

News

U.S. embassy supports Yemen's unity, evades responsibility for drone attack

Page 2

Opinion

In memory of Michael Nebelung

Page 6



Interview

The U.N.'s transitional assistance to Yemen: 'One of the challenges is that the expectations are very high'

Page 4 and 5



متوفر لدى جميع  
الموزعين المعتمدين  
ومراكز خدمة سبأفون

400

ريال إشتراك شهري  
حسب سنة الإشتراك



200

فائز شهرياً



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67%

تخفيض في خدمة  
الأهل والأصدقاء



100%

الخط مجاني



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ريال بداية لباقات  
الإنترنت



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المُشغّل الأول و الأكبر للهاتف النقال في اليمن



**Struggling to make a connection:** Yemen's Internet users say increasingly poor and unpredictable Web services are getting out of hand. Repeated sabotage of fiber-optic cables have contributed to the problem, but many blame the government's monopoly on the service. **Read more on Page 10** (Photo by Mohammed Al-Hassani)

## President Hadi appeases angry tribes in Hadramout

**Initial demands from Tribal Federation have been met by government**

Ali Ibrahim Al-Moshki

SANA'A, Dec. 18—President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi agreed Tuesday to the demands of tribes in Hadramout, who have asked that military camps be removed from the area and that those responsible for the killing of a prominent tribal sheikh be handed over.

The president also promised that jobs with petroleum companies working in the region will be allocated for residents in Hadramout governorate, according to Khalid Al-Daini, the area's governor.

Last week a coalition of powerful

tribes in Hadramout threatened to occupy military camps and government compounds in the governorate if the state did not respond to their demands. The tribes gave the government a Dec. 20 deadline.

Hadramout has been tense since the killing of a tribal sheikh, Sheikh Sa'ad Bin Hamad Harbish, at a security checkpoint on Dec. 2 at the entrance to the city of Seyoun. The sheikh refused to stop at the checkpoint when soldiers asked to inspect his convoy's cars.

Col. Hussein Hashim, Seyoun city's security manager, said forces are on high alert for an expected mass rally on Friday hosted by the tribes. He said troops are equipped with batons, tear gas and water hoses in anticipation of riots.

Hadi reportedly phoned Harbish's family this week and sent a presidential committee to negotiate

with tribal sheikhs.

The committee was comprised of senior government officials including Ali Nasser Al-Akhsa, the deputy interior minister, and Khalid Al-Daini, the governor of Hadramout.

Al-Daini said the committee met with the Hadramout Tribal Federation, informing them that President Hadi has accepted their demands.

"These demands will be met gradually. For example, military camps will be evacuated based on a withdrawal schedule. Local residents will receive vocational training in order to be recruited for work in the oil companies, and investigations are currently underway to identify those responsible for the death of the sheikh in order to hand them over for prosecution," Al-Daini said.

While peace between the tribes and the government appears to be going ahead, Abdulrahman

Anees, a journalist based in Hadramout, said people are preparing for the worst.

"People rushed to purchase and store food and other supplies because they fear an eruption of military clashes and mass chaos as a result of the planned demonstration," he said.

Saleh Molla Al-Dwilah, spokesperson for the Hadramout Tribal Federation, confirmed that President Hadi had agreed to all their demands, but said they will go ahead with the planned mass rally in case action does not materialize.

"All political entities and civil society organizations in Hadramout's cities should prepare for the mass rally and form local committees to maintain security and protect public and private property," read a statement from the Tribal Federation released on Tuesday.

## HRW wants civilian deaths in drone attacks investigated

Nasser Al-Sakkaf

SANA'A, Dec. 18—Human Rights Watch called on the U.S. and Yemeni governments to investigate the deaths of civilians caused by airstrikes in Yemen "to ensure accountability and appropriate redress for unlawful attacks."

According to a press release published on Dec. 17, the fourth anniversary of a U.S. cruise missile attack in the Al-Ma'ajalah area in Abyan governorate that killed 41 sleeping civilians, victims' relatives are still waiting for the U.S. to "acknowledge the killing" or "even to account for what happened in that airstrike."

The legal coordinator of the AlKarama Foundation in Yemen, Mohamed Al-Ahmadi, supports HRW's assessment that the U.S. has never publicly acknowledged or investigated the majority of attacks that take place and needs to be held accountable.

"I don't think there will be any reaction to this [press] release from either the U.S. or Yemeni governments, but relatives of the dead will be encouraged in their struggle to achieve an official investigation and compensation for their losses," Al-Ahmadi said.

"The only way to say whether the dead were linked to terrorist groups is to conduct a thorough investigation," he added.

The media coverage of civilian casualties in drone strikes following the Al-Ma'ajalah strike in 2009 has noticeably increased, Al-Ahmadi said.

"Many journalists were fearful about reporting on airstrikes, but nowadays the barriers of silence have been broken," he said.

Yemeni journalist Abdullelah Haider Shaye, who was later imprisoned for his reporting, was the first to expose the civilian death toll in the Al-Ma'ajalah strike by publish-

ing the names of women and children who died in that attack.

Shaye was released from prison this year despite the U.S.'s insistence that he remain in state custody. The AlKarama organization awarded Shaye the Human Rights Defenders award this year for his reporting.

Interim President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi has publicly endorsed the U.S.'s drone program in Yemen in the two nations' joint efforts to fight terrorism.

The most recent airstrike in Yemen has bolstered anti-drone activists argument. A wedding convoy in the Rada'a area of Al-Beida'a governorate was targeted last week, killing 12 people and injuring another eight.

Yemen's government has said that at least two of those killed were Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) affiliates.

On Sunday, Yemen's Parliament

called on the government to prevent U.S. drones from flying over Yemen. They urged the government instead to utilize Yemen's own military and security forces to combat terror.

But, the call has been seen largely as symbolic as President Hadi serves as the official authority of the drone program.

"I do not think that the Yemeni state will respond positively to this request because American pressure on the Yemeni government is stronger than the influence of human rights organizations," said Ali Al-Ansi, a member of Yemen's Parliament.

President Barack Obama said in May that the U.S. only uses lethal force outside recognized battle zones—in places such as Yemen—if it has "near-certainty" that no civilians will be harmed.

The Yemen Times contacted the U.S. Embassy in Yemen, but they declined to comment.





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### "يدي بيدك 5": مشروع اجتماعي برعاية راديو يمن تايمز



يهدف هذا المشروع لجمع البطانيات والملابس الشتوية، ومن ثم توزيعها على الأسر المحتاجة في صنعاء.

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## US embassy supports Yemen's unity, evades responsibility for drone attack

Ali Abulohoom

SANA'A, Dec. 18—The U.S.'s attitude toward Yemen's unity has always been to preserve the union, said Karen Sasahara, the U.S. charge d'affaires at the American Embassy in Sana'a, in a roundtable discussion with local journalists on Sunday.

"The U.S. wants the Southern leaders, who are representing the Southern people to bring the voices and opinions of the people into the dialogue so they can be heard very clearly as there is no better time for the grievances of the South to be heard in definite way," Sasahara said.

Sasahara assumed the helm at the embassy following the September departure of Ambassador Gerald Feierstein, who was stationed in Sana'a for three years.

Of the most pressing questions, for the embassy's current leader, were those centered around a recent U.S. drone strike that hit a wedding convoy in central Yemen, killing 12 people and injuring eight others.

The U.S. continues to operate a controversial drone program to battle terrorism in Yemen. Strikes are rarely acknowledged by the U.S. government, infuriating activists who say no one is held accountable for civilian deaths.

President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi has publicly offered his support for the program, despite a call from Yemen's Parliament this week to end the use of drone strikes.

In response to the most recent drone attack, Sasahara directed journalists to Yemen's Ministry of Interior, saying they are the more concerned body to sort out the information that is surfacing regarding the strike.

"I've heard conflicting reports after the meeting of the security committee," Sasahara said, adding that reports indicated that there "were Al-Qaeda in the Ara-

bian Peninsula [AQAP] elements involved in the wedding convoy."

On the attack on Yemen's Ministry of Defense that left 56 dead and more than 200 injured on Dec. 5, the U.S. charge d'affaires for Yemen acknowledged that AQAP was involved. However, she denied the U.S.'s role in the subsequent investigation. She advised journalists to direct their questions to the Yemeni government. A source at the Defense Ministry previously told the Yemen Times that a joint American-German committee would be assisting in investigations of the attack.

As for the investigation committee formed by the Yemeni President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi, Sasahara advised Yemen's government to use the footage of the attack, recorded on CCTV, and to continue questioning eyewitnesses at the scene.

In spite of an impasse at the National Dialogue Conference, reconciliatory talks which were supposed to end in September and face deadlocks over major issues such as the future shape of the country, Sasahara expressed her support for the process.

"We still consider the National Dialogue Conference to be a success because the people involved in the dialogue are still talking, and as long as the people are talking that means the problems are getting solved."

But Sasahara recognized people's frustrations with the transitional process that seems to be dragging its feet.

"We are disappointed that the National Dialogue did not conclude in September as it was scheduled," she said. "We also understand that over the past two months many parts within the dialogue actually started to talk about the details, for instance federalism and regions, and it's impossible to be concluded without reaching acceptable outcomes regarding that."

The Group of 10 Ambassadors in Sana'a, comprised of the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council along with five members from the Gulf Cooperation Council, is in charge of overseeing the implementation of the Gulf Cooperation Council's Initiative, the doctrine that stipulated outcomes of Yemen's transitional process.

In reaction to unconfirmed reports that state the ambassadors are disappointed about Jamal Benomar's role in the transitional period, Sasahara denied such claims.

"We work with Jamal on a regular basis, he is in touch with all the parties, and he is a special envoy from the U.N. so I think he's doing very good job within very difficult circumstances," Sasahara said.

Regarding the 56 Yemeni detainees who are still being held in Guantanamo prison despite being cleared for release, Sasahara reaffirmed the U.S. earlier position that they are eligible to be transported to Yemen.

However, she added, each one of them will be reviewed on a case by case basis. Sasahara said this process has to take place in coordination with the Yemeni government.

"I know it's a slow process but the U.S. is absolutely committed to doing as the [U.S.] president said in his speech at the National Defense University on the 22nd of May, he wants to close Guantanamo," she said.

Fielding questions about the U.S.'s financial assistance to Yemen, Sasahara said that last week at the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, she signed a new agreement to provide additional funding to Yemen in the amount of \$21.9 million for projects such as maternity health care and clean water.

"This is in addition to the \$120 million that the U.S. alone has provided through USAID [so far]," she said.

## The end is near NDC to conclude this month

Mohammed Al-Hassani

SANA'A, Dec. 18—Officials from the National Dialogue Conference (NDC)'s governing body, the presidium, said on Tuesday that the conference will wrap up before the end of the year.

In a statement to the press, Yaseen Saeed Noman and Sultan Al-Atwani, the joint deputy heads of the conference said within the next two weeks a roadmap of the processes to follow the conference will be set into place.

Many say pressure from foreign influences has weighed heavily on the decision to conclude.

Yasser Al-Ruaini, the NDC's deputy secretary general, said the Group of 10 Ambassadors in Sana'a, which includes the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council and five countries from the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) recently met with the conference's presidium.

"President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi is somewhat responsive to

such pressures," Al-Ruaini said.

However, major issues that the conference was meant to resolve—including the future shape of the Yemeni state and addressing Southern desires for secession—are still pending even after an initial extension of the conference. The NDC began in March and was supposed to conclude in September.

Moreover, the conference's Reconciliation Committee, which was created to seek compromise on some of the conference's most controversial issues including a Transitional Justice Law, say they are still at a loss as to what to do.

The Transitional Justice Law, as stipulated by the GCC Initiative, was designed to address human rights violations committed by the former regime under Ali Abdulla Saleh during Yemen's 2011 uprising. However, the General People's Congress (GPC), the former ruling party which Saleh still heads, has been a major opponent to proposals put forward by the working

group dealing with the issue.

President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi met with the Reconciliation Committee last week, ordering the formation of a smaller three-member committee to try and seek resolve on pending issues.

The Reconciliation Committee's reporter, Hussam Al-Sharjbi, said the Transitional Justice Working Group's final report is supposed to be handed in on Thursday.

The Reconciliation Committee's is also busy trying to develop a plan for the post-NDC period, in which a nine-month transitional government will be formed in addition to a redesign of the Shoura Council.

While critics scoff at the lack of the NDC's accomplishments for the last nine months, others say it is all part of a transitional process.

"I think the people in charge of the NDC are more serious this time to finalize pending issues in the upcoming 10 days," Dr. Ahmed Sinan, an academic and political analyst, said.

## AQAP threatens government interests in online video

Ali Ibrahim Al-Moshki

SANA'A, Dec. 18—A man identified as a military commander for Al-Qaeda in Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) appeared in a video on YouTube on Monday making unprecedented threats against the Yemeni government.

"We are able to drive two trucks to every military camp in Yemen. We are able to drive two trucks to each ministry loaded with tons of explosives," said Qasim Al-Raimi in the roughly 10-minute video that was supposedly posted by Al-Malahi, an Al-Qaeda-affiliated publication.

Al-Raimi threatened to attack government interests if Yemen continues its war against the militant group.

"We are still calling on the wise people of the government, if there are wise individuals. We say to them, the government and the army should not get involved in this conflict and should not chase us or give intelligence information to the American drone [program]," Al-Raimi said in the video titled,

"So they may reason."

The video's authenticity could not be confirmed by an independent third source, nor does it contain any reference to the recent attack on the Ministry of Defense in which an unconfirmed number of armed men killed over 50 people and injured over 200 others.

AQAP has been suspected of being behind the attack but the government not named any official culprits.

In the video, Al-Raimi also accuses interim President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi of colluding with the U.S.

"Abu Rabu has entrapped the army in a war with Al-Qaeda. Now he is unable to protect them. He will not be able to defend them against our attacks."

The film also details the number of government soldiers AQAP has captured and held prisoner. According to the video from 2009 through 2013, 300 soldiers have been held and then released by the militant group after the soldiers "proclaimed repentance" and promised not to fight against AQAP

again.

"In May of 2011, 100 soldiers from the October Seven military camp in Abyan were released," a voice in the video says.

The video then shows short glimpse of soldiers, pledging to end the war against AQAP.

In response to the video, Mohammed Al-Mawiri, the media secretary for the Interior Ministry, said, "AQAP's statement confirms the government accusations that [Al-Qaeda] is behind terrorist acts. The army is right to combat it."

"Al-Qaeda's statement is a proof that it is still strong in Yemen," said Abdulrazzaq Al-Jamali, a researcher who follows AQAP developments.

Yemen's government has long battled the militant group. With the support of President Hadi, the U.S. runs a controversial drone program in the country, in which a number of civilians have been killed.

"Neither drone strikes nor the security campaign against the Al-Qaeda will affect its power," said Al-Jamali. "[Yemeni] security forces and the Americans have failed in their war against AQAP."

## Yemen calls for reforms on liquid gas prices

Total Oil company locked in ongoing negotiations with officials

Rammah Al-Jubari

SANA'A, Dec. 18—The Yemeni government called on the Total Oil company this week to adhere to changes in Yemeni liquid natural gas (LNG) prices that will peg them to global prices as of the first of the year. Total Oil purchases approximately two-thirds of Yemeni LNG supply.

The company agreed to negotiate reforms at a meeting held by President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi with the head of the Total Middle East department in early December, according to the minister of finance.

Shawki Al-Mekhlafi, the deputy minister of Yemen's Ministry of Oil and Minerals, told the Yemen Times that "agreements signed during the former regime deprived Yemen of full and fair compensation for LNG sales."

Previous contracts were signed

under the leadership of ousted President Ali Abdulla Saleh, who was forced to step down following Yemen's popular uprising in 2011.

"It is illogical to have sold gas for \$3 per million Btu for 20 years while the global price was never lower than \$12," said economic analyst Rasheed Al-Haddad.

Al-Mekhlafi said the state treasury receives \$300 million per year in profit from the product, whereas if gas were sold at the global market rate, Yemen would be raking in more than \$1 billion each year.

According to the Ministry of Oil, Yemen produces 6.7 million tons of LNG yearly. In 1995, under Saleh, the government signed a 20-year agreement to sell liquid gas to Total Oil (France), Kogas (Korea), and GDF-Suez (France) for \$3 per million British thermal units (Btu).

In a meeting with a representative of the U.S. Treasury Department on Monday, Yemen's finance minister, Sakhr Al-Wajeeh, said, "Yemen may have to take action to ensure Yemeni interests unless LNG prices

are corrected at the beginning of the new year."

"Yemen is currently undergoing a sensitive and exceptional [political and economic] situation, and reform of gas prices cannot be postponed any longer," he added.

On Tuesday, Ahmed Dares, Yemen's oil minister, announced that an agreement had been reached with Kogas, which purchases roughly one-third of Yemen's annual LNG production. Kogas will pay a new rate of \$12.60 per million Btu, versus the previous rate of \$7.21 agreed upon a year ago, which had initially raised the rate by \$1.50.

The Total Middle East communications director, Eve Gautier, said in an email to the Yemen Times that negotiations between Yemen and the company over the new price have not yet concluded.

"Talks are ongoing with Yemeni authorities regarding the pricing of Yemen LNG's production," Gautier said, adding that company policy prevented her from commenting further on ongoing negotiations.

ADVERTORIAL

## Arabic Web Days in Sana'a

On Saturday, for the first time in Yemen, Google Developers Group (GDG Sana'a) hosted the Arabic Web Days Conference in cooperation with Google International and the Arabic Web Days Regional Initiative, under the sponsorship of Natco in cooperation with TeleYemen.

In addition to being the first conference on the topic of Arabic content, the conference was the first in Yemen to use a video conference technique to host international speakers nationwide online. The Arabic Web Days are among the events that make the most significant contributions to enrichment of Arabic Internet content.

Engineer Wael Al-Fakhrani, Director of Google in the Middle East and North

Africa; Faeq Awais, Director of Translation and Arabization at Google; and other international speakers as well as local and regional representatives participated in the conference online via Google Hangout service.

Al-Fakhrani delivered a speech on behalf of Google followed by Fathi Abdulwasea Hayel, CEO of Natco Holding Company, who delivered a speech in which he welcomed the guests and emphasized the need to support youth and also improve the image of Yemen at the local and international level through such specialized and innovative events.

Caroline Scolder, Mobile Program



Manager at Wikimedia Foundation, announced the start of cooperation with GDG-Sana'a by the beginning of 2014 to introduce the Project Zero-Wikipedia to telecommunications companies in Yemen.

GDG extended its special thanks to Natco for its support and sponsorship of the conference, in particular the strong support of Mr. Hayel, the CEO.



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## The U.N.'s transitional assistance to Yemen

# 'One of the challenges is that the expectations are very high'

Yemen, like many other countries that have gone through transitional periods, is facing difficulties dealing with issues requiring synchronized government coordination, including one in the pipeline for February, the holding of national elections.

The United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) is an organization that implements projects worldwide under the international governing body. Since 2008, the UNOPS has been running various projects in Yemen.

In 2013, the organization's portfolio grew to provide assistance to U.N. Special Envoy to Yemen Jamal Benomar and his work with the National Dialogue Conference (NDC). This support will be extended to Yemen's drafting of a new constitution, slated to take place following the wrap up of the NDC.

In line with the UNOPS mandate in Yemen, the organization has also been requested by the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation to support the assessment of the government's public procurement system (policy, organization, processes and capacity).

Additionally, last month, the governments of Yemen and Qatar officially designated the UNOPS to administer a newly-established fund created to compensate civilians and military personnel who were forced out of their jobs and off their land in the South, following the nation's civil war in 1994. Qatar donated \$350 million to the Southern Victims' Fund in November, giving Yemen the resources to move ahead with reconciliatory efforts for tensions that still exist between the two regions.

Jan Mattsson, the executive director of the UNOPS, recently visited Yemen in order to assess progress in the country and better understand how the U.N. can assist Yemen in its political transition.

In an interview with the Yemen Times, Mattsson along with Niels Guenther, the UNOPS country director in Yemen, talk about the country's current projects and visions for Yemen's future.

Interview and photos by Nima Tamaddon



Niels Guenther

Jan Mattsson

### Mr. Mattsson, it's your first trip to Sana'a. Have you already met with Yemeni officials?

**JM:** Yes, I had the opportunity to meet with the prime minister and also the minister of development, and I had a brief conversation upon arrival with the deputy foreign minister.

**Transparency and accountability are two of the main pillars of effective and good governance. The Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation recently requested support from the UNOPS to help assess the government's public procurement system. Is Yemen transparent and accountable enough according to your guidelines? What do you think of the request?**

**JM:** That is one of the handful of activities that we are doing here. Yes, we were asked by the planning minister to send in an expert to take a rapid assessment on the government's procurement practices. The process is in place...our experts had discussion with lots of people in the government and other observers. There is a lot that can be done, not only to increase transparency but especially the efficiency of the procurement. Speed is also very im-

portant because you want to see the results. You can easily get bogged down in very bureaucratic and complicated processes.

**What is your focus regarding the projects you are running? Are your current tasks going to be more concentrated on state building processes, or other fields such as education and health care?**

**JM:** Well, in this particular activity, all focus is on procurement, supply chain management and how institutions can be strengthened—how the people who work in these institutions can be trained to appropriate levels. We have a way of assessing public procurement capacity comparing it with the best international practices, as well as individual competence.

**Can you compare the current situation in Yemen to any other country where you have operational programs?**

**JM:** No, I don't think if I'm able to that.

**So, the situation in Yemen is unique?**

**JM:** Well, we always like to say that every country is unique, but there is so much in common in all those

other countries in terms of how this process can be strengthened. As a matter of fact, in most developing countries there has been too much attention given to the training of people responsible for procurement. So you have people well trained, handling procurement, but not necessarily according to international, best-practice standards. We see that everywhere in countries. We see possibilities of making significant savings, easily 10 or 20 percent savings in public procurement by just getting it right. That should be possible here as well. We are talking about health related procurements such as in the pharmaceutical [field], state hospitals and construction type of activities.

**But procurement is a general term. Can you elaborate on what your projects are in Yemen?**

**JM:** Yes, procurement is just a way of describing work, or an aspect of work, in many different sectors. It is technical in that sense. But of course, it applies whether it's the health, education, construction sector, etc. In that sense, it is cross-country. I can't tell you whether it's for this or that. This would be part of the process for the existing government and the new government

to determine depending on its priorities. So let's say that the government decides that health is a priority, then we would of course target capacity building and procurement in the health sector. Health is too broad a topic as well because that could refer to the pharmaceutical [field], health-related clinical equipment or help for hospitals and labs, or it could be building or renovating hospitals when you talk about the construction sector. I think there's a process ahead now of deciding where the investment should be made based on the government's priorities. It's too early to talk about that part.

**What are Yemen's main challenges preventing it from reaching your standards?**

**JM:** I would say it's mainly in professional development.

**NG:** I agree with that. We also understand that when it comes to the absorption capacity of the government, it is not only about ensuring that corruption is avoided, but also as Jan said, efficiency. So if you establish too many controls without building up the capacity of the people to be empowered and to be competent, to operate within that environment, then the result is that nothing is procured, nothing happens, so very little or very slowly. Obviously given current circumstances, there is a high demand for development. For instance, there are also opportunities in terms of funding from the Friends of Yemen and others. Therefore it is a very timely thing to do now to see where exactly not only where the weaknesses are, but also where the priorities are from the development side. What is needed then is to bring this together and see where a niche or a good interface for the UNOPS is to insert itself.

**When you talk about development, is there a lack of knowledge and expertise that are exacerbating Yemen's problems, or a lack of level of accountability among political parties and figures that stand against development?**

**JM:** When we look at things from a procurement angle, obviously we look at the technical aspects.

**NG:** We also believe that if there is

a strong system in place that focuses on the technical side then there will be less ambiguity in place, less reasons for mistrust and more transparency basically.

**Recently, a fund for Southern victims of the civil war was established with support from Qatar in the form of a \$350 million donation. The Yemeni government asked the UNOPS to administer the fund. Can you explain this project in detail? Are there other sponsors beside Qatar?**

**JM:** This project will be under the overall umbrella of support we provide for the U.N.'s special representative Jamal Benomar. The UNOPS role is to provide administrative support for the whole process. You asked specifically about the funding. There is an initial contribution from the government of Qatar, with \$350 million pledged, and I think they already paid \$150 million.

## Obviously given current circumstances, there is a high demand for development

**NG:** Yes, \$150 million has already been transferred and another \$200 million has been pledged based on a request for 2014.

**JM:** Even though people are speculating on the amount needed to reimburse officials that lost their jobs, and the people who lost their land, there is no definite amount of how much money is needed. But certainly, there is a need for additional donations from donors. So that is something that has to be worked on. I'm sure from the U.N.'s perspective, that it's going to be spearheaded by [Benomar]. Then the government of course would also need to

raise more funds. As for the processes involved, two commissions are in place, steering committees that are going to be set up. Technical people will review the applications in a transparent way to make sure there is consistency, fairness and openness about how decisions are made. Work still needs to be done that is extremely important for the success of the whole project.

**So, basically it means that you are going to establish an office, and people from the South can go there to apply for help?**

**JM:** What I've been briefed on in the last couple of days is that two committees, one for each [set of grievances, stolen lands and lost jobs], have been set up, and that already 100,000 complaints have been made to each committee, for a total of 200,000 [complaints]. There may be some people that applied to both committees because there are two forms of compensation. How many people [with complaints there are in general], I don't know. Maybe there are more to come if I understand correctly because there has been no deadline set yet for the process.

**NG:** There was a mandate for both committees, set up by a presidential decree in early 2013. Their work is ongoing, and it's also supported by various partners within the U.N., not only from the political side [that is represented by] Jamal Benomar, but also through the [United Nations Development Program] UNDP and others. We understand that the fund to compensate is part of the process, the next steps are to review, to classify, to process, to come up with recommendations and to compensate.

**How do you verify those that apply for compensation? You definitely need to rely on Yemeni government for this process, right?**

**JM:** I think that detail, as far as I understand, has not been worked out yet. But of course, you are on right track in saying that it has to be based on verifiable claims.

**NG:** The documentation in theory could be multiple claims on the same piece of land. Also not all compensation would be financial. There is a discussion to give land back or



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to allocate a new piece or different piece of land as compensation. So financial compensation is one piece of the picture. The UNOPS role is not involved in policy so the policy support is extended through Jamal Benomar and his team. But the entire process is Yemeni led. It is a part of a discussion at the National Dialogue, it's a part of the political transitional process for reconciliation, and we are here to support that by bringing in means and processing [support] to the technical side.

**Regarding the specific part of your job that is administrating the fund, do you think it's better to establish an office in Aden or another part of the South? Mainly because travelling to the capital for some Southerners might be hard due to the historical background and animosity between some Southerners and Northerners.**

**NG:** The committees have been established there in the South for the application process that is happening in the South. [But] if the UNOPS role is to receive funding from Qatar or others, this might happen in Sana'a where we have a small presence. We hope this will build and grow based on requirements. There will be a need for the fund management to have a certain link to the South because obviously this fund needs to work closely with the committees. So if committees are based in the South, then also it's a part of the work. That's a part of the planning, but there is no such document that says it should be an office in Aden. The process needs to be designed based on some policies, and the policies are more or less in place, but if you want to dig into detail, then there is a need to define and so far there is no money for this. Qatar is the first contributing country that has pledged some money to the government, so the process is starting. One of the challenges is that the expectations are very high.

**From which side?**

**NG:** From the Southerners, and we

understand why. At the same time to set this up, there needs to be agreement. It needs certain things to be set up properly. You cannot just say, 'Well we will take \$50 out of the budget and distribute it based on first come first serve.' It's not necessarily [a matter of] those who are processed first should be fully compensated first. This is one of the policy questions that is not for the UNOPS to decide. This is something that the committees are deciding. There is also a link between the committees and the wider political and financial stakeholders that need to [be involved in] this kind of decision making.

**We see many challenges in the political process, for example, with the timeline and with the NDC being extended**

**JM:** For example, if the value of total claims ends up as \$1 billion and only 35 percent of those resources are available, then maybe the decision is that everybody gets 35 percent of their claims, as opposed to the first people who apply getting all the money, and the second and third [round] applicants get nothing.

**I don't want to frustrate you by continuing to ask for details, but what timetable have you planned for this project? How long will this budget and project run?**

**NG:** There is no decision. The land commission and the dismissal commission have a mandate through a presidential decree which was for one year only. Very likely this needs to be extended because of the much higher number of claims received.

Also, the processing, and the documentation of that information takes longer than maybe initially anticipated. The fund itself and the negotiations for the set up of the fund were at very high level—so far at a political level. Only now that the [project is launched] there will be the beginning of technical discussions. In order to do this properly and in an accountable, fair and transparent way, the process needs to be set up. So it would be a little bit of speculation at this point, [over] how much and when and if there are other donors, when would they come in? There are things we don't know yet.

**To put this issue in a bigger picture, how important is the establishment of this fund for Yemen's future?**

**JM:** It does appear to be very important from the perspective of national reconciliation, and then it's important to be implemented well.

**In a country that is suffering from a lack of water, education, health service, foreign investment, etc., do you think the issue of Southerners is more important?**

**JM:** Ok, it's a fair journalistic question. And frankly, I obviously cannot comment on the priorities of the government. This seems to be extremely important and would of course have the advantage of supporting the local economy as well. It is an infusion of capital into the local economy. But in addition to that, there are of course so many investment needs that you mentioned and we discussed, such as the health sector, infrastructure, education, water sanitation, energy sector... all of these things are of course priorities. The good news is that it seems that as long as this ongoing process is going well and the election goes well, then there should also not only

be domestic investment in resources but more international interest in investing here.

**You just mention the election which is scheduled for February 2014. From your perspective, what would be a deciding factor or a very important element in the post-NDC period?**

**JM:** I think a number of things need to happen, including constitutional discussions, agreements and the shaping of the constitution. From what I gathered by talking to a lot of people here, [the constitution] cannot be ready by February. So already people are talking about having the election a bit later once those processes have been set up properly.

**It's very clear what we are working towards. We are working towards this election and a new democratically-elected government**

**You came here and met with the interim government of Yemen. How do you see the future of those talks and promises that I assume they have made in meetings with you? How reliable are those promises in a fragile situation like this—in a transitional period? How can you trust them?**

**NG:** Generally we believe that it's a Yemeni-led process. We know that the U.N., through the office of Jamal Benomar, is supportive and the UNOPS will not get involved [because] it's not part of our mandate to be involved in the political side. We understand that the political transition process needs to be in balance with development and also certain humanitarian activities that are necessary. Currently, we have a focus on implementing activities in direct support to Jamal Benomar's office. Therefore, we are involved with the NDC, [and] there might be a role for the UNOPS to support the operational side of the constitutional drafting commission. There are other U.N. agencies that are already preparing—as you know the UNDP and others—voter registration, the constitutional referendum and the elections.

**JM:** Just to clarify, the UNOPS mandate is one of operational support, implementation support and obviously the political process here is led by [Benomar] on the U.N. side and the rest of the coordinators as well. We are the supporters of those processes, making sure that things are implemented.

**NG:** Having said that, we see many challenges in the political process, for example, with the timeline and with the NDC being extended. We understand why. But I think we also see a lot of optimism and not only from the outside. [People] are saying this is something that looks really amazing if you compare it with other countries in the region—though it's always difficult to compare—but also I believe in the meetings we have had with the government. I think there is energy and political will. There might be some [people] who are less interested or do not have the same direction [at the NDC, but] this is not unexpected. This is something that needs to be sorted out and will not be easy. But I think the overall impression is still optimistic, and it must move forward, and people understand this hopefully, insha'allah.

**What is your prediction about the direction of Yemen in the next, let's say, five years from now?**

**JM:** It's very clear what we are working towards. We are working towards this election and a new democratically-elected government and stability in the country, which would allow investment and development. So we are working towards a very positive scenario in the country.

**I think the overall impression is still optimistic, and it must move forward**

**NG:** We know, as I said earlier, that political development and humanitarian processes are running in parallel. They will continue to do so. We hope that with progress on the political side, the focus will shift to development so that in a few years time that there will be—when there is more stability—not only [improvement in] security but in terms of institutional [capacity]—a better system of governance will be established. [For] some of those things, like infrastructure, the Yemenis' need cannot wait, and it has to start now. We know that there will be many challenges. Everybody knows it, but what can we do but hope and pray and [are] optimistic.

**JM:** This is very important time for Yemen, these months.

**NG:** Yes, there are many opportunities, actually amazing ones, for Yemenis.



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## In memory of Michael Nebelung

Wael Zakout

On Saturday, Dec. 1, a group of donors gathered at the World Bank office in Sana'a to discuss the ways in which we could help Yemen implement the outcomes of the National Dialogue Conference (NDC). Our meeting included, in addition to the World Bank, representatives of the U.N., the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Department for International Development (DFID), representatives of Germany, the Netherlands, and Japan, among a host of other participants.

It was the weekend, and the offices were empty except for those attending the meeting. Michael Nebelung sat right in front of me as we discussed the steps we need to take going forward. We agreed on a plan to study other countries' experiences in managing transitions, both successful and un-

successful and to review Yemen's own experience with reform over the last 10 years. We also decided to hire a team of top experts to draw up scenarios for how donors could best support government implementation of the outcomes of the NDC. And finally, we agreed to meet the following week. However, Michael's life was cut short.

On the morning of Dec. 5, Michael, Yemen's country director for Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), a German development organization, went to a hospital in Sana'a for a medical checkup. He was accompanied by a fellow GIZ staff member and their driver.

While they were there, a group of terrorists attacked the hospital. They went on a shooting spree, killing everyone in their path: doctors, nurses and patients alike. The carnage left 56 people dead and more than 200 injured. Michael was among the victims. He was murdered in cold blood by those cowardly terrorists.

I first met Michael about a year ago, when he came to my office with a long list of GIZ-supported programs. We discussed these projects and explored the options for cooperation between the World Bank and GIZ. Later on, we became good friends. He was a smart man, knowledgeable and dedicated to development. Michael spent almost all of his professional life helping others. His journey took him across the world, from Guatemala, through Kosovo and to Yemen. He was committed to helping the people of Yemen send their children to school, improve their health services and provide clean water for their families. Like all of us, he sought to support Yemen during this historic period of national transition.

None of us who attended Saturday's meeting is under the illusion that the task ahead is easy or risk free, but we all believe in the Yemeni people. We also understand that building Yemen's future requires ongoing support from the international community. Those



who killed Michael and the many other victims are seeking to halt this historic, peaceful political transition.

To them, we say, "You will not succeed!"

We will continue to walk in Michael's path. We will continue his work. We will remain beside the Yemeni people as they seek to build their modern democratic state and we are determined to continue what Michael has started through to completion.

Wael Zakout is the World Bank country manager in Yemen



**OUR OPINION**

## Yemen in 2014

By 2014, we will have finished the National Dialogue Conference (NDC) and will have agreed on a framework for the next phase.

In 2014, we will have a new government and the Shoura Council will be restructured or rather, reformed. The new government will include all major political players, and its representatives will include both women and youth. Some of the key ministers such as those for finance, defense and the interior will be appointed by the president outside of the control of political parties. The posts will be filled by either independents or widely-popular persons.

This temporary government will take Yemen through a roughly nine-month timeframe in which a referendum for the constitution will take place. We will also complete some of the Gulf Council Countries (GCC) stipulations as outlined in the GCC Initiative. This includes following through with initial army restructuring reforms and ridding cities of their armed militias.

Also, some Southern grievances will be attended to more seriously and rapidly and some of those in Sa'ada as well.

We will also create a body that facilitates the creation of legislation that is required urgently such as the Transitional Justice Law and the Elections Law.

We hope that by the end of 2014, we will have created some visible changes in Yemen's infrastructure and allowed for the early stages of a system that redistributes power and wealth. We hope to also have created a foundation for good governance.

Then, we will have elections and have a new president, a new Parliament and a new government. All of these bodies will work together for the sake of following through with the outcomes of the NDC within the next five to six years.

At least this is the plan... let's hope in six years it will be a reality.

**Nadia Al-Sakkaf**

## Yemen and Obama's drones

Dr. Qais Ghanem

The latest in the sad saga of murder-by-drone occurred in Yemen on Sunday. It has been going on since 2002, while the deposed President Ali Abdulla Saleh was in power and covering up for the U.S. by claiming that the attacks were by the Yemeni Air Force.

The innocent victims were dressed up in their best attire, looking forward to the feast and festivities of a family wedding. But that was not to be. Some members of U.S. intelligence, sitting in comfortable chairs on the U.S. mainland, using the world's most sophisticated technology, came to the conclusion that those wedding guests, both male and female, both adults and children, were in fact "terrorists" and deserved to die instantaneously. The people behind this of course utilized all the so-called criteria supplied by their commanding officers. They used information that is accumulated to target terrorists and avoid the loss of innocent life. The net result: 13 dead and 12 severely injured, who now risk death due to the abysmal medical facilities in Al-Beida'a, where the strike took place.

Fast forward to Sana'a, where the Yemen's toothless Parliament has voted overwhelmingly to ban drones in the skies of their chaotic and impoverished country, which they love and care about. Bravo, one would say, and better late than never.

Not so fast though, for the resolution is apparently non-binding, and therefore meaningless without the approval of the new strongman of Yemen, President-by-referendum, Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi. It turns out that he is a strong supporter of the "Oba-drone" program, and previously has made official statements praising the program, and defending its accuracy.

It was not surprising when Hadi's office issued a statement claiming that the victims "were top leaders who plotted several terrorist attacks against the armed forces, police, civilians and vital government installations." According to local residents, there were two men who may have fit that description on Sunday night but certainly not the other individuals. There is a well known term for that obfuscation—collective punishment. The definition of this term is a "penalty imposed on every member of a group without regard to his or her involvement in the group's actions and conduct." In these situations, Human Rights Watch recommends the following actions be taken: establish an independent commission of inquiry to investigate crimes in violation of international law committed and seek international assistance to investigate the crimes.

I'm not holding my breath for this to take place.

There is another interesting twist to this situation. It would be amusing if it was not so tragic. Yemen's government—under Hadi's leadership—has compensated the victims' families

with \$158,000 and 100 Kalashnikov rifles. One of the criteria that makes someone a target of the Oba-drone program is "young men carrying Kalashnikov rifles."

Yemenis want to know the real reasons for this carte blanche offering from their government in response to the execution of the innocent. The poor and unacceptable excuses by Hadi and his inner circle no longer hold up. Sportsman turned politician, Imran Khan, has started a campaign for civil disobedience

in response to the U.S.'s drone program in Pakistan. There too, the former military dictator, Pervez Musharraf was working hand-in-hand with the Oba-drone assassination campaign, but he is now being prosecuted for crimes against his people. Are there lessons to be learned in Yemen?

Dr. Qais Ghanem is a retired neurologist, current radio show host, poet and author who resides in Canada.



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**Experience:**

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**Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH**  
would like to thank all friends and comforters who shared the sadness and grief with us  
in losing our dearest colleagues:

**Dr. Michael Nebelung**  
**Dr. Kai Stietenroth**  
**Mr. Ali Al-Harbi**

Who passed away as a result of the tragic event on Al-Ordhi hospital, and extend  
our heartfelt condolences and sincere sympathy to all the national and international  
victims' families.

We pray to Allah Almighty that He may raise their levels in the Heavens.

YEMEN TIMES  
Radio

## FROM THE AIRWAVES

Article 19 is a weekly awareness broadcast on Radio Yemen Times that tackles some of Yemen's toughest issues: those related to the right to freedom of opinion and expression as defined in Article 19 of the International Declaration of Human Rights.

The program airs on Radio Yemen Times, 88.8 FM, on Wednesdays at 8 p.m. and is rebroadcast on Saturdays at 11 a.m.

## Restrictions on the freedom of expression

Restrictions on freedom of expression were discussed recently with Khalid Al-Hamadi, head of the Freedom Foundation, and Ahmed Al-Rihabi, a lawyer with the HOOD Organization for Defending Rights and Freedoms.

Al-Hamadi said that restrictions were looser prior to Yemen's 2011 uprising. However, now, in addition to government restrictions, there are influential figures, including sheikhs and powerful tribes, that try to restrict the freedom of expression.

Al-Rihabi said the state supposedly guarantees the freedom of opinion and expression based on Article 41 of Yemen's Constitution, adding that portions of the document criminalize incitement against others, particularly related to religious and sectarian incitement. The Constitution also criminalizes gender or race-based incitement.

Al-Hamadi added that the media should avoid incitement of hatred and

violence, as media serve as a way for people to communicate. It should not be used as a means to manipulate people, he said.

Al-Rihabi pointed out that Yemen has fair laws but enforcement is inconsistent because of ambiguity in the way they are written. This ambiguity can be used to reduce the freedom of expression under the pretext of protecting the public for national security reasons, Al-Rihabi argues.

Social media networks, while often used as a productive way to voice an opinion, Al-Hamadi says, also provides potential platforms for defama-

**Al-Hamadi**  
We hoped the changes in the political system in Yemen would make a qualitative leap forward in obtaining these rights. Unfortunately, the [governmental] mindset is still the same, and the situation remains unchanged.

tion of character, disinformation and baseless accusations. He added that polite and constructive criticism is the proper way to express opinions and respect the rights of individuals.



Khalid Al-Hamadi الحمادي خالد

Ahmed Al-Rihabi الرحابي أحمد

With regard to ambiguities in the text of the Constitution, Khalid Al-Anisi, a lawyer weighed in on the discussion. He said the lack of specificity of some portions of the Constitution allows the government to interpret certain texts in a way that restricts the freedom of expression.

Waleed Majid, a human rights activist, agreed, saying the state's Constitution can act as the single biggest roadblock to the freedom of expression.

Najwa Abdulla, who called Radio Yemen Times to enact her right to express herself, said free and uncensored expression of thought sometimes harms public interests because people sometimes abuse freedom.

## القيود والضوابط التي تخضع لها حرية التعبير

ناقشت حلقة هذا الأربعاء القيود والضوابط التي تخضع لها حرية التعبير عن الرأي وكان ضيفي هذه الحلقة الأستاذ خالد الحمادي / رئيس مؤسسة حرية الإعلام والمحامي أحمد الرحابي من منظمة هود.

ويرى الحمادي فيما يخص هذه القيود والضوابط أنه قبل ثورات الربيع العربي، كانت القيود مفضضة وغير محددة بالضوابط ومساحة الحرية يحكمها مزاج الحاكم، أما حالياً فالقيود تشعبت ولم تعد حكومية فقط، أصبحت هناك مجامع جديدة هم المتنفذين، والمشايخ القبائل وغيرها، فأصبحوا يشكلون قيود جديدة على حرية التعبير عن الرأي.

ويرى الحمادي أن من بيته من زجاج فلا ينبغي أن يرمي بيوت الناس بالحجارة، مشيراً إلى أن في ظل وجود الإعلام الجديد ووسائل التواصل الاجتماعي أصبح الفضاء مفتوح لعمليات التشهير واختراق المعلومات وتوجيه التهم جازفاً على الآخرين، مؤكداً بأن الطريقة الصحيحة للتعبير عن الرأي والوصول إلى حق الفرد هو الانتقاد بعينية.

وفي تقرير ميداني بث ضمن الحلقة حول القيود والضوابط على حرية الرأي والتعبير أكد المحامي خالد الأنسي أن هناك نصوص توضع بمثابة قبائل والغام في وجه حرية التعبير، متى ما ضاق صدر النظام السياسي بها، قام بتقييدها في وجه من يمارسونها واستخدمها في تعطيل وتقييد حرياتهم.

كما أوضح بليغ المخلافي مدير... بأن انتهاكات هذا الحق في اليمن كثيرة ولكن لا يتم الإعلان عنها حيث أن اليمن من أكثر الدول التي توقع معاهدات ولكنها من أقل الدول التي تعمل على تطبيق تلك المعاهدات. وعن القيد الأكبر يرى الناشط الحقوقي وليد ماجد أن دستور الدولة هو الشيء الوحيد الذي

يمكن أن يكون قيد للحرية التي هي في الأصل مطلقة. وفي مداخلات من متصلين قالت نجوى عبدالله أن التعبير الصريح عن الرأي يضر بالصالح العام إذا كان عشوائياً ولا يستند لضوابط، فيما رأى محمد الفقيه أن أهم القيود التي يفرضها على نفسه وحرته هي عندما تطل هذه الحرية الآخرين بالسب والتشهير.

**أحمد الرحابي:**  
الرقابة الشعبية ورقابة السلطة الرابعة ووصول صوت المواطن ذلك هو التقييم الحقيقي لجهد المسؤولين.

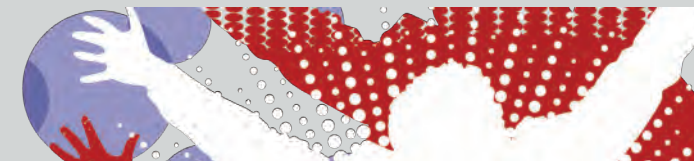
**Al-Rihabi**  
Popular supervision, media monitoring, and getting the citizen's voice across, is the true evaluation of the efforts of those in power.



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مجلس التعاون  
Yemen 2013 Forum

YEMEN TIMES  
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## Global Communities Yemen

MENA-YES Program

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFPs)

LETTER OF RE INVITATION

Global Communities  
Yemen  
Partners for Good

The MENA YES program, implemented by Global Communities in Yemen, Jordan and Lebanon, will address youth unemployment through workforce readiness and entrepreneurship, engaging employers and trainers to identify and address employment opportunities and related skill gaps in the labor market for each country. Special emphasis will be given to disadvantaged youth, low- to medium-level skilled individuals, women, urban and rural youth, and individuals working in hazardous environments. In Yemen, the Vocational Training (VT) component of the program will focus on the provision of short term VT courses, ranging between 60 and 200 hours.

Interested Vendors/Training Providers are invited to submit proposals for the implementation of VT courses in one or more of the following sectors:

1. Basic Nursing.
2. Restaurants cooks .
3. Restaurant waiters .

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Global communities reserves the right to visit any interested Vendor/Training Provider and/or training facility prior to the contract award and to reject those considered to be unqualified for the proposed request.

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

The Program Coordinator ,  
Global Communities Yemen  
Hadda-Iran Street behind Korean restaurant, Sana'a  
Tel: +967 1 427425

Email: [hani@globalcommunitiesyemen.org](mailto:hani@globalcommunitiesyemen.org)

Completed responses to the RFPs should be submitted not later than 3:00 p.m. on 26th of Dec. 2013 to the above address.

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# YEMEN TIMES

Yemen's first and most widely-read English-language newspaper

## Frustrated consumers Subscribers unhappy about Internet services in Yemen

Story and photo by  
**Mohammed Al-Hassani**

**M**ohammed Al-Hashimi is a website designer based in Sana'a. His work keeps him at a

computer for significant number of hours a day. But if it wasn't for a poor Internet connection, he would be able to cut down on those hours.

"We are fed up with the poor quality of Internet service," he said. Al-Hashimi, like countless other Yemenis, say unreliable Internet service hinders their every day lives, not only at work but also at home. For months, the Internet service in Yemen has been deteriorating with subscribers taking to social media—when the Internet does work—to rail against government-monopolized services.

Increasingly, Internet service is unavailable during the majority of daylight hours, and it runs very slowly from 6 p.m. until 2 a.m. Internet users say they waste a lot of time just waiting for screens to load.

"I have been finding downloading very difficult," Al-Hashimi said. "Uploading is also very slow. Sometimes, I cannot surf the Web at all."

He has been put in awkward positions several times with customers

for whom he designs and maintains websites because of the Internet's sluggish capabilities. They still expect him to meet deadlines.

Internet service first came to Yemen in 1996 and has always been run and censored by the dominant government-run provider, Yemen Net, which operates under the Public Telecommunication Corporation.

Despite shortcomings, the number of Internet subscribers in Yemen continues to grow—albeit at a slow pace—with only an estimated 15 percent of the population having access to services. In 2013, according to Yahya Al-Matri, the public relations manager at Yemen Net, there were 2 million subscribers, and the number of Internet cafes in the country grew to a little over 1,100.

Yemen Net says there are factors outside of their control that are affecting the speed and efficiency of connections.

"Yemen Net is providing services," said Al-Matri, but he blames repeated attacks on optical fiber cables and electricity lines in some Yemeni governorates for overall low-quality connections.

In 2012, there were 180 attacks on optical fiber cables, according to official reports. In addition, slow data transfer speeds are sometimes attributable to faulty connection wiring in some areas.

Damage to the internal wiring of the network can slow down service, or even cut it off altogether, said Engineer Yasser Al-Emad, the Internet manager at the Ministry of Telecommunications and Information Technology.

He says consumers are also sometimes to blame for slow Internet connections because of a lack of computer maintenance.

"In addition, some computer vi-

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The nation's main Internet provider, state-owned Yemen Net, says they are improving services, but subscribers are not convinced.

Saleh Al-Hamati, the executive manager of Smart Solutions, a private company that designs and hosts websites, said that although there are numerous ways to provide Internet service, it is still generally very expensive and of poor quality because of the government monopoly.

"Monopolies inevitably result in poor quality and high prices. Yemen is ten years late in the Internet field in comparison with the rest of

the world," he said. At the beginning of 2013, Yemen Net, announced a 25 percent discount for subscription fees. Despite the price break, subscriber complaints have not abated. Service continues to be provided at slow speeds with a monthly data transfer limit of 7 GB.

Al-Matri says his company is aware of their growing unpopularity but promised that the company is working to improve services. He says Yemen Net has a plan for 2014 to work with international organizations such as the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) to improve protocols.


"This change will fulfill subscribers' desires, particularly in terms of privacy, safety and surfing speed," he said.

In response to growing frustrations, local organizations are working towards prioritizing Internet in the nation's agenda. In August, ISOC-Yemen was established as a local non-profit organization

under the umbrella of the Internet Society ISOC, a prominent international organization founded in 1992 in the U.S. to promote open Internet standards, policy, education and training throughout the world. Over 100 people have joined ISOC-Yemen with the goal of developing and enhancing Internet services, expanding accessibility, and promoting the use of the Internet in Yemen in various sectors such as education, health and government.

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