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تخفيض في خدمة
الأهل والأصدقاء



100%

الخط مجاني



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Security forces accuse interior minister of bowing to tribal pressures



When Interior Minister Mohammed Qahtan retracted orders to have tribesmen arrested, security forces headed straight from the tribal leaders home—which they had surrounded—to the Interior Ministry. The security forces protested the minister's decision and accused him of putting more security forces at risk by not prosecuting the case.

10,000 Salafis homeless in Sana'a

Nasser Al-Sakkaf

SANA'A, Jan. 20—About 10,000 Salafis are homeless in Sana'a, sleeping in mosques and tents in the Sawan district of the capital. The influx of Salafis, conservative Sunnis, is a result of an agreement that was reached between the Salafis and the Houthis last week, which stipulated that 15,000 non-local Salafis residing in Dammaj had to leave the town in Sa'ada governorate.

In the agreement—brokered by a government-established committee—the government agreed to provide housing for the displaced Salafis and to cover their transportation costs from Dammaj.

However, Yahia Abu Osbo, the head of the presidential committee tasked to resolve the conflict in Dammaj, told the Yemen Times last week that the committee was not financially able to cover the expenses of transporting the Salafis from Dammaj to Sana'a.

Soror Al-Wadei, a spokesperson for the Salafis émigrés to Sana'a said, "They're still waiting for the state to provide them with housing according to the agreement signed last week in Sa'ada. They agreed to cover housing and transportation costs but have not done so [yet]."

"Those forced to leave Dammaj are still in mosques and tents in the capital city," he said.

An estimated 10,000 Salafis left for Sana'a last week. Al-Wadei says the vast majority of those who came to Sana'a have nowhere else

to go. Approximately 5,000 Salafis left Dammaj for other parts of the country.

A mediation committee, represented by Abdulkader Hilal, Sana'a's mayor, provided 3,000 blankets and 3,000 mattresses along with 500 tents to be set up in the 22 May Stadium for the displaced.

"We will not remain in the stadium or mosques of the capital forever," Al-Wadei said. "We are waiting for the government to solve this. We hope that this happens soon because it is cold outside, and we are sleeping in tents."

Al-Wadie says the initial signed agreement stated that the non-local Salafis residing in Dammaj would be sent to Tehama, in Hodeida governorate. But, the Tehama Movement, a group that has called for its own region, rejected the proposal. The movement released a statement on Wednesday saying they did not want the sectarianism associated with the Salafi-Houthi conflict to find its way to Tehama.

Calls to members of the presidential committee for comment were not returned as of press time.

Sawan resident Essam Al-Qadasi told the Yemen Times that there was a significant Salafi presence in the district prior to the latest influx.

"It's natural for someone fleeing a conflict to seek out those they are closest too. There are many Salafis in Sawan and they have a mosque [here] too," Al-Qadasi said.

Story and photo by Amal Al-Yarisi

SANA'A, Jan. 20—A number of security-related personnel in police vehicles fired shots into the air on Monday morning near the Ministry of Interior's headquarters in the Al-Hasaba neighborhood in northern Sana'a. The men said they were firing their weapons in protest, demanding that Gen. Mohamed Qahtan, Yemen's interior minister, step down from his post.

The protesters have accused Qahtan of directing security forces not to arrest armed tribesmen believed to have been involved in the shooting of two policemen, according to Mohamed Ali, a Special Security Forces soldier who participated in the protest.

Last Monday, police attempted to prevent a group of men from constructing a building they did not have a permit to build, Ali said. The men shot at the policemen, killing one, eyewitnesses told the Yemen Times. This Monday, the police returned to the site again to arrest the men for the shooting. The armed men allegedly opened fire again, killing another officer, said Ali, who was present at the time of both shootings.

However, Ali says orders came down from Qahtan not to pursue the men accused of shooting the officers.

"After we surrounded the tribal leader's house, we were surprised

to receive Qahtan's order to leave the place," he said.

This provoked the troops who were on service besieging the house to go directly to the Headquarters of the Interior Ministry to protest the minister's alleged instructions.

"We were shocked by his [unjust] order," said Ali. "He is supposed to back and encourage us— not to let us down."

"The lives of policemen and soliders were put at risk and the interior minister has done nothing," said Mohamed Al-Jilal, a policeman and guard at the Interior Ministry's headquarters.

In a press release, the Interior Ministry says the tribesmen were arrested.

Militants angry about drone strikes attack security checkpoints in Al-Beida'a



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Regions still up for debate, but president says thoughtful consideration will determine structure

Mohammed Al-Hassani

SANAA, Jan. 20—President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi said on Sunday that Yemen's new federal state structure will be designed and divided based on comprehensive field-based studies.

"The wealth of every city and governorate will be distributed in an organized, just and equal manner. Justice and equality will dominate in a federal state" the president said in a meeting with academics, sheikhs and National Dialogue Conference (NDC) representatives.

"Regions will be based on field studies with the aim of getting rid of regionalism [and] sectarianism..." Hadi continued.

Representatives from the NDC, slated to end Jan. 25, have agreed that Yemen's future structure of state will be a federal one. Still up for debate is the number of regions that will comprise the federal state.

NDC representatives recently signed on off on what is called the Southern Issue Solution Document, which gives the president the power to create a committee tasked with reaching a consensus on the number of regions.

Hadi said this committee will base its decision on the field studies.

Major political parties are divided. Representatives from the Yemeni Socialist Party, which was born in the South before North and

South Yemen became one united country in 1990, are insisting that Yemen's state be divided once again into two regions. Members of the Southern Movement, the South's separatist group formed in 1997, are also pushing for a two-region division.

On the other hand, representatives from two of Yemen's major political parties, the General People's Congress (GPC), and the Islah Party have said that a two-region system will just facilitate the South's attempts to secede. They are standing behind a plan to divide the country into six regions: two in the South and four in the North.

In the meeting with the president, instead of focusing on the number

of regions, Hadi reaffirmed his confidence in Yemen as an united federal state.

"The federal system is the solution for all problems in Yemen," he said. "A system with regions will eradicate corruption because the administrative and supervisory work in this type of system [requires transparency]."

Hadi also noted the international community's backing of Yemen's plan to become a federal state.

"The international community, including the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council, supports this strongly and recognize the importance of maintaining unity and democratic structures in Yemen."

Security shuts down 'Rescue Campaign' protest with teargas and water hoses

16 arrested

Ali Ibrahim Al-Moshki

SANAA, Jan. 20—Security forces arrested 16 individuals associated with the "Rescue Campaign" who were protesting near the Defense Ministry on Sunday, Nora Al-Jarwi, the head of the campaign, told the Yemen Times.

She said one protestor is still being held.

Security forces used water hoses and teargas to disperse the crowd, several eyewitnesses and protest participants reported.

Eyewitness Abdulmajid Jahlan,

said seven military vehicles arrived to break up the protest.

The Rescue Campaign—as it is been termed—is a youth initiative that is calling for a government reshuffle, including the replacement of all of Yemen's current ministers.

On Sunday, around 100 people gathered to march through the streets of the capital city, starting at Hael Street and ending up outside of Bab Al-Yemen, near the Defense Ministry.

Last week, the campaign organized a similar protest. Far fewer participants showed up to the protest after President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi personally called some of the campaign's organizers asking them to cancel their march.

Militants angry about drone strikes attack security checkpoints in Al-Beida'a

11 killed in clashes

Nasser Al-Sakkaf

SANAA, Jan. 20—Armed militants, purportedly angry about drone strikes in the area, attacked several security checkpoints in the Rada'a district of Al-Beida'a governorate on Thursday.

"The militants' assault on the security checkpoints came in response to the unjustified repeated aerial raids on the Qaifa area [in the Ra'ada district]," said Ahmed Saeed Al-Dahab, a tribal sheikh

from Ra'ada.

According to Hamoud Al-Amari, Rada'a's security manager, militants attacked three major checkpoints at various entrances to the district.

Al-Dahab said five gunmen and six soldiers were killed in the attack. The armed men also kidnapped three soldiers and took off in a military armored vehicle, he said.

The gunmen were able to take control of checkpoints for three hours before the military, with the assistance of government planes firing bullets, were able to regain control of the checkpoints, Al-

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Amari said.

"Reinforcements arrived on Saturday to support Brigade 139 in Rada'a," said Al-Amari. "A guerrilla war is taking place in Ra'ada, and security personnel are having a hard time controlling it"

Several residents said there is growing resentment about drone strikes in the area.

Area security officials reported a drone strike on Jan. 5 in the Rada'a district. There were no reported casualties.

Following a believed U.S. drone

strike at the beginning of December near the village of Qaifa, in which 12 civilians in a wedding convoy were killed, Al-Daheri Al-Shadadi, Al-Beida'a's governor, pledged that no more strikes would take place in the area.

The Qaifa area is located right outside the city of Ra'ada, where the Al-Dahab family lives. The family is accused—by both the American and Yemeni governments—of having links to Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP).



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One arrested in fatal shooting of Iranian diplomat

Iran asks Yemen to protect its remaining foreign staff in the country

Ali Ibrahim Al-Moshki

SANA'A, Jan. 20—Yemen's Interior Ministry said on Sunday that

they have in their custody the car used in the fatal shooting of an Iranian diplomat on Saturday. The suspected driver of the car is also in custody, said Col. Mohammed Hizam, the deputy head of the Public Relations Department at the Interior Ministry.

Investigations are underway to locate additional suspects, Hizam

said. At least two unidentified gunmen on Saturday shot and killed Ali Asghar Assadi, Iran's economic attaché at the Iranian Embassy in Sana'a, outside the ambassador's residence in the Hadda neighborhood. A majority of embassies are located near Hadda Street, a main thoroughfare in Sana'a.

Iran's Fars News Agency reported that the body of the slain diplomat arrived in Tehran on Monday morning. According to the agency, Iran is planning to dispatch an investigative team to Yemen to probe into the assassination.

Naji Al-Tam, the head of Sana'a's investigative team, said gunmen boarding a Toyota Hilux vehicle opened fire on the Iranian diplomat after he resisted a believed kidnapping attempt near the embassy's building.

The gunmen fled the scene in the car now in custody, Al-Tam said.

Assadi was pronounced dead at an area hospital.

"Targeting the Iranian diplomat will serve to damage Yemeni-Iranian relations. This criminal act is an attempt to destabilize the country," said Mohammed Al-Mawiri, the press secretary for Yemen's Interior Ministry.

Yemen's official news agency, Saba, quoted the foreign affairs minister, Abu Bakr Al-Qirbi, as saying, "This act primarily targets Yemen and Iran's relationship. It did not only target the Iranian diplomat."

"Security forces will do their jobs, chase the perpetrators to ensure the criminals are brought to justice," Al-Qirbi said. "We are keen to prevent any attempts aimed at hurting the relation between Yemen and Iran."

The Fars News Agency reported that Iran's Ministry of Foreign Affairs asked Yemeni authorities to protect Iran's

remaining diplomats in the country according to commitments outlined in international law.

"We refuse any delay or dereliction by the Yemeni government in this matter. Iran is resolved to pursue the assassination of its diplomat," said the spokesperson for Iran's Foreign Ministry.

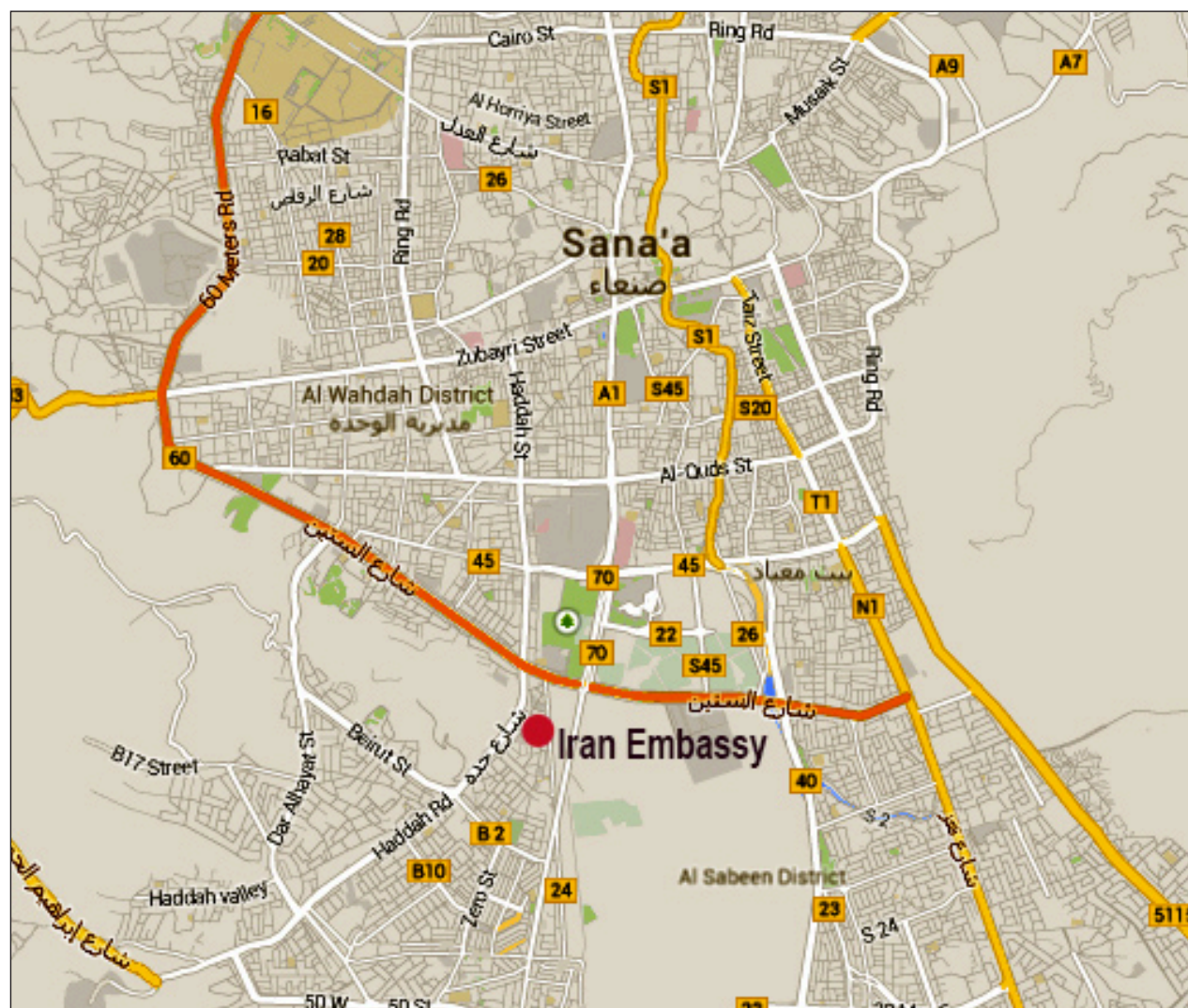
The Yemen Times contacted the Iranian Embassy in Sana'a for comment, but as of press time, calls went unreturned.

Yemen has had a contentious relationship with Iran. Top Yemeni

officials have accused the predominantly Shia nation of funneling money and weapons to the Houthis, a group of Zaidi Shiites who operate outside of state control in the North.

"This assassination falls within the Saudi-Iranian regional conflict," said Abdulsalam Mohammed, the head of the Abaad Center for Strategic Studies in Sana'a.

In July 2013, an Iranian diplomat was abducted by gunmen while driving in Sana'a. He remains in captivity.





Yemeni mothers are not breastfeeding enough, experts say

Baby formula can be a dangerous substitute for mother's milk

Samar Al-Ariqi

Almost all pharmacies in Sana'a sell powdered baby formula that is mixed with water to be bottle fed to infants. Baby formula is meant as a replacement for, or supplement to, breastfeeding.

The use of baby formula remains controversial worldwide. Breastfeeding proponents cite scientific studies that find unadulterated milk from the mother encourages brain development in infants, defends against infections and pre-

vents allergies. The World Health Organization says "exclusive breastfeeding is recommended up to 6 months of age, with continued breastfeeding along with appropriate complementary foods up to two years of age or beyond." However, many recognize breastfeeding may not be possible for all women. Comfort levels, lifestyle and other medical factors all play into a woman's decision to breastfeed.

But, in Yemen, experts worry about a trend towards reliance on baby formula, especially considering the unregulated black market of baby formula.

In 2012 UNICEF conducted a national survey that revealed only 13 percent of Yemeni children are breastfed, whereas the rest were nourished using a combination of breastfeeding and bottle feeding or bottle feeding exclusively.

The organization conducted a similar survey in 2006. According to Dr. Rajia Shahrani, a health and nutrition expert for UNICEF, the results were identical.

On their website, UNICEF says poor water quality and deficient hygiene can make bottle feeding especially harmful in Yemen, leaving experts to emphasize the im-



Only 13 percent of Yemeni children are exclusively breastfed, UNICEF says.



There are up to 300 different types of baby formulas on the Yemeni market, many of which are smuggled into the country illegally.

portance of breast milk, beyond the usual reasons they encourage women to breastfeed, including the high-nutritional value of mother's milk.

"Out of 1,000 Yemeni children, 72 die due to diarrhea and respiratory illnesses, which [are often related to] bottle feeding," said Shahrani.

There are a huge number of baby formulas for sale in Yemen—pharmacists say as many as 300 different types. Some formulas are locally produced, but the majority are imported.

Dr. Hani Bawazeer, a pediatrician, describes the readily and relatively inexpensive availability of baby formula as a "worrying phenomenon" that is not in the best interests of children and infants.

Bawazeer takes big issue with the varying quality of formulas. He believes baby formula should only be available by a doctor's prescription.

"It is difficult for parents to choose the most appropriate formula," he said. "Doctors should prescribe baby formula, just as they do any other medication."

According to Yemen's Ministry of Health, baby formula is technically only supposed to be sold with a doctor's prescription. However, pharmacies—as well as grocery stores, routinely ignore this regulation.

Bawazeer said there is insufficient awareness about the appropriate way to use formulas, which can put the child's health at risk. Caregivers often lack information about how to accurately mix formula, what proportions are appropriate and the importance of a clean preparation environment.

The pediatrician also argues against a market that has allowed for questionable quality of products to emerge.

The secretary general of the Yemeni Society for Consumer Protection (YSCP) in Sana'a, Saleh Ghailan, said that the market is saturated with products of disputed nutritional value that are labeled with inaccurate and misleading information, and do not contain all of the nutritional value claimed on the packaging.

"We did a random product check and found that baby formulas are not matching up to the claims on the packaging," he said.

As with most product purchasing decisions, parents tend to choose baby formula based on what they can afford and many worry those are usually the ones of the lowest quality.

Pharmacist Abdulghani Ali Abdulla said in his experience, people do not tend to examine a product's ingredients. What matters most to them is that the recommended age range printed on the product matches the age of their child, he said. Additionally, parents may not know which ingredients to look for or what to avoid, which is why Abdulla advocates for required



While consumers technically need a prescription to purchase formula, it is readily available in pharmacies and groceries stores without one.



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The United States' bloody messes in Yemen

Hooria Mashhour
Washingtonpost.com
First Published Jan. 15

Dec. 12 was supposed to be a day of celebration for the al-Ameri family. A young bride traveled to her wedding with her relatives in Al-Beida'a province, Yemen. But in a few dark seconds their celebrations were eviscerated. A U.S. drone fired at the wedding procession, destroying five vehicles and most of their occupants. Not even the bride's car, ornately decorated in flowers for the occasion, was spared from the carnage. Senior Yemeni officials later admitted that the strike was a "mistake".

Some mistake: Though the bride survived, the strike is said to have killed at least 14 civilians and injured 22 others, over a third of them

seriously. This marks the largest death toll by a drone strike in Yemen since the drone war's inception. It is also the largest death toll by U.S. strike since December 2009, when a U.S. cruise missile killed 41 civilians in Al-Majala, including 14 women and 21 children.

In the wake of the killing, a wave of outrage has swept the country. The Yemeni government rushed to meet community elders, seeking to negotiate a quiet settlement for the killing of the bride's loved ones. But the bereaved villagers rejected the overtures and instead demanded that Yemen's president, Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi, stop U.S. drones before they would sit at any negotiating table.

On its side, rather than forthrightly address its role in these grim events, the U.S. government has issued no admission of responsibility, nor any apology. It has left

the Yemeni government to clean up another bloody mess.

Only recently, we had cause to hope for better. In November, Yemeni civil engineer Faisal bin Ali Jaber traveled over 7,000 miles to the U.S. in search of answers. He met congressmen, senators, and even some White House officials to tell them how U.S. missiles incinerated his nephew and brother-in-law at his son's wedding last year. In that strike, the U.S. killed two potential allies—one an imam who regularly preached against Al-Qaeda, the other one of the town's few policemen. Jaber received heartfelt condolences from many lawmakers. Yet no official was prepared to explain why his relatives were killed, or why the U.S. administration would not acknowledge its mistake.

This is not the first time a U.S. drone has killed civilians in Al-Beida'a. On Sept. 2, 2012, a U.S.

plane hit a village shuttle near Rada'a. The vehicle was full of villagers carrying their day's shopping. As usual, the initial press coverage labelled the dead as "al-Qaeda militants," but when the relatives threatened to deliver the bodies to the president's gates, the Yemeni government was forced to concede that all 12 of those people killed were civilians. Among the victims, a pregnant woman and three children were laid to rest.

The use of drones in Yemen might appear a simple, quick-fix option for President Obama. But as Nabeel Khoury, former U.S. deputy chief of mission to Yemen, recently wrote, "Drone strikes take out a few bad guys to be sure, but they also kill a large number of innocent civilians. Given Yemen's tribal structure, the U.S. generates roughly forty to sixty new enemies for every AQAP [Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula]

operative killed by drones."

Let me be clear: I, like the vast majority of my countrymen, reject terrorism. All of us were repulsed by recent footage of a gruesome attack on a Yemeni defense ministry hospital. We agree that our fight against extremist groups cannot be won without a variety of efforts, including robust law enforcement. But more often than not, U.S. drone strikes leave families bereaved and villages terrified. Drones tear at the fabric of Yemeni society. Wronged and angry men are just the sort extreme groups like AQAP find easiest to recruit.

Our president may reassure the United States of his support for drone strikes but the reality is that no leader can legitimately approve the extrajudicial killing of his own citizens. Moreover, he does so in the face of Yemeni consensus. This August, Yemen's National Dialogue

Conference — which President Obama has praised — decided by a 90 percent majority that the use of drones in Yemen should be criminalised.

Yemeni legislators are aware that the drone war is deeply unpopular. Since the Dec. 12 strike, our Parliament has unanimously voted to ban drone flights in Yemeni airspace, declaring them a "grave breach" of the country's sovereignty. For a country so often divided, this unanimity from Yemen's most representative bodies testifies to the strength of opinion against drones. But their calls have thus far met only with more bombings from the skies. How can the people of Yemen build trust in their fledgling democracy when our collective will is ignored by democracy's greatest exponent?

Hooria Mashhour is Yemen's human rights minister.

A Possible Alternative for Yemen

Mustapha Al-Noman
Aawsat.net
First Published Jan. 19

On Dec. 23, 2013, Yemeni state media broadcast footage of a meeting during which a document called the "Solutions and Guarantees Relating to the Southern Issue" was signed. State media announced that this document would bring about salvation and secure a better future for Yemen. Only a few hours later, however, it became clear that the situation had not developed as the advisors had hoped and that the issue would require more than mere temptation to resolve. Remarkably, the U.N. envoy to Yemen, Jamal Benomar, was absent. It appears he decided to leave the country just hours before the signing, as if he sensed the damage that had been done to the document he helped develop.

While some of its articles called for the imposition of stronger controls on the country, others appeared to contradict each other, or at best were open to interpretation. Although the General People's Congress (GPC), the Yemeni Socialist Party and the Nasserites were absent, the Yemeni National Dialogue Conference's (NDC) administrators bizarrely insisted on announcing that all parties had signed the document. Some of the attendants were shown kissing each other's heads, a gesture of respect and admiration in the Arab world. The administrative body's weakness in terms of politics and legal issues was thus emphasized and highlighted.

The only party that remained true to its orientation was the GPC, which held firm to its reservations. The party sought the help of one of the most important Arab advisors on international law. He voiced many reservations and warned of what he considered to be the document's fundamental political and legal shortcomings, as well as its poorly drafted text. Days later, we heard that those who originally abstained had agreed to sign, but only after they added their reservations next to their signatures. What is sad is the fact that the signing of this flawed document means, more or less, a happy ending to the Yemeni National Dialogue. But if this is indeed the case, why did the so-called political elite sign the document in the first place? Why did they fail to notice these caveats? On Jan. 7, 2014, another statement was released approving these reservations. The content of this new state-

ment, which has been signed and voted on, will serve to provoke fresh controversy within the committee assigned to draft Yemen's new constitution. What is even more dangerous is that the people in the South will not accept this.

Those attending the Yemeni NDC at the Mövenpick Hotel have wasted the Yemeni people's time and money and dashed their hopes and aspirations. However, these same people view themselves as the saviors of the nation and the protectors of its future. Today, Yemenis are facing a terrifying, confused and chaotic scene. Truly confronting the country's problems cannot take place through creating illusions. That can only be achieved through honesty and clarity, and by informing Yemen's citizens about the reality of the current situation and the country's future prospects. Foreign visions should not dominate the scene. And those who imagine that solutions will be readily provided and imposed by the international community are frivolous and have failed to comprehend what happened in neighboring countries, which have been turned into rubble.

Yemen is today facing a scene that even the most pessimistic could not envision: either separation or fragmentation.

We are faced with an utterly futile political arena, while time and effort are being wasted. This will only serve to further complicate and strain the situation, inciting more hatred and enmity and worsening living and security conditions across Yemen, whether in the South or the North. It is irresponsible to purposefully ignore the facts and bury one's head in the sand while everyone else knows what is taking place publicly and in private. Meanwhile, many boast they represent this or that part of the country, having no qualms about signing papers they know are politically and legally worthless and which do not serve Yemen's best interests.

I will not talk about what is happening in Sa'ada province, but I do believe that I have a national and moral duty to raise my voice and declare that Yemen's best interests lie in it returning to the situation before May 21, 1990, one day before Yemen's reunification. I am not one of those people who dream of the catastrophic situation settling down or improving. It has been two years since the power transfer in Yemen. People continue to be deluded about the prospects of a solution appearing like magic to restore calm in Yemen's restive South. But this has not happened, nor will it happen. It is

enough to look at the number of visits government officials have made to the South and what these visits have produced. In fact, I will add another question about the number of visits members of Al-Hirak have made to the South in order to convince their brothers to support the decisions they are making at the Mövenpick.

When the 1994 civil war in Yemen ended, a few people warned of the fallout unless those holding the levers of power did something. The regime was tirelessly supported by their new Southern partners, who were brought to power instead of the losers of the heinous war that killed thousands and disrupted the psychological and social links between the South and the North.

Following July 7, 1994, those in power failed to notice the destructive impact of what happened, believing instead that money, nepotism and buying allegiances were the appropriate means of placating the South and buying people's silence. However, indignation grew in the South, particularly among those who, having been removed from their public jobs, lost their sources of livelihood. Later, things continued to deteriorate, and a few people began to raise their voices, warning of how serious the situation was. However, the arrogance of those in power led them to ignore those warnings and continue to claim that all was well. All of the strikes, sit-ins and demonstrations were dismissed as being the work of a minority so small they could be counted on the fingers of one hand. Thus, those in power continued to serve their own interests, and things ultimately spiraled out of control.

A few days ago, I saw a former Southern minister on television speaking about the South's grievances and their legitimate demands of freedom and independence. This change of attitude suggests the serious nature of the current situation, particularly since this minister contributed to the isolation and the forcing of the Southern officers into early retirement. His latest statements no doubt represent a late pang of conscience or a realization of the transformations that have taken place in the South. In both cases, it is an indication of what must now be done.

Those arguing in favor of Yemeni unity today—basing their arguments on international texts—have to turn to what the U.N. Security Council resolutions has so far publicized regarding the unity of Iraq, Syria, Libya and Sudan. They also have to realize that talk about the

return to a federal government with two regions is the minimum that can be accepted in the South. They must accept that and carry it out, lest we come to a situation that pushes Yemen towards complete fragmentation. At that time, no one will have the ability to control the repercussions.

I feel anguish to find myself supporting those calling for the return to the pre-May 21, 1990, borders. But I hope that Yemen's Southerners are not pushed into denying their kinship with their brothers in the North and their historical and geographic links. Once the situation calms in the future, it will be

eminently possible for the coming generations to restore what we have lost thanks to clumsy policies, arrogance and reverence of money and power.

Mustapha Al-Noman is a Yemeni politician who serves as the country's ambassador to Spain.



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Does Yemen need a 'rescue' plan?

Youth activists who were involved in Yemen's 2011 anti-government uprising and other emerging political leaders launched what they called the "Rescue Campaign" last week. In a rally held last Tuesday, event organizers and their supporters called for a government reshuffle. During protests they called for all current ministers, including the prime minister, Mohammed Salem Basindwa, to be removed and replaced.

Who supports the campaign? Why did the major political parties in Yemen oppose it? Is the campaign related to the protests in 2011? Is it an extension of what has come to be called Yemen's revolution?

In an interview with the Yemen Times, Iman Abu Hadi, a prominent campaign organizer, Waleed Al-Amari, a leading figure during the 2011 uprising, and Asya Abu Zaid, the secretary general of the Al-Salam Party, which was established in the post-revolution period, debate these questions.

Interview and photos by Mohammed Al-Hassani



Iman Abu Hadi

Waleed Al-Amari

Asya Abu Zaid

To begin with Ms. Abu Hadi, did everything for the campaign go on as you planned?

Abu Hadi: We began the rally in Bab Al-Yemen with a crowd of people from different areas of Sana'a. We protested in front of the Cabinet and after that in front of the United Nations' building in Sana'a to demand a new civil state. However, many protesters left at the very beginning due to pressure being put on them.

Pressure from security officials?

Abu Hadi: No, pressure from political parties that worked to turn public opinion against us.

Did you have specific committees that organized the campaign?

Abu Hadi: Yes, we appointed a preparatory committee to organize the campaign under the supervision of the Freeman Block, [a group of defectors from Yemen's former ruling party, the General People's Congress], but something went wrong because protesters divided into several [smaller] rallies due to the lack of coordination.

So, the Freeman Block is behind this campaign?

Abu Hadi: Yes, and it encouraged several revolutionary people and their supporters, as well as political figures and independents to participate in the campaign.

Do you attribute your inability to successfully organize the first protest to opposition from political parties?

Abu Hadi: Because parties exerted pressure on us, we weren't able to hold the first protest as planned. This is also due to a structural imbalance and disagreements among the preparatory committee's leaders.

When did you begin to prepare for the anti-government rally?

Abu Hadi: The Freeman Block began to prepare for the campaign when the head of the block, Abdu Bishr, resigned from Parliament [in November 2013]. In the beginning, several political and social figures reacted positively and showed willingness to participate in the campaign.

You have said that political parties have gotten media outlets to oppose you. In your opinion, what is their motiva-

tion to do that?

Abu Hadi: We have wondered about the media campaign against us, but we thought we could convince them to interact with us. Some political parties wanted to manipulate the protest for their own interests.

Will you continue to organize rallies in the future?

Abu Hadi: Yes, we will continue to organize protests until the end of the transitional period. The scheduled date for elections is Feb. 21. We will not give up and will continue to mobilize people.

What are your demands?

Abu Hadi: We demand a government reshuffle, a new government formed by technocrats based on merit rather than political affiliation.

Some have said you are trying to topple the [transitional government]?

Abu Hadi: That's not true at all. We support President [Abdu Rabu Mansour] Hadi, but we want him to issue decrees that protect people's interests, not just certain political parties. [Since the current government came to power], in terms of living standards and security and the economic situation, people are experiencing worse circumstances than during the 33 pre-revolution years [under former President Ali Abdulla Saleh].

President Hadi is said to have contacted some of the campaign's leaders, is that true?

Abu Hadi: Yes, and we appreciate his orders that allowed for security forces to protect the rally. He has also promised us to reshuffle the government.

Ms. Abu Zaid, your party was created following the 2011 anti-government uprising. What role did you play in the Rescue Campaign?

Abu Zaid: We support it and participated in the rally because the current government is a real failure. It has failed in terms of security, economics and moral guidance. Competent people have been marginalized and not allowed in state institutions. Political parties compete with each other for power, destroying the nation.

Mr. Al-Amari, what do you think of the Rescue Campaign?

Al-Amari: We support people's right to take to streets and express their opinions without being suppressed. Moreover, we agree that the government has significantly fallen short in performing its duties. The government in Yemen was established in reconciliation between the General People's Congress [GPC] and its allies on the one hand and the Joint Meeting Parties [JMPs] and its partners on the other. So, when we talk about a government reshuffle, we should talk about the entire governing system.

How does that play into your opposition to the Rescue Campaign?

Al-Amari: Of course, when you look at the demands of the campaign, you see they target one side. We know the government is not doing its job perfectly, but those who are negligent should be held accountable. For example, if we talk about the Education Ministry's negligence, we should hold the education minister accountable. The same should be done to the telecommunications minister. However, it is a matter of political extortion if we talk about toppling the government at a time when we are nearing the conclusion of the National Dialogue Conference [NDC]. When we talk about a national consensus, we should look at the consensus as a way to regulate. We, as revolutionary youth, should totally believe that we have to accomplish all the goals of the February 2011 revolution. For us, creating another revolution before reaching the goals of the February revolution is pointless. [Even the day that the revolution started is still under debate, as well as whether we should make it a national holiday or not.

Let us pose a question to Ms. Abu Hadi, does your campaign serve specific people in power?

Abu Hadi: No. We are revolutionary youth. We are not affiliated with a particular side in the government. However, we have stated our mission to overthrow the entire government. It is true that there are good ministers, but [generally speaking] there is too much failure. I call on the head of the Cabinet, [Prime Minister] Mohammed Salem Basindawa, to step down and to live up to his reputation and to serve the public interest. The campaign is not attacking individuals, it is against the overall poor performance of the government.

Why didn't you wait until the end of the NDC to launch such a campaign?

Abu Hadi: In my opinion, the NDC does not represent the entire nation. It represents 'gangs' that control the Yemeni people. Many things have not been dealt with at the NDC, including the issue of transitional justice. Nothing has been done for the victims [that were supposed to be served by a transitional justice law]. The outcomes of the NDC serve foreign agendas. I, as a leading figure for the revolutionary youth, who like thousands of others has sacrificed [for the country's future], want to say to President Hadi that the NDC outcomes do not represent or honor us. [This is how we feel now] because we called for the exclusion of former power houses from the dialogue, but nothing happened. A consensus will not be reached as disputes continue to rack up. What is taking place now is a hypocritical reconciliation that serves partisan interests, not public interests. We are with you [president], but you should make decisions that favor the people who elected you. Anyhow, our campaign will continue. We will prepare for massive protests nationwide. Everyone will be surprised.

Translated from Arabic by Khalid Al-Karimi and Bassam Al-Khameri



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Area brigade and armed men continue to clash in Al-Dhale

Two prominent Southern Movement leaders killed last week

Nasser al-Sakkaf

SANA'A, Jan. 20—Sporadic clashes between Brigade 33 soldiers and armed men in Al-Dhale governorate have been intensifying since the death of two Southern Movement leaders last week.

Since Friday, two soldiers and five civilians, including one of the Southern Movement leaders have died in the clashes, several local sources said. Two children and their mother were amongst the



Five civilians have been killed by security forces in Al-Dhale since Friday, including two sisters, Yusra and Yasmin Yassin. The mother of the children was also killed.

dead. On Thursday Southern Movement leader and sheikh, Sheikh Ali Ridha, was killed at a security checkpoint in the governorate, according to Mohammed Al-Shaeir, the security manager in Al-Dhale.

Then on Friday, Sheikh Barkan Mana'a, another well-known Southern Movement leader, was killed when Brigade 33 and gunmen exchanged fire. Mana'a was reportedly on his way to Ridha's funeral.

The Southern Movement, formed in 2007, has called for the secession of the Southern governorates from the North governorates, which were united as one country in 1990.

Brigade 33 has been unpopular in the governorate since late December when the military forces fired shells at a funeral tent near a school, killing 15 people and injuring 29 others. Officials from the brigade

later said they had accidentally fired a round, but both the local officials and eyewitnesses say three shells were fired.

An area rights activist, Waleed Al-Khatib, said residents are growing increasingly intolerant of the brigade. He said soldiers have been indiscriminately arresting residents on the street.

"About 45 people from Al-Dhale were arrested on Saturday," Al-Khatib said.

Meanwhile in Sana'a at the National Dialogue Conference (NDC), representatives are pushing for a quick and effective solution to the ongoing clashes between gunmen and Brigade 33.

Some have recommended that President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi permanently remove the brigade and replace them with local security forces.



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