

INSIDE

Business

The future of Yemeni Rial

Page 3



Our Opinion

Close Guantanamo, free Emad and others

Page 4

Report

When Yemen is the destination

Page 6



Analysis

Wikileaks for Africa? Introducing Afrileaks

Page 7



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Security sector heads visit Marib, meet with tribal leaders

Story by **Ali Ibrahim Al-Moshki**
Photo by **Amal Al-Yarisi**

SANA'A, Jan. 14—The heads of Yemen's security apparatus conducted sweeps of military sites in Marib governorate on Wednesday after meeting with tribal leaders Tuesday night.

The heads were part of a new committee established by Prime Minister Khalid Bahah on Monday. "The committee will seek to address problems in Marib and Al-Jawf governorates and implement article five of the Peace and National Partnership Security Annex," read Bahah's statement, which was published on the state-run Saba News Agency on Monday. "It will be chaired by Minister of Defense Mahmoud Al-Subaihi, and include as members Minister of Interior Jalal Al-Rowishan, Minister of Local Administration Abd Al-Rageeb Seif Fatih, and Ayesah Awas, chairman of the Defense and Security Directorate within the President's Office."

According to Bahah's announcement, the committee possesses the right to seek the help of those with "proper expertise," to aid the committee in the performance of its tasks. It is required to submit reports documenting its findings to the prime minister within three months of the date of the announcement of its establishment.

Article five of the Peace and National Partnership Agreement's Security Annex calls for the "immediate cessation of hostilities and a ceasefire in Al-Jawf and Marib." It further calls for all armed groups from outside the two governorates to withdraw, and for the restructuring



Tensions have been rising in Marib governorate over the last two weeks after tribesmen seized a large weapons cache on Jan. 2 from the 62nd Mechanized Brigade.

ing of both governorate's administrative, security and military bodies. It states that the details of the ceasefire and restructuring will be established through a "supplemental document."

Ayesah Awas told the Yemen Times that the committee members visited Marib governorate on Tuesday and held a meeting with local tribal leaders at the headquarters of the 6th Military Command. He added that the committee also conducted field sweeps of military bases in the governorate to assess the battle readiness of troops in the area.

"I can't go into detail about what we discussed during our meetings and field sweeps," he said. "However we're now in the first phase of the process to begin addressing security issues in Al-Jawf and Marib. This will consist of further meetings with local heads of security apparatuses and tribal leaders to better coordinate our efforts."

Mohammad Buhaibah, a leading sheikh within the Murad tribe, Marib's largest, met with Awas and other committee members on Wednesday. "We discussed several issues, including the withdrawal of all armed

fighters from outside the government, and the disarmament of local tribes," he said.

"We also specifically discussed the possibility of returning weapons seized by tribesmen on Jan. 2 from the 62nd Mechanized Brigade," he added. "We're prepared to cooperate with all these demands, and aid the committee logistically on the ground, as long as our grievances towards the Houthis are also addressed, in a fair way."

Marib governorate has witnessed rising tensions over the last two weeks after tribesmen seized a large

weapons cache on Jan. 2 from the 62nd Mechanized Brigade that was passing through the area on its way to Sana'a governorate's Arhab district.

Tribal sources claimed that tribesmen seized the weapons, which included several tanks, dozens of military vehicles, rocket launchers and heavy artillery, in order to equip themselves against any suspected attacks launched by the Houthis, also known as Ansar Allah. Beginning on Saturday, Jan. 10, the Yemen Times reported that thousands of armed tribesmen from the Al-Jawf, Al-Baida, and Sa'ada governorates arrived in the area to help prevent the expansion of the Houthis.

The committee was supposed to be formed following the Nov. 7 formation of Yemen's new technocratic government, in accordance with the Peace and National Partnership Agreement.

Prime Minister Press Secretary and Official Cabinet Spokesman Rajeh Badi, told the Yemen Times that the formation of the committee had been delayed due to the tense security situation facing the country.

"The situation in Marib and Al-Jawf is constantly evolving. We needed to take time to monitor developments there before establishing the committee," Badi added that no Houthis or affiliates of Ansar Allah were working with the committee.

Mohammad Al-Bukhaiti, a member of the Houthi Political Office in Sana'a, said that Ansar Allah welcomed the creation of the committee, adding however that it should have been created sooner. "Better late than never," he said. "We'll cooperate fully with the committee's orders and directives, as long as it commits to restructuring all administrative, security and military bodies in the two governorates, in an impartial manner, that works to assimilate all political powers in the country," he added.

Al-Bukhaiti claimed that any failure to do so could reignite tensions in both governorates and lead to a new round of violence, particularly in Marib, where the situation currently remains tense. He acknowledged that no members or affiliates of Ansar Allah were part of the committee.

Houthi GPC leader assassinated in Dhamar

■ **Ali Ibrahim Al-Moshki**

SANA'A, Jan. 14—Preliminary investigations alleged Wednesday morning that members of Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) were involved in the murder of local GPC leader Abdul Raqeeb Al-Wesabi, 34, in Maber city in Dhamar governorate on Tuesday.

Al-Wesabi was killed Tuesday evening while standing outside a shop he owned in Maber city. He was shot and killed by two armed assailants riding a motorcycle. AQAP has not officially claimed responsibility for the attack.

Dhamar governorate's Deputy

Security Chief Abdullah Al-Saidi stated that forensic evidence found at the scene implicated men known to have links to AQAP. "We're currently pursuing the perpetrators and expect to find them soon."

According to Ahmad Al-Harura, director of the Dhuran Ans district, Al-Wesabi was a GPC representative in Dhuran Ans district's local administrative council, managed one of thirty electoral offices in the neighboring Maber district in addition to being a wealthy businessman who owned several shopping centers throughout the governorate.

"Al-Wesabi was a close friend,"

he said. "He had three sons and a daughter and was well liked, he had no enemies. However, he was known to be a Houthi supporter." He added that Dhuran Ans district was known for having a large number of Houthis and being a GPC stronghold.

Houthis seized control of Dhamar governorate on Oct. 14, encountering very little resistance in the process. Following their takeover AQAP claimed responsibility for a number of assassinations and attacks throughout the governorate.

Khalid Al-Ghubari, a Houthi leader in Dhamar governorate, confirmed that Al-Wesabi had

strong connections to Ansar Allah and was likely targeted for that reason. "The situation is not entirely stable in Dhamar, AQAP has targeted a number of Houthi figures in the area, even breaking into their homes," he said.

AQAP claimed responsibility for a bombing in Dhamar city at the governor's residence on Jan. 4, resulting in the killing of five Houthis including Al-Masira television correspondent Khalid Al-Weshali, and the injuring of 24 others. The group also assassinated local Houthi leader Khalid Al-Weshali, of the same family, and his personal escort on Nov. 17.

Al-Thawra newspaper employees stage protest

■ **Bassam Al-Khameri**

SANA'A, Jan. 14—Hundreds of journalists and employees of the state-run Al-Thawra newspaper staged a protest in front of the Cabinet building on Wednesday, demanding the appointment of a director and editor-in-chief.

The newspaper has been operating without a director or editor-in-chief since Jan. 6, when Faisal Mukaram, who had previously filled both positions, submitted his letter of resignation to the Ministry of Information. The ministry issued a statement the same day, accusing Houthis, also known as Ansar Allah, of having stormed Mukaram's house and forcing his resignation.

Dhaif Allah Al-Shami, a member of the Houthi Political Office in Sana'a, denied the allegations at the time and said popular committees were not ordered to storm Mukaram's house.

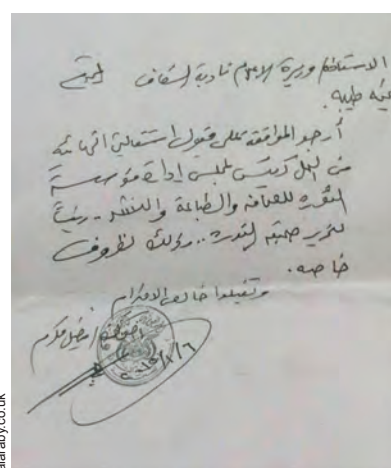
"Mukaram resigned willingly

without being forced by anybody after the employees of Al-Thawra newspaper began to demand his resignation," he said.

Wednesday's protests were the second this week, with newspaper staff having staged a similar protest in front of the Ministry of Information on Monday. Hassan Sharaf Al-Deen, a journalist with Al-Thawra newspaper, told the Yemen Times the second protest was held to apply as much pressure on the government as possible.

"We want the new director and editor-in-chief to be selected from qualified employees of the newspaper," he said.

On Tuesday the Yemeni Journalists' Union called on government and the Ministry of Information to appoint a new director and editor-in-chief as a matter of urgency, and to end Houthi interference with the newspaper. They also appealed directly to Ansar Allah to force the withdrawal of its popular commit-



Faisal Mukaram's resignation letter.

tee members from the newspaper's premises.

"The information minister should appoint a new editor-in-chief from the deputies in the newspaper in order to regulate the work of the

newspaper and normalize the situation," said Marwan Dammaj, the union's general secretary.

On Jan. 7, the Ministry of Information directed all public and private actors to end relations with Al-Thawra newspaper after its editorial position was compromised by Houthi interference. "The information ministry asserts that any letter, document, or agreement marked with the stamp of the newspaper is illegal and the ministry claims no responsibility for it," the ministry announced on its website.

Although Mukaram has not returned to work since the incident, his name remains on print publications and on the newspaper's website.

On Dec. 17, armed Houthis stormed the headquarters of Al-Thawra newspaper, located in the Al-Jeraf area of Sana'a's Al-Thawra district, and began printing daily issues of the newspaper.

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Tens of thousands join celebrations in Aden

■ **Khalid Al-Karimi**

SANA'A, Jan. 13—Tens of thousands of people took part in an organized march in Aden on Tuesday to mark the ninth anniversary of Reconciliation and Tolerance Day.

Beginning at 5 p.m., participants marched from Al-Arood Square in Aden's Khor Maksr neighborhood and headed towards Al-Muala neighborhood, where Aden city's council headquarters are located.

Abd Al-Raouf Al-Sakkaf, a member of the Southern Movement's Supreme Supervisory Committee, said the march began later to allow people to congregate at Al-Arood square. Crowds gathered throughout the day and listened to speeches. A letter by the South's former president, Ali Saleh Al-Beidh, was also read out.

According to Khalid Bamadhaf, a prominent Southern Movement leader, this year's gathering is unprecedented. "Tens of thousands of people have attended, demonstrating their desire to establish an independent southern state," he told the Yemen Times.

Mohammed Musaed, a member of the Aden Security Department, said security forces had taken precautionary measures in case of violence. "We have increased the number of security personnel guarding vital government facilities

and military headquarters, and have prepared the riot police and fire department," he said.

"Today we gather for the ninth anniversary of Reconciliation and Tolerance Day, which was established in 2006 by the Radfan Society in Aden," read a statement released by the committee on Tuesday. "We are asserting that we will continue our peaceful revolution to build the new federal Arab southern state with full sovereignty on all of southern land."

Reconciliation and Tolerance Day was launched in 2006 to encourage southerners to overcome internal divisions and unite in pursuit of their common interests. However, with the emergence of the Southern Movement in 2007, the event has taken on stronger secessionist undertones.

Southern Movement announces public holidays

Southern Movement members released a statement on Monday afternoon, which was circulated by local media outlets, declaring Jan. 13 a holiday. However, according to local sources, it was not taken into account by many students and employees.

Anis Hajar, manager of the education office in Aden's Al-Tawahi district, told the Yemen Times that schools in the district were operating

normally as of Tuesday. "The students are taking their exams, they came to school and did so without interruption," he said, adding that all employees at the Ministry of Education's office in Aden showed up to work as usual.

Taher Naji, head of the trade and industry office in Aden's Al-Muala neighborhood, also reported that employees showed up to work. "I attended on Tuesday like everyday, and employees showed up as usual."

Aden's governor, Abduaziz Bin Hattour, sent out a memo on Monday to the civil service office in Aden requesting them to monitor attendance of state employees in the governorate. The memo was later published by the Aden Al-Ghad newspaper.

"Lately, absenteeism has grown in government facilities under the pretext of 'protest.' Considering that the employees work for the state, not any other political or partisan group, and receive their salary from the state, regular daily attendance is important and all employees should commit to it," read the memo.

As part of a series of steps taken by the Southern Movement since Oct. 14, repeated calls have been made for protest marches, sit-ins, and strikes. On Nov. 26 the Southern Movement called for a partial two-hour strike, which a number of



Tens of thousands of demonstrators took part in celebrations commemorating Tolerance and Reconciliation Day in Aden city on Jan. 13.

employees at state-run institutions, including the Gulf of Aden Ports Corporation, participated in. Later, on Dec. 15, a number of southerners followed the movement's call for workers in all government facilities to take part in an eight-hour strike.

Khalid Bamadhaf, a representative for the Southern Movement, said his group is not forcing south-

erners to go on strike or take part in the celebrations for Tuesday's tolerance day. "The southern people are willing to participate in this celebration given that it's an occasion for all southern political and civil factions," he said.

The Socialist Party's Al-Sakkaf agrees, saying southerners and Southern Movement supporters

have the right to declare Jan. 13 a holiday. It should also be encouraged by the state, he said, as a means of helping southerners overcome the negative memory of what happened that day. "Promoting tolerance and reconciliation amongst the peoples of the south will help promote reconciliation amongst the Yemeni people as a whole."

Educational channel remains closed down

■ **Ali Ibrahim Al-Moshki**

SANA'A, Jan. 14—The state-run "Educational Satellite Channel" remains off-air for the third consecutive day after its offices in Sana'a were taken over by Houthis on Monday morning.

Houthis, also known as Ansar Allah, claimed the station, which broadcasts educational programming for elementary, middle and high school students, was involved in corruption.

A source within the station who asked to remain anonymous told the Yemen Times on Wednesday that the channel was still closed. "Meetings were held between Houthis, the minister of education, and the channel's manager, but these haven't produced any results," he said. "Try and watch the station yourself, you'll see, it's not operating."

According to Abd Al-Rahman Al-Namr, the station's general director, Houthi popular committee members entered the offices of the channel in Sana'a's Al-Jiraf area on Monday morning unannounced, on the pretext that its management was involved in corruption. "They demanded to see the employee sign-in sheet, which we gave them," Al-Namr said. "They noticed that of the 60 employees whose names were present on the sheet, only a few had signed in, which they said was evidence of corruption."

Al-Namr added that he attended a meeting later that night along with Houthi popular committee members and the minister of education, in which all parties agreed that the station would be re-opened the next day. He denied any allegations of corruption. "We explained to them that station employees work different shifts, and that those who worked the afternoon and night shifts had not yet arrived at the station." At the time, the Houthis seemed to understand, Al-Namr said. "We're an impartial station that plays educational broadcasting for students to help with their exams, we have no political orientation."

Minister of Education Abdul Latif Al-Hakimi confirmed that he attended the meeting on Monday and that all parties involved agreed to re-open the station. He denied the Houthis were involved in any wrongdoing. "Those armed men who entered were acting alone and not under any orders from Ansar Allah," he said. Al-Hakimi would not comment further on the situation, saying only that



The state-run Educational Satellite Channel remains off-air for the third consecutive day following a takeover by Houthis.

the ministry did not want to cause any problems with Ansar Allah.

During a follow-up meeting on Tuesday, Al-Namr said, "[the Houthis] told me they still needed to monitor the station and review its finances and management before they could re-open it, promising that they would eventually do so." Houthis did not provide a specific date for when the station would re-open, according to Al-Namr.

Abu Ali, a popular committee leader in Sana'a's Al-Jiraf area who took part in the raid, claimed that popular committee members had received information from station employees claiming that the channel's management was involved in corruption. "Many employees who receive salaries don't actually go to work, they're phantom workers," he said.

'Phantom workers' is a term used in Yemen to describe the practice of paying out salaries to individuals who are not officially employed and don't perform any job functions. It is considered a common vehicle for corruption in Yemen. Ali added that, "We're implementing orders from our superiors in Ansar Allah. In the event that the station is re-opened, it'll be monitored by the popular committee members."

The station was launched by the Ministry of Education on May 23, 2013,

and is the only channel in Yemen dedicated to broadcasting educational programmes. Its programming is aimed at students from the first to twelfth grade, and corresponds with the national curriculum set in public schools.

Adel Al-Banna, principal of the Jil Al-Methaq middle school in the Qa Al-Qaidhi area of Sana'a governorate's Sanhan district, claimed the channel was an important tool used by teachers. "During exam weeks, the channel would broadcast segments aimed at 9th and 11th graders that would help them by reviewing subjects that would be covered on tests," he said.

Ali Mujahid Al-Mawri, a teacher of Islamic culture at the Ibn Al-Haitham high school in Dhamar city, described the move as a power play by the Houthis and an attempt to change the national curriculum and indoctrinate the youth. "The station will open again before long, but they'll be showing different programming," he said. "It'll all be pro-Houthi, pro-Ansar Allah."

Mohammad Al-Bukhaiti, a member of the Houthi Political Office in Sana'a, denied claims that Ansar Allah was attempting to change Yemen's national curriculum. "The station was involved in corruption. Popular committees are monitoring it as they do other government institutions," he said.

New social welfare approved by SWF



Yemen's Social Welfare Fund (SWF) is poised to add an additional 250,000 individuals as welfare beneficiaries by the end of January.

■ **Ali Aboluhom**

SANA'A, Jan. 14—The Social Welfare Fund (SWF) released a statement at the end of its annual meeting on Tuesday, announcing that 250,000 new welfare beneficiaries will be added to the fund's list.

Mansour Al-Fayadhi, the SWF's general manager, told the Yemen Times on Wednesday that the decision followed announcements made by President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi on July 31 last year.

President Hadi's decision to extend welfare to an additional 250,000 individuals came after fuel subsidies were cut on July 30, and was seen as an effort to ease the burden on economically disadvantaged citizens.

The Social Welfare Fund is a government institution chaired by Sameera Obaid, the minister of social affairs and labor. The fund was established in 1996 to distribute financial and other forms of assistance to disadvantaged families and individuals.

According to Al-Fayadhi, the

number of beneficiaries will increase from 1,500,000 to approximately 1,750,000 by the end of January.

Obaid and Al-Fayadhi said a survey will be conducted in January to determine which individuals and families will be among the 250,000 new welfare recipients. Teams will be sent to Yemen's governorates to meet with local council members and draw up lists of those eligible for assistance.

World Bank grant increases welfare payments

On Dec 19, 2014, the World Bank provided the Yemeni government with a grant of \$90 million to be distributed through the SWF to help alleviate poverty in the country.

Obaid told the Yemen Times that the SWF had consequently increased the financial assistance given to individuals and families by \$50.

Al-Fayadhi said the SWF had already received and distributed 40 percent of World Bank grant by the end of 2014. "We expect to receive the rest of the grant by the first quarter

of 2015," he added.

Since Oct. 2014, Al-Fayadhi said that individual beneficiaries received YR9,000 (\$40) every three months, while families receive YR18,000 (\$80).

The increase was welcomed by those depending on welfare to survive, but the amounts received remain inadequate by most standards. Ali Saleh Abdullah, 30, who lives in Al-Makhader district of Ibb, said his family has been registered with SWF since 1996.

Abdullah's family used to receive handouts of YR9,000 (\$40) every three months. However, since Oct 2014 the sum has increased to YR18,000 (\$80). "Even after last year's increase the sum seems trivial, but it's better than nothing," said Abdullah. "We buy two sacks of wheat and two 10-kilo sacks of sugar, but we are an extended family consuming fourfold the amount of these commodities in a three month period. If we depended entirely on handouts we would die of hunger. I sell Qat to provide for my family."

The future of Yemeni Rial

■ **Jeremy Hodge**

Since the country's uprising in 2011, Yemen has been embroiled in constant political turmoil that has bred intense economic unrest. Increasing brazenness seen in attacks launched by Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), and armed tribesmen on oil pipelines and fragile state infrastructure, in addition to the recent takeover of Sana'a and a number of other Yemeni governorates by the Houthis, also known as Ansar Allah, have all served to derail the transition and lead to an increased squeeze on the country's resources and economy.

These factors have led to decreases in oil production, forcing Yemen, which has been an oil exporting country since 1986, and whose crude exports previously constituted upwards of 70% of its operating budget, to begin importing fuel in order to meet its domestic needs. Such factors have put a strain on the country's foreign currency reserves, a fact which experts say could lead to increased pressure on the Central Bank of Yemen (CBY), and an eventual collapse of the country's currency, the Yemeni Rial (YR), in comparison to the dollar.

Foreign currency

Mustafa Nasr is the chairman of the Studies and Economic Media Center (SEMC), a non-profit NGO that works with government and the private sector to monitor and study economic developments in Yemen. Despite the challenges facing Yemen, he remains optimistic regarding the future of the country's currency. "Yemen spent \$1.7 billion on oil imports in 2014, however we also exported \$1.5 billion in crude oil and liquefied natural gas," he claimed. "In the end, we nearly broke even, and lost only \$200 million in reserves. This isn't enough to have a significant effect on the price of our currency."

The total size of Yemen's foreign currency reserves stood at \$4.8 billion in October, a figure that, due to a lack of economic diversification, is largely subject to fluctuations in international oil prices. Yemen's production peaked in 2001 at 440,000 bpd (barrels per day) before declining due to maturing oil fields. During the first quarter of 2009, Yemen experienced a cri-

sis in its oil sector when revenue from oil sales decreased 75% on the previous year as international prices dropped as a result of world economic crisis that struck in 2008, and investment to pay for expansion in the sector dried up. Despite the apparent flaw this exposed in the country's economy, no major reforms were taken to expand the government's sources of revenue.

"Mohammad Bohaibah, a leader in the Marib's Murad tribe, the governorate's largest, told the Yemen Times that tribesmen would 'devastate the governorate's electricity grid and oil pipelines,' if the Houthis attempted to expand in Marib."

Things took a turn for the worse in 2011, when repeated attacks launched on pipelines and oil infrastructure forced Yemen to begin spending from its reserves to import oil in order to meet domestic demand. The government was aided at the time by generous donations from Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in June and July of 2011, totaling 6 million barrels. However according to Nasr, the long term damage this could have wrecked on Yemen's economy has been mitigated by recent drops in international oil prices, which, by the beginning of July 2014 hovered at just over \$105 per barrel, before steadily beginning to drop. By Dec. 8, 2014, prices reached record lows, at \$63.50 a barrel according to Nymex January West Texas Intermediate, a US benchmark. Currently, oil trades for \$46.07 a barrel on the West Texas Intermediate.

"Luckily for us, our spending on imports began to overtake export earnings at around the same time that prices began to drop internationally, creating a buyers market," Nasr said. "This has allowed our foreign reserves to remain stable; as long as this remains the case the CBY will be able to preserve the current exchange rate, and stave off a crisis."

However, according to some, recent developments and indicators show that this near balance of payments is unsustainable. In the event of any further disruptions to the current status quo, the gap between Yemen's fuel bill and oil export earnings could widen, causing a further strain on reserves and possibly a currency crisis.

Abdu Seif, head of the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) Advisory and Oversight team in Yemen, says it's "just a matter of time before the rial collapses." The successful near balance of payments achieved in 2014 was only possible due to a \$950 million purchase of fuel products made by Saudi Arabia on behalf of the Yemeni government last summer. Yemen's already strained budget would not be able to absorb this amount on its own if Saudi Arabia decided to not make a similar offer this year, according to Seif. Yemen's budget deficit for the 2014 fiscal year totaled YR679 billion (\$3.153 billion), and is expected to increase in 2015 if fuel subsidies are kept in place and oil revenue declines.

However, the drying up of Saudi aid seems to be what is likely to occur in the near future. With the exception of \$54 million in food aid provided in December, Saudi Arabia has been wary of providing money to Yemen when the Houthis—who are viewed with skepticism by Riyadh for their perceived close ties to regional rival Iran—hold sway in the capital and elsewhere.

Rumors circulating that Saudi Arabia may ask Yemen to repay a \$1 billion loan provided to the CBY in 2012, if proved true, could further chip away at the country's reserves and starve Yemen of even more of its desperately needed foreign currency.

Originally slated to be paid back over 12 years with a four-year grace period, the loan was the first dispersal of a \$3.25 billion pledge made by Saudi Arabia as part of an initiative launched by the Friends of Yemen (FOY). FOY is an international consortium made up of 39 governments and eight multilateral institutions chaired by the governments of Saudi Arabia and the United Kingdom. It was created in 2010 to help stabilize the country and combat the threat of rising militancy and radicalism, particularly from groups such as AQAP.

CBY Governor Mohammed Bin Humam told Reuters in December that the rumors were false, however, doubts prevail as to whether or not the Saudi government or the FOY will follow through and disperse money that they had been previously pledged to Yemen. The \$3.25 billion promised by Saudi Arabia were part of a broader \$7.9 billion total pledge package made to Yemen by all FOY donor countries and institutions in Sept. 2012. Since then, reports have claimed that Yemen has only received about one third of the money. "Disagreements" between the Yemeni government and donors over which specific projects the money would be used for are often widely cited as reason for delays in the transfer.

Tribal war

Yemen's oil crisis risks being further exacerbated by renewed tensions in Marib governorate, where



Yemen's exchange rate is closely tied to oil exports and foreign development assistance, both of which are threatened and could result in a steep rise on the current rate of YR215 to the dollar.

a majority of Yemen's oil production occurs. Attempts by Houthis to penetrate Marib first occurred on Nov. 9, 2014, when the group took over the Al-Mas military base in the governorate's Jedaan area. The move provoked local tribesmen, who opposed the spread of the Houthis for fear that they might seek to take over Marib as they had other governorates, such as Amran, Ibb, and Al-Baida.

At the time, tribesmen were able to deter the Houthis by threatening to attack government infrastructure and oil pipelines. Two weeks later, on Nov. 25, the two sides signed a peace agreement containing 13 articles. In the agreement, Houthis agreed not to expand further into Marib if tribesmen could successfully protect government facilities, prevent attacks on oil pipelines and electricity networks, and prevent the spread of AQAP throughout the governorate. For just over one month, the peace was held.

However on Jan. 2, the Yemen Times reported that tribesmen in Marib had forcibly seized a large stockpile of weapons from the 62nd Mechanized Brigade that had been passing through the area, allegedly to arm themselves against a possible renewed offensive that could be launched by the Houthis. Just over a week later, on Jan. 10, the Yemen Times reported that thousands of armed tribesmen had begun pouring into Marib from Al-Jawf, Al-Baida and Sa'ada governorates, to help prevent the Houthi's expansion in the region.

It is unclear exactly when the latest round of tensions between Houthis and Marib's tribesmen renewed or for what purpose; however what has followed since has been an escalation and exchange of accusations by both sides, both publicly and in private, with each side accusing the other of attempting to sabotage Marib's fragile peace.

Members of the Houthi Political Office in Sana'a have told the Yemen Times that Marib's tribesmen have failed to uphold their end of the bargain, and have cooperated with and failed to prevent AQAP cells from operating in the area. Tribesmen have accused the Houthis of eyeing Marib's oil reserves and planning a takeover of the governorate.

Regardless of the truth behind these claims, the reality is that a Houthi invasion of the governorate could serve as the tipping point that upsets the fragile financial balance that Yemen's government has been able to manage until now, causing the state to witness further drops in oil revenues, which are already at record lows.

Mohammad Bohaibah, a leader in the Marib's Murad tribe, the governorate's largest, told the Yemen Times that tribesmen would "devastate the governorate's electricity grid and oil pipelines," if the Houthis attempted to expand in Marib.

Implications

According to a report released by the CBY on Jan. 10, the Yemeni

government's earnings from oil sales are already at their lowest figures ever. Yemen's government raked in \$1.58 billion through oil sales between January and November 2014, a \$892 million decrease compared to the same period during the previous year, according to the CBY report.

This figure is just \$58 million less than Saudi Arabia's \$950 million dollar purchase of oil products made last summer that was slated to help Yemen meet its domestic fuel needs. In 2015, with Saudi Arabia less likely to provide assistance, and expected decreases in revenue from oil sales possible, it is unclear how Yemen's government could expect to be able to plug any further financial gaps.

Furthermore, according to Seif, Yemen's current foreign currency reserves are only enough to pay for four to five months worth of imports. "These [the country's reserves] are not amounts that the Yemeni government can expect Saudi Arabia to prop up any time soon," he said. "Marib's facilities are worth billions of dollars. If the Houthis enter the governorate, and vital facilities such as oil pipelines are attacked and destroyed, either by Houthis or tribesmen, there won't be any money available to repair them. We could witness Yemen's currency dropping to anywhere between YR400 and YR500 to the dollar."

Additional reporting by Ali Abulohoum

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**YT vision statement****"To make Yemen a good world citizen."**Prof. Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf,
(1951 - 1999)
Founder of Yemen Times**OUR OPINION****Close Guantanamo, free Emad and others**

Emad Hassan was cleared for release from Guantanamo Bay in 2009 by no less than six different within the American government—including the CIA and FBI. Yet, he remains in prison, where he has tragically spent a third of his life.

Emad is a Yemeni citizen who was abducted while studying in Pakistan and sold by bounty hunters for \$5000. What "sealed his fate," according to his attorneys, would be laughable—if not so tragic. When Emad was questioned about Al-Qaeda, he told his interrogators that yes—he knew about it. Emad was referring to a small village in Yemen by the same name, according to Reprieve, the UK-based charity and rights group.

He has barely eaten in the last seven years as he has been on hunger strike since 2007, longer than any other detainee at Guantanamo. Reprieve has detailed the brutal way he is force-fed twice a day.

Reprieve said the guards met out brutal treatment as punishment for the hunger strike detainees have gone on to protest their continued detainment.

"The Guantanamo authorities view the hunger strike as dangerous disobedience and they punish anyone who takes part. The guards beat them, violently drag the men from their cells, strap them to a chair and shove tubes up their noses, through which a nutritional supplement is pumped at high speed."

President Obama promised to shut Guantanamo down within a year of being elected. That was six years ago.

One hundred and twenty-seven men remain at Guantanamo Bay's US detention camp, which was opened on Jan. 11, 2002. This week marked the 13 anniversary of its opening. Fifty-nine of the 127 men remaining in Guantanamo have been cleared for release.

We can't give Emad back the years he lost away from his family, his homeland and his life, but we can demand that Emad and others are released so that they can move on with their lives.

"All I ask is to be given my rights—the rights that are guaranteed by constitutions in all civilized nations. All I ask is to live free," Emad said. What is more reasonable than that?

Ahlam Mohsen
Deputy editor-in-chief

The new old cabinet in Afghanistan

Doing away with the old power networks would bring Afghanistan closer to stability.

Massoumeh Torfeh
Aljazeera.com
First published Jan. 13

After weeks of waiting and under intense pressure from parliament, the national unity government of Afghanistan led by President Ashraf Ghani and Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah has announced the list of its nominations for the cabinet. The president has asked all acting ministers to remain in their posts until the parliament approves the new nominations.

At first glance, the cabinet looks mediocre with many unknown faces and some repeats of the previous Karzai cabinet. In comparison, it is a more representative cabinet evenly divided between the various political groups that make up the unity government. It is, however, questionable whether it can deliver the ambitious plans set by the president.

The cabinet list tallies with the two lists that were leaked by Shamshad TV and Arman Melli newspaper. They had correctly named Sher Mohammad Karimi as the nominee for defense minister, and Salahuddin Rabbani as foreign minister.

General Karimi, the current Chief of Army Staff, is 70 and an ethnic Pashtun from Khost province. Rabbani, 44 and an ethnic Tajik, is the current chairman of the High Peace Council and the eldest son of former President Burhanuddin Rabbani who was killed by a suicide bomber in 2011. The current Head of Nation Security Directorate (NDS), Rahmatullah Nabil, remains in his position. He returned to the post when the former head of NDS, Asadullah Khalid, was badly injured in a Taliban

ban attack in December 2012.

Point of contention

The key post of interior minister, the main point of contention between the president and the chief executive, appeared differently in the two leaked lists. While Arman Melli had named Fazl Ahmad Manavi, Shamshad TV's list did not include any names for that position.

Manavi, who was the head of the Independent Election Commission, was a fierce critic of Ghani's camp during the presidential elections accusing it of extensive fraud.

The criticism has clearly cost him dearly with Nur-ul-haq Ulumi, who is a former communist party member and a former general of Afghanistan's army during the Soviet era in the 1980s, being named the nominee.

Among the more controversial moves it was confirmed by a source close to the president that he had invited two former Taliban members, Mullah Abdul Salam Zaeef and Wakil Ahmad Muttawakil, to join his cabinet. Although they have reportedly refused the posts, it is important to ask why the president invited such figures and whether he is likely in the near future to call them back for governorship posts.

Some may argue that it is essential to bring Taliban members onboard to help the process of peace and reconciliation. The opposite could also be argued that in view of the rising threat from the Taliban and the recent video released showing Pakistani and Afghan Taliban joining forces with ISIL, it may pose a serious risk to have Taliban in the cabinet privy to nation-

al security decisions. The video is a stark reminder of the years of Taliban rule when they joined hands with al-Qaeda, turning Afghanistan into a training ground which churned out thousands of terrorists from around the world.

Ghani's invitation to Taliban members does not make sense especially when considering a recent poll conducted by Tolo News to mark his first 100 days in office which showed that one-fifth of those asked view the Taliban as "enemies of the state" rather than "political opposition", which is a title Ghani prefers.

Among other controversial names reportedly invited to the cabinet is Ghairat Baheer, a close relative of the notorious Hizb-e-Islami leader Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, with very close connections to Pakistan's military intelligence, ISI.

It is believed that in the newly rekindled relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan, there is a better atmosphere of co-operation and that the recent visit of ISI director general, General Rizwan Akhtar to Kabul on Sunday, has meant they will cooperate more "to check terrorism and extremism and restore peace in Afghanistan."

Strategy for radical reform

Perhaps the submission of the cabinet list was the easiest of Ghani's problems. He now faces the hurdle of parliamentary approval and, most importantly, the challenge of bringing a non-homogenous cabinet up to speed with his ambitious strategy for radical reform and good governance.

Many of the ministers have been chosen out of quotas allocated to power brokers and strongmen who helped Ghani and

Abdullah to power. They will not necessarily be responsive to policy or strategy requirements.

Every member of the new cabinet would have to be tough on fighting corruption and the three security ministries need strong leadership as they face the dangers of a robust Taliban insurgency without the benefit of international backing.

"We cannot expect miracles," said Fahim Dashty, a prominent journalist in Afghanistan.

"The fact that in comparison to Karzai's government there are fewer ministers tainted with corruption and the cabinet appears to be more nationally representative is sufficient for cautious optimism at this stage," he said.

Endemic internal, regional and international power games have entrenched Afghanistan for decades and it is true we cannot expect miracles from a national unity government that carries much of that narrative with it.

However, the sooner the president and the chief executive can shift the power structure away from those old power networks, away from the culture of strongmen and the Taliban towards their political and economic reform agenda, the closer they would be to bringing stability to Afghanistan. It would take much more than the lifetime of one cabinet.

Massoumeh Torfeh is former director of strategic communication at the UN Assistance Mission for Afghanistan (UNAMA) and is currently a research associate at the London School of Economics and Political Science, specialising in Iran, Afghanistan and Central Asia.

Boko Haram and Nigeria's future

five key questions answered

IRIN
First published Jan. 13

The terrible news keeps on coming from Nigeria's embattled northeast. Two suspected child suicide bombers reportedly blew themselves up in a crowded market on Sunday—the second such attack in two days linked to Boko Haram in which young girls were strapped with explosives. Meanwhile, the Islamic extremist group has maintained the momentum of its more conventional attacks, capturing the town of Baga last week on the border with Chad and deliberately executing civilians (earlier reports of up to 2,000 dead by Amnesty International have been disputed by the military. But the true figure remains unknown).

IRIN considers five key questions as Nigeria embarks on an election campaign against the grim backdrop of continued violence.

Do the latest attacks indicate a change in Boko Haram strategy?

No. The use of girl suicide bombers is not new. In December, a 13-year old wearing a suicide vest entered a market in the northern city of Kano, but she did not detonate her explosives: The teenager had been ordered to carry the bomb by her father, a Boko Haram member. Two other teenage girls deployed by Boko Haram at the same time did complete their mission, killing four people and themselves in the blasts.

Neither is the military's failure to hold territory anything new. Boko Haram declared a caliphate in captured territory in August last year, including 10 major towns in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe states. In Borno, Boko Haram holds 13 out of 27 Local Government Areas (LGAs), and two LGAs in both Adamawa and Yobe, although the situation is extremely fluid.

The military's response has often been either silence or bluster. The trending hashtag #JeSuisBaga was a poignant comment on the high-profile reaction of the French government (and the world,

including the Nigerian authorities) to the Charlie Hebdo killings in Paris, and the hush of Abuja to the tragedy in Baga. Boko Haram seems to have singled out the town for special punishment after capturing it on Jan. 7. That may be due to the defiance of the community-rooted vigilante "Civilian JTF," which reportedly had done much of the hard fighting to try to hold the town after the military barracks fell on Jan. 3. The irony is the Nigerian military also laid waste to Baga, allegedly killing 183 people in a reprisal raid in 2013, according to Human Rights Watch. That was during an earlier phase of the war, when the government's hearts-and-minds campaign amounted to a self-defeating, insurgency-stoking, brutal shock-and-awe strategy targeting entire communities, with little differentiation between civilians and combatants.

What is life like in Boko Haram territory?

Details are sketchy. The reaction of most people to the arrival of Boko Haram is to flee; and the Salafist group is not exactly welcoming towards journalists. The accounts that do emerge suggest that, as promised, the militants impose a strict version of Sharia law, which has included amputations. There have also been reports of forced marriages by Boko Haram fighters. Movement is controlled with vehicles banned, apparently to prevent escape. The squeeze on local markets as a consequence of the closure of transport links has been exacerbated by a system of price controls. In some cases traders have had their wares "liberated" and distributed. There are hints that Boko Haram does not have enough men to garrison its towns effectively, and occupation therefore quickly dwindles to a few road blocks, with no real attempt at an alternative administration. So, life continues pretty much as normal if you are, for example, a traditional farmer.

Why is the military's performance so lamentable?

Nigeria is proof that military spending

does not necessarily buy security. The 2014 defense budget was \$2.1 billion and the overall security allotment \$5.8 billion—the largest slice of the government's expenditure pie. And yet the regular excuse is that its soldiers are out-gunned by Boko Haram, despite the helicopter gunships, ground-attack aircraft, and surveillance drones in the official inventory. Closer to the reality on the ground was the report of a recent court martial, in which soldiers complained they were issued with 60 rounds of ammunition and expected to transport themselves to the front in a tipper truck. They were owed five months' back pay.

Corruption is said to be the biggest enemy, with money and fuel meant for the troops siphoned off by senior officers. The repeated failure to destroy munitions and equipment before positions are surrendered to Boko Haram is another factor, as is—sadly, given Nigeria's peacekeeping pedigree—military incompetence. When the troops are well led and properly supplied they win their battles. But there have been repeated reports of the military even failing to make use of reliable intelligence provided by its allies. And now the government has splurged on opaque defense contracts, with more helicopter gunships, mine-resistant armored vehicles and possibly a squadron of new, never-before flown by any other air force, counter-insurgency aircraft.

What is the humanitarian fallout?

The government says the fighting has displaced 1.5 million people within the country. There are questions over the methodology used by the National Emergency Management Agency, which produced that number, but the UN uses the figure. According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, people typically flee to the neighboring states of Bauchi, Gombe, and Taraba, and to central Nigeria and the Middle Belt region. These areas, to a lesser extent, are also affected by violence, "increasing competition for resources between IDPs [internally dis-

placed persons] and host communities in flashpoint areas."

Worsening food security in a region with already some of the worst nutrition and child mortality indicators in the country is another cause for concern. As a result of the disruption to local markets and the fall in agricultural incomes, the Famine Early Warning System Network has advised that "in the absence of well-targeted humanitarian assistance, as many as three million people will be unable to meet basic food needs by July 2015."

What happens next?

All this will have an impact on already dangerously charged and highly polarized elections on Feb. 14. The entourage around President Goodluck Jonathan, a southerner, has long whispered that Boko Haram has been a conspiracy by northern politicians to scupper his tenure. The populist theory prevailing in the north, which will vote in huge numbers for his rival Muhammadu Buhari, is that Boko Haram is the creation of the government to undermine their region.

The Independent National Electoral Commission claims that 80 percent of the people entitled to vote in the northeast have their official voting cards—an almost incredible result given the extent of insecurity in the region. But there is confusion over how the poll can be run under the current electoral laws in conflict-affected areas. With the grubby history and perennial violence of Nigerian elections, it is unlikely that the ballot will be peaceful, or that either side will accept defeat with grace and sang-froid. Regardless of who is deemed the winner, there may well be unrest and bloody protest, from which only Boko Haram can profit. But the positive take is that there is a growing social and political consciousness demanding change. And if saner heads prevail, out of this process Nigeria's democracy can emerge stronger, striking a more effective blow against extremism.

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Investigations into brutal acid attack coming to a conclusion

■ Khalid Al-Karimi

Adnan Al-Madani was on his way to work on the morning of Sept. 7 when he was approached by two men riding a motorcycle. The men were there to kill him, although Al-Madani was not the likely target for a hit. For fear that the sound of firearms may alert security forces in the area, one of the men instead hoisted up a vat of acid, which he threw and poured over Al-Madani's body.

Immediately after the attack, Al-Madani received treatment at a number of Yemeni hospitals, although none could undo his permanent disfigurement. He suffered from third degree burns, permanent facial distortion, and was at risk of going blind in both eyes. A week later, he was flown to Jordan to receive reconstructive surgery, where doctors were able to save his right eye, and use skin from his leg to patch up that which was lost on his neck. However, after more than a month of treatment, doctors were unable to repair his left eye, and on Nov. 11, he was flown to Germany to receive specialized treatment.

Al-Madani works as a mid-level manager in the Monitoring Department at the electricity generator sector of the state-run Public Electricity Corporation (PEC) in Sana'a city. His hospital expenses were paid for by the PEC, perhaps as a means of distancing themselves from controversy following the uproar that was sparked over Al-Madani's case.

In addition to his position within

the PEC and its worker's union, Al-Madani was also one of the founders of a national activist campaign known as, "#the people live in darkness, #government remains lit." Established in June 2013, the initiative is dedicated to spreading awareness of government corruption and complicity in power outages throughout Yemen. According to the campaign's own estimates, it collected a total of 10,000 signatures protesting government corruption, waste, and squander.

More than just a campaigner, Al-Madani claims he had uncovered corruption within the PEC. "The brazenness of the crime speaks to the scope of the issues he was trying to address," says Fuad Al-Khazan, Al-Madani's lawyer.

The Yemen Times contacted Harith Al-Amri, the PEC's deputy general manager regarding the veracity of claims made by Al-Madani and his lawyer. "The PEC is riddled with corruption, it's true," he said. "Al-Madani was standing up for what is right and he should not have been attacked. What happened was a heinous crime, its perpetrators should be punished."

On Dec. 7, state-run Saba News Agency reported that Sana'a's police arrested the main suspects responsible for orchestrating the attack on Al-Madani. Two weeks later on Dec. 24, the Ministry of Interior released details regarding the identity of the attackers on its official website, Al-Haris.

Those named in the case include Rashid Al-Nimr, deputy director of the PEC branch in Sana'a, and his brother, Ahmad Al-Nimr,

who serves as the branch's deputy general director of administrative and financial affairs. According to reports from the Ministry of Interior, both were responsible for paying money to those who carried out the attack.

Police reports reviewed by the Yemen Times implicate three other men as being directly responsible for tracking down Al-Madani and dousing him with acid. In police interrogation records, one of the men claimed he was responsible for following and tracking Al-Madani and coordinating with the other two men, who were both riding the motorcycle from which the acid was thrown. One of the other two men, who admitted to being responsible for carrying the vat of acid and dousing it onto Al-Madani, claims he did this in exchange for YR3,000 (\$13.9), which was paid out to him directly by Rashid Al-Nimr.

On Dec. 31, 2014, the North Capital Secretariat Court in Sana'a issued a warrant addressed to the General Director of the PEC calling for the arrests of Rashid Yahya Mohammad Latf Al-Nimr and Ahmad Mohammad Latf Al-Nimr, in addition to two other suspects, Ahmed Hamoud Murshid Al-Nimr and Rashad Yahya Mohammad Latf Al-Nimr, both employees within the



Adnan Al-Madani, seen before and immediately after the heinous acid attack that left him permanently disfigured.

PEC branch in Haima. While Ahmad Hamoud works as a managing supervisor of the plant, Rashad works as the branch's bill collector. The warrant orders the PEC to stop paying their salaries and to assist security forces in apprehending both men in the event that they appear in any government buildings. It is not clear how these latter two are involved in the crime. According to Al-Khazan, they were apprehended near the crime scene and are suspected of involvement, however details remain vague.

Since the attack, Al-Madani's case has reached the national stage,

and a number of activists, PEC employees, and sympathizers have held rallies and protests in support of Al-Madani calling for greater

government accountability and the immediate arrest of those responsible. Throughout November, protests took place under the slogan, "we're all Adnan Al-Madani" in front of the interior ministry and the Cabinet building in Sana'a. Demonstrations spread to Taiz city on Dec. 7, where protestors gathered in front of the governorate's government compound.

According to Mohammad Mused, an officer with the Aden Security Department, Ahmad Mohammad Lutf Al-Nimr was arrested at Aden airport on Monday, Jan. 5. According to Mused, security forces had placed Al-Nimr on a national travel ban after registering his name at the country's airports. Upon his arrest, Ahmad Mohammad Lutf Al-Nimr was transferred to the Criminal Investigation Department in Sana'a, where he is currently awaiting trial.

However a number of security force sources, including both Funaish Al-Waeli, an investigator at Sana'a's Criminal Investigation Department and Mohammad Hizam, deputy head of the Ministry of Interior's Public Relations Department, confirmed to the Yemen Times that the primary suspect, Rashid Al-Nimr, remains at large. However, Hizam remains confident he would be caught. "Those responsible for this crime will be all brought to justice," he said.



Expression of Interest (EOI)

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees - with its Branch Office Sana'a, Republic of Yemen - has an international mandate to provide international protection and to seek solutions for the problem of refugees in Yemen. In addition, The Office assumes the lead responsibility for protection, emergency shelter and camp management for internally displaced persons in Yemen. The work of the Office is of an entirely non-political character.

The Office in Sana'a expresses its interest to contract a qualified auctioneer to carry out the sale of all obsolete items including vehicles, generators, office equipment and other equipment & tools as it is where it is.

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دعوة للراغبين في مجال البيع بالمراد العلني

مكتب المفوضية السامية للأمم المتحدة لشؤون اللاجئين - بصنعاء، الجمهورية اليمنية - لديه التفويض الدولي لتوفير الحماية الدولية والسعي إلى إيجاد حلول لمشكلة اللاجئين في اليمن. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، المفوضية السامية للأمم المتحدة لشؤون اللاجئين هي الرائدة والمسؤولة الرئيسية عن الحماية وتقديم المأوى في حالات الطوارئ وإدارة المخيمات للنازحين داخلياً في اليمن. وعمل المفوضية ذو طابع انساني بحت.

تعلن المفوضية السامية للأمم المتحدة لشؤون اللاجئين في صنعاء عن رغبتها للتعاقد مع مكتب دلاله للبيع عبر المراد العلني لكل الاغراض والمواد القديمه على سبيل المثال وليس الحصر (السيارات، المولدات والادوات المكتبية وغيرها) بحالتها الراهنه وفي مكانها المحدد.

آخر موعد لتقديم العروض يوم الأربعاء الموافق ٢٨ يناير ٢٠١٥ الساعة ٠٤ مساءً.

للمزيد من الاستفسارات والمعلومات يرجى التواصل على ارقام المكتب الموجودة أدناه خلال ساعات الدوام الرسمي لدى مكتب المفوضية صنعاء بين ص ٨:٠٠ حتى ١٦:٠٠م.

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فاكس: ٠١٤٦٩٧٧٠

الرجاء تقديم ملف التعريف بالجهد مع رسالة ابداء الرغبة في العمل إلى مكتب المفوضية بصنعاء في ظرف مغلق ومختوم بالشمع الأحمر ومكتوب عليه اسم الجهة واسم مقدم العرض على العنوان المذكور أعلاه في موعد اقصاه الأربعاء الموافق ٢٨ يناير ٢٠١٥ الساعة ٠٤ مساءً.

لن يتم النظر في العروض التي ستقدم بعد هذا الموعد او المراسلة إلى عنوان اخر.



When Yemen is the destination

UN Refugee Agency: More migrant deaths in 2014 than previous four years combined



An estimated 92,592 refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants landed on Yemen's shores last year, mostly from Ethiopia and Somalia.

Ahlam Mohsen

This is a three-part series about the migrants and refugees who come to Yemen. Part one, below, focuses on the conditions in countries of origin that lead people to flee their homes. Part two will focus on the journey migrants and refugees make and its risks and tragedies. Part three is about the obstacles migrants and refugees face upon reaching Yemen and proposed long-term solutions.

Adem* left Ethiopia for Yemen after spending two years in Goba Civil Prison in Addis Ababa. Adem is Oromo-Ethiopian.

He first travelled from Ethiopia to Somalia, where he departed from Bassasso port and arrived in Beer Ali, a small area in Yemen's Shabwa governorate, in 2002.

Two hundred and forty-six people have died making the journey to Yemen by boat this year—more than the previous four years combined, according to the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR).

The vast majority of new arrivals are from Somalia and Ethiopia, said Nick Stanton, a public information officer with UNHCR.

Amongst the 91,592 who landed on Yemen's coast this year are refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants. This figure is higher than 2013's but lower than 2012 and 2011, "when we recorded over 100,000 people in each of these years," Stanton said.

The majority of 2014's new arrivals came towards the end of the year. Curiously, September saw the highest number of new arrivals since UNHCR began keeping records in 2002. UNHCR recorded 12,768 new arrivals during the month. It was also a month fraught with uncertainty.

The Houthis, an armed Shia Zaydi group, took over the capital on Sept. 21, following about a month of protests. The Houthis rode to town on the back of popular resentment following the removal of fuel subsidies on July 30, and set up protest tents in August.

"When people leave their home countries it's not an easy choice. These are families, young people, old people, and they all have lives and ties to their homes," Stanton said. "So we have to recognise that there are some strong push and pull factors on the individuals that decide to leave their homes, walk for many days, pay smugglers for a place on a boat, and take the risk of crossing the

Gulf of Aden or Red Sea to come to Yemen."

Many of the migrants who choose to come to Yemen are economic migrants—they move in hope of securing a better future for themselves and their families. Yemen is widely viewed as a gateway to more prosperous countries in the Middle East.

"Yemen's place close to the Horn of Africa and as a route to wealthy Gulf countries also contributes to the high numbers of new arrivals we record. People's final preferred destination countries in the wider Gulf region include countries which Yemen borders, notably Saudi Arabia. For many, these Gulf countries offer the prospect of higher wages and greater livelihood opportunities," Stanton said.

"Refugees, on the other hand, have to move if they are to save their lives or preserve their freedom. They are fleeing war, persecution, insecurity and are not protected in their home country; seeking sanctuary is a necessity for them."

Whether fleeing persecution, conflict, or simply seeking a better future for themselves and their families, migrants and refugees travel the same routes and face the same dangerous journeys.

Somalia

According to UNHCR—with 1.1 million refugees around the world—Somalia has the third largest global population after Syria and Afghanistan.

Out of more than 91,500 migrants who landed at Yemen's coast last year, 19,640 were Somali. According to UNHCR, there are several factors behind the surge of arrivals this year, including an ongoing drought, "as well as the combined effects of conflict, insecurity, and lack of livelihood opportunities in countries of origin."

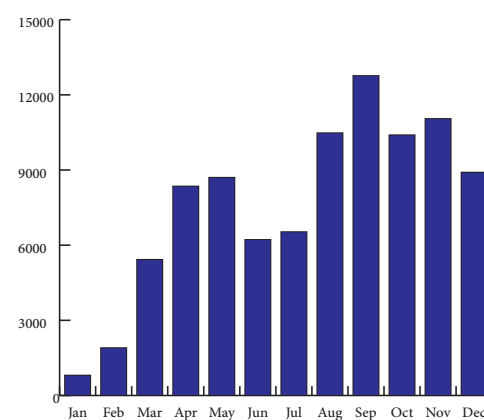
Moreover, the surge can also be attributed to decreasing cooperation between regional countries to better manage migratory movements, Stanton said.

Somalis arriving in Yemen are recognized as prima facie refugees—an automatic status bestowed on them in recognition of the more than two decades of civil war that Somalia went through.

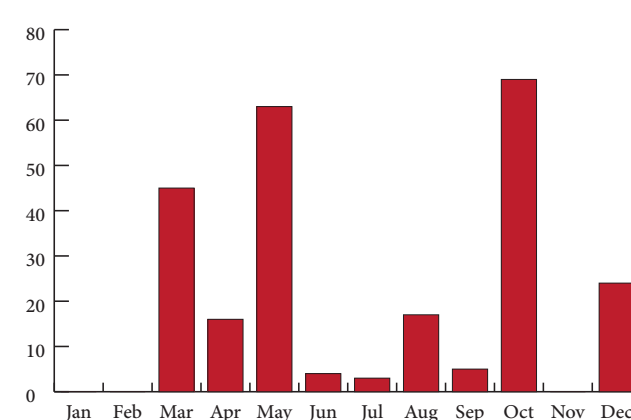
Huda*, 26, and her son Salim*, 9, arrived in Yemen on Jan. 31, after taking a boat from Obock, Djibouti to Bab Al-Mandeb. They are both currently staying at the Kharaz Refugee Camp in Yemen.

"I didn't plan this, the situation pushed us out of Somalia. Our country was unstable, we couldn't survive there," Huda told UNHCR.

Somalia remains one of the world's largest and most complex humanitarian crises in the world.



2014 numbers of new arrivals at Yemeni coasts by month (Data source: UNHCR)



2014 number of recorded deaths by month (Data source: UNHCR)

"After two years of improvements following the devastating famine in 2011, a lethal mix of drought, surging food prices, increasing malnutrition, insecurity and slow funding has plunged the humanitarian situation into significant decline," Stanton said.

Ethiopia

Ethiopians make-up the largest population among new arrivals in Yemen. In 2014, out of more than 91,500 migrants and refugees who arrived at Yemen's shores, 71,907 were Ethiopian, according to UNHCR. According to the agency, the primary reason Ethiopians make the journey to Yemen is the search of greater employment opportunities.

Despite being one of the world's fastest growing countries—Ethiopia recording double-digit economic growth over the past decade—more than 20 million people are living

below the poverty line, according to the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). Several million people require emergency assistance every year just to meet their basic survival needs.

With more than 80 percent of the population living in rural areas and relying on agriculture for their livelihood, "their vulnerability is frequently exacerbated by natural and man-made hazards, including drought, flooding, disease outbreaks, inter-communal conflict and refugee influxes from neighboring states," said Stanton.

While the vast majority of Ethiopians coming to Yemen are economic migrants, there are others, like Adem, escaping persecution.

According to Amnesty International, thousands of Oromos, members of Ethiopia's largest ethnic group, "are being ruthlessly targeted by the state based solely on their

perceived opposition to the government."

"Oromos are regularly subjected to arbitrary arrest, prolonged detention without charge, enforced disappearance, repeated torture, and unlawful state killings as part of the government's incessant attempts to crush dissent," Amnesty International added in a statement published in Oct.

*Not their real names

The next piece in the series will look at the often dangerous journey migrants and refugees take to Yemen, including the most deadly routes for points of departure, the locations in Yemen of deaths at sea, and the most common entry points to Yemen for new arrivals in 2014—as well as first-hand accounts of the tragedies and violations that occur during the journey.

Republic of Yemen Social Welfare Fund (SWF) Social Welfare Fund Institutional Support Project VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT Monitoring and Evaluation Officer Proc ref: C32

The Government of Republic of Yemen has received grants from the International Development Association towards the cost of the Social Welfare Fund Institutional Support Project, and intends to apply part of the proceeds of these grants for the recruitment of a Monitoring and Evaluation Officer. The Social Welfare Fund (implementing agency for the project) now invites qualified individual applicants to apply for this position.

Duties and Responsibilities

Under the general direction of the Social Welfare Funds (SWF) Managing Director, the Mentoring and Evaluation Officer (M&E) is responsible for the following tasks

1) General responsibilities

- Provide overall management for the design and implementation of the projects' M&E systems;
- Serve as the primary point person for all monitoring and evaluation related work and be the primary M&E resource to the partners and grantees.

2) Development of M&E Plan

- Support the development of the M&E guidelines for the Projects funded by the World Bank in the SWF, including a results framework, detailed indicators and data collection arrangements, M&E management, M&E responsibilities, timeline, and budget;
- Assist in generating indicators as needed with relevant SWF and IDA specialists and review these with the Technical Coordinator;

3) Development of M&E Instruments

- Develop and test data collection instruments according to the needs of the M&E Plan, such as registration forms, baseline surveys, focus groups, checklists, monitoring forms, etc.;

4) Regular data collection, monitoring, and reporting

- Support the implementation of data collection instruments to capture necessary data on beneficiaries, project activities, and results, and ensure monitoring activities are conducted on schedule
- Regularly review indicators and data collection process and ensure it is functioning well in all activity locations; perform data quality assessments and make adjustments as needed
- Ensure that key project indicators are captured through the SWF's Management Information System;

Qualifications & Experience:

Required:

- A Graduate degree in Economics, Social Sciences, Education or a closely related field;
- Minimum of 3 years of professional experience in M&E and preparing projects' monthly, bi-annually and annual English and Arabic progress reports, with a minimum of 2 years managing monitoring and evaluation activities in a multi-stakeholder environment;
- Experience successfully working with public sector and/or civil society organizations in designing, managing and/or implementing M&E systems;
- Strong computer skills, particularly Word, Excel, PowerPoint, internet browsers; experience with other types of database, data analysis and management software being an added advantage (e.g., SPSS, STATA);
- Strong proficiency of English and Arabic, both oral and written;
- Strong interpersonal skills and pro-active approach to problem solving;
- Ability to work independently under limited supervision;
- Willingness to adhere to all SWF's policies and procedures; and
- Working effectively in a team environment

Applications in the form of detailed CV should be submitted by individual consultants to the address below, indicating that they are qualified and would be able to perform the services. Short-listed candidates shall be interviewed to finalize the selection.

A consultant will be selected in accordance with the procedures for selection of individual consultants as set out in the World Bank's Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants by World Bank Borrowers (May 2004; revised October 1, 2006 and May 1, 2010)

Applications must be delivered to the address below on or before February 15, 2015, 11:00 PM – Yemen Time.

Social Welfare Fund (SWF)
Noqum Beside Control
Telefax: (+967-1) 540102
Attn: Mr. Mohammed Fadhle
Email: mohamedfadhle@gmail.com



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0900 hours – Flag hoisting by the Ambassador

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تود السفارة الهندية دعوة المواطنين الهنود

والاشخاص من ذوي الاصول الهندية في اليمن

لحضور احتفالات العيد الجمهوري السادس والستون

في يوم الاثنين ٢٦ يناير ٢٠١٥

المكان: السفارة الهندية بصنعاء

شارع ٢٤ المتضرع من شارع حده جوار شركة واي، منطقة حده، صنعاء

البرنامج: ٠٨:٤٥ صباحاً: التجمع في السفارة

٠٩:٠٠ صباحاً: فعالية رفع العلم من قبل السفير

(لا يسمح بدخول الحقائق والهواتف المحمولة داخل مبنى السفارة)

Wikileaks for Africa? Introducing Afrileaks

Basia Cummings
 theguardian.com
 First published Jan. 13

When Zimbabwean politician Edward Chindori-Chininga died in a car crash in 2013, some believed the circumstances had been “suspicious.”

Soon after the death of the country’s former minister for energy and mining, the news outlet New Zimbabwe reported that Chindori’s colleagues had said he had known he was a “marked man” after his department released a report “claiming millions of dollars in taxes paid by companies mining diamonds” in the controversial Marange diamond fields “had vanished.”

Khadija Sharife, an investigative journalist based in South Africa, says Chindori-Chininga’s case serves as just one example of why Africa is in need of a project like Afrileaks, which aims to help train a new generation of investigative journalists about how to safely use leaked material.

Afrileaks, which launches today [Jan.13], is designed to securely connect whistleblowers with media organizations across Africa, and is the first of its kind to provide ongoing technical training in how to “verify and investigate the quality of leaks.”

Since the Wikileaks, Iraq war logs, and Edwards Snowden’s revelations about America’s NSA, whistleblowing has gained global attention, but Sharife and her colleagues at Afrileaks say that many journalists across Africa lack investigative skills, and often have little understanding of the dangers they could face in investigating leaks.

“Whistleblowers that we spoke with were not aware of measures such as encrypted email,” Sharife says. “Nor did many have the experience to pursue the safest means of transmitting information.”

The secure web service, developed in partnership with Italy’s Hermes Center for Transparency and Digital Human Rights and the Africa Network of Centers for Investigative Journalism (ANCIR), will allow individuals to send information “without fear of being compromised and exposed,” says Sharife. The site will become “live” for leaks from today [Jan.13].

The leak is never the story

Media outlets that have already signed up to the initiative include South Africa’s Mail & Guardian, Botswana’s Guardian newspaper, The Zimbabwean, and Mozambique’s Verdade. Journalists are taught skills such as sourcing and cross-examination, and how to assess for consistency, bias, contradiction, reliability and metadata—knowledge that Sharife argues is vital in developing a cohort of reporters who are able to hold organizations and governments to account.

The sessions are taught by a panel of experts, including Friedrich Lindenberg, whose work fuses software development, journalism and open government advocacy, and Luis Nhachote, an award-winning Mozambican journalist working with Verdade.

Three of the ten lowest listings on the press freedom index are in Africa—with Eritrea ranked lowest in the world in 2014, closely followed by Somalia and Sudan.

Leigh Baldwin, an investigative journalist at Global Witness, a media organization partnering with

Afrileaks, says that it is this sensitivity to issues of censorship and local history that makes Afrileaks unique.

“Too often, corruption and human rights violations go unreported in Africa because of the risks faced by sources,” Baldwin says. “By connecting leakers directly with trusted partners, Afrileaks provides a way for local and international journalists to work together to expose abuses and get important stories out.”

Unlike Wikileaks, however, Afrileaks won’t publish any information itself. It will act only as a facilitator, a “highly secure mailbox.” The whistleblower can send files to the site securely, they say, and nominate the media organization they want to receive the leaks. They can choose to remain anonymous, or continue to be part of the subsequent investigation.

“The leak is never the story,” Sharife says. “They are always just the lead.”

Public interest

Giovanni Pellerano, a 29-year-old computer engineer from Italy and one of the many architects behind the Afrileaks software explains that it’s vital the project provides ongoing support to its partners.

“Whistleblowing is an important instrument that should be used carefully, so future training is now being planned and will continue to take place regularly.” Two sessions already took place in 2014, in Maputo and Johannesburg.

Pellerano was one of the founders of GlobaLeaks back in 2011, when a chat with friends turned into developing free software in order to make it possible “for non-techy people to easily set up secure anonymous



“Whistleblowers that we spoke with were not aware of measures such as encrypted email”

whistleblowing initiatives in the public interest.”

Since then, Pellerano has gone on to develop software for various organizations, but Afrileaks is his first project outside the western world.

Life and death?

But what unique risks do African leakers face? And why launch this service now?

For years, companies in South Africa have employed whistleblowing mechanisms to try and root out internal fraud and corruption, with a degree of success. But the 2014 PwC Economic Crime Survey has charted a recent decline in the practice.

In 2007, the report says 16 percent of corporate crime was detected through whistleblowing. In 2013, that figure had dropped to six percent, though it increased slightly last year. The report suggests this may be due to concerns over the power of companies, and South African law, to protect whistleblowers.

Sharife argues that the stakes are now higher—following the leaks by Chelsea Manning and Snowden—than ever before, and for all parties involved.

“We have seen how vicious the response is, but the truth is worth fighting for, whatever the consequences,” she says.

Both Sharife and Pellerano say that everyone working at the project is acutely aware that in some cases, leaking information can be a case of life and death. They say Afrileaks will try to take as many steps as it can to protect whistleblowers, but also want to stress that leaking sensitive information always comes with risks, especially in Africa.

“In terms of investigations, there are various challenges that affect whistleblowers,” Pellerano explains. “Censoring, surveillance, legal liability, physical risk, intimidation, and other issues. But all these restraints are exacerbated, to a great extent, in African countries.”



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- ▶ Preparing purchase orders/service orders and /or contracts whichever is applicable after obtaining due approvals from the competent authorities for signatures thereafter seeking approval from the Finance Manager/General Manager.
- ▶ Generating reports on day to day activities seeking guidance and approvals in order to streamline the work.
- ▶ Maintaining complete records and filing system in a proper manner for Audit trail and control purposes.

Your Profile:

- ▶ Bachelor degree in Business Administration or equivalent.
- ▶ 5 years' experiences in the subject role specially in E&P industry.
- ▶ PC literate in MS Office (Excel, Power point, Word, and Project).
- ▶ Fluent English and communication skills.
- ▶ Yemeni National.

Warehouse Document Controller

Ref. No.: YE15.54 | Location: Shabwah | Contract: One Year

Responsibilities:

- ▶ Filing, archiving, and maintaining PO related to new delivered materials and correspondences log registers in regular basis.
- ▶ Filing the GRNs, GRs, GIs and material Certifications.
- ▶ Maintaining the material movement register and inventory reports.
- ▶ Filing the inventory reports and warehouse correspondences in a timely manner.
- ▶ Arranging flight and hotel booking for the field staff.
- ▶ Maintaining the reimbursement documentations for warehouse staff.

Your Profile:

- ▶ Bachelor degree in Business Administration or equivalent.

- ▶ 3-5 years' experiences in the same job profile.
- ▶ PC literate in MS Office (Excel, Power point, Word, and Project).
- ▶ Fluent English and communication skills.
- ▶ Yemeni National.

Warehouse Keeper

Ref. No.: YE15.56 | Location: Shabwah | Contract: One Year

Responsibilities:

- ▶ Reconciling receipt of materials and equipment against Purchase/Service Orders.
- ▶ Receiving and control issuing materials and equipment in field base.
- ▶ Correct Handling, storing, and maintaining all types of company materials/equipments received on site.
- ▶ Correct cataloguing the received items, working closely with end user groups.
- ▶ Preparing the documentations for issuing materials to Production and Drilling Operations, obtain approvals of Warehouse Supervisor and Company Field Management.
- ▶ Preparing monthly financial reconciliation of inventory receipts/issues and submit to Warehouse Field Base Supervisor for approval.
- ▶ Conducting physical inventories of materials and equipment on monthly basis as per Inventory procedures, to comply with external and internal audit requirements.
- ▶ Handling material storage, packing, preservation and delivery at Warehouse.

Your Profile:

- ▶ Bachelor in Business Administration or equivalent.
- ▶ 5 years' experience in the same job profile.
- ▶ PC literate in MS Office (Excel, Power point, Word, and Project).
- ▶ Fluent English and communication skills.
- ▶ Yemeni National.

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Copenhagen to Kobani, Berlin to Erbil

The Islamic State's assault in Syria and Iraq has given Europe's Kurdish diaspora a new sense of purpose

Liana Aghajanian
foreignpolicy.com
First published Jan. 6

This summer, 30-year-old political scientist Shaho Pirani kissed his kids goodbye, had his father drive him to the airport, and took a 2,000-mile flight from Copenhagen, Denmark, to Erbil, Iraq.

This was not for a vacation. Pirani arrived two days after leaving his home in Denmark in the city of Koya, located in Iraqi Kurdistan, to undergo military and tactical training with Kurdish Peshmerga forces in an attempt to learn firsthand how he could battle Islamic State extremists and other future threats to the Kurdistan region, which stretches through Iraq, Turkey, Iran, and Syria.

Pirani was excited, but also nervous. He imagined what would happen if he was caught by the Islamic State's fighters. "What if they capture me because I'm a foreigner?" he thought. "What if they behead me or parade me as a hostage on TV?" But his anxiety was quickly replaced with empowerment. He was soon immersed in the political history of the region, given tactical training, taught how to handle and shoot with Kalashnikovs and sniper guns, and given detailed instruction in everything from how to take bases and checkpoints to how the wind could affect the range of his weapons.

Pirani finished his month of training and flew home. He was never planning to stay and fight. Peshmerga commanders told him that he wasn't needed — yet. But since he returned to Copenhagen, he's spent every waking moment trying to figure out how to get back on the front lines. With money securely put aside for an impending flight, Pirani is ready to go. All he needs is a phone call telling him it's time.

"I'm on social media and I see news updates, I see these horrific things, I'm uneasy, I cannot relax, I cannot find calm inside," he tells Foreign Policy in a phone interview from his home in Copenhagen. "I just want to get off my seat, take the car to the airport, and take a plane home to Kurdistan and do something."

Pirani was born in Iran to a politically active Kurdish-Iranian family that immigrated to Denmark in the early 1990s. Pirani says he came to Europe alone with a fake passport when he was seven or eight. He spent two years in a German refugee camp before an uncle brought him to Denmark.

Across Europe, there are hundreds of diaspora Kurds like Pirani who have answered the call to arms, left behind family, jobs, and peaceful suburban lives, and joined to fight the Islamic State alongside the Peshmerga and the Turkey-based Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). For Europe's highly organized Kurdish diaspora, the decision to take to the front lines in their ancestral homelands isn't one made overnight, but results from a long-standing feeling of distance combined with intense responsibility that has been cultivated over several decades. Across Germany, Sweden, and Britain, Kurdish cultural and political activity has flourished, allowing Kurds to invest in and discover their identities.

In the process of settling in Europe, they've also managed to change Western perceptions of a little-understood ethnic group that makes up the fourth-largest population in the Middle East.

Susanne Guven, the head of the Kurdish National Association of Sweden, estimates that "a couple hundred" Kurds from Sweden have left to Iraq and Syria and many more are ready to join. "I frequently get messages from people wanting to know how they can go to Syria to fight in the war," she says. The German newspaper Der Spiegel reported that over 50 German Kurds

have made the trip to go to Syria. One Facebook page has actively been recruiting fighters from Britain, Germany, and Sweden, as well as Canada, to go fight in Syria.

The rise of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria has created a new urgency, but the pull to go back to Kurdistan isn't new. Pirani says it's a feeling many Kurds, known as the world's largest stateless nation, experience throughout their lifetimes. "It's something that's with you throughout all your life, and I'm trying to teach my kids the same," he says. "I just try to tell them that they cannot forget why their father is here and what's happening in their home country."

But for those who are willing to stand in solidarity on the front lines, the risks loom large, as do the potential consequences waiting for them back home.

The PKK is designated as a terrorist organization by the United States and the European Union, which means that those fighting alongside the Kurdish revolutionary Marxist group could be subject to anti-terrorism laws if they choose to return home. Ten Kurds in Denmark were arrested in September 2012 under anti-terrorism laws for funneling \$24 million to the PKK. They were released only after the court accepted that the money was for cultural activities and to help victims of the 2011 earthquake in Van, Turkey. Pirani says if he tries to go and fight with the PKK, he'll risk at least six years of prison time.

A European Union spokesperson, who only agreed to speak on background, told Foreign Policy that it is "up to the member states" to assess the dangers posed by an individual who travels abroad, and whether "to include him in the police database, and the decision to bring him to court or not." Many European countries have increased penalties against citizens who join terrorist groups in an effort to deal with jihadis going to join the Islamic State. In September, Danish politicians floated the idea of taking away the passports of those who go to fight in Iraq or Syria.

Those who go to fight alongside the Peshmerga, who are allied with the US military, don't necessarily face terrorism charges, but that doesn't mean they'll have an easy time, either. When Pirani told a Peshmerga officer he was ready to return immediately, the officer told him that the Kurds in Iraq need modern weaponry and ammunition, not people. "If you come down here, you'll just be another person to be shot or bombed by the Islamic State," he was told.

After months of fighting, Peshmerga forces retook two Iraqi towns from the Islamic State in late November and gained control of the town of Baiji, where the country's largest oil refinery is located. Iraqi Kurdish fighters recently joined the ongoing battle for Kobani, a besieged Syrian border town that has become a symbol of Kurdish resistance. The arrival last month of 150 Peshmerga helped reinvigorate the fight against the Islamic State.

Some Kurds have chosen to provide their expertise in other ways. "I know a lot of doctors who have left Sweden to help and paid for the tickets from their own pockets," Guven says, adding that the Kurdish National Association opened a bank account to raise money for refugees from Kobani. In London, Kurdish youth are also doing their part: Recently, a group of young Kurds hosted a comedy night called "Stand Up Against ISIS" to raise funds for the Kurdish Red Crescent.

There is perhaps no place that could foster a more passionate response from its community of Kurds than Europe. Many Kurds first began moving to Berlin, London, Stockholm, and other European cities as guest workers in the 1980s, laying the groundwork for more, who came in the 1990s fleeing political persecution in Turkey, the authoritarian regime in Iraq,

and harsh assimilation policies in Syria.

Today, with an estimated 500,000 Kurds in Germany, some 50,000 in Sweden, and 100,000 in Britain, the Kurds make up a robust and active network who keep strong ties to organizations back home and participate in changing public opinion in Europe about their community with a number of alternative strategies. This community and sense of solidarity has been building for decades in Europe. But the jihadi advance in Syria and Iraq has awoken it and given it a new sense of purpose.

Barzoo Eliassi, a research officer at the International Migration Institute at Oxford and lecturer at Linnaeus University in Sweden who researches the Kurdish diaspora, says that Europe is where Kurds—who were stigmatized, oppressed, and economically marginalized back in the Middle East—have wholeheartedly embraced and discovered their Kurdishness.

"When they come to Europe, they find a new political context, which is more democratic and liberal," he says. "You have more freedom for your own cultural identity; no one comes and tells you that you cannot be Kurdish or you can't speak Kurdish. Although you are in a minority position, you are more privileged, you have space to invest in your identity."

The waves of immigration have also led Kurds from Turkey, Iran, and Iraq to intermingle in a way they wouldn't in their fractious homeland. As Kurds from across different borders meet in Stockholm or Berlin or London, they are able to form a more cohesive identity than they would otherwise be able to across Turkish or Iraqi or Syrian borders.

Eliassi, who called the Kurdish diaspora one of the best-organized immigrant groups in Europe, points to Sweden, where he says Kurdish libraries, television shows, and cultural centers explore Kurdish identity while also sharing it with a Swedish audience.

This flourishing identity has also translated into concrete action. Across Europe, the Kurdish diaspora has lobbied for the Kurdish cause, holding protests and sit-ins, engaging in hunger strikes and online activism. In late 2011, over a dozen protesters rushed into the offices of the Guardian, demanding coverage of human rights abuses by the Turkish government against Kurds. In October, Kurdish activists staged a mock slave market in London and broke into the European Parliament in Brussels to demand international action for the besieged Kurdish town of Kobani in Syria.

Memed Aksoy, a Kurdish activist and spokesperson for the Kurdish Assembly in the U.K., one of the largest Kurdish activist groups based in Britain, knows of two people who left Portsmouth, England, to join the PKK in Iraq, as well as many more who have left from Germany, where the largest number of Kurds in the diaspora reside. Aksoy says he's happy to see the PKK's presence revitalized in Europe. Ever since the group was designated a terrorist group in 2004, its supporters in Europe have come under scrutiny and have consequently lost money, momentum, and membership. "We're once again slowly organizing ourselves," he says.

The PKK's attempts to help Yazidis escape the Islamic State's siege on Mount Sinjar in Iraq, as well as the group's support for the ongoing siege of Kobani, have won the group praise from leaders around the world.

A group of European politicians is currently pressuring the European Union to remove the PKK from its terrorism watch list.

Harry van Bommel, a Dutch Socialist Party politician, says he is working on opening the debate in the Netherlands to have the organization removed from the list for two reasons: To support the peace process between Kurds and the



Kurds are among the most well organized of Europe's diaspora Groups. Their numbers total 650,000 in Britain, Sweden, and Germany.

Turkish government and for the vital, internationally important role the organization has played in the fight against the Islamic State, also known as ISIS. "It's politically not right to play a role in this fight against ISIS and at the same time to consider [the PKK] a terrorist organization—that's not a credible position of the international community," he says. "We have to take into account that these lists are political lists, they are not legal lists, and therefore it is a political decision to become on the list, and also a political decision to get off the list."

Eliassi says the fight over Kobani has been a significant moment for Kurds, leading to a rupture in how they're viewed by the West. The battle has helped bring the PKK's brand of secular politics, along with its emphasis on gender equality, onto the world stage.

At the same time, the fight against the Islamic State has given Kurds a

renewed sense of hope that a different future for the Middle East is possible—one that could include the realization of their aspirations for autonomy and independence. This has energized the Kurdish diaspora, too.

"If you asked the Kurds maybe 10 or 15 years ago they wouldn't have been so outspoken about it," says Shwan Zulal, a London-based analyst of Kurdistan. "Nowadays they see it in their grasp but they know it's going to be a hard slog, it's going to be very difficult."

Though divided across political, religious, linguistic, and geographic lines, the extended Kurdish diaspora has also presented an opportunity for unity among the Kurds in Europe as they raise funds, organize protests, or consider leaving home to go join the fight across their homeland.

Speaking from his home in Denmark, Pirani, who described the

last 30 years of the greater Kurdish struggle as "being at a party where you feel really important but no one is looking at you," is planning to go back to Kurdistan next year to enroll in another training course.

He wants to be prepared, he says, whether it's helping in Iraq or Syria or the less-reported ongoing clashes between Kurds and the Iranian military. He recognizes that although his military training has just begun, he has another advantage: the eyes and ears of a wide audience at home in Denmark and Europe, where he can bridge two worlds that are slowly becoming familiar with each other.

"I know you are better at fighting people than me," he told contacts back in Iraq. "But if you kill thousands of our enemies, no one in the world will see it. Teach me some of these things, and I can show the people in Europe how things are done."

24 January 2015

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٠١/٤١٨٣٢٠	فندق شهران - صنعاء
٠١/٤٠٦٦٦١, ٤٠٦٦٨١	فندق وأجنحة التاج الملكي

معاهد

٠١/٤٤٥٤٨٢/٣/٤	معهد يالي
٠١/٢٦٤٢٢١	معهد التي
٠١/٥٥٧٤١٥٠	المعهد البريطاني للغات والكمبيوتر
٠١/٥٢٧٨٧١	معهد اكسيد
٠١/٤٤١٠٣٦	معهد مالي
٠١/٤٤٨٥٧٣	معهد هورايزن

شركات التأمين

٠١/٥٥٥٥٥٥	المتحدة للتأمين
٠١/٢٧٢٩٢٤	الوطنية للتأمين
٠١/٦٠٨٢٧٢	الشركة اليمنية الإسلامية للتأمين
٠١/٢١٤٠٩٣	وإعادة التأمين
٠١/٢١٤٠٩٣	شركة أمان
٠١/٤٢٨٨٠٩	الجزيرة للتأمين وإعادة التأمين
٤٤٨٣٤٠/١/٢	الشركة اليمنية القطرية للتأمين
٤٤٨٣٣٩	فاكس:

مدارس

٠١/٤٤٠٨٤٠	روضة واحة الأطفال
٧٣٣٤٥٥٦٤٥	موبايل:
٠١/٤١٤٠٢٦	مدرسة رينبو
٠١/٤٢٤٤٣٣	
٠١/٣٧٠٩١/٢	مدارس صنعاء الدولية
٠١/٣٧٠٩٣	فاكس:
٠١/٤٤٨٣٥٨/٩	مدرسة التركي الدولي
٠١/٣٨٣٠٩١	مدرسة منارات

سفرات

٠١/٢٨٠٧٧٧	٠١/٢٧٤٦٩١	قدس فلاي
٢٢١٢٧٠	٠١/٥٣٥٠٨٠	سكاي للسفرات والسياحة
٠٢/		
٤٤٤١١٨		عطلات الصقر
٤٤٦٣٥٠		مركز أعمال الصقر
٠١-٤٤١١٥٨/٥٩/٦٠		العلمية للسفرات والسياحة
٠١/٢٧٢٨٩٥-٦		وكالات سفرات اليمن

مطاعم

٩١٦٧٦٢	١٠٠٩٢٥٠٥ - ١٠٠٥٧٣٦٦٢	مطعم ومخازنة الشيباني (باسم محمد عبده الشيباني)
٤١٧٣٩١		مطعم منابو الياباني
٤٣١٩٩٩		فطيرتي

٠٤/٤١٩٨٨	إب
٠٥/٣٠٢٦٤١	المكلا
٠٥/٢٠٢٢٢٦	شبهه
٠٥/٤٠٧٢١٩	سيئون
٧٧٧٧٨٨٦٦٠	بلحاف
٠٥/٦٦٠٤٩٨	سقطري
٠١/٤١٦٧٥١	UPS
٠١-٤٤١٠٩٦٧/٧/٨	DHL

شحن وتوصيل

٠٩٦٧١٤٣١٣٣٩	مركز الندى للخدمات العامة
٤٣١٣٤٠	فاكس:
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٥٣١٢٣١-	
٠١/٢٦٧٩٢٩	العالمية للشحن - صنعاء

مستشفيات

٠١/٢٤٦٩٦٧-٦٦	مستشفى الثورة
٠١/٢٧٤٢٨٦-٨٧	مستشفى الجمهوري
٠١/٦٠٠٠٠٠	المستشفى الالمني الحديث
٠١/٦٠١٨٨٩٠	فاكس:
٠١/٤٤٤٩٣٦	المستشفى الاهلي الحديث
٠١/٥٠٠٠٠٠	مستشفى العلوم والتكنولوجيا
٠١/٢٨٣٢٨٣	مستشفى الكويت

شركات طيران

٠١/٤٥٥٥٤٥	طيران اليمنية
٠١/٢١٧١٢٦	فرع تعز:
٢/٢٥٢٤٥٦	فرع عدن:
٣/٢٠١٤٧٤	فرع الحديدة:
٠١/٥٦٥٦٥٦	٠١/٢٥٠٨٠٠
٠١/٤٤٤٤٤٤	السعيدة
٠١/٤٢٧٩٩٣	الإماراتية
٠١/٢١٣٤٠٠	الإثيوبية
٠١/٤٤٥٩٧٠-٣	الألمانية (لوفتهانزا)
٠١/٥٠٦٥٧٤	التركية
٠١/٥٠٦٠٣٠	السعودية
٠١/٤٤٠٩٢٢	القطرية
٠١/٤٤٦٠٦٤/٥/٧	طيران الخليج
٠١/٤٤٧٧٢٥	طيران الأردنية - صنعاء
٠١/٤٤٦٧٥٠	طيران الاتحاد
	طيران دبي

فنادق

٠١/٢١٢٥٤٤-٦٦	فندق ميركيور صنعاء
٢/٣٢٨٦٦٦	عدن
٠١/٤١٨٥٤٥/٧	فندق شمر
٠١/٥٤٦٦٦٦	فندق موفمبيك
٠١/٥٤٦٠٠٠	فاكس:
٠١/٤٣٢٠٢٠/٣٠/٤٠	فندق لازوردي

٠١/٣٣٢٧٠١	وزارة الداخلية
٠١/٢٦٠٢٦٥	وزارة المالية
٠١/٢٠٢٢٢٥٧	وزارة المواصلات
٠١/٤١٨٢٨٩	وزارة المياه والبيئة
٠١/٣٢٦١٩٦	وزارة الكهرباء

البنوك

٠١/٢٦٠٨٢٣	بنك اليمن والخليج
٠١/٢٦٠٨٢٤	فاكس:
٠٢/٢٧٠٣٤٧/٨/٩	عدن
٠٢/٢٣٧٨٢٤	فاكس:
٠١/٢٠٣٢٧١	بنك التضامن الإسلامي
٠١/٢٧٧٢٢٤	البنك التجاري
٠١/٢٧٧٢٩١	فاكس:
٠١/٥٣٨٢٦٦-٧٧	مصرف اليمن البحرين الشامل - الستين الغربي
٠١/٤٠٧٠٣٠	بنك اليمن الدولي
٠١/٢٧٦٥٨٥/٢	البنك العربي
٠١/٥٦٣٨١٣	بنك التسليف الزراعي
٠١/٢٧٤٣١٤	البنك المركزي
٠١/٤٤٩٧٣١	بنك الامل
٠١/٥١٧٥٤٤	البنك القطري الدولي
٠١/٢٧١٦٠١	بنك اليمنى للانشاء والتعمير
٠١/٢٨٦٥٠٦	بنك سبا الإسلامي
٠١/٢٧٤٢٧١	بنك كاليون
٠١/٤٠٧٥٤٠	يوناييتد بنك لميتد
٠١/٥٣٨٩٠١	بنك كاك الإسلامي
٠١/٢٠٩٤٥١	بنك اليمن والكويت للتجارة والانشاءات

تأجير سيارات

٠١/٥٠٦٣٧٢	زاوية (Budget)
٠١/٣٤٠٩٥٨	فاكس:
٠١/٢٧٠٧٥١	يورب كار
٠١/٥٤٥٩٨٥	فرع شيرتون
٢/٢٤٥٦٢٥	فرع عدن
٠١-٤٤٠٣٠٩	صنعاء
٠١/٥٨٩٥٤٥	فرع شيراتون
٢-٢٤٥٦٢٥	عدن

مراكز تدريب وتعليم الكمبيوتر

٠١/٤٤٥٥١٨/٧	NIIT لتعليم الكمبيوتر
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البريد السريع

٠١/٤٤٠١٧٠	صنعاء
٢/٢٤٥٦٢٦	عدن
٢/٢٦٦٩٧٥	الحديدة
٠٤/٢٠٥٧٨٠	تعز



١٧٧	طوارئ الكهرباء
١٧١	طوارئ المياه
١٩٩	طوارئ الشرطة
١١٨	الإستعلامات
١٩١	الإطفاء
١٩٤	حوادث (المرور)
٠١/٢٥٢٧٠١/٧	الشؤون الداخلية
٠١/٢٠٢٥٤٤/٧	الشؤون الخارجية
٠١/٢٥٠٧٦١/٣	الهجرة
٠١/٣٣٢٠٠١/٢	التلفزيون
٠١/٢٠٣١٣١/٣	الصليب الاحمر
٠١/٢٧٢٠٦١	الإذاعة

الوزارات

٠١/٢٩٠٢٠٠	رئاسة الجمهورية
٠١/٤٩٠٨٠٠	رئاسة الوزراء
٠١/٥٤٥١٣٢	وزارة الأشغال العامة والطرق
٠١/٢٧٤٤٣٩	وزارة الأوقاف والإرشاد
٠١/٥٣٥٠٣١	وزارة التعليم العالي والبحث العلمي
٠١/٢٦٨٥٨٣	وزارة الثروة السمكية
٠١/٢٧٤٦٤٠	وزارة الثقافة
٠١/٢٩٤٥٧٩	وزارة الخدمة المدنية والتأمينات
٠١/٢٧٦٤٠٤	وزارة الدفاع
٠١/٢٨٢٩٦٣	وزارة الزراعة والري
٠١/٢٦٢٨٠٩	وزارة الشؤون الاجتماعية والعمل
٠١/٤٠٢٢١٣	وزارة الشؤون القانونية
٠١/٢٥٢٢١١	وزارة الصحة العامة والسكان
٠١/٤٧٢٩١٣	وزارة الشباب والرياضة
٠١/٢٣٥٤٢٣	وزارة الصناعة والتجارة
٠١/٢٣٦٥١٢	وزارة العدل
٠١/٢٣٠٠٥٠	وزارة السياحة
٠١/٤٠٢٢٥٤	وزارة المغتربين
٠١/٢٠٢٣٠٩/١٠	وزارة النفط والمعادن
٠١/٢٨٩٥٧٧	وزارة شؤون الداخلية
٠١/٢٦٠٩٠٣	وزارة النقل
٠١/٤٤٤٨٣١	وزارة حقوق الانسان
٠١/٣٣١٤٦٠	وزارة الاتصالات وتقنية المعلومات
٠١/٢٢٧٢٤٢	وزارة الادارة المحلية
٠١/٢٧٤٠٠٨	وزارة الاعلام
٠١/٢٥٠١٠١	وزارة التخطيط والتعاون الدولي
٠١/٢٥٢٧٢٢	وزارة التربية والتعليم
٠١/٥٣٧٩١٤	وزارة الخارجية

OPINION

Syria crisis:

A new year without hope

By Lina Sinjab

BBC News

First published Jan. 7

The 12 months between the first round of the Geneva II peace talks in January 2014 and the Moscow peace talks planned for January 2015 have turned out to be the deadliest since the start of the Syrian uprising four years ago.

This time last year, Syrians had high hopes in the run-up to the international peace conference.

Backed by the UN, US and Russia, the Geneva talks offered a chance for Syrians to end the bloodshed. But it was not to be: almost 6,000 people were killed on the ground in Syria as representatives of the government and opposition failed to agree even on an agenda for the discussions.

A further 70,000 people were killed over the rest of the year.

The UN special envoy at the time, Lakhdar Brahimi, apologised to the Syrian people for the failure of the talks, and resigned a few months later.

'Starve of surrender'

2014 was a year of defeat and dis-

appointment for the opposition and a year of gains for President Bashar al-Assad, but at a very high price paid by civilians.

Throughout the year, the government tried to promote what it called "local ceasefires", where in reality a policy of "starve or surrender" was used as a way of subduing residents of rebel-held areas.

The regime's three-year siege of the Old City of Homs was only lifted after an Iranian-brokered deal, tied to the release of Iranian fighters held by the rebel Islamic Front in the north.

Soon after the siege was lifted, another rebel-held district of Homs - al-Wair in the north-western outskirts, where thousands of displaced civilians were seeking refuge - came under attack.

In parts of the capital Damascus, too, regime sieges were lifted, only to be imposed again soon afterwards.

The Palestinian refugee camp of Yarmouk, on the southern edge of Damascus, is reported to be one of the places once again under siege.

Speaking at a conference in Chatham House in London in November, Mr Brahimi said the regime's ceasefire proposals were part of its war plan, not peace plan.

Jihadist threat

There is one message the government wants to send - that its power will prevail and there is no room for compromise.

That was clear in the 2012 parliamentary elections and in June's presidential poll, which was a foregone conclusion despite the presence of two candidates besides Mr Assad on the ballots.

Many would argue that the president would not have survived without the backing of Russia and in particular Iran, which is said to be in charge of military strategy, has boots on the ground and is propping up the government financially.

However, while the Assad regime sees itself as winning and is aiming to regain control of all of Syria, there is a third entity that is now asserting itself that has declared both the government and the rebels as enemies.

Islamic State (IS) has declared a caliphate in areas under its control across large parts of Syria and neighbouring Iraq.

Its rise has spelt another defeat for Syria's revolutionaries who want freedom and democracy. Now they have two fronts on which to fight.

IS has sought to erase the borders drawn up by Sykes-Picot Agree-

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ment in 1916.

Although the jihadist group has posed a threat in Syria since it announced its existence in the country in early 2013, regime forces failed to attack its bases in northern Syria, particularly in the province of Raqqa.

The US-led coalition launched air strikes on the group's positions in September after three Western hostages were beheaded by IS and it launched an offensive on the Kurdish enclave around Kobane.

By that time the group had already beheaded several hundred Syrians, though that did not move the international community to act.

In the first week of US air strikes on IS, President Assad's forces launched nearly 600 air strikes and barrel bomb attacks on rebel-held areas. A majority of the victims were civilians - adding to Syrians' feeling that they were being abandoned.

Long shot

The year ended with the UN's World Food Programme (WFP) announcing that it would have to suspend its food voucher scheme for Syrian refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, Iraq and Egypt because of a lack of funds.

The agency eventually received

the money it needed to resume the scheme, but it demonstrated how the international community was failing the Syrians even on a humanitarian level, deepening doubts over how it could help stop the war.

Now the world is looking at whether a plan by the new UN special envoy for Syria, Staffan de Mistura, for local ceasefires or "freeze zones" can be implemented.

But to work it requires the commitment of President Assad's forces,

and agreement among all the rebel forces operating on the ground.

Russia is hoping to host a meeting end of this month between the Syrian government and some elements of the opposition. However, it is a move which critics see as filling time while delivering nothing.

Meanwhile, ordinary Syrians have long lost strength, faith, and hope. Their goal has become acquiring a visa to Europe or embarking on perilous boat-crossing.

Saudi's bold political gambit

The reopening of Saudi embassy in Iraq reflects a fundamental reassessment of Riyadh's foreign policy.

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Recent reports of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia reopening its embassies in Baghdad and in the capital of the Kurdish Regional Government, Erbil, may appear to be an overdue, yet mundane diplomatic affair, but this news signifies a development in Saudi foreign policy to Iraq.

While diplomatic relations between Riyadh and Baghdad were severed after Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait in 1990, Saudi Arabia failed to reopen diplomatic facilities in Iraq as tensions ensued with the post-Baathist government. The recent news serves as an indication that Riyadh has finally come to terms with a Shia-led government in Baghdad, and is now seeking a presence in Iraq to influence developments there on an official, bilateral level.

In terms of regional power dynamics, the fall of Saddam Hussein's government in 2003 affected all of Iraq's neighbors. Jordan and Syria had to deal with an influx of Iraqi refugees. Both Syria and Iran feared the Bush administration would use Iraq as a base to destabilize their regimes. Both Turkey and Saudi Arabia feared that the empowered Kurds and Shia in Iraq after 2003 would foment similar aspirations

among their respective Kurdish and Shia populations.

Contentious issue

The reopening of embassies in Baghdad after the US-led occupation had been a contentious issue for regional actors in the Middle East. The new politicians in Iraq had to urge various Arab states and organizations to reopen their embassies in Baghdad in order to bestow some regional legitimacy upon a nascent Iraqi government.

The Arab League hesitated reopening its diplomatic facilities in Baghdad as an indirect way of protesting the fact that an Arab capital was under foreign control.

Baghdad repeatedly asked Syria to open up its embassy in Baghdad, hoping that diplomatic relations would end Syria's policy of granting refuge to former Baathists and supporting the Iraqi insurgency immediately following the 2003 invasion.

For Saudi Arabia, the failure to open an embassy in Baghdad had less to do with the presence of US forces occupying an Arab capital, but rather as a means of protesting the rise of a new Shia-led government in Iraq.

After the Iranian Revolution of 1979, Saudi Arabia's Shia began to protest, demanding more rights from the Saudi government, and the fear in Riyadh was that the ascent of a Shia-led government in Iraq could ignite similar protests in 2003. Sau-

di Arabia's fears of renewed unrest among its Shia population in its oil-rich Eastern province is an internal domestic issue. However, the Iraq War of 2003 also represented a foreign policy setback on the regional level.

Iranian influence

Iraq under Saddam Hussein, even a weak Iraq after 1991, still served as a buffer against Iran, which had rivalled Riyadh for regional hegemony in the Middle East and the greater Islamic world since 1979, fighting proxy wars from Lebanon to Pakistan. After 2003, Saudi Arabia watched as Iran's influence grew in Iraq, which was backing Baghdad's first Shia-led government, in addition to Tehran influencing events in the Houthi rebellion in Yemen, another state Saudi Arabia considers as its backyard.

Not only had Iranian influence outflanked Saudi Arabia on both sides of its borders, but from the perspective of Riyadh, the Arab Spring protests of Bahrain were deemed as an Iranian-backed project. Finally, Iran seemed on the verge of not only acquiring a nuclear program, but also reaching at least a de facto working relationship with the US in the region.

While Saudi Arabia was initially reluctant to challenge the status quo by supporting the protests and rebellion against Syria's Bashar Assad, it weighed in on the side of

the rebels, and in this proxy war, Iran also defeated Saudi aspirations by keeping the incumbent government in Damascus alive.

The regional situation in the Middle East has been described by Richard Haass, President of the Council on Foreign Relations, as the Middle Eastern Thirty Years War, or as a new sectarian Cold War waged by Iran and Saudi Arabia.

If one were to use either analogy, then Iran is definitely winning this conflict. From this perspective, the news of reopening the Saudi embassies emerges in the context of a reassessment of Riyadh's foreign policy, released at a fortuitous time as King Abdullah is hospitalized and worries emerge of what this means for the future leadership of the Kingdom.

Quiet diplomacy

However, the decision to reopen the embassies reflects a sustained period of quiet diplomacy that preceded the king's health condition. The first indication that Iran and Saudi Arabia were beginning to cooperate over Iraq's future occurred after the ISIL offensive into Mosul in the summer of 2014. Both Tehran and Riyadh agreed on Haider Al-Abadi as a replacement to Iraq's incumbent Prime Minister, Nouri Al-Maliki. This agreement represents an evolution from the Saudi side, as evident from a Wikileaks cable where King Abdullah expressed his personal dislike of Maliki in a meeting with US



Saudi border guard stands next to a fence on Saudi Arabia's northern borderline with Iraq.

officials

On the bilateral Iraqi and Saudi level, a thaw in relations occurred after Iraq's president visited Riyadh and met with the king in November 2014, and a Saudi-Iraqi agreement was reached to combat ISIL. This agreement is significant given the number of Iraqis in both the state and society who blame the rise of ISIL on Saudi Arabia in the first place as the financial and ideological incubator of this group. For example, Iraqi public service announcements encouraged Iraqis to inform on "foreign" terrorists, invoking an image of a bearded man with a short thobe, handing out funds to local Iraqis, to stir up problems in Iraq.

It appears that Iraq, Iran, and Saudi Arabia have come to the conclusion that when it comes to combatting ISIL, all three parties need to reach a modus vivendi. If one chooses to employ short hand monikers to describe the state of affairs in the region, rather than a "Thirty Years War" or a "Cold War," regional actors in the Middle East have finally come to an agreement that they are waging their own "War on Terror" against ISIL.

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