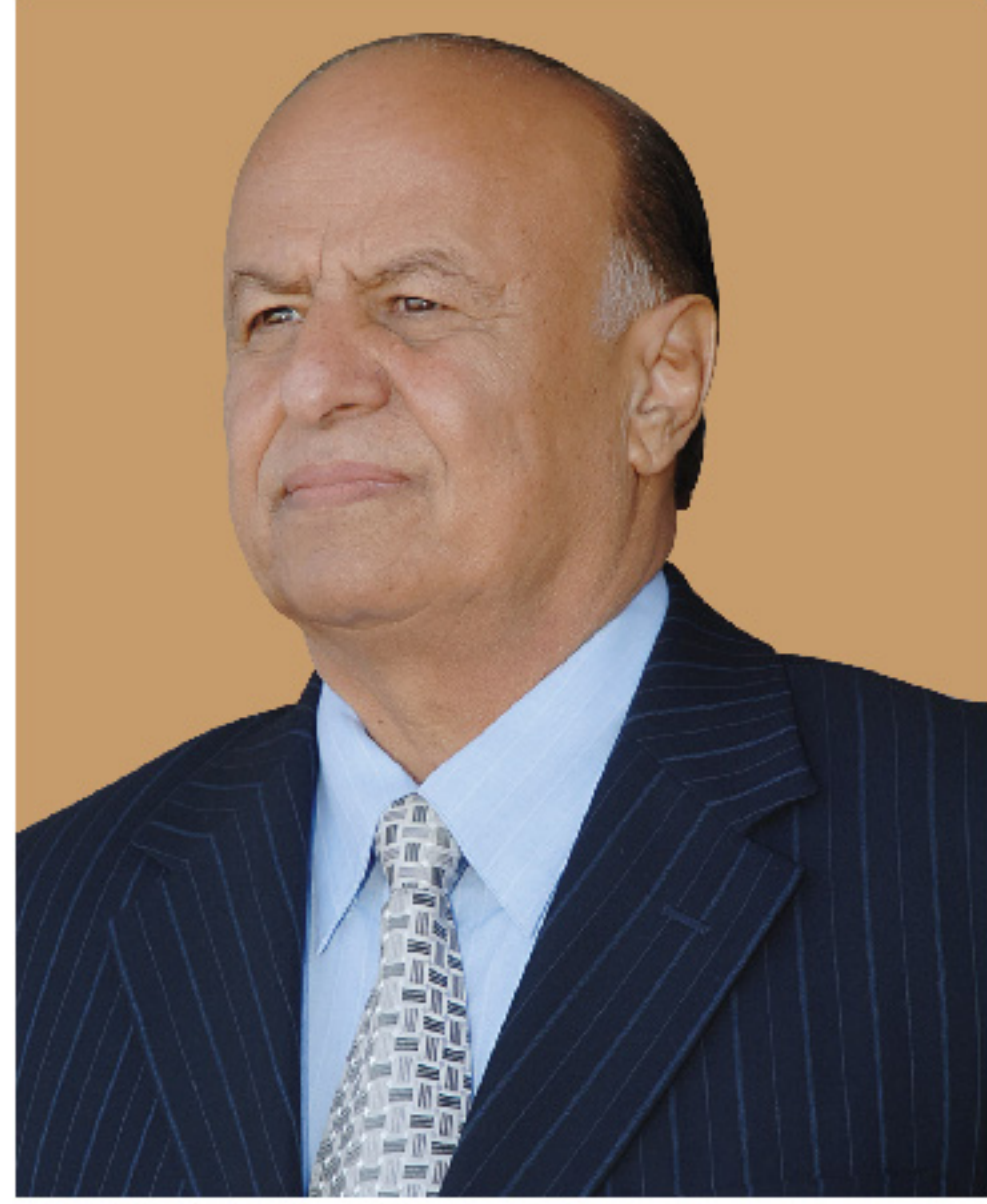
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Arhab's displaced return home

By: Ali Saeed

Nageeb Al-Hanik and his 11-family members have finally returned home after living in a cave for seven months.

Al-Hanik's family fled when fighting broke out between Arhab tribesmen and the Republican Guards, led by Ahmed Ali Abdullah Saleh, the former president's son, in late May 2011.

Al-Hanik's is one of hundreds of families who have begun filtering home after war forced them to the capital Sana'a and Amran governorate – while some others were forced to live in caves until fighting gradually wound down after ex-president Saleh signed a power transfer deal on Nov. 23, 2011.

"After Saleh signed the Gulf Co-operative Council initiative, people started coming back home as the scale of the shelling scale was noticeably reduced," said Al-Hanik.

In January, local and international aid organizations began providing food and other assistance to returnees, according to Al-Hanik.

Vision Hope International, a foreign NGO contracted with the United Nations is one of those distributing food to needy residents.

"Close to the army camps in the east of the district several houses have been destroyed. Several thousand families have been displaced into Amran governorate, into Sana'a city and within Arhab district," Matthias Leibbrand, General Director of Vision Hope International, explained.

Because so many buildings were

destroyed during the months-long conflict, many families are unable to return simply because they have nowhere to live, according to Al-Hanik.

"The government and aid organizations should help returnees to rebuild destroyed buildings to enable them return home," he added.

Seven families still live in caves in Arhab as their houses were completely destroyed.

Around 500 homes were damaged between May 2011 and Feb 2012, Ahmed Al-Rehabi, a lawyer at HOOD organization told the Yemen Times. Al-Rehabi leads human and material loss evaluations at HOOD, and has been assessing Arhab's damage.

Damage varies from one house to another; some homes have been completely destroyed, while others



About 500 homes were damaged in Arhab between May 2011 and February 2012, this made hundreds of displaced families unable to go back home.



A place that mesmerized me



Inside view of Al-Ameria school in Rada'a

By: Yaseen Hameed

The place I am talking about is not Al-Ameria city in Iraq. No, the place I am talking about is an old school with wonderful architecture. The school is in Rada', the capital city of Al-Baidha governorate. It was built by King Salah Al-Deen Amer bin Al-Mansour Bin Daood Al-Taheri in the Hijri year 910. The king was the fourth in line in the Al-Taheri kingdom, which controlled the Yemen for 65 years before the Turks took over in 1517. The kingdom was said to have many construction projects.

The king has funded it using revenues from the Rada', Damt and Juban areas. Prince Ali Bin Mohammad Al-Ba'dani was entrusted with overseeing the construction. The school consists of two floors;

the first floor contained rooms for studying as well as housing for students

I first visited the school when I was 13 and was mesmerized by its fabulous decorations, in particular its beautiful paste inscriptions. The second floor was built for prayer, and is decorated with Arabic calligraphy, which spells out verses from the Quran. The ceiling contains multiple domes.

All entrances and windows are composed of thick half-circles. The main entrance is in the southeast direction. The school was renovated from 1983 until the late 1990s. The school is covered with white decorated paste. I remember wondering why every place in the world wasn't constructed in this fascinating way.

However, the school was not the only one of its kind in Rada'. There was also the Ba'dani school which

collapsed and has only one of its walls standing. The wooden decorated door of the school was moved to the Al-Ameria School. There was also the Baghdadi School, said to have been built by the wife of King Abdulwahab Al-Taheri, and which followed the same pattern as the Al-Ameria school.

Of all the schools, it was only Al-Ameria which survived until the present day. The school was allocated for Islamic studies, for students from all over the country to come to study and live in the dorms. They would even be provided with salaries, the result of money given as endowments for students at the school.

I feel so sad because Al-Qaeda militants went to the school and stayed there. Even though they are no longer there, such a thing should never have happened.



Around 1,144 families in Arhab have benefited from the food aid rations provided by the UN.

have partially collapsed after being hit by shells, he said.

So far, a number of organizations including the local Islah Charitable Organization, Soul, ADRA, ICRC and Vision Hope International have distributed food items, mattresses, and blankets.

Around 1,144 families in Arhab benefited from the food aid rations, including flour, rice, oil, sugar and beans, distributed by Vision Hope International, said the organization. Food packages will be distributed to approximately 1,685 more families in the same areas in March, the organization added.

Aid distribution has been progressing well, with no major obsta-

cles for assistance teams, according to Leibbrand.

"In our case we arranged the distribution through Jama'iyya Arhab [a local NGO], in safe places outside conflict areas," Leibbrand said.

He added that as well as damaging local homes, "wells were destroyed and therefore also irrigation of the fields stopped in many areas".

Farmers in Arhab rely on rainwater and well water pumped up by diesel generators to irrigate crops.

Agriculture is the main source of income for around 2,000 people in the area where grapes, oranges, corn and qat are grown. Therefore,

the livelihoods of thousands of Arhab families have also been.

Shelling damaged some 24 water wells, while a number of diesel generators were also damaged or stolen, according to Al-Rehabi.

While fighting has calmed in much of Arhab, some areas are still affected, according to Vision Hope International, particularly in south-eastern Arhab, where the area's military camps are located.

A Republican Guard source said that the soldiers are unable to leave the camps while armed. At the same time, no new military enforcements can enter the camps as armed opposition tribesmen have set up checkpoints.



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Accompanying data, background information, Terms of Reference (TOR) and other requirements for the assignment is available on request. For further information about this RFQ, please contact:

**The Project Director,
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Represented by its chairman

Eng. Abdullah Ahmed Saeed Bugshan

is pleased to extend it's highest comgratulations and best wishes to

H.E.Field Marshal

Abd Rabbu Mansour Hadi

On the occasion of being awarded the confidence of the people
in electing him as President of the Republic of Yemen



تهانينا

UN envoy to Yemen: 'Yemen's transition is fragile'

Interview by:
Nadia Al-Sakkaf

Since his first visit in April 2011, Jamal Benomar, the United Nations Secretary General Special Advisor on Yemen, has been visiting Yemen almost every month. Earlier visits aimed at facilitating a political agreement between the main political players. Now he is following up the process in cooperation with Gulf countries and the international community to make sure Yemen continues towards a more peaceful, sustainable future.

It his visit this week, he witnessed the passing of power from former president Saleh to new

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“It is through the national dialogue conference that the southern question will be addressed,” explained Benomar. “Their reaction to the elections was partially because no one included them in the process or even talked to them.”

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“Yemenis have to figure out for themselves what sort of healing process they need. There is no one recipe on how to address the issues of the past,” “There remains a deep distrust among the parties and this is slowing the process along with the wide spread of arms.”

president Abd Rabbo Mansour Hadi, and although he is optimistic, he is concerned that progress is slow and the transition is remains tenuous.

“Yemen's transition is fragile and is just beginning. It needs those who will support it. And there are really serious challenges in terms of security and politics that should not be underestimated,” he said.

He believes that Yemen will need more support now than ever before. One of the main tasks is to support the national dialogue process, which is going to be difficult,

but, he says, Yemenis cannot allow it to fail.

“Now that the peaceful transition of power has officially happened the most important next step is the national dialogue which could make or break this transition,” said Benomar.

But still, several steps that must be taken before the national dialogue can commence, according to the UN envoy. The process of the national dialogue was designed specifically to include all actors in the political process and is the vehicle through which Yemen will debate and agree on how to address long-standing grievances and national issues.

However, committees responsible for reaching out to various groups have even been formed yet and this is a concern.

“It is through the national dialogue conference that the southern question will be addressed,” explained Benomar. “Their reaction to the elections was partially because no one included them in the process or even talked to them.”

“You cannot blame the southern movement or Houthis for not being in the political process when no one really made the effort to bring them in,” he insisted.

Although there are many factions in the south, Benomar is optimistic that most are open to dialogue. However, to date no organized dialogue has begun, and this is the problem.

Roadmap to transition

According to the Gulf Initiative roadmap, Yemen's military committee should have already cleared city centers of any military signs or armed militias, yet progress

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“You cannot blame the southern movement or Houthis for not being in the political process when no one really made the effort to bring them in,”

has been slow.

“There remains a deep distrust among the parties and this is slowing the process along with the wide spread of arms,” explained Benomar.

More dialogue between different groups will help ease the military tensions while progress on the security front will help create favorable conditions for the national dialogue.

“The one thing the military committee could improve to make more progress in its tasks is to work on cooperation on all sides,” said Benomar. “It needs to put more pressure on the influential players in this sector.”

Benomar noted the efforts made by Mohammed Al-Mikhlaifi, Minister of Legal Affairs, who is championing the transitional justice law – especially the fact that the law has been placed as matter of public debate. According to Benomar, the transitional justice law has been designed to ensure



Jamal Benomar

the rights of victims to know the truth, receive compensation and redress and guarantees that past violations will not be repeated.

“Yemenis have to figure out for themselves what sort of healing process they need. There is no one recipe on how to address the is-

suues of the past,” he said.

Concluding, Benomar explained that many countries in transition are struggling with the same issues, and Yemenis will need to find a consensus on their own model on how to deal with the past and move on.

نتقدم بأحر التهاني والتبريكات إلى
أبناء الشعب اليمني
وفخامة المشير الركن
عبد ربه منصور هادي
بمناسبة نيته ثقة الشعب وانتخابه رئيساً
للجمهورية اليمنية

We express our best wishes to
the Yemeni people and
H. E. Field Marshal
Abd Rabbu Mansour Hadi

On the occasion of being awarded the confidence of the people
and electing him as President of the Republic

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للنقل وخدمات حقول النفط
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THE PREFERRED SOURCE

Pan-Arabism – the only sensible way forward

By: Linda S. Heard
Gulf News
Feb. 28, 2012

A powerful, united and determined Arab world could pressure America to get serious about a Palestinian state.

Last Tuesday, I read Faisal Al-Qasim's column, titled Pan-Arabism used to divide and rule, with interest as the concepts of Arab nationalism and the emergence of an Arab nation are variously considered by many modern-day Arabs to be old-fashioned, stupidly idealistic, undesirable or simply unworkable.

Although Al-Qasim tackled the topic by citing some of pan-Arabism's proponents – Iraq's former president Saddam Hussain, Libya's former leader Muammar Gaddafi and Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad as "deviated individuals" who "called for unifying the Arab world into a single entity" whereas

"in actual fact they were separatist rulers", he failed to clarify his view of pan-Arabism in principle.

I've no intention of putting words in Al-Qasim's mouth, but as the host of Al-Jazeera's Opposite Direction, during which he spends much of his time waving his arms around to keep Arab guests from going for one another's throats, I can understand if he believes Arab unity is a lost cause. It may be, but, to my mind, it is something all Arabs should believe in and strive for.

The dictators Al-Qasim refers to were, indeed, sectarian or tribal and they all used brutal tactics to rule. But that doesn't mean they weren't sincere Arab nationalists. Saddam and Gaddafi were of the same mold as Egypt's former president Jamal Abdul Nasser who, in 1958, succeeded in unifying his country with Syria under the banner of the United Arab Republic.

Nasser worked hard to further the Palestinian cause, even to the extent of going to war and he

stood firmly with Algerians in their struggle to oust the French. Gaddafi was inspired by Nasser's dream of a unified Arab nation and in 1972 he spearheaded the "Federation of Arab Republics" – a union between Libya, Egypt and Syria – that failed to get off the ground and, in 1974, he worked unsuccessfully to join Libya with Tunisia.

For his efforts, Nasser was universally adored from Casablanca to Sana'a. Gaddafi isn't exactly the flavor of the year and neither is Al-Assad. The way they were prepared to sacrifice their own people to cling on to power is abhorrent, but it isn't right to say that they used pan-Arabism to divide and rule. In any case, pan-Arabism shouldn't be judged on the basis of its advocates in the same way that religion ought not to be criticized due to the actions of some misguided believers.

The fact is that the Arab world – if, indeed, such an entity still exists – has rarely been as splintered as it is now, as evidenced by the divisions in the Arab League over Syria

and Iran. There are great disparities in GDP and standards of living – and chasms between liberals and conservatives and systems of governance. The youth of the Middle East and North Africa region wave their respective country's flag and listen to patriotic songs but rarely proclaim themselves to be proud Arabs.

Family-oriented culture

Arab traditions are being watered down to make way for western-imported lifestyles. In some countries, traditional dress has almost disappeared along with time-consuming dishes, cast aside because kids prefer burgers and French fries.

It bothers me to see young Arabs aspiring to become western clones when, if they only knew it, their own family-oriented culture of respect, hospitality and generosity is rich and should be preserved. Superficially, Arabs may not have a lot in common nowadays but that culture is rooted in all Arab lands along with a shared language and

faith-based societal mores.

When Arab Spring states are undergoing transition and no one knows how Syria will look six months from now, the idea of a unified Arab bloc may sound ridiculous. But when the dust has settled, Arab leaders should hold a conference, to revisit pan-Arabism/Arab nationalism to decide once and for all whether closer cooperation would be beneficial for all or whether Nasser's grand plan should be filed in the dustbin of history.

Like it or not, from a geopolitical standpoint big is beautiful. It took two world wars for Europe to cotton on. The Nato alliance of countries from North America and Europe has afforded protection to all and the EU club provides even the smallest of its European members with international clout as well as a financial cushion. Likewise, English-speaking nations, such as the US, Canada, the UK, Australia and New Zealand, all very different, usually band together when one faces aggression.

If Arabs could pool resources and invest in one another's countries there wouldn't be a single Arab child wondering where his or her next meal is coming from. If there had been a pan-Arab army when former US president George W. Bush moved into the White House, Iraq wouldn't have been invaded and, it's likely Al-Assad would have packed his suitcases months ago. Moreover, a powerful, united and determined Arab world with every country pulling in the same direction could lean on Washington to get serious about a Palestinian state.

The bottom line is "united we stand, divided we fall". For the sake of this region's prosperity, security and stability, I hope the Arab condition isn't defined by the words of the American comedic actress Lily Tomlin who once memorably said: "We are all in this together, by ourselves."

Linda S. Heard is a specialist writer on Middle East affairs.

The line that stretches from Srebrenica to Homs

By: Emir Suljagic
& Reuf Bajrovic

The daily footage of the bombardment and siege of Homs by Bashar Al-Assad's army and security forces evokes vivid memories for those familiar with the wars in the former Yugoslavia. Bosnians are all too well-acquainted with the meat grinding machinery of modern siege warfare. This relentless assault on Syria's people can no longer be countenanced.

As in the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina two decades ago, one of the first steps taken by the European Union in the face of growing disaster in Syria was to impose an arms embargo. The basic assumption that the fewer arms there are the lower the death toll should have been discredited by the Bosnia experience. Even the UN arms

embargo's chief exponent, then-British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd, has since voiced belated regret over his efforts to prevent "leveling the killing field." The Yugoslav People's Army and its Bosnian Serb subsidiary never wanted for arms, employing them against a virtually unarmed adversary, the Army of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Even without the Russian and Iranian support he is receiving, Assad would hold an effective monopoly on deadly force in Syria, like his father's ally Milošević before him.

The crimes against humanity committed in Syria by the Bashar Al-Assad regime amount to reprising the ethnic cleansing practices seen in the Balkans in the 1990s. There is no moral difference between Libya last year, where the West and some Arab states effectively intervened to protect civilians and facilitate popular libera-

tion, and Syria now. While there is a tremendous human cost being exacted in Syria, this is not a "humanitarian crisis." In both Syria and Libya, an oppressive regime employed all means necessary, including murder, persecution and torture of ordinary citizens, to maintain power. Russian and Chinese opposition to military intervention cannot be an excuse for inaction.

A meaningful response to the butchery ongoing in Syria must include some basic elements: recognition of the Syrian National Council arming the Free Syrian Army and providing it with air support, and indicting Bashar Al-Assad and his underlings for crimes against humanity.

Arming the Free Syrian Army, founded to defend unarmed demonstrators from Assad's forces would help end the violence – the distribution of arms matters more

than their sheer number. The ability to take and defend territory would bolster attempts by Syrians to formulate a single political platform for a new unified and democratic Syria. Continued violence and ethnic cleansing will deepen Syria's ethnic and religious cleavages, which the rebels have seemed to be able to overcome over the past year. Finally, arming the opposition is a precondition to the fight remaining Syrian. Abandoning the Free Syrian Army would leave these forces susceptible to radical ideologies and movements, which seek to kidnap the Syrian fight for freedom and hinder building a democratic and prosperous new Syria for decades to come.

Again, Bosnia should be a lesson: in a far less conducive environment, some Bosniak elements turned to extremist ideologies, which resulted in the formation of religious Muslim-only units, with

emirs and imams, in what started out as a secular, multiethnic Army of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Wartime atrocities committed by foreign and domestic "mujahedeen" created deep-seated fears and resentments that continue to be employed by nationalist politicians.

The case of Libya demonstrates that Western air power can be employed to devastating effect in support of a popular insurrection. Indicting Assad and his executioners would not only further discredit the regime and put an end to the impunity with which the regime is prosecuting its brutal campaign; it could also save lives in real time by deterring further atrocities.

The assumption of impunity with which Assad's generals are issuing orders to shoot unarmed members of the opposition, is the same kind of assumption of impunity that Slobodan Milošević's and

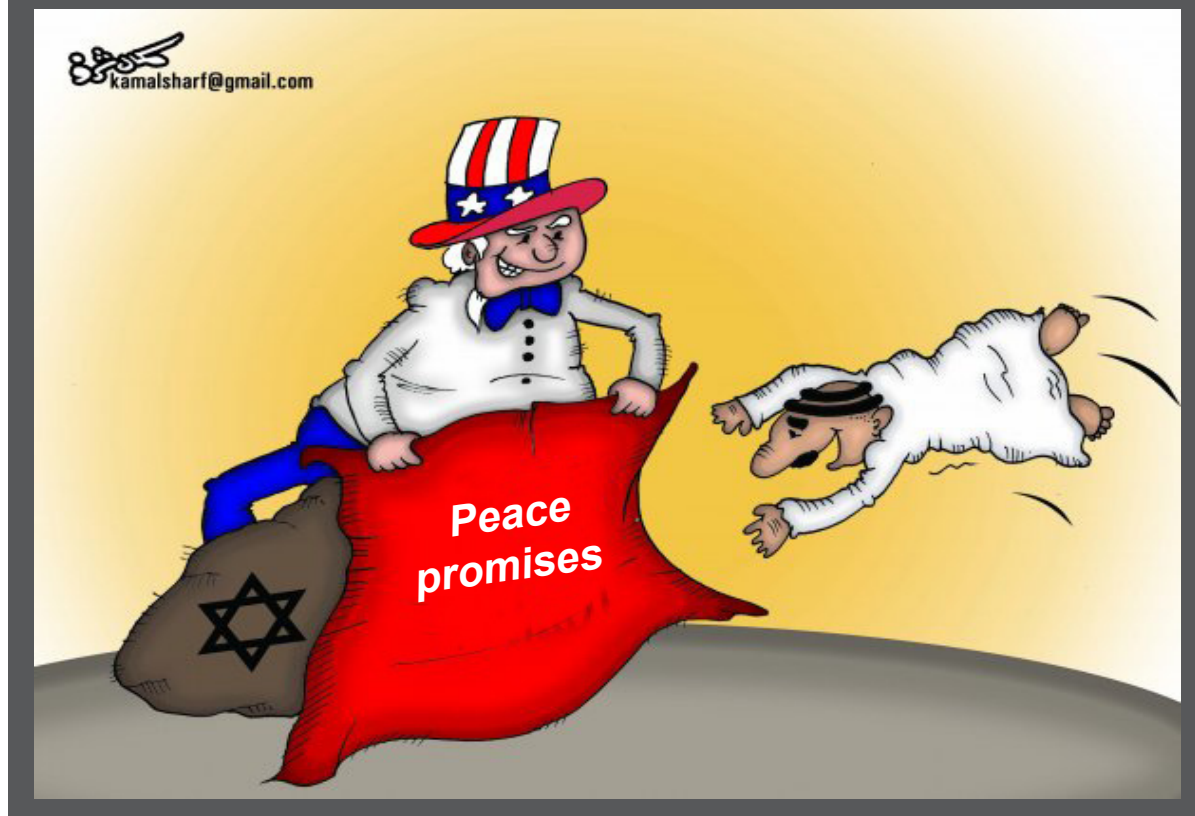
Radovan Karadžić's generals operated under in Bosnia in the 1990s, orchestrating ethnic cleansing and genocide.

The UN General Assembly adopted an international "responsibility to protect" populations whose governments demonstrate an unwillingness to do so. Explaining the intervention in Libya, US President Barack Obama, said that the line from the beaches of Normandy stretched to Benghazi. Unless the West effectively intervenes, including providing crucial evidence to the ICC to support the indictment of the Assad regime's leaders, the line drawn in Srebrenica in 1995 will stretch all the way to Homs or beyond.

Emir Suljagic is a Srebrenica survivor and author; Reuf Bajrovic is a Washington-based political consultant.

SKETCHED OPINION

By Kamak Sharaf



Key to Somalia's stability

Editorial
Khaleejtimes.com
25 February 2012

The International Conference on Somalia held recently in London succeeded in bringing the impoverished and security-challenged African nation to world attention.

The United Arab Emirates for one has committed \$2 million for operations of the new Local Stability Fund for Somalia in the initial year. Not only does this prove the UAE's commitment to help the people of Somalia in overcoming their massive socio-economic problems that are compounded by the state's weak political set-up and the severe security challenges, it sets an exemplary precedent. UAE Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah Bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, therefore, stressed the need for funds to realize the international commitments at the conference.

The fact remains that it is the people of Somalia that are the greatest victims of the ongoing state of disarray in the country as put by Sheikh Abdullah. Stability in Somalia is of great importance for Africa and across the waters in the Arabian Peninsula. With Somali militant group Al-Shabab officially joining hands with Al-Qaeda, the terrorism threat has now gone global. Not to forget the Somali piracy problem that is still plaguing international marine traffic.

Therefore, the aim of the conference was to seek a solution to end the political instability and more importantly help bolster security in a country whose major parts are controlled by the Al-Shabab militants. The transitional government of Prime Minister Abdiweli Mohammed Ali has also been urged to make way for a more representative set-up by August in order to strengthen the state. While Abdiweli has called for more airstrikes to attack Al-Shabab's strongholds,

key Western leaders, including US Secretary State Hillary Clinton and British Prime Minister David Cameron, have not indicated that this would form a critical component of the security plans for Somalia. Despite any international avowal for airstrikes, Friday morning brought news of a major airstrike on a militant convoy in southern Somalia killing at least six. Whether this was a US-led strike is yet unknown.

At the same time, the UN Security Council has decided to boost the strength of the African Union peacekeeping force, Amisom to 17,000. Further pledges have been also made to fight terrorism and piracy. A lot still remains to be done. Somalia had undergone the worst ever drought resulting in tens of thousands falling victims to starvation and disease. This can only happen once a more effective government is in place and more areas are regained from the militants' control.

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Urgent actions needed to overcome climate change impact

By: Yemen Times Staff

Long-term implications of climate change (local and global) will lead to a total accumulated reduction of household income of between \$5.7 billion and \$9.2 billion by 2050.

Moreover, between 80,000 and 270,000 Yemenis, primarily non-farm households in rural areas could go hungry due to climate change. This household group is projected to lose an accumulated 3.5 to 5.7 billion US\$ as a consequence of longer term climate change by 2050. Their loss is a direct result of decrease of income opportunities created outside the agriculture and urban sectors.

These were the findings of a recent paper "Climate Change and Floods in Yemen" by Manfred Wiebelt, Clemens Breisinger, Olivier Ecker, Perihan Al-Riffai, Richard Robertson, and Ranier Thiele, published by the International Food Policy Research Institute. The study aimed to assess the impacts of climate change on the Yemeni economy, agriculture, and household income and food security.

The study also highlights solutions and options for adaptation to deal with the probable impacts.

"Action to mitigate the negative effects of climate change and variability should be taken on the global and local level," said Wiebelt.

The recommendations include a global action plan for improving food security, combined with a better integration of climate change in national development strategies, and agricultural and rural policies. Disaster risk management and social protection policies will be keys for improving Yemen's resilience in the face of climate change.

Other ways to combat the effects of climate variability include reforms of Yemen's domestic policy and nonagricultural sector that benefit both farm and nonfarm households through for example creating sources of income generation for Yemenis outside the agriculture sector while facilitating services for farmers.

Increased access to markets and efficient supply chains would allow farm households to benefit from global food price increases.

Private sector investments would

generate employment for rural nonfarm households, Yemen's most food insecure population. Additionally, increased access to credit and an investment-friendly tax regime would fuel private investment and infrastructure development in rural areas.

"The effects of climate change are extremely salient considering Yemen's high levels of food import dependency, food insecurity, and poverty. An estimated 43 percent of Yemenis live in poverty, and 32 percent of the population does not have access to enough food," said Alexandra Beizan-Diaz of IFPRI.

Global commodity price changes will threaten the country's already vulnerable populations. Although higher global prices will raise agricultural GDP, they will lower Yemen's overall GDP growth and decrease household incomes.

Major impacts

In addition to the longer-term climate change effects, climate variability is shown to induce heavy economic losses and spikes in food insecurity.

The impact assessment of the October 2008 tropical storm and

floods in the Wadi Hadramout puts the total cumulated real income loss over the period 2008-12 at 180 percent of pre-flood agricultural value added.

Due to the direct flood loss, farmers in the flooding areas suffered most in the year of the flood occurrence, where the percentage of hungry people living from farming spiked by about 15 percentage points as an immediate result of the flood.

The major impact channels of climate change are through changing world food prices as a result of global food scarcities, long-term local yield changes as a result of temperature and rainfall variations, and damages and losses of cropland, fruit trees, livestock, and infrastructure as a result of natural disasters such as recurrent storms and floods.

Moreover, spatial variation in climate change impacts within Yemen means that such effects can vary across subnational regions.

The researchers behind the study developed a recursive dynamic computable general equilibrium (DCGE) model with six agroecological zones to capture linkages between climate



A general view shows damages following a tropical storm in the Yemeni province of Hadramout, Yemen, 26 October 2008.

change, production, and household incomes. They also captured changes in per capita calorie consumption in response to changing household expenditure for assessing changes in people's hunger situation as a measure for food security.

"Given the high uncertainty surrounding future global food prices and local yields, all simulations are

run under two global climate scenarios," said Breisinger.

The results of the DCGE simulations suggest that climate-change-induced higher global prices for food will lower Yemen's overall GDP growth, raise agricultural GDP, decrease real household incomes, and increase the number of hungry people.

Clinic-on-wheels helps marginalized in Sana'a

By: Malak Shaher

The dark skinned six-year-old Ayoub was waiting outside the medical van with his pregnant mother and his younger brother for a check-up.

Ayoub's family is commonly known as Akhdam or "servants" in Yemen. They are of African origin and are rarely integrated in Yemeni society, which sees them as inferior. Their exclusion is so extreme that they do not even go to public clinics unless their condition is "critical".

A large number of Akhdam and other marginalized people live in Shoub, one of the districts targeted by a mobile medical team with the support of USAID.

This month, the Yemen Family

Care Association (YFCA), supported by USAID, re-activated three mobile medical teams that were paused during the political crisis Yemen went through last year. In a larger plan, USAID itself has other 10 mobile medical teams targeting remote provinces of all the country's governorates.

Entering the van, Ayoub was mesmerized by the small mobile medical clinic and submitted himself to the doctor. His mother said it was the first time he had seen a clinic. The doctor gave him an all-clear and gave his mother maternal medical advice to stay healthy through her pregnancy.

Fatehia Al-Maktari, a gynecologist and team member, says that "each place is different in the service it needs most". In Shoub, where many marginalized people live, health



Dr. Fatehia Al-Maktari checking up six year old Ayoub inside the clinic-on-wheels last week in Shoub, Sana'a, where a large community of marginalized people live

education should come first since these people rarely interact with the rest of society.

"Marginalized people do not usually interact with society as the latter treats them with inferiority," she explained. "As a result, we try our best to allocate specific days to visit them and encourage them to come to our medical van."

The team is providing health primary care, maternal and childcare, diagnosis, and free medications. The van is equipped with the necessary medical materials such as an ultrasonography machine, first-aid equipment, antibiotics, family planning pills and coils and basic medications.

The team is made up of Al-Maktari, a general practitioner, a midwife and a lab technician - all working with the

YFCA in Sana'a.

Not an easy task for women

Working as a member of a mobile team that specifically targets women, the female doctors have to travel in their on-wheels clinic to rural areas of Sana'a. For Summaya Al-Shawafi, a member of the team and a general practitioner, "it is not an easy task. It is tiring".

"I had no idea about the mobile medical teams and I did not like the idea of going to far away places every single day. It was so tiring that I wanted to quit," said Al-Shawafi.

"Yet when I knew that there are patients living in these areas or who cannot reach public clinics easily, I realized how vital the help I am offering really is. So I knew I was doing the right thing," she concluded.

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Post Title: Managing Director
Organisation: National Microfinance Foundation
Location: Sanaa
Duration: Full time, including 3 months probationary period
No. of Post: 1
Closing Date: March 15th, 2012

Background

The National Microfinance Foundation was established by the Social Fund for Development in 2004 as a non-governmental organization that aims at improving the economic and social conditions of the low and limited income Yemenis, by providing them with a variety of financial services they cannot obtain from the mainstream banking sector. Currently, NMF is one of the largest microfinance institutions in Yemen, and as of December 31st, 2011 NMF had more than 11,000 active clients served through 12 branches located in Sanaa, Taiz, Qaada, Yarim, Ibb, Dhamar, Hajjah, Lahj and Hodaidah.

The Foundation requires a Managing Director to provide leadership, supervise staff, manage every day activities, identify problems, provide solutions, prepare and ensure effective implementation of the Foundation's five-year strategic plans.

Specific responsibilities:

The Managing Director will be responsible for the following tasks:

- Manage and supervise the programs over all operations and branches through middle management and conduct regular field visits.
- Supervise 100+ employees in the headquarters and the branches.
- Recruitment of qualified personals for the top management positions and ensures the development of the program's staff.
- Develop the NMF's capacity and infrastructure to prepare it for the transformation into a microfinance bank in the future.
- Coordinate with top management the preparation of strategies and detailed work plans to increase the program's outreach and financial sustainability.
- Develop the institution's strategic plan and ensure its implementation and that it meets the institutions and goals.
- Developing and maintaining relations with shareholders, creditors and local authorities.
- Ensure effective communication and coordination with the Board of Directors, donors, and other competitors and stake holders.
- Represent the institution locally and globally.

Qualifications and skills

The Managing Director must have the following qualifications and skills:

- A Bachelor Degree as a minimum (Masters Degree preferred) from a reputable university in business, finance, management, economics, accounting, or any other related field.
- Five years of experience in a managerial position in a major company, bank, or Financial development organization, with a proven track record in dealing with international donors, and research agencies, government institutions, etc.
- Good knowledge on Microfinance and the main parties that support the Microfinance industry locally and globally.
- Strong communication, public relations, organizational, and leadership skills.
- Mature, energetic, creative, and dynamic personality.
- Possess the ability to produce accurate and precise strategies, working plans, and reports to the Board of Directors, donors, and other parties concerned.
- Competent with the use of computers.
- High proficiency in written and spoken Arabic and English.
- Traveling across the country and abroad will be required.

Salary, benefits and others:

- Attractive salary (including social security), according to working experience and qualifications.
- Training opportunities will be available.

Submission guideline:

The application should comprise of a one page cover letter explaining the applicants' interest and suitability for the position, indicating earliest joining date if selected, and a CV with at least two significant references

Interested candidates should submit their application by email to: halawi@sfd-yemen.org before 15th of March 2012. Applications received after the closing date will not be considered. Only short-listed candidates will be contacted for interviews.



JOB VACANCIES

Equal Access (EA), an international development communications organization invites applications from qualified Yemeni citizens for the following consultancies:

1. Freelance Scriptwriters (3) for Radio Drama Series

Description of duties:

1. Conduct research and write scripts in Arabic as part of the scriptwriting team for 100+ episodes of a radio drama series to be produced by Equal Access.
2. Present finalized scripts to a Content Advisory Group periodically and incorporate feedback/ suggested changes as necessary.
3. Work closely with the producer of the drama series to ensure recordings are aligned with the finalized scripts.

Required qualifications and skills:

1. Experienced writing original dramas and stories and expressing ideas clearly, creating believable characters, and developing a compelling story.
2. Ability to come up with creative ideas to deliver social messages in interesting ways.
3. Ability to work in a group, as a part of scriptwriting team to deliver quality scripts.
4. Ability to meet weekly writing deadlines.
5. Good understanding of the nature of conflict in Yemen, current issues of young people, and knowledge of sports.
6. Ability to attend weekly meetings (at a minimum) at EA offices with the script writing team and producer.
7. Fluency in Arabic required.
8. Ability to write and edit scripts on computer using Microsoft Word.

Applicants for this consultancy are requested to send a cover letter, a recent CV including contact details, two references and a sample of writing (preferably a short drama script) to eayemenjobs@gmail.com no later than 15 March 2012. The scriptwriter is not an employee position but a freelance consultant and does not require full time presence in EA offices. The consultant will be provided access to a computer and a printer in EA offices, if required.

Shortlisted applicants will be required to attend a 3-day workshop end of March, 2012 on creative drama writing in Sana'a. Do not apply if you cannot arrange for your own transport to and from the workshop. The three best scriptwriters will be selected for the consultancy on the basis of their performance during the workshop.

2. Producer/Director (1) for Radio Drama Series

Description of the duties:

1. Attend regular Content Advisory Group meetings and provide feedback and guidance to scriptwriters in finalizing scripts.
2. Select, manage, rehearse and direct actors in the drama series.
3. Organize recording sessions.
4. Record and finalize 100+ broadcast quality episodes at EA's on-site studio (including editing and mixing).

Required qualifications and skills:

1. At least 4 years of demonstrated experience in radio or TV production in Yemen, preferably in production of serial radio dramas.
2. Excellent understanding of radio production processes: able to direct, record, edit, mix (with SFX and background music) and finalize broadcast quality episodes.
3. Able to lead a production team (including team of scriptwriters) to produce quality results.
4. Ability to meet weekly/monthly production deadlines.
5. Able to provide guidance and leadership for the scriptwriters and other members of the production team.
6. Good understanding of the nature of conflict in Yemen, current issues of young people, and knowledge of sports.

Applicants for this consultancy are requested to send a cover letter, a recent CV including contact details, and the contact details of two references to eayemenjobs@gmail.com no later than 15 March 2012. The Producer is not an employee position but a freelance consultant and does not require full time presence in EA office.

Al-Hugrain: Yemen's Treasure Trove

By: Saleh Al-Batati

When you attempt to look over this ancient town, you are forced to look up because its high buildings perch on the side of a mountain. This strategic position has made Al-Hugrain appear as though it was ascending to heaven.

It looks like an island when it rains, when it is surrounded by water. The free-standing structure of the city, with its outspoken shape, attracts all the attention in the vicinity.

The town's houses appear to have been randomly stacked. In reality, it is a unique design, part of a complex geometric system of bulwarks designed to protect the town from enemies.

Al-Hugrain lies at the northern gateway to Hadramout's Wadi Doan. It is located amidst a high mountain and it overlooks two large, fertile valleys - Wadi Doan and Wadi Al-Ghaber.

It is a historic town, with age-old relics dating back to the Himyarite era. Dammoon's relics hail back to Imro Al-Qais, a great poet and a prince of the Kinda kingdom, and Dammon was mentioned in his lines, referring to the area he lived in.

It is a town full of dams and large reservoirs which irrigate the farming areas. The town's economy was heavily dependent on agriculture, where crops, wheat and palm trees spread across its reaches.

It was important not only in the pre-Islamic period, but also in the Islamic period itself. In the fourth century AH, Al-Hugrain was a residence of Al-Emam Al-Muhager Ahmed Bin Eisa, the founding father of the Sufi religious sect; he had emigrated from Al-Basra in Iraq to settle in Al-Hugrain. There is a place called the room of Al-Muhager, where he would

pray, recite, and write. The room has become a shrine for visitors, who perform religious ceremonies there.

In the town center, there is an area for bazaars and a public arena for entertainment on special occasions like Eid.

During such celebrations, people congregate to listen to poetry recited using a technique called 'zamel', and also sing and perform folk dances as a gentle breeze blows across the city.

Al-Hugrain's tremendous, tall buildings are made of very simple substances. They were constructed using brick, straw and mud. Masons worked around the clock tirelessly, and women too took part in the construction of these buildings.

Most of these buildings are semi-detached, with wide terraces on the roofs which are used for picnics and sleeping areas. The materials used were clay, plasterwork, and lime, especially on the roof to decorate its facade.

Even the materials used on the buildings' canopies were quite simple: fronds and palms leaves, woven and interlocked. The beams and columns used to bear the ceiling of every single room is made of hewn stone.

The four-story buildings are 90 feet tall, with wooden windows of geometric designs. If the skyscrapers of the modern day have been built in the United States, skyscrapers of the past were built on a mountain rim in Al-Hugrain.

One might wonder what allows these skyscrapers to endure the weather and conditions and maintain its tradition though decades of neglect. Dogged determination and persistence, as well as the exertion of enormous efforts are behind the firmness and rigidity of these towering buildings.

Landmarks in Al-Hugrain

In the city's suburbs, there are

photo by saleh al-batati



Houses on big rocks in Al-Hugrain

prominent landmarks, among which is Al-Quza. It is a small village with ancient monuments which date back thousands of years, with Himyarite inscriptions on the memorial stones.

There are several springs and pools that irrigate farming areas. Another prominent landmark, Seela, a small village in the south of Al-Hugrain, is situated on a mountain range which extends to Wadi Doan. Fragments of ancient pottery which have been found there attest to village's heritage as

a historic landmark.

Tourists have flocked to this area since the announcement of Al-Hugrain as a cultural and historical protectorate in 2006.

Although it is a major landmark, the flow of tourists to the area significantly decreased as a result of acts of terrorism which took place at a turn-off leading to Al-Hugrain on January 18th 2008.

Inhabitants, scholars and dignitaries in Al-Hugrain strongly condemned the acts of terrorism. However, now that things have begun to return to normal, tourists

have begun to trickle into the city. Security checkpoints surround the city, and policemen have demonstrated their readiness to protect tourists.

Traditional buildings at risk

Preservationists are aware of the great importance of the city. They are concerned about the future of these high-rise brick buildings. Like Zabeed in Hodeida, Al-Hugrain is in jeopardy on account of the expansion of cement and stone houses. This is regarded as a real and serious threat that is out

of sync with the rest of the town. A lack of oversight of the town's long-standing traditions may lead to old buildings becoming unsustainable; tough decisions remain essential to maintaining the integrity of the traditional buildings.

On the governmental level, a special committee must be formed to meet the needs and requirements of spire-like buildings. A rescue plan should be carried out, one which would include the renovation of buildings and enforced decisions to block the rapid expansion of cement houses.



Al-Hugrain city

photo by saleh al-batati



The House of Al-Emam Al-Muhager was built in 318 AH

Continued from page 1

Can Yemen replace qat with the bio-diesel producing Jatropha tree?

Mahbub Hadi, a farmer and consultant for Hail Agricultural Center in Hodeida, said "there are some lands which can be utilized for planting this tree particularly the eastern region such as Marib."

Hadi continued, "The Jatropha Tree suits this land; rather than leaving the land to remain useless and unused, we can plant this tree and invest it correctly

without taking advantage of agricultural land for food products. As important as simply planting the tree is the presence of plants and factories to extract vital oils from it, and this is where the role of the government and other organizations comes in.

The use of Jatropha oil as an alternative bio-diesel would represent a significant and positive shift in Yemen's economy," he added "Personally, I asked one Sudanese farmer friend to bring me seeds from this tree. Once I

get the seed, I will start to plant it in Hodeidah's western dry area."

The deputy minister of Agriculture for Production Development, Abdulamlik Al-Thor said, "This tree poses a threat to the world because it will enter into competition with the cultivation of food products.

For Yemen in particular, the Jatropha Tree will not repair the Yemeni economy; in Yemen, we need to grow food products first." Althor added,

"Our people suffer from poverty and food insecurity on a large scale; they need agricultural products that can raise the level of available food for people.

As for the development of strategic plans to plant the Jatropha Tree in the future, there are no plans to support such projects in the Ministry of Agriculture development sector because, as I mentioned, previously we only focused on the development of agriculture that could meet the demands of citizens - not the de-

mand of the western countries."

The spread of Jatropha

Malaysia was the first state in the world to invest in the Jatropha Tree and extract oil from it. It then spread to the United States of America, Canada, Europe, India and the rest of the world's countries.

North Sudan is an Arab country seeking to produce bio-diesel from Jatropha seeds, and has turned the effort into a national project. The general director

of the country's National Research Center, Mohmaed Jalal, told Al Jazeera that his country is currently seeking to plant one million Jatropha trees, to be increased to one billion trees over the next six years.

With proper management, one ton of Jatropha Curcas seeds can produce up to 600 liters of bio-diesel.

Extracted oil can be directly used in diesel engines after being blended with conventional diesel fuel.



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H.E.Field Marshal

Abd Rabbu Mansour Hadi

On the occasion of being awarded the confidence of the people
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نتقدم

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فخامة المشير الركن

عبد ربه منصور هادي

رئيس الجمهورية

وذلك بفوزه بثقة الشعب اليمني وإنتخابه رئيس للجمهورية
مع التمنيات له بالنجاح في قيادة الوطن

فالف مبروك

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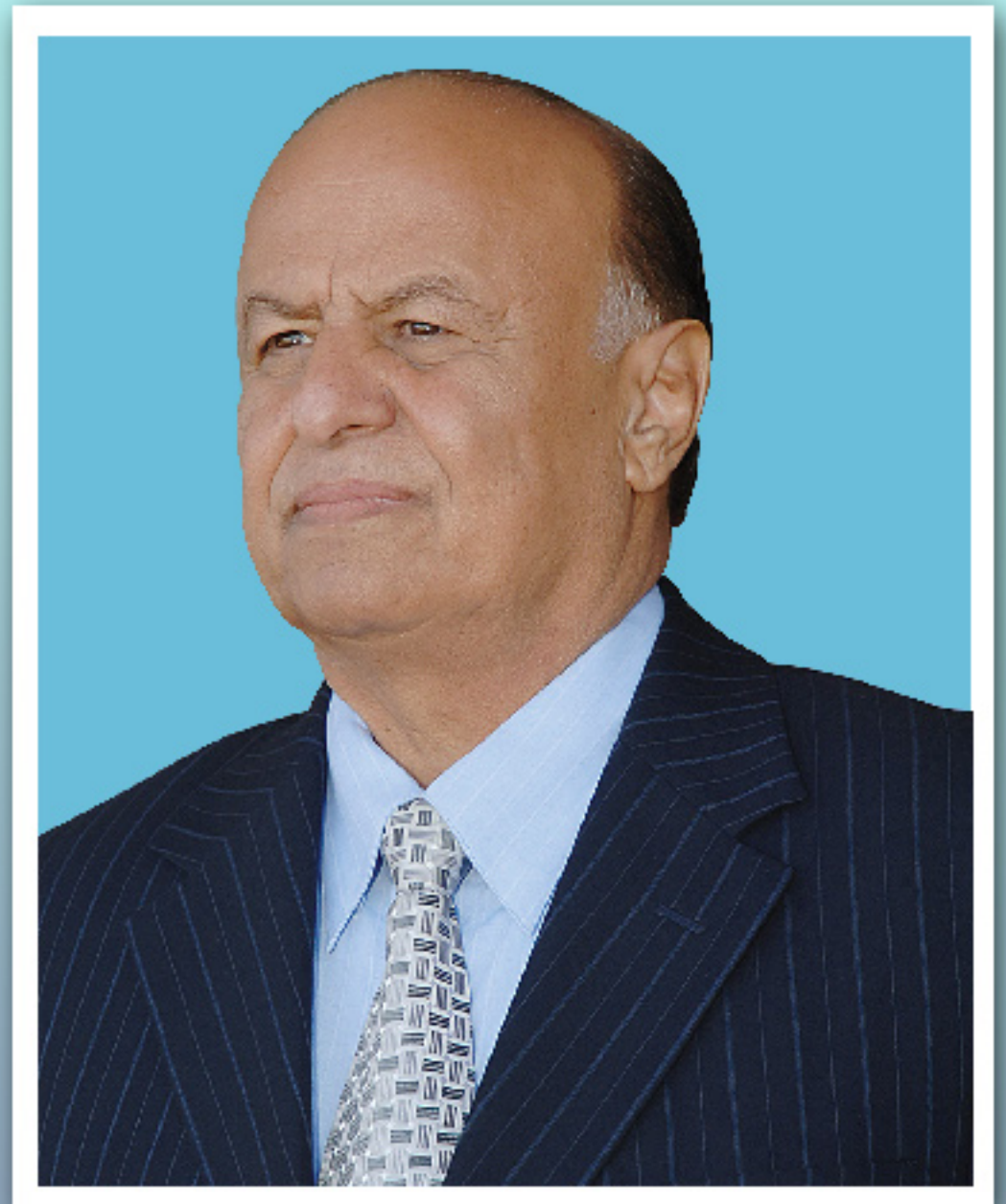
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We also would like to congratulate all Yemenis on

advocating for wisdom and for

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Sales for tiny cadre of regional defense companies fell in 2010, research shows

For arms, Mideast is buyer's, not a seller's, market

By: David Rosenberg
The Media Line

The year 2010 wasn't a bad one for the world's top arms makers, but in the Middle East the tiny cadre of defense companies to make it to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute's (SIPRI) top 100 list didn't have much to celebrate. Last year doesn't look to have been much better.

Even as the global economy struggled to climb out of recession, the top 100 arms makers pushed up sales by one percent after inflation to \$411.1 billion in 2010. But the five Middle Eastern companies — three from Israel and one each from Kuwait and Turkey — in the list saw their sales fall by almost eleven percent to \$8.42 billion, according to SIPRI data broken down by The Media Line.

The sales slump for Middle East and North Africa (MENA) defense companies stands in sharp contrast to the demand for weaponry. Thanks to the windfall from high oil prices as well as wars and domestic unrest, the region bought one sixth of the world's arms imports while accounting for just 1/15th of its population.

The Arab Spring and tensions with Iran have only encouraged the trend. Last July, Saudi Arabia boosted the size of arms deal with the U.S. to \$90 billion from the \$60 billion announced in 2010. Other Gulf countries have been



Although Yemen is not an arms maker, tribesmen excel at dealing in the arms trade.

eyeing weapons purchases while Israel has been debating an increase

in military spending out of concern that old friends like Egypt and Tur-

key are turning hostile.

Cuts in military spending in the U.S. and other Western countries may also spur sales in the next several years, said Susan Jackson, head of SIPRI's arms production project.

"From the perspective of companies in the U.S. and Western Eu-

rope, their revenues from military-related business. The company saw its defense sales slump nearly 50 percent as the U.S. troop presence in Iraq wound down and it became ensnared in a legal dispute with the U.S. Department of Justice.

Last year didn't look much better: Agility's third-quarter revenue —

lion. They were higher in the first nine months of 2011 as well and the next few years look even better after Azerbaijan agreed in December to buy \$1.6 billion in drones, anti-aircraft and missile defense systems, from IAI.

Another MENA company to enjoy higher sales in 2010 was the



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VACANCY

TITLE
GRADE
OFFICIAL STATION (COUNTRY)
ORGANIZATIONAL
LOCATION/UNIT

: **Financial Assistant**
: G-5
: Yemen
: Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean (EMRO)
: Office of the WHO Representative,

OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAMME:

To provide financial assistance to WRO Yemen

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- Provides logistic assistance including procurements of supplies and equipment.
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Top Middle East Arms Markers

Rank	2010	2009	Company	Sectors	Base	Arms Sales \$Bln 2010	2009	Arms Total Sales	Total Profit \$ mln	Total Payroll
35	29		Elbit Systems	Electronics	Israel	2.48	2.70	95	183	12,320
37	41		Israel Aerospace Industries	Aircraft Israel Electronics Missiles		2.40	2.03	76	94	16,000
54	53		Rafael	Aircraft Israel Missiles Small arms		1.47	1.57	98	N/A	6,500
58	36		Agility Service		Kuwait	1.31	2.48	23	87	22,000
87	95		Aselan	Electronics	Turkey	0.76	0.64	97	160	4,010

Source: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute

roping the way to deal with proposed military spending cuts is to focus on export markets and one of those markets they want to focus on is the Middle East, particularly Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates," Jackson told The Media Line.

But the fact is the big arms-buying bucks go to the world's biggest arms makers, which are based on North America and Europe. Sales by the 44 U.S.-based companies on the SIPRI list accounted for over 60 percent of all global arms sales while 29 companies based in Western Europe accounted for another 30 percent.

Jackson said most of the MENA region would have trouble developing a domestic industry.

"You really need to have well developed infrastructure with highly skilled workers. For instance, in India they have tried for decades to develop and maintain an arms industry. But it hasn't gained much traction," she said "Even if they grow more technology infrastructure; it's quite not enough to absorb technology into arms production."

The biggest decline among MENA defense companies was at Kuwait's Agility, a logistics company that gets about a quarter of

the latest reported by the company — fell 19 percent to 330 million Kuwaiti dinars (\$1 billion), compared with the same time in 2010.

Among the three Israeli companies in the top 100, defense electronics maker Elbit Systems and state-owned Rafael, which makes a defense cornucopia of missiles and small arms, both suffered a sales slump. Elbit's revenues fell as its Watchkeeper drone contract in Britain began winding down as it did a project to upgrade Turkish M-60 tanks.

Elbit's sales picked up in the first nine months of 2011 by six percent to \$1.97 billion, but earlier this month it announced that an Israeli Defense Ministry decision in December to block delivery of sophisticated intelligence systems to the Turkish Air Force would force it to take a \$65 million charge on last year's earnings.

The \$140 million deal advanced infrared Lorop camera and related equipment was signed in 2009, but since then Israeli-Turkish relations have deteriorated.

Only Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI), another government-owned company, saw its sales grow in 2010 by about 18 percent to \$2.48 bil-

lion. They were higher in the first nine months of 2011 as well and the next few years look even better after Azerbaijan agreed in December to buy \$1.6 billion in drones, anti-aircraft and missile defense systems, from IAI.

Another MENA company to enjoy higher sales in 2010 was the Turkish electronics and electronic systems company Aslan, which is owned by a foundation linked to the country's armed forces. The smallest of the region's top 100 arms makers, its sales increased close to 19 percent last year. In the first nine months, they grew further still reaching 912 million Turkish dinars from 686 million the same time in 2010.

Turkey is a net importer of defense equipment, but its long-term strategy is to reverse this. The government has launched projects to reduce imports and step up sales abroad. Between 2005 and 2009, Turkey doubled its defense exports to \$669 million, according to the Turkish Defense Industry Manufacturers Association (SaS-ad). "Although this represents an important leap forward in absolute terms, Turkey is still far from being a top-level defense exporter on a global scale," Francesco Milan wrote in a paper for the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology's International Relations and Security Network. "However, Turkey is investing heavily in the sector, trying to strengthen exports through its diplomatic network."

Kuwaitis celebrate their National Day in Sana'a

Fahd Sa'ad Al-Mei, Kuwaiti ambassador in Yemen, celebrated Kuwaiti National Day with an official at the Movenpick Hotel in Sana'a. It was attended by a number of political leaders, intellectuals, businessmen, social figures and journalists.

The ambassador said in a statement that he presents his congratulations to H.E the Prince of Kuwait, Crown Prince, the Prime Minister and the people of Kuwait, marking the country's National Day.

He expressed his wishes that happiness would continue for Kuwait, its leadership and people and offered many happy returns under the wise political leadership headed by H.E Prince of Kuwait.

He indicated that the ceremony came at a time of positive Yemeni-Kuwaiti relations, reflecting the

fraternal relationship between the two countries.

For his part, Nabil Shamasn, Minister of Civil Service and official representative of the Yemeni government, said that the two country's mutual relations are making noticeable progress, reflecting the way in which the two political leaderships support social, economic and political relations.

Shamasn expressed his pleasure at participating in Kuwait's National Day celebrations, wishing for more prosperity and development between the two countries.

He highlighted Kuwait's support for Yemen's security and stability and its major contribution in the success of the GCC Initiative, aimed at ending political unrest in Yemen.

Kuwaiti economic support for Yemen has contributed to building

relations between the two countries, he added, pointing out that Yemenis hold cordial feelings for their Kuwaiti brothers.

The many attendees to Kuwait's National Day celebrations highlighted the respect and friendly view Yemenis have of Kuwait.

Saud Al-Harbi, Kuwaiti consul in Sana'a, also congratulated the Kuwaiti people and its leadership on this national occasion.

He expressed his pride over Kuwait's political and economic developments and architecture due to the wise leadership of the country's Prince, Subah Al-Ahmed Al-Subah and his Prince Crown, Nawaf Al-Subah and the cabinet. In addition to Shamasn, Jamal Benomar, United Nations special advisor to Ye-



Group photo

men, a number of MPs and members of the Shoura council as well as Arab and foreign diplomats also attended the ceremony.



From right: the Kuwaiti ambassador, Jamal Benomer, Saudi ambassador, the Kuwaiti consul,



From right: Kuwaiti ambassador, Oman's ambassador, Kuwaiti consul, and Kuwaiti diplomatic attaché



From right, the Kuwaiti ambassador, ambassador of the UAE, the Kuwaiti consul, Saud Al-Harbi and the Kuwaiti diplomatic attaché, Mohamed Al-Mubarki.

Advertorial

AKF, YEFE celebrate the graduation of 144 trainees



TAIZ, Feb. 16 - Al-Khair Foundation for Social Development (AKF) and Yemen Education for Employment Foundation (YEFE) have organized a graduation ceremony for the second batch of AKF trainees, the third and fourth batches of YEFE trainees, totaling 144 trainees including 98 technicians of the Al Rowad (pioneers) program.

Chairman of YEFE's board and chairman of AKF, Alwan Al-Shaibani explained that the activities of the two foundations were not affected by the protests Yemen witnessed over the past year.

"Our activities were never suspended as we believe that man is the appropriate key for changing the realities of our people towards a better life," Al-Shaibani said.

He added that programs prepared by the two foundations for youth are not only designed to expand their cognitive and scientific skills, but also instill "good perceptions and values and social morals and promote the good treatment of family and community".

Youths who take part in the programs will also acquire the skill of time management, including help in giving up bad habits that waste time, harm health and fragment society.

"The Success program is designed to give the trainees self-confidence and the abilities to encounter challenges with a positive spirit," he said.

For his part, Mukhtar Al-Saqqaf, General Manager of Al-Khair Social Development Foundation, said that the two foundations cooperate to achieve their goals and

views regarding charitable support for individuals and society with the aim of improving education and combating poverty and unemployment.

"The two foundations focused on providing trainees with courses to improve their abilities and cognitive capacities, their living standards and serving their families and societies," Al-Saqqaf said.

Both the Executive Director of YEFE, Yasser Al-Saidi, and Dr. Labeeb Shaher, Taiz Branch Manager, said they are seeking to expand their programs to cover other governorates such as Lahj, Abyan and Dhala to target more youths.

Graduates of the foundations delivered speeches during the ceremony in which they expressed their thanks to the two foundations.

The ceremony was attended by Abdullah Abdu Saeed Anaam, Deputy Chairman of Trustees Board of Solidarity and Social Care Foundation, Mohamed Abdo Saeed Anaam, a prominent businessman, and representatives of media outlets and graduates' families.

During the ceremony, the graduates were awarded and granted work equipment presented by AKF and sponsored by the Community Livelihood Project (CLP) of USAID.



From right: Jamal Benomer, minister of civil service, Nabeel Shamasn, and the Kuwaiti ambassador.



From right: The Kuwaiti ambassador, Fahd Sa'ad Al-Mei, the American ambassador Gerald Feierstein and the Kuwaiti consul, Saud Al-Harbi.

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