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## Large-scale security campaign throughout country in bid to increase security and stability

Story and photo by Ashraf Al-Muraqab

SANA'A, Jan. 06 — On Saturday, Yemen's Ministry of Interior launched a campaign to confiscate arms and unlicensed motorbikes in Sana'a and other governorates in an effort to reduce the number of assassinations and improve security.

Over the last two years, several soldiers, military officials and civilian have been targeted by an increasing number of assassinations.

On Saturday, security forces were deployed at key entry points to Sana'a and other governorates as well as on main streets.

A source at the Interior Ministry told the Yemen Times that the campaign aims to confiscate weapons and unlicensed cars and motorcycles as a legal procedure to prevent crimes before they happen.

He pointed out that the campaign aims to target all people without exception in order to promote the rule of law and the authority of the state.

The source added that the results of the campaign would be announced in a press conference to be held by the Ministry of Interior



Security forces check cars in Sana'a for any illegal weapons.

at the end of the week. He said that the campaign has achieved positive results so far in reducing the number of people carry weapons and the spread of unlicensed vehicles.

In a press conference the Interior Ministry organized on Saturday in the Police Officers Club in Sana'a, Abdulrahman Hanash, Undersecretary of the ministry, said that the campaign aims to control increasing security imbalances.

"The main aim of the campaign is

to eliminate the carrying of weapons in main cities and governorates across the country. Whoever carries a weapon in Sana'a will be dealt with strictly," he added.

Hanash called on all residents to cooperate with the security forces and inform them about any suspects in order to instill stability. He asserted the importance of media in making people aware about the risks of weapon misuse and the importance of ridding major cities of weapons.

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## Parliament takes action to preserve heritage sites



Old Sana'a City could lose its status as a World Heritage site if the government fails to act.

### Amal Al-Yarisi

SANAA, Jan. 6 — Parliament discussed a bill designed to preserve historic cities in Yemen on Saturday.

This first of its kind, the bill has been pending for 15 years according to Abdu Al-Muaiz Dabwan, a parliamentarian.

The bill would allocate money for the preservation of historic sites, especially those on the UNESCO World Heritage List, like Old Sana'a and Zabid City in Hodeida.

Dabwan said the bill has gener-

ated support and will most likely be passed.

The absence of such a law has prevented the General Authority for Historic Cities Protection from having full authority to take measures to care for such sites. The authority currently lacks a budget to make necessary repairs at sites, Dabwan said.

Jameel Shamsan, the head of the authority, said the bill needs to be passed soon as Old Sana'a and Zabid city have been considered for removal from UNESCO's list due to neglect on the part of the state.

Abdulhabib Al-Dabhani, the deputy manager of the heritage office in Zabid, said Zabid City is in desperate need of the funding the bill would provide.

Al-Dabhani said there are over 25 building violations in Zabid that threaten its status as world heritage site. He fears removal from UNESCO's list is going to be a wake-up call for the government.

"Once the historic cities are eliminated from the World Heritage List, the government will consider these historic landmarks."

## Saudi Foreign Affairs Minister denies involvement in drone war in Yemen



Saudi Arabian officials contest a recent report that states they have assisted America in their drone war.

### Amira Nasser

SANAA, Jan. 6 — Following a report released by the British newspaper, the Times of London which asserted that Saudi Arabian air forces have been participating alongside the Americans in their war against Al-Qaeda in Yemen, the Saudi Minister of Foreign Affairs, Prince Suod Al-Faisal, has released a statement refuting his country's participation.

The Times of London reported that a U.S. intelligence source said, "Some of the so-called drone missions are actually Saudi air-

force missions."

Ayash Awad, a Coordinator at Yemen's Saba Center for Security and Defense Studies, said he believes that Saudi has reservation with regards to confirming a partnership with the U.S. in its war on terror for fear of angering targeted tribes.

Abdusalam Mohammed, the head of Ab'ad Center for Strategic Studies, said he does not believe the report.

"Perhaps there is Saudi interference against Al-Qaeda in Yemen such as intelligence, but not drone strikes."

He claims Saudi Arabia does not own advanced air weapons, but said there could be coordination between Saudi Arabia and U.S. in regard to fighting Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula.

Mohammed Al-Emad, the Editor-in-Chief of Al-Hawya newspaper, said Saudi Arabia's recent statements are diplomatic and expected. He believes it is completely logical and strategic that Saudi Arabia is participating alongside the Americans.

According to the Long War Journal, 223 people were killed by drones in Yemen in 2012.

## 217 reported suicides in 2012

### Samar Qaed

SANAA, Jan. 6 — A total of 217 Yemenis committed suicide in 2012, 19 of them children, according to the Media Security Center in the Interior Ministry.

Hodeida has the highest concentration of suicides in the country with 42 percent of the total number. Sana'a follows with 30 percent and the remaining percentage is divided between Taiz, Hajja and Marib.

The statistics indicate that suicides are on a slight decline the past two years. 235 Yemenis committed suicide in 2011 and 292 in 2010. However, Colonel Mohammed Al-Qa'adi, the manager of the public relations department in the Interior Ministry, says this falls within a margin of error as the numbers are based on reports from police stations. Many suicides go unreported, especially in rural areas, he said.

Al-Qa'adi says there are two primary reasons behind this, police sources in rural areas can be unreliable and some people never report a family member's suicide because it can be seen as shameful.

Despite a perceived drop in statistics, the trend is still worrying for experts.

Dr. Salah Al-Jumaei, an academic psychologist at Sana'a University, said current, tough economic circumstances in Yemen are one of the major causes of suicide in Yemen. Other driving factors include a loss of faith and drug addiction,

he said.

Dr. Fuad Al-Salahi, a sociology professor at Sana'a University, said the youth are particularly vulnerable to suicide and in their demographic, it is often brought on by feelings of inadequacy.

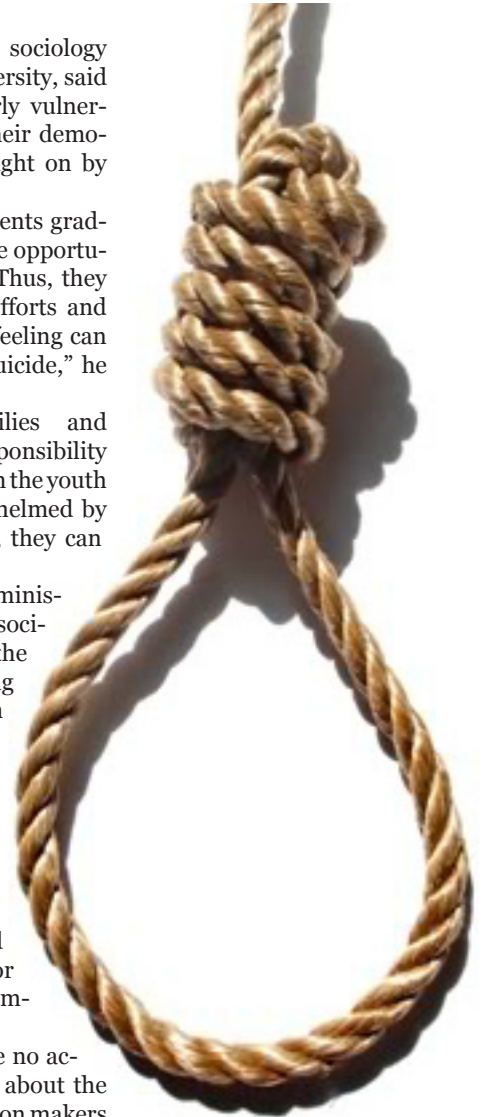
"When university students graduate, they do not have the opportunity to find jobs easily. Thus, they tend to feel that their efforts and time were in vain. This feeling can drive them to commit suicide," he said.

Al-Salahi says families and schools need to take responsibility for instilling confidence in the youth so when they are overwhelmed by feelings of hopelessness, they can cope.

Al-Qa'adi said the ministry is trying to educate society about suicide, but the country is severely lacking in services to deal with depression and psychological disorders related to suicide.

"Where are the research and social centers? Where are the psychologists and the Education Ministry and all those responsible for combating this phenomenon?" he asked.

"Decision makers take no action to enlighten people about the dangers of suicide. Decision makers are only concerned about politics, but the majority of suicides occur due to a deteriorated economic and social situation," Al-Qa'adi said.



## Iran's ambassador denies accusations of espionage



### Mohammed Bin Sallam

SANAA, Jan. 6 — Mahmoud Hassn Zada, Iran's Ambassador to Yemen, held a press conference at the Iranian Embassy in Sana'a on Sunday that addressed increasing concerns about Iran's influence in Yemen.

Regarding recent accusations made in several media publications that Iran has been running a spy ring in Yemen for the last seven years, Zada said, "We requested the Yemeni government to prove that by evidence, instead of accusing others. This affects relations between the two countries negatively."

He went on to say increasingly negative rumors concerning Iran's influence in Yemen have severely impacted current relations.

"Some opposing bodies are working to deepen the rift between the

two Muslim countries," he said.

Zada said that an international focus on the Iranian spy rings in Yemen aims to mislead the public. He also refuted Iran's involvement in a ship found recently transporting weapons off the coast of Yemen.

The ambassador added, "Yemeni officials are being misled by wrong reports and accusations concerning this subject."

The ambassador said Iran support for Yemen has been continuous, pointing out that Iran has no desire to influence Yemen's internal political affairs. He also reconfirmed his support for Yemeni stability and a comprehensive national dialogue.

The statements from the Iranian ambassador come after President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi revealed in a speech delivered last summer that accuses Iran of espionage in

Yemen.

Hadi called on Iran not to interfere in Yemen's affairs, indicating security forces have unearthed several espionage networks working under Iran. He also said Tehran supports politicians and journalists that derail the transitional process in Yemen.

In the same vein, the Head of National Security, General Ali Hassn Al-Ahmadi, called on Iran to stop intervening in Yemeni affairs, including the supporting of or training of Houthis militants. He said Sana'a has solid evidence, proving Iran's involvement.

Regarding a recent statement released by the U.S.'s Ambassador to Yemen, Gerald M. Feierstein, that references Iran's support for the Houthis and Southern Movement factions, Zada asked, "Who gave him the right to talk about Iran having a hostile role in Yemen?"

# Occupying soldiers unwelcome in local stadium



The stadium has been turned into a sleeping spot for soldiers to rest.



Occupying key areas of the grounds, soldiers have prevented sports from occurring.

**Ahmed Dawood and Sadeq Al-Wesabi**

**A**s a keen athlete, Mohammed Al-Zinj, used to spend his days at the sports club, in Sha'b Sana'a Stadium, but for over a year he hasn't been able to go. A space that was once dedicated to its customers' workout needs, allowed local soccer teams a space to compete and housed a large library of books, is now a military barricade.

"The majority of the club's activities have stopped, and the bulk of the athletes and fans are unable to enter the stadium," Al-Zinj said, referring to the club's takeover by General Ali Mohsen Al-Ahmer's troops, a pro-revolution military figure, who was recently removed from his position as Commander of the First Armoured Division.

The soldiers of the Division took control of the stadium in September 2011 following the breakout of the revolution against former President's Ali Abdullah Saleh's regime.

Asim Al-Nihmi, the information assistant at the club, said the soldiers have not been good guests during their occupation.

"The locker rooms have been ruined and the ground has been devastated. The neighbors do not have access to the stadium to play sport. The club has completely deteriorated," he said. "Anyone who sees the club for the first time will think it is the headquarters of the FAD and not a sports club."

Despite initial hopes that the

soldiers would be forced to vacate the club following Hadi's order to restructure the army, Mohammed Al-Zuraiqi, a former coach at the facility, says the situation remains the same with the soldiers promising their departure, but not moving.

"There is no need to occupy our stadium as the security situation is stable," he said. "They use our rooms, bathrooms, equipment, generator, furniture. They even use our changing rooms."

"The Security Committee should find a solution for this problem. Our activities have stopped because these soldiers have found a 'comfortable city' to reside in," Al-Zuraiqi added.

However, the soldiers say they have not impeded the activities of the sports club.

"We are less than 30 soldiers and stationed at the gate. There are unused rooms and sport activities are going on. Several activities have happened successfully," said Major Yahya Shaiban, who is responsible for the soldiers stationed in the stadium.

But, Khalid Al-Maqtari, the general secretary of Sha'b Sana'a Club tells a different tale. He says he remembers the exact month the FAD took over the space.

Without the consent of the club's administration, the soldiers showed up and began wreaking havoc Al-Maqtari said.

He says the old locker rooms are now areas for soldiers to chew qat and that the occupiers have almost completely destroyed the water well. The soldiers even hung a banner out front of the stadium reading Ansar Al-Thawra (Revolution Supporters) Al-Maqtari said.

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"We are a sports club. We have nothing with politics," he said. "We don't accept military forces in our club. We wish they would leave as soon as possible."

If and when the soldiers leave, Al-Maqtari is not sure financially they will ever be able to recover.

The club's administration said they have attempted many times to get the soldiers to leave. In September, they sought international help. They protested outside a U.N. office but no one intervened.

They have also contacted the Military Committee to evacuate the soldiers and even spoke to General Mohsen, but no agreement was reached.

Although Shaiban says he and his men will leave, they are under the jurisdiction of the Security Committee who has a plan to remove checkpoints and security presence step by step.

"They may order us to leave today or tomorrow. The decision isn't in our hands," he said.

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# Yemen... A Living Museum

Hesham Hussain

The clouds are hugging the mountain cliffs. The streets are jammed and crowded with people. Each town has a number of old buildings. Within each modern city lies an ancient, gated city. The historic sites are enormous. Villages and homes are erected at high altitudes without any roads leading to them. Reminiscence of ancient kingdoms and civilizations are discovered in many areas. Natural springs and rare plants are plentiful.

Many people are suffering from poverty, illiteracy, malnutrition and hunger. Yet they are generous, intelligent, hospitable, kind and always smiling! Drive your car and travel hundreds of kilometers for several hours through tiny, curvy and high altitude roads. The drive may take a whole day, yet it feels like a couple of hours. Where is this place, where does it exist, and why is it unknown?

Beautiful mountains, open valleys, green fields, sandy deserts and gorgeous coastlines all exist abundantly in one place. Yemen. It is a complete museum by all means. Foreigners who have had the chance to visit Yemen and tour its amazing cities will tell you all about it. Yemen is not just a complete museum, it is a living museum in the sense that everywhere you look and visit there is uniqueness and variety. People are still residing in ancient cities and in cliffs of mountains that vehicles cannot reach. This is the living museum most people in the world are unaware of.

Whenever Yemen is mentioned, the ideas that come to one's mind are chaos, instability and poverty. The most one can expect is for others to have knowledge of Yemen's climate and location. While Yemen could be one of the top tourist attractions in the world, it is a little-known place for tourism.

Let's assume that there isn't a security concern. What will make Yemen a point of attraction for

tourists? If Yemen has the natural scenery and the historic landmarks, what is lacking?

On a road trip from Taiz to Sana'a, passing through the green valley of Ibb, and taking the curvy road up the Sumarah Mountain, one cannot help but contemplate and reflect upon the natural beauty of Yemen. If this mountain or scenery were to be in another region like America or Europe, it would be declared a national park or a natural habitat. This is only a sample of what can be found in Yemen. It is a fact that no one can falsify; Yemen has the potential to be a major universal hub for tourism. From the white, sandy beaches of the Red Sea to the historic sites of Al-Jawf and all the way to the exceptional island of Socotra. This island is full of wonders with its unique plants and creatures that aren't found anywhere else. To this extent, it has been called "the most alien-looking place on earth."

It saddens every Yemeni and every person who has managed to visit Yemen to see the country still

is not a tourists' hub. Yemen is definitely not listed in the lists of top countries to be visited by tourists!

Perhaps it's the humble tourism promotion campaign that is making Yemen an unpopular place to visit. However this problem can be easily fixed as sincere and dedicated people take ownership of this task and fulfill their responsibility as employees of the Tourism Ministry. When generating revenues from tourism becomes an objective and part of Yemen's budget, more resources will be allocated for the promotion campaign. More importantly, Yemen will need to assess its tourist sites and enumerate them (though they will be too many to count). A full assessment of tourism in Yemen will need to be carried out by professionals to identify the major key sites, the obstacles to reaching those sites and how to overcome those challenges.

Having the logistical support for tourism in Yemen is a key aspect in succeeding. Constructing the right infrastructure for tourism is also

very important. Travelling from one city to another on a long, tiny or defective road does not appeal to any traveler, let alone a person who wants to enjoy and explore a foreign country. The infrastructure to support tourism must be established and focused to assure its success in making tourists happy and at ease. Having sufficient and effective services for tourists such as rest areas with decent facilities and directories is extremely important.

There are a number of small tools and features that can be implemented to make tourists feel comfortable during their travel. Experts in tourism and tourists' behavior should be consulted to identify all aspects.

Simple leaflets that contain geographical maps to identify roads and landmarks must be abundantly available for tourists. Guidebooks that are professional and artistically made can make a big difference. When a number of travelers enjoy their trip, experience good services and logistical support in

Yemen, they will surely re-visit. Most importantly, they will share such experiences with their families, friends and colleagues. They will basically promote tourism in Yemen. After all, "word of mouth is the best advertisement," as many people say.

When will the time come for tourism to prosper in Yemen? Unfortunately, many Yemenis themselves have not had the chance to explore their homeland. There are many obstacles that any traveler will have to consider in advance. The hardship of transportation makes a person think twice before travelling for pleasure. Yemen has many challenges. Even though the enhancement of tourism might not seem a priority at this point to many people, it will play a role in the future of Yemen. After all, it is unfortunate for people across the globe to be deprived of visiting one of the most natural and historic places in the world. It is a living museum that should be explored and experienced at least once in the life time.

## Spiritualizing the National Dialogue Conference

Rafat Al-Akhali

After months of hard work, the National Dialogue Technical Committee submitted its final report to the president on Dec. 12, 2012. This report is a critical milestone towards the National Dialogue Conference, which is expected to be held in February of 2013, although no set date has been announced yet.

But is Yemen preparing for a National "Dialogue" Conference or a National "Deliberation" Conference? Although the words "dialogue" (hiwar) and "deliberation" (mudawalah) are often used interchangeably in both the Arabic and English language, they are very different concepts when applied by the practitioners in the field of dialogue and deliberation, as I will explain in this article.

The word "hiwar" in Arabic has two main definitions: either to describe a calm conversation between two or more people, or (especially in a political or conflict context) to describe a process by which two or more parties engage in a conversation that is calm and free from animosity with the aim of reaching an agreement on a certain issue. These

two definitions are exactly the same ones found in dictionaries to define the English word "dialogue."

However, while the Arabic implementation of "hiwar" generally remained unchanged, a new movement emerged in the Western world in the 20th century. This movement, championed by philosophers such as John Dewey, Martin Buber, Paulo Freire and David Bohm, established the fields of "dialogue" and "deliberation." A growing body of practitioners around the world developed this field and applied it in different sectors ranging from business management to public policy.

In this field, dialogue is a process that allows people, usually in small groups, to share their perspectives and experiences with one another about difficult issues. Dialogue is not about winning an argument or coming to an agreement but about understanding and learning. Dialogue dispels stereotypes, builds trust and enables people to be open to perspectives that are very different from their own. Dialogue can, and often does, lead to both personal and collaborative action.

Deliberation is a closely related process with a different emphasis. Deliberation emphasizes the im-

portance of examining options and trade-offs to make better decisions. Dialogue often lays the groundwork for deliberation. The trust, mutual understanding and relationships that are built during dialogue enable participants to deliberate more effectively and to make better decisions.

I remember being taught by the French-Canadian philosopher, Thierry C. Pauchant, that dialogue is a spiritual, transformative journey of understanding the other. Dialogue needs a supporting environment. The lighting, surrounding nature, sounds (and silence), and smells all contribute greatly to the experience. The mental condition of the participants is crucial - taking a moment of silence before speaking, thinking about every word one will say and how the others will receive it, and speaking truly from the core.

I have been through such a transformative experience before, and I can testify to its power. In following the preparations for the National Dialogue Conference in Yemen, I fear that the process has been mechanized and the spiritual aspect of it completely ignored so far. I feel the conference is becoming more about deliberation than dia-

logue, and it seems that the issue of building trust and understanding among the participants is not taking priority.

To give an example, given the lack of attention to true dialogue as defined above, I foresee the group working on the Southern case proceeding as follows. The Southerners will come in and talk for hours about all the injustices they have suffered since unity and say that they handed in a functioning state in 1990, only to be deprived of every right and dignity that they had. They therefore want to regain their independence. The Northerners will acknowledge that there were mistakes made in the past but say all regions of Yemen suffered from these injustices, and the regime that was responsible for that is now gone. They will then say, "So let us start a new chapter and build our future together." The U.N. will bring in experts to explain the different options of local governance that could resolve grievances, and only God knows whether the participants will reach an agreement or not. The sessions will be held in a big, brightly-lit hotel meeting hall, with constant interruptions of people walking in and out. The discussions will of course be inter-

rupted every day after lunch, as the participants will want to go home to chew qat. They will probably invite each other to continue the discussions over qat.

Now imagine a different scenario. The working group first takes a tour of the South. They visit the old man who has been out of a job since 1994 and listen to how he lost everything he has. They visit the widow who has been kicked out of her apartment by a sheikh or an army officer from the North who decided he now owns the building. They listen to how she had to raise her children in a hut; they see the pain she feels through her tears. They visit all the lands and buildings that were confiscated by Northerners. The group does the same tour across different regions in Yemen. They then take a retreat in a secluded resort. They begin their session with a moment of complete silence. Each of the participants is then asked to talk about their feelings they experienced on the tour. They share what touched them the most and whether there was anything surprising to them. Anyone will be allowed to share a personal story. Only after this emotional sharing session, are the participants asked to give their opinions of what can be done to resolve

this issue. The location is quiet, the lights are dim, no one interrupts the person speaking, and everyone speaks from their core. Options are identified and experts are brought in to analyze the pros and cons of each option. They share experiences from other countries, and the participants are finally asked to deliberate to reach an agreement. How will the outcome from this experience differ from the one described in the previous paragraph?

It is definitely not too late to design Yemen's National Dialogue sessions in a way that makes it a spiritual, transformative journey for all participants. I hope the members of the National Dialogue Technical Committee, and the international community supporting the National Dialogue Conference will read this article and take it into consideration when they facilitate the National Dialogue Conference.

*Rafat Al-Akhali is a political activist, the co-founder and Chairman of Resonate! Yemen: a youth-run foundation focusing on engaging youth in public policy. He is currently studying a Masters in Public Policy at the University of Oxford.*

## Yemen Drone War: New model for US intervention, with Saudi help

Jason Ditz  
Antiwar.com  
First Published Jan. 4

With the U.S. still coming to grips with what a disaster the Iraq invasion was, and still toiling away in Afghanistan well over a decade into that occupation,

the Obama Administration is eager to frame its ambitions for more intervention as being a "new model."

Libya was the first candidate for the "new model," a regime change imposed primarily through air strikes. But, with Libya's security situation ever-worsening, that's not the "good example" the administration wants either. Now it is Yemen.

Officials say that the administra-

tion has latched onto its war in Yemen, with its high body count, legal ambiguity and intense secrecy as "a new model for US intervention abroad," with the big problem of selling the public on the virtues of a war many didn't even know was going on in the first place.

The officials cite Guantanamo Bay and the enormous legal problem of open-ended detention of suspects

with little evidence as a justification for the Yemen strategy. "There is no kill or capture anymore. It's kill or kill," one noted.

As morally reprehensible as this is as a strategy, it appears one carefully thought out by the administration, which has been able to ditch responsibility for people killed in drone strikes by claiming the killings are a "state secret."

A lot of people are being killed in Yemen, but when innocents are obliterated in a random air strike, the Hadi regime is quick to take the credit, and help the U.S. ditch the blame. Saudi Arabia is adding warplanes to the semi-organized kill frenzy, adding yet more deliberate ambiguity to how many of the deaths are directly on the hands of the U.S..

Whereas one would've thought a "new model" for intervention would seek to avoid open-ended wars by spurning adventurism in favor of realistic goals, the administration appears to have chosen the opposite, deciding that open-endedness and ambiguity is a small price to pay if it keeps the American public even more in the dark about its assorted wars.

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An interview with Dr. Herta Däubler-Gmelin

# Federal or central: A question of power sharing

**Nadia Al-Sakkaf**

**D**r. Herta Däubler-Gmelin is a former German National Minister of Justice, a longtime member of the German Parliament and Chair of the Human Rights and Humanitarian Assistance Committee.

She was recently invited to Yemen to speak at the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Foundation. She gave a presentation entitled, "Options of Political Decentralization - An Introduction to Federalism: Chances, Challenges and Preconditions."

Although she says she does not want to tell the Yemeni people what they should want or need, she believes that what Yemen may require is a shift in power from individuals to institutions.

"If this were to happen, there would not be such strong resistance to letting go of power," she explains. "It is a question of power sharing."

The bottom line is that if there is adequate power distribution among the bodies governing the country, it does not leave space for corruption or dictatorship, she says.

Däubler-Gmelin explains that there are two accepted structures for power sharing. One being the common horizontal model - that is utilized in countries throughout the world - where three branches of government, legislative, executive and judiciary split power. The other is a vertical power share between a national government and regions or states.

To illustrate the point of where such structures are successful, she explains, small, homogenous countries can usually thrive with just a horizontal or central power sharing system, provided there is an independent judiciary and a strong, efficient and accountable lawmaking body. However, when there are historical, religious, ethnic or political divisions, an additional measure for power sharing is necessary to ensure equal citizenship, good governance and genuine democracy for all.

### Levels of regulation

Speaking in terms of political theory, Däubler-Gmelin says a genuinely central state has only one level of control and that is national. With

non-central states there are other levels of management that include elements of power sharing.

The levels of regulation in such systems are usually divided into three levels:

The first is a national regulatory body. This falls under the responsibility of the national state and is the same for all regions.

The second level is the local or regional control whereby each state or region has certain control and the authority to assert itself in rules and regulations.

The third level is the joint cooperation between the national level and the regions. Such cooperation takes into account the requirements and needs of the central/national government and each of the regions individually.

Through the three layers of control, states or regions maintain a certain level of autonomy, but they are responsible for the welfare of the nation collectively, Däubler-Gmelin says.

Giving an example of her own country, she adds, "In Germany, strong regional states have to support weaker states so that all citi-

zens across the country enjoy similar living conditions."

Through the German federal system, a living conditions index is calculated every year to gauge how different areas are faring. Additionally, the amount each region contributes to or takes from the nation is reviewed every year as a form of checks and balances.

The regions and the national government are involved in this review and in the collection of taxes and revenues so that each state knows how it is doing and how the others are doing comparatively.

Däubler-Gmelin says this shared power provides an element of trust between regional and national authorities and an element of shared responsibility for the welfare of the country as a whole.

"We have regionally elected governments and parliaments that are accountable to their constituencies in the region, and so they work for their best interest. We also have the federal parliament which legislates for the entire nation. These two levels work together in a transparent manner especially when it comes to national and regional budgets," she



**"In Germany, strong regional states have to support weaker states so that all citizens across the country enjoy similar living conditions."**

says. She emphasized that a structure with additional vertical power sharing helps limit corruption. The authorities at the regional level realize they are accountable to the constituencies that elected them, rather than to a central government that otherwise would have appointed them, she concludes.

# Yemenis torn over potential federal state

**Samar Qaed**

**W**ith the National Dialogue Conference (NDC) approaching and the country still recovering from revolutionary wounds, experts, politicians, organizations and ordinary citizens are all talking about how to form the new Yemeni government. Federalism has emerged as a prominent option to solve the current political crisis and no doubt will be a hot topic amongst those who now hold one of the allotted 565 seats at the NDC.

However, as many see it a solution to propel Yemen forward, the opposition puts forth arguments that this approach overlooks the Southern issue, the Houthis conflict in Sa'ada and the varying dogmatic schools of thought in the nation.

A researcher at the Yemeni Research Center, Dr. Nabeela Ghaleb, said that politicians have no problem with federalism as an advanced political and administrative system

but that Yemen does not have the political foundations for this to be successful. Currently there are too many marginalized populations that would be neglected by this system. First, the nation needs to construct institutions that establish equal citizenship rights for all Yemenis she said.

"Federalism in a country like Yemen, that doesn't have a lot of experience with democracy, is unsuitable. Divergent political views in Yemen may lead to disputes between the center and regions inside the country. [This] hinders public and private interests and at best leads to confusion in the decision making [process], which will contribute to separating regions and destroying the country."

Ghaleb furthered that Yemen is currently in a transitional period that is supposed to implement procedures to save the country, but federalism will inhibit achievements.

Omar Al-Amodi, a Political Science professor at Sana'a University, said unity in Yemen is under threat because of calls for federal-

ism. Given the current situation, such a form of government raises the probability of separation as dividing the country into small states could spark a civil war.

"What is happening in Yemen puts the Arab Spring at stake, not only in terms of the relation between the state and society, but even the relationship between residents themselves and also the establishment of the state and its foundations," he said.

Al-Amodi added that at a time when the Southern issue receives national, regional and international attention, it is facing problems that must be taken into consideration.

Abdulla Al-Akwa', a political writer, said that federalism is more complicated. He said the presence of natural resources in some areas will cause people to hoard their wealth, and this will destroy the country instead of achieving change.

With oil concentrated in Marib, a heavily tribal governorate, federalism would result in continuous disputes about access to natural resources.

Al-Akwa' also makes his case against federalism by pointing out that those countries around the world, where federalism is supposedly successful, still struggle with maintaining a federalist state.

"The experienced federal countries still have problems and a desire to separate. What is happening in Canada is an example because Quebec has continued threatening the unity of Canada for decades. They hold a self-determination referendum each four years in order to become an independent country. Canadians resent this, saying Quebec attempts to blackmail Canada to get a bigger share of the national wealth" he said.

Poverty and deprivation are also huge issues to consider. The Arab Human Development Report in 2010, conducted by the UNDP, indicated that poverty rate in Yemen has reached almost 60 percent, as an increase in unemployment. With a history of tyranny and corruption in politics, there are increasing concerns regarding the ability of politicians to manipulate a federal

system.

Currently this rate in Yemen is increasing more due to electricity outages and the increase in diesel prices. Yemeni society is witnessing a 3.6 percent increase in work opportunities while the workforce continues to grow by 4.3 percent each year, according to the statistics of the Yemeni Information Center

A journalist, Rashad Al-Sharabi, pointed out that some regional countries such as Saudi Arabia reject federalism in Yemen because it may result in the establishment of a Southern state and after that, a Houthis Shiite State in Sa'ada.

Al-Sharabi said neighboring and foreign countries will stand by their own interests and they usually require a united Yemen.

Yet, politicians and analysts aside, the question remains on how the Yemeni population feel about the prospect of federalism. Meeting with people on the street, the population, much like the politicians appeared divided on the issue.

Ahlam Al-Maqtari, a Sana'a resident, does not approve of federal-

ism, considering it a way to divide the country.

"The integrated unity is the best situation for Yemen, and any suggestion of a new system will wreak havoc on the country and people," she said.

Abdu Al-Jamei disagreed with Al-Maqtari. He supported federalism adoption saying, "It is better the country is divided into five regions, not two because a two-region division will lead to the separation of the south from the north. We fear this."

Ghasan Al-Ariqi says the current situation is unfit for the country to adopt federalism. He justified his opinion saying, "The cultural awareness among people is not good enough to embark on this system."

"The sectarian problems exist in many governorates. If federalism is approved, rifts among Yemenis will increase."

The NDC is expected to take account of this variety of opinion when it begins this year. An exact date is still pending.

# Life outside is not what Yemeni expats thought it would be

**Story by Ashraf Al-Muraqab**  
**Photo by Sadeq Al-Wesabi**

**A** young Yemeni, Khaled Al-Haimi, graduated from secondary school but was unable to go to college due to financial difficulties and the increasingly tough living conditions he says he found in Yemen.

With a family to support, Al-Haimi decided to go abroad to look for a job, lured by the promise of higher pay.

Once he left Yemen, he says his real suffering began. Like many young Yemenis, Al-Haimi says he acted without thinking about the obstacles that would await him as an inexperienced migrant.

His first task was to obtain a visa to his chosen country of Saudi Arabia, which costs him about

YR900,000, or \$4,000. Al-Haimi had to take out loans.

"I'm lucky because I found someone to sponsor me, but I was astonished with the conditions he put forward. He requested [almost YR 300,000 or \$1,300] per year," he said. "Later on I discovered that he used me as his annual income."

Al-Haimi found life very hard in Saudi.

"I worked in a bakery and spent all my time inside without being able to go out to see friends or do shopping," he said. "Sitting in my room, I kept asking myself, 'Why I have come here, and where is the life I dreamed of.'"

This is the life of many exhausted Yemeni expatriates who have immigrated and travelled long distances in order to make money for their families.

In addition to a harsh life, Yemeni expatriates complain about injustices they experience as im-

migrants. They are often not subject to the same protection rights granted to citizens, according to Anas Al-Barq, a Yemeni national working in a vegetable store in Saudi Arabia.

"My friends and I started working here more than ten years ago without receiving any incentives, insurance or even residence," he said.

Al-Barq says days off are always unpaid and his employer can terminate his contract at any time without just cause.

Several published media reports have revealed that Yemenis are subject to torture and imprisonment along the Yemeni-Saudi borders, while trying to cross countries.

Abdulmalek Al-Asar, Head of the AHD Organization, a group dedicated to caring for expatriates, told the Yemen Times that "the real problem is the ignorance of

the government to find appropriate solution for [expatriates'] issues."

"Though there are more than 35,000 Yemeni prisoners in Saudi jails, no one knows why the Yemeni government doesn't provide resolution for their problems," he said. "We contacted the government, but unfortunately they didn't cooperate with us. I don't know what role the Expatriate Ministry plays to reduce violations against Yemenis abroad."

A recent study, done by Shaif Ezi Sagheer, the undersecretary of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor, revealed that about 6 million Yemenis live in more than 55 countries worldwide.

The study shows Saudi Arabia is home to the highest number of Yemeni expatriates with about 1.3 million. This is followed by about 70,000 Yemenis living in the United Arab Emirates and 11,000 in Qatar.



**Yemenis leaving the Consulate in Jeddah.**

# Revolution brought tribes together causing decrease in revenge killings



The revolution in 2011 saw multiple tribes join together under a common aim to change the state.



Tribes throughout Yemen are experiencing an increase in communication after the revolution.

## Mohammed Al-Samei

Tribal leaders report that revenge killing rates have decreased since the onset of the revolution in 2011.

Revenge killings are a long running problem between feuding tribes who lock themselves into a cycle of retaliation for crimes they accuse the others of committing. There have been especially gruesome cases reported from areas

like Marib, Al-Jawf, Dhamar and Al-Baida'a.

However, several social leaders have said that many of their disputes were provoked by the government under former president Ali Abdullah Saleh.

"After several forces of the former regime, that used to instigate fighting between tribes fell down during the revolution, revenge crimes have decreased," said Sheikh Hizam Al-Atia, a prominent social figure in Al-Jawf, located 143 km. from

Sana'a.

Locals in Dhamar, located 100 km. from the capital city, are convinced the former regime was either directly or indirectly behind much of the tribal violence in the area.

"I remember Sheikh Hussein Ahmed Hussein Al-Hudaiji said at Dhamar's Change Square that the former president supported him with weapons and at the same time supported his foes," said Hussein Al-Swfi, a 33-year-old Dhamar resident.

However Al-Swfi witnessed a shift in dynamics during the revolution. "We saw conflicted tribesmen living together in one tent because they hoped that change would alleviate conflicts," he said.

Sheikh Rafad Al-Falahi, a leader in the Al-Hada area of Dhamar, agreed that the "spirit of the revolution" dissipated many tribal rifts.

"Conflicted tribes used to live in one tent and participate together in several protests. Tolerance spread among the residents," he said.

Al-Atia, vice head of the Al-Jawf Tribes Alliance said revenge killings take their toll on locals. It prohibits government development and generates fear among residents. But, Al-Atia also noticed a marked change in tribal sheikhs trying to bridge gaps during the uprisings. He said tribal sheikhs in Al-Jawf were seen "communicating."

However, the revolution also brought on a deteriorated security system in many governorates and without a strong support from the

state, many leaders say revenge killings may return to their pre-revolution rates. Al-Falahi said he can already see it, noticing spikes in revenge killings throughout 2012.

He said fighting arose between Al-Rashda and Bani Atif tribes in Dhamar and while tribal mediators worked hard to resolve issues, the government was completely absent.

Tribesmen continue to die and without intervention from the state, the problem will never fully go away, he said.

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- Undertakes follow-up action on child protection programme implementation activities with a focus on the three pillars of Evidence, Empowerment and Equity, contributes to teamwork building, and prepares relevant reports. Drafts changes in programme workplans as required.
- Attends technical cooperation meetings, prepares notes and undertakes follow-up action and coordination related to child protection programme implementation and monitoring.
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Republic of Yemen  
 Ministry of Electricity and Energy  
 Public Electricity Corporation  
 Power Sector Project  
 Project ID (P086865)

### SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF THREE PHASE CT/VT ELECTRONIC METERS AND CURRENT TRANSFORMERES

ICB No.: YEM 08 G12/PEC

- This invitation for Bids follows the General Procurement Notice for this Project that was published in the dg Market on May 24, 2012 (updated on August 2, 2012) and in the United Nations Development Business (UNDB) Issue No. 658, dated June 16, 2012 (updated on August 4, 2012) on-line and print version Issue No. 658, dated August 31, 2012.
- The Republic of Yemen has received a Credit (No. 4172-YEM) from the International Development Association (IDA) toward the cost of the Power Sector Project, and it intends to apply part of the IDA proceeds towards the cost of the Contract for SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF THREE PHASE CT/VT ELECTRONIC METERS AND CURRENT TRANSFORMERES.
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الجمهورية اليمنية  
 وزارة الكهرباء والطاقة  
 المؤسسة العامة للكهرباء  
 مشروع قطاع الكهرباء  
 رقم المشروع (P086865)

### إعلان مناقصة توريد عدادات إلكترونية و محولات تيار

مناقصة رقم: YEM08G12/PEC

- يأتي هذا الإعلان تنقيحاً على الدعوة العامة لمشروع قطاع الكهرباء المنشورة في صحيفة *Marriot* بتاريخ 2005/06/24 في هجرتيها في 2006/08/02 و في صحيفة الأمم المتحدة أعمال التنمية العدد رقم 656 بتاريخ 2005/06/16 و هجرتيها في 2006/08/04 العدد رقم 658 بتاريخ 2006/08/31.
- حصلت حكومة الجمهورية اليمنية على قرض تنموي رقم (4172-YEM) من هيئة التنمية الدولية (IDA) كجزء من التمويل للتمويل لمشروع قطاع الكهرباء ويتولى، يتولى جزء من عملية الترخيص المنع من هيئة التنمية الدولية لتنفيذ المنحوتات المسبقة كخطا لتوريد عدادات إلكترونية ومحولات تيار.
- تدعو المؤسسة العامة للكهرباء وشركات المنطقة شراعية لتقديم بطلاتهم والتحول في توريد عدادات إلكترونية ومحولات تيار.
- يتم تكيم العروض بواسطة شروط محددة في العطاءات التنافسية الدولية بلدياً أو إقليمياً وورشحات هيئة التنمية الدولية التي تكتم للمناقصة منقول لكل من الشركات المنطقة من التولاء التي تتوفر فيها الشروط المحددة في عدادات هيئة التنمية الدولية بشأن التوريدات.
- الحصول على مزيد من المعلومات عن وثيقة المناقصة من العنوان أدناه خلال فترة اليوم الرسمي (15:00-08:30) من السبت إلى الأربعاء.
- يتم عقد العروض بكتابة التطبيقية وعلى المتكتمين الراغبين شراء وثيقة المناقصة تكيم طلب خطاب رسمي إلى عنوان المشروع مع دفع رسوم المناقصة 1000\$ (ألف دولار). وفي حالة طلب رسمي يمكن إرسال وثيقة المناقصة بالبريد بعد دفع الرسوم المشار إليها في حساب المشروع رقم ( 12168 - 1100) سويفت CHYEYESA3XXX لدى البنك المركزي اليمني.
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- تتم موعد بيع الوثائق هو تاريخ 24/02/2013.
- تسلم العطاءات مغلقة وبشكل يتسلم في العنوان أدناه في موعد أقصاه الساعة 11:00 صباحاً بتاريخ 03/02/2013 (الوقت النهائي) موضحاً اسم ورقم المناقصة وأن ينظر في أي عطاء يصل متأخراً.
- يجب أن تكون العطاءات صالحة لفترة (120) يوماً ورائق مطعاه تأمين الطلح صالح لمدة (150) يوماً كما هو موضح في وثيقة المناقصة.
- سيتم فتح العطاءات في تاريخ تسليم العطاءات المذكور أعلاه بحضور أصحاب الشركات أو من يتوجب عليهم على العنوان التالي في تمام الساعة 11:00 صباحاً بتاريخ 03/02/2013.
- العنوان المشار إليه في الفقرة 10 و 12 هو:

Public Electricity Corporation (PEC)  
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# Weddings emerge sans the green stuff

Ashraf Al-Muraqab

**T**raditional weddings in Yemen are usually the scene of joyful faces, strings of lights and until recently, swollen cheeks full of qat.

Chewed by millions of men and women every day, the green leaf draws ire from many water experts, who say the cultivation of qat is consuming too much of the country's water resources. However, qat, a mild narcotic, is entrenched in social customs and is typically a staple at weddings, often provided by the bride and groom as a gift.

At large social occasions, the cost of supplying qat for the entire wedding party is often huge, impacting the couple and their family long after the day has ended.

In a snub to tradition, youth have increasingly banned qat from their weddings entirely. In November 2012, a young Yemeni, Al-Bara Shaiban decided to deviate from the norm by holding one of the first qat-free weddings in Sana'a that generated media attention.

Requesting that his guests refrain from chewing qat, many entered the wedding with skepticism, however after a fun-filled day their attitudes soon changed.

Praised by several social and political figures, Bara's wedding encouraged several others to follow suit. Marking a turning point, since then the number of qat-free weddings has noticeably increased in Sana'a and other governorates such as Hodeida and Taiz.

Mohammed Al-Shehaby, a young man from Taiz, says he was the first to hold a qat-free wedding in his area. Attracting the presence of several social and political figures and leading businessmen, the event challenged qat's dominance at weddings in the governorate.

Shawqi Ahmed Hael, the governor of Taiz, attended Al-Shehaby's wedding and announced that the government will allocate YR500 million of qat taxes to establish places for youth to practice sport and spend their leisure time there instead of chewing qat.

For his part, businessman Abdulwase Hael Saeed, the head of Yemen Without Qat Foundation, called on people to work together to

rid Yemeni society of qat.

"We are among the most backward countries because we waste our time chewing," he said. He went on to say that qat trees consume about 60 percent of the country's water resources, negatively affecting the national economy and ability to sustain itself in the future.

Ali Al-Hawani, a wedding singer in Sana'a, said not to call the small trend a movement yet.

"Yemenis prefer to chew qat in gatherings and weddings as they are used to this tradition," he said.

He added that many people, including people who chew qat recreationally, accept weddings without qat, but others will continue to provide it along with bottles of water because it's considered an act of generosity. If the groom doesn't provide qat for his guests, he could be considered stingy.

Hussein Mansour, a marriage contract manager in Sana'a said, "A free-qat wedding makes the occasion blessed. If we succeed in removing qat from our weddings, it will lay the pathway for it to be gradually banned from all social gatherings in the country. Only with this, will we be able to begin development projects that function without qat, backwardness, weapons and corruption."

Mujeeb Al-Fatish, the Coordinator of Youth Initiatives in Sana'a, said, "It is possible that all our weddings will be qat-free, but only if the people and the government show support for this move."

Some businessmen in Yemen have also showed their support for the trend, with some even saying they are willing to cover the expenses of weddings that are qat-free.

Many politicians and civil society organizations have been active in combating qat growing in Yemen, but the change in attitudes is still new. Recently, Parliament turned down a bill aimed at tackling the spread of qat and qat-growing.



Some businessmen have offered to pay for weddings if they are qat-free.

The bill is designed to gradually prevent qat planting, over a period of 21 years. According to the bill, farmers who quit growing qat will be compensated, allowing them to diversify their crops slowly.

Dr. Najeeb Saeed Ghanim, a Parliament member and the Head of the Health and Population Committee, introduced the bill.

"The bill provides a gradual plan so that qat will be prohibited in the future," he said.

Ghanim indicated that the bill involves economic alternatives to solve income-related issues caused by changing crops.

Abdulrahman Al-Qubati, a member of Qat-Free Generation

Organization, said the group launches seasonal campaigns to disseminate information about the detrimental effects of qat.

"The organization will also stage a protest in front of the House of Representatives in order to lobby Parliament to enact the bill so that Yemen's future will be economically and socially free of qat and its negative impacts."

Al-Qubati added the purpose of the organization is to make Yemen's future generations understand the effects of qat on society.

Many other civil society organizations strive to educate people about the harmful effects of qat, but changing entrenched social

attitudes and highlighting the dangers of qat consumption may take years not months, they say.

Saeed says Yemenis spend up to \$20 million a day on qat consumption.

Studies also highlight that the average family expenditure on qat often reaches 12 percent of their total income, with only two percent being spent on education and three percent spent on health.

With increasingly dangerous chemicals and pesticides being used to increase qat production, society may face a looming health catastrophe if the growing of the leaf is not regulated or controlled, anti-qat campaigners say.



While wedding attendees are typically receptive to a wedding without qat, the traditional ones that allow the leaf are more prevalent.

# Taiz takes a note from Sana'a and launches its own city-wide 'Sharik' cleaning campaign



Under the slogan, "Clean Cities for Our Generation," participants got to work sweeping streets.



The city fulfilled its commitment to fill in potholes and provide more trash cans for residents.

Story by Emad Al-Saqqaf  
Photos by Shawqi Al-Saqqaf

**T**he local government in Taiz launched the first phase of the social cleaning campaign, "Sharik" on Saturday.

Just like the sister campaign that took place in Sana'a in mid-

December, people from all walks of life, including soldiers, housewives, and college students participated.

The campaign will last 56 days in Sala, Al-Qahira and Al-Mudafar districts.

"I'm proud that Taiz has pioneered the idea of Sharik, a sustainable project and not a

temporary one like in some other governorates," said Taiz's governor, Shawqi Ahmed Hael.

The campaign aims to promote civic engagement and create a culture that values clean streets, but it was a long time coming, Hael said.

"We announced this cleaning project four months ago, but

we delayed it in order to create a suitable framework for implementation. We had to solve multiple problems like repairing potholes in the streets, reconciling a shortage of trash cans and fixing broken cleaning equipment," he said.

To pave the way for citizen's participation, Taiz underwent a

face lift.

"The local authority has now paved 85 percent of the city's streets. It restored light posts and opened the entrances of the city. This cost approximately YR 600 million," Hael said.

The governor commended the funding efforts of local businessmen, national companies

and contractors.

"I am happy to participate in this campaign and clean my city. I want to send a message to people that cleaning or environment protection is not only the business of the street cleaners. It is a joint responsibility," said Altaf Ibrahim, a student at the Technical and Vocational Institute.

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