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## 19th Anniversary of Reunification Day الذكرى ١٩ للوحدة اليمنية Many Happy Returns كل عام وأنتم بخير

**Inside:**  **5** Abdul Kareem Shamsan speaks to Yemen Times

 **10** Prisoner Organization, a voice for the voiceless

 **18** Lack of marketing strategy threatens agricultural sector

### Al-Alimi: Government prepares to approve local governance with broad powers

By: Mohammed Bin Sallam

SANA'A, May 20 – Deputy Prime Minister for Defense and Security Rashad Al-Alimi spoke on Tuesday before media personnel from official, independent and international media outlets about the ruling General People's Congress's (GPC) preparations to approve local governance with broad powers. The new move, according to the official, stipulates the election of district directors and governors.

Many official conferences concerning the new move are due to take place in early June in Aden and in other governorates. The conferences will engage senior government officials who will discuss local authority strategy for nearly 12 days.

With regard to the consultative meeting proposed by the opposition Joint Meeting Parties (JMP), Al-Alimi, who is also the Minister of Local Administration, said, "We have no objection to any debate on issues as long as it respects the multi-party system, the constitution and national principles." He indicated that the government is ready to accept proposals from any party, provided that such proposals obey the constitution and other relevant laws.

At the conference, which dozens of pro-JMP journalists quit in protest against closed newspapers, Al-Alimi called on staff of those suspended papers to consult the Press and Publications Law, which permits the



**Al-Alimi: No government exists that doesn't make mistakes, and we are trying to correct those notable mistakes in the government's performance**

Information Minister to take administrative procedures against any paper committing publication related violations. According to the law, newspapers that have been shut down or otherwise hurt are entitled to go to the judiciary if they have any petitions. Al-Alimi declared that his government is ready to prosecute any official charged with violating the law.

Responding to questions why the Information Ministry suspended many independent newspapers, the official said, "The ministry only took administrative procedures without any suspension." However, he didn't indicate whether the procedures were preceded by censorship on press freedom.

"There is no problem with the suspended papers... such papers may resume printing as of tomorrow as long as they respect the law," Al-Alimi went on to say, adding that the establishment of a press court is a judicial affair that aims to facilitate procedures of trials on publication cases. So far, over 105 publication cases in Sana'a alone have been brought to trial. "Many of these cases remain unsettled as courts and judges are engaged in other issues," Al-Alimi noted.

Al-Alimi advised official and independent media outlets to adopt a national approach in dealing with issues on the ground in order to strengthen unity and deter all malicious plots against the homeland and its unity, security and stability. He also recommended that media personnel promote values of love and peace and fight violence and hatred, as well as give priority to the public interests of the people and the homeland.

Regarding the current security situation in southern and eastern areas, Al-Alimi said, "Challenges faced by Yemen today include terrorism, economic woes and malicious plots against unity and democracy," confirming that Yemen is in need of strong solidarity to overcome those challenges.

"The political opposition, represented by the JMP and other parties, should have an active role in addressing national issues and defending unity," he added.

Continued on page 2

### More attention to Somali human traffickers needed, says MSF

By: Amel Al-Ariqi

SANA'A, May 20 – Despite the extensive presence of international forces in the Gulf of Aden to fight Somali pirates, not enough attention is paid to the little overloaded boats involved in human trafficking that cross its waters, says Médecins Sans Frontières in Yemen.

"While the international community mobilizes itself to protect commercial shipping off Somalia's shores, little, if anything, has been done for people uprooted by the conflict," said Francisco Otero, head mission for Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) in Yemen.

The ongoing tragedy of Somalis suffering a vicious war, hunger, malnutrition, grinding poverty, disease and lawlessness has led to the massive displacement of civilians, many of whom are desperately seeking safety outside the country, said Otero.

"Tens of thousands of people fleeing war or extreme poverty are placing their lives in the hands of merciless smugglers who ferry them from Somalia's northern coast through the Gulf of Aden to Yemen," he said.

Some United Nation experts have even warned that smugglers may turn out to be pirates themselves: "We don't have sturdy evidence, but there are signs that some smugglers are involved in piracy," said Claire Bourgeois, United Nations High Commissariat for Refugees (UNHCR) representative in Yemen.

She said that the smugglers use African immigrants to distract the inter-



Thousands of Africans flee war or extreme poverty, putting their lives in the hands of merciless smugglers who are sometimes pirates.

national forces, as they collect information about marine traffic during their journey across to Yemen. They also can use the African migrants as human shields when they encounter the marine forces, she said.

On March 21, a French warship came across a fully overloaded boat carrying about 100 people. The boat capsized and eight people drowned, when the refugees all moved at the same time to one side upon disembarking.

Later the boat was dragged to the Yemeni port of Aden, where weapons were found, indicate that the smugglers, who had charged the immigrants a lot of money for the illegal crossing, were also pirates.

For roughly USD50 to USD120 per

person, a huge sum in Somalia, the smugglers accept to take passenger across the sea in small boats, which are often barely seaworthy, and it is rarely that these passengers make it.

Boats regularly leave the port of Bossaso in Somalia. Passengers say that more than 100 people are routinely packed into the 30 to 40 person vessels. Some suffocate and others are beaten to death by the armed smugglers.

To avoid detection, the smugglers force passengers into the water far from the beach, often under cover of darkness. As many can't swim and those who can become disoriented, death by drowning is routine.

One 40 year-old mother described her harrowing experience in January to the Doctors Without Borders team in southern Yemen providing medical care to those who make it to the beaches alive: "It was very crowded... you feel yourself suffocating. As the boat was coming towards the shore, my husband was getting the children ready. Then suddenly the smugglers threw him into the sea. He resisted, holding on to the boat, but they stabbed him. The smugglers threw my two daughters into the sea. There was a young man who could swim very well who helped my children. In the morning I saw the dead body of my husband."

Continued on page 2

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## Commander of the Republican Guard mediates with the president to increase allocations for Sa'ada Jews

By: Mohammed Bin Sallam

AMRAN, May 20 — Rabbi Yahya Yusuf that denied the news of new families of the Jewish community living in Yemen immigrated to Israel.

"This news is fabricated and baseless. This is only media fabrication," said Rabbi Yusuf in a phone call with the Yemen Times yesterday. "Yemeni Jewish citizens in Sana'a live in peace and security under special care from President Ali Abdullah Saleh and have no intention of leaving their country."

The 64 Jewish citizens who were displaced from Sa'ada during the war between the Houthis and the Yemeni army have been living under difficult financial conditions. Rabbi Yusuf said that President Saleh gave directives to the government to increase the financial allocations of each Jewish citizen from YR 5,000 to 10,000 per month. "We are following the execution of these directives with Ministry of Finance and we expect that they will be implemented soon," said Yahya.

Concerning the situation of school students, Yusuf said that "we have 25 male



Children of the Jewish community in Raidah, Amran are usually home schooled or assemble in one of the elders' homes in the neighborhood to be educated.

and female students who need education. Although the government gave directives to enroll them in Al-Mustaqbal private school, which is run by Nabila Jabr Bin Jabr, 20 students refused to study the public Yemeni curriculum and preferred to study at Hebrew schools inside Tourist City where we live. The reason is mainly attributed to a lack of security and no available private means of transportation.

"We need a special means of trans-

portation, such as a bus, which any government or non-governmental body can donate it so that all students can study in one school together. This will give our children a sense of affiliation to this country like other Yemeni students have, and they will not feel so isolated from our surroundings," added the Rabbi.

A reliable source told the Yemen Times that Ahmed Ali Abdullah Saleh, Commander of the Republican Guard, mediated with President Saleh to double the financial allocations that Yemeni Jews receive to improve their living standards and that he sent a convoy to carry out the execution of the president's directives.

Concerning the situation of Jews in Amran, citizen Abraham Bin Yahya Bin Yusuf told the Yemen Times that "the situation is better and Jewish citizens are now able to go to the markets to buy their needs. In addition, they are able to prac-

tice their religion in synagogues with little security concerns and their sons and daughters go to study in one of the two Hebrew schools in the governorate. They have their own bus which President Saleh granted them."

Abraham denied the news that a number of Yemeni Jewish families immigrated to Israel. "This news is fabricated and baseless," he said. "Although we hold our own passports and can leave Yemen at any time, we are steady on our land where we were born and where our fathers and grandfathers lived for thousands of years. We will never immigrate as long as we are living here in security and are able to have a decent life, as do the other Yemeni citizens."

"We still have some apprehension about practicing our jobs in the Raida district out of fear of potential hostilities that some extremist Salafis may commit against us," Abraham added. "These people install hatred not only between Jews and other citizens but also between people who disagree with their extremist opinions. They are against tolerance and peace that all celestial religions recommend."

## Al-Basatin wins Save the Children football cup



Al-Basatin football team pose with their cup after having beaten Save the Children 2-1

Fatima Al-Ajel  
For the Yemen Times

ADEN, May 20 — A football team of young refugees from Al-Basatin, Aden, took on Save the Children staff and beat them 2 to 1, in a game riddled with good humor and excitement on Tuesday, held to promote youth participation in the community.

"The Al-Basatin team was stronger and better prepared than us, but we learnt from them and it was a good opportunity to spend time with them," said Gawad Mohamed, leader of the Save the Children team and talent behind its only goal during the match.

"I was very happy to participate in such a match," said member of the winning team Abubaker Mohammed, exhilarated at his team having scored two goals and won the privilege to take the Save the Children cup home for the first time.

The victory was easy for Al-Basatin's members as they have their own team and play regularly. Its fourteen star footballers were all Somali, some born in Yemen and some recently arrived.

The sports event was the highlight of a day to celebrate Save the Children's 90th anniversary in advocating for children's right to a better life, under the theme "Together for better participation and life for all children and youth."

Children and adolescents who participated in the celebration, from Al-Basatin in Aden and the Kharaz Refugee camp in Lahj, called those in

power to implement the principles of the Convention of the Rights of the Child ratified by Yemen in 1991.

A short sketch by children from the two Al-Basatin refugee schools focused on the importance of education, especially for girls, and health for all. The students' councils from Al-Basatin and the Kharaz refugee camp made a speech to further stress the importance of education without discrimination.

The Save the Children football match was the first of its kind, although similar football matches are held by other organizations, including one planned for June in Sana'a by the United Nations Haut Commissariat for Refugees.

Both the Kharaz camp and Al-Basatin have a football team. They have often played with the support of Save the Children, but Tuesday was the first time that Save the Children staff put on their football gear to play against them.

Save the Children has been in Yemen since 1963 and has been working with the government, the Higher Council for Motherhood and Childhood, donors, partners, teachers, parents and children to strengthen the capacity of relevant child rights networks and community leaders to advocate and monitor child rights.

Save the Children fights for children's rights, influences public opinion and support children at risk for a better world in which all children's rights are respected.

### Continued from page 1

Al-Alimi: Government prepares to improve local governance with broad powers

Mistakes accompanying government performance

Al-Alimi admitted that there have been some mistakes in the way the government has operated. "I hope that media outlets contribute to correcting such mistakes and improving the government's performance," he noted. "No government exists that doesn't make mistakes, and we are trying to correct those notable mistakes in the government's performance." He confirmed that several areas nationwide don't have qualified staff to manage development.

Al-Alimi further ascertained that security situations are stable in all governorates, even in those southern and eastern cities that are currently witness to tensions and conflicts. He said that all Yemeni governorates are preparing to celebrate the 19th anniversary of Yemen's reunification.

We need not fear some irresponsible practices intending to spark violence," Al-Alimi stated. "The government deals with such issues according to the law." He affirmed that the government is committed

to resolving issues via peaceful dialogue and not through violence. However, Al-Alimi admitted that dialogue may not work with outlaws who point their guns at the government. "These outlaws represent only 3 to 4 percent of Yemen's total population," he said.

According to Al-Alimi, dialogue still is open for all to overcome any persistent obstacles while resolving homeland issues requires a national consensus.

Al-Alimi revealed that there are common things shared by the Houthis, the Al-Qaeda Organization and outlaws in the southern and eastern governorates. All three sides have malicious plots to hurt unity and democracy in Yemen.

The most recent videotape from Al-Qaeda surprised observers," Al-Alimi stated, assuring that Al-Qaeda elements search for weaknesses that lead to the collapse of political regimes.

He labeled support for Houthis and Al-Qaeda elements as well as support for outlaws in the southern governorates as an irresponsible plot against unity and democracy.

According to Al-Alimi, the ruling party alone is not responsible for the three main

challenges facing Yemen, which are terrorism, plots against unity and the economic crisis, as the political opposition is also responsible for overcoming such challenges.

Al-Alimi denied the authenticity of some media reports that state a real crisis is threatening Yemen. "These reports are incorrect and baseless," he said, advising various media outlets to utilize the allowed scope of press freedom in Yemen to improve their performance and to avoid misleading and frustrating the Yemeni, Arab and international communities. He highlighted that the government tolerates wrong practices by some local newspapers, which are underestimating political conflicts that took place in some southern areas. He labeled such conflicts as normal.

More attention to Somali human traffickers needed, says MSF

According to UHCR, more than 50,000 people -Somalis, and Ethiopians fleeing impoverishment or persecution- attempted the journey across the Mandab Strait in 2008. Up to 600 drowning deaths were

recorded, and 359 people were reported missing.

The total figures are likely too low, as Yemen's extensive coastline prohibits a complete accounting of all arrivals, dead or alive," commented the head of mission for MSF in Yemen.

Measures should be taken at the source," he said, adding that since most of the boats launch from Puntland, which has an autonomous regional government, "the UN should seek ways to expand its existing operations there to receive and protect those who are fleeing for their lives."

Safe and legal options to cross international borders and seek asylum and protection must be available, as provided for under international refugee law," he added, stressing Somalia's neighbors' responsibility to open their borders to refugees.

This exodus has been brought on by crisis and war. In such circumstances, people have rights, including that of safe passage," he said.

So far this year, over 21,660 people have arrived in Yemen, according to the UNHCR.



Community Based Health Development Programme

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Under guidance of the CBHD programme manager and the CBHD delegate the programme accountant will implement, support and supervise the financial management of programme activities and administer the CBHD office in Sana'a. He/she is responsible for the cash-box; he/she keeps the cashbooks and checks all accountancy documents in accordance with CBHD programme financial procedures; he/she prepares monthly data entry using CBHD accounting software. He/she is in charge of several administrative duties (follow-up of contracts, mails, human-resources, relation with local administrations and service providers). He/she provides appropriate translations on request.

Successful applicants should fulfil the following requirements:

- University education in accounting or similar knowledge learned.
- A minimum of 3 years working experience with international accounting procedures.
- Familiar with one or more accounting systems.
- Ability to communicate financial information to non technical audiences.
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- Good computer operating skills in MS Word and MS Excel.
- A valid driving licence.

Contract

- One year contract with possibility of extension;
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- Support the recruitment and selection process applying best practice HR tools and mechanisms, advises and briefs managers and project personnel on different types of contracting modalities, HR policies and benefits, coordinates the PAD process and advises on performance issues.
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Please note that only candidates who fulfill the above requirements will be considered and notified. UNFPA is offering equal opportunities, however, qualified females are strongly encouraged to apply.

In Brief

**SANA'A**

**Media training course kicked off**

The first training course for media trainers was launched here on Monday within the current cooperation between Yemeni Journalists Syndicate (YJS) and the National Democratic Institute (NDI).

The two-day intensive course aims to empower twenty five journalists to master training skills.

Head of the training committee in YJS Nabil al-Osidi made it clear that the course comes as a first step within the various training activities and programs which the committee and NDI in Yemen already agreed upon them.

Al-Osidi affirmed the importance of the course in creating a nucleus of Yemeni trainers network, who will carry out later training programs for the Yemeni journalists in the different governorates.

**Scientific symposium on means to fight measles**

The Scientific Committee in the Faculty of Medical Sciences, University of Sciences and Technology, held on Monday a scientific symposium on measles in Yemen and the efforts to fight it.

The dean of Medical Sciences Faculty, Inas al-Sheikh affirmed during the symposium opening the importance of the symposium to define the disease which caused the deaths of more than 750 children.

Al-Sheikh made reference to implementing the preventive programs and strategies around the world led to a decline in the mortalities of measles to 197 cases in 2007.

The symposium discussed during a number of points topped by the epidemiological situation of measles in the world and Middle East.

**Arab plastic arts symposium**

The international parallel symposium entitled "Arab Plastic Arts Movement ... Half a Century of Achievements," organized by Culture Ministry, was

launched here on

Monday. The two-day symposium comes within the 2nd session of Sana'a International Forum for Plastic Arts' activities which began on Sunday.

In the opening of the forum, participated by 13 critics and plastic artists from 13 Arab countries and China, the Culture Minister Mohammed al-Maflahi praised the first participation of China, saying

it is a reflection of the good relations between the two countries.

The Minister also paid tribute to the level of plastic arts movement in Yemen, saying it started to come to existence and hoped that the symposium will give a chance to the participants to exchange their experiences in this field.

It is worth to mention that chairman of the Qatari Businessmen Association (QBA) Sheikh Faisal Bin Qassim Al-Thani participated as an honor guest in the 2nd session of Sana'a International Forum for Plastic Arts.

**Yemen arrests two Jordanians over thousands of counterfeit dollars**

Police in Sana'a have arrested two Jordanians in connection with trading in forged foreign currency.

The Interior Ministry's Information Center reported that the Jordanians, aged 25 and 40, were caught after they gave a third Jordanian national, 40, who runs a restaurant in Yemen a sum of \$ 25.000 in forged US currency.

The restaurant owner doubted the dollars were forged and then called the police.

However, no further details on the offense were given ...how and why the two had given the sum to a third Jordanian.

The police are investigating the arrests.

In recent months, the police have arrested about 12 people in connec-

tion with possession of and trading in forged currencies.

**LAHJJ**

**Session on woman political empowerment held**

The Women Human Rights and Democracy Center organized on Monday, in coordination with Yemeni Women Union, a discussion session on the political empowerment of women.

The session was participated by 50 participants from Taben and al-Houta districts representing civil society organizations, political parties, education leaders and representatives of literacy and adult education.

General secretary of Local Council in Lahj Ali Matar affirmed in the session the importance of political role of woman, mentioning the government interest in women in different fields.

During the session, two work papers were discussed dealing with women rights in Islam and the political empowerment of women.

**HADRAMOUT**

**PM delivers first subsidies to floods-affected houses owners**

Prime Minister Ali Mujawar inaugurated here on Monday the first payments delivery of the subsidies to the owners of devastated houses in Tarim city due to the rainstorm hit the eastern governorates of Hadramout and Mahrah in October 2008.

During the celebration held in Sayoun of Hadramout governorate on the occasion of the 19th anniversary of the Unification Day, the Premier emphasized the national and humanitarian values of Yemen's unification, which restore to Yemeni people their consideration and struggle history.

"The country today enjoys the unity's welfare and the comprehensive development in different fields of life", said Mujawar, noting the developmental projects carried out in the districts of Hadramout governorate

since the Unification Day.

Mujawar called for tackling consciously the narrow sub-cultures and the hatred culture, which try to harm the Yemeni people's unity, pointing to the security and stability condition created by the unification inside the society.

He indicated the conscious and national role of Hadramout's people in defending the revolution, republic and notification, affirming the political leadership's keen interest in the governorate and expanding the developmental projects to cover all districts.

Implementation ratio in al-Wadiah outlet reached 75 percent and the outlet's operating mechanism will focus on the unified management according to the government's policies regarding changing the land outlets to land ports, the Premier said.

Mujawar also highlighted in his speech to the underway preparations to celebrate the city of Tarim, which has been chosen by Islamic Education Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO), to be the capital of Islamic culture for 2010.

**MAHWEET**

**Man sets fire to his kids, wife**

A man has set fire to the flat where two of his kids, his wife and wife's mother were after the wife along with the two sons left their home following a family argument with the husband.

Police in Yemen's western province of Mahweet said the husband was outraged after he failed to convince his wife to come back with him to their home.

He then took a five-liter petrol bottle and started to pour the substance in the room where his two sons, wife and wife's mother were sitting and set fire. All in the room were hurt and rushed to a hospital.

After the incident the husband escaped to another western city, Hodeida.

According to the Information

Center of the Interior Ministry, the police in Mahweet and Hodeida coordinated to arrest him.

**IBB**

**Two children victims of flood**

Floodwaters have swept two kids, ages 12 and 10, while they were on way home from a school at the district of Dhuhar, Ibb.

On the way back along with their sister who their mother asked them to go to the school and help her come back when heavy rains started to fall, the younger son slipped into floods which immersed a small bridge when they tried to cross.

The elder son then tried to save his younger brother but unfortunately the two were swept away by floodwaters.

The police were informed about the accident and immediately launched a search for the bodies throughout the night.

Next day, locals in Dhale province found a body which was identified as the body of Abdul Salam Abdullah Al-Qudaimi, the elder son, after the family of the kids launched major efforts to find their bodies.

Search for the body of the younger brother Abdul Majeed Abdullah Al-Qudaimi is continuing, with his relatives appealing the people in nearby areas to contact them if a body of a 10-year-old boy could be found.

Early this year, heavy rains hit several parts of the republic claiming lives and submerging lands.

Late last year, Yemen witnessed a heavy-rain tragedy when almost 100 were killed and dozens injured. Torrential waters lashed most areas in the country but the eastern provinces of Mahara and Hadramout were badly ravaged.

More than 2000 houses were totally destroyed.

Losses were estimated at more than \$ 1 billion.

After the tragedy, Yemen received considerable support to rebuild the flood-hit areas.

**SA'ADA**

**Sa'ada, UNHCR discuss means to assist affected areas**

Sa'ada governor Hassan Mana'a discussed on Sunday with the representative of United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Sana'a assistances to be presented by the commissioner to the affected areas in Sa'ada.

The discussions dealt with means of expanding assistance programs of the commissioner in the affected areas in Sa'ada governorate.

They discussed the plan to distribute human assistance to be presented by the commissioner soon to cover camps settlers.

They also discussed the possibility of the commissioner's contribution in reconstructing Sa'ada and to make coordination with Sa'ada Reconstruction Fund.

Mana'a praised the humanitarian role of the commissioner to alleviate the sufferings of displaced persons in various countries around the world, voicing his readiness to present all supports to facilitate the tasks of the commissioner in Sa'ada.

**DHAMAR**

**Light quack rattles central Yemen**

A moderate earthquake rattled central Yemen on Monday and there were no reports of damage or injuries.

The 3.1 magnitude tremor occurred at 9:11 pm and centered 5 km below the ground in the western part of Dhamar province, the National Seismological Observatory Center (NSOC) said.

Earthquakes are common in some parts of Yemen, with the province of Dhamar accounting for most quivers.

In 1982, a powerful quake shook the city killing and injuring thousands of people. It was the deadliest quake in the history of the province. Since then quivers hit it sporadically, with seismologists warning strong earthquakes may occur in the future.

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REPUBLIC OF YEMEN

Ministry of Technical Education and Vocational Training (MTEVT)  
Project Implementation Unit of Technical and Vocational Institutions  
Funded by the Saudi Fund for Development (Grant No. M.B.2/1428)

### Selection of Consultants

#### Request for Expression of Interest

**To Prepare Equipment Lists, technical specifications, bills of quantities, Estimated cost, Bidding Documents and Supervision for supply of equipment.**

The Government of the Republic of Yemen - Ministry of Technical Education and Vocational Training (MTEVT) has received a grant from the Saudi Fund for Development (SFD) towards equipping the new Technical and Vocational Institutions in (Sana'a Secretariat, Aden, Taiz, Abyan, Lahj, Shabwa, Hadramout, Sa'ada, ALmahara, Sana'a, ALmahweet, ALbaida'a, Hajah and ALhodeidah). In order to complete equipping and furnishing the new Technical and Vocational Institutions, the services of Consultants are required to undertake preparation of the specifications of the Equipment, Furniture, Tools and consumables for the new Technical and Vocational Institutions workshops and Labs as well as the bidding documents and Supervision for supply of equipment . **Which will be financed from the local budget (Government 100%).**

The Consultant assignment will include and not be limited to:-

- Lists of equipment, furniture, tools, consumables etc for each specialization, with preliminary cost estimate.
- Detailed lists of equipment, furniture, tools, consumables etc for each specialization, with the final cost estimate, specifications, supported with lay out plans indicating all items distribution for each lab and workshop.
- Preparation of the final bidding documents prepared after elaborating them based on client comments.
- Supervision for supply of the equipment and furniture etc from advertisement of the tenders until the completion of supply, examination and receipt of equipments and then installation, operation and training, according to (SFD) Guide lines.

#### Assignment duration

1. The assignment of the preparing studies will be completed within six months starting from the date of signing the Contract.
2. The assignment of the supervision will be start from advertisement of the tenders until the completion of supply, examination and receipt of equipments and then installation, operation and training.

The Ministry of Technical Education & Vocational Training - Project Implementation Unit of Technical and Vocational Institutions now invites eligible consultants to indicate their interest in providing the services. Interested consultants must provide information indicating that they are qualified to perform the services (brochures, description of similar assignments, experience in similar conditions, availability of appropriate skills among staff, etc.). Consultants may associate to enhance their qualifications.

A Consultant will be selected according to the basis and standards specified in the Executive By-law of Procurement Law and it's Manual.

Interested consultants may obtain further information at the address below during office hours 08.00 to 14.00 hours.

Expressions of interest must be delivered to the address below by [20 / 6 / 2009].

#### Contact:-

Eng. Khaled Ali Alkomaim  
Project Implementation Unit of Technical and Vocational Institutions; Alhasaba - Arab League Street,  
P.O.Box 429; Tel 00967 1 257456; Fax 00967 1 257466  
Sana'a; Republic of Yemen.  
Email: Kaagk70@yahoo.com

# Abdul Kareem Shamsan Director of the National Information Center to Yemen Times: "The center is ready to provide any institution or individual with the information they needs"

The National Information Center was established in 1995. It aims to establish, develop and manage a comprehensive national information system connecting the information centers in different sectors and coordinate between them within a national network. Through this network data and information are provided to different sectors, the concerned persons and decision makers to assist the preparation, execution, follow-up, evaluation and development of plans, programs and policies in various fields. Ultimately, the information helps raise the standard of administrative, Organizational, Scientific, and productive activities efficiency and efficacy of different kinds and fields in the Republic.

Abdul Kareem Shamsan, Director of the National Information Center (NIC), was interviewed by Ola Al-Shami to elaborate more on the center's scheme of work.



By: Ola Al-Shami

## What is the nature of work at the National Information Center and what kind of institutions does it provide information to?

NIC as it is today is a newly established center. Its goal is to provide information for researchers and decision makers. We needed to create a mechanism through which we can receive queries, collect and store information digitally and as hard copies and retrieve information to be able to serve as a full-fledged information center.

Anyone can benefit from the information available: individuals, institutions or governmental bodies. There are absolutely no limits to the access to information. We have so far not encountered any problems in providing anyone with any type of information.

Is there any coordination between the center and Yemeni universities in order to make information readily available to students and researchers?

Of course, there is a deal with the universities. For example, we have agreed with the Sana'a University that we must receive a copy of every Masters (MA) thesis for our MA thesis database. We categorize all of them according to subject, author and date and make them widely accessible on our website.

## How is the information updated here?

There is a mechanism of the work scheme here. We have a diagram to

classify the information, and we have a specific department to update the information through direct contact with the information sources.

The sources of information can be inside or outside the country. Inside the country, we get information from all the official bodies. From outside, we depend on the internet or deals with international bodies to get information, or we cooperate with international bodies through international databases which provide us with rich information.

## How do you archive such a large amount of information?

Basically, we keep information electronically, but sometimes there is a need to preserve the papers as well, such as with Master theses and government reports. We have built different databases in the framework of NIC activities in the field of information dissemination. It is accessible through the NIC's website that any researcher can surf to find the information he needs. Ours is the biggest website in Yemen. And if you needed more information on a specific topic, you can open a link and send a message to ask to be provided with more detailed information.

We also have an updated library with Yemeni and international publications such as books and periodicals.

## Do you analyze the information at the center, or do you depend on

## information analysis from other sources only?

In this point there are two types of information. One type of information is that we take data from different sources of different periods and modulate it to bring its final shape.

In the other type, we keep it as it is, such as the official reports from ministries and the government. We sometimes revise the information we have or investigate its accuracy.

In our database we have several categories such as researches of university students and scholars. We have background information about the president and the republic, about the state institutions, about the various sectors such as laws and legislations, transport, economy both macro and micro, about media and freedoms and human rights, about

# 4U

The NIC is located in Sana'a, Zubairi Street across from Al-Jumhuri Hospital. It is open from 8:30 am to 9:30 pm from Saturday to Wednesday. Call: +967-1-215116/7/8, fax: +967-1-207716. Or send to P. O. Box 19560. You can send email to: [info@yemen-nic.info](mailto:info@yemen-nic.info) or check the website for more information at: [www.yemen-nic.info](http://www.yemen-nic.info)

cultural, women and environment issues and so on.

We have our own data collection mechanism through which we can create news, and monitor information on Yemen from anywhere around the world. We have a department for media surveillance and monitoring where information is documented in a digital way.

## Who asks most for information? And what kind of information are you asked most to provide?

University students are the ones who use our database the most, then follow the decision makers, then the public, and finally the investors.

Queries can come to us in person whereby we give the researcher a form to fill, or they can come via our website through the proper links. We also have the special services link through which only those who subscribe to either the email newsletters on general information, economic newsletter or be informed on updates of the center. Upon receiving the request it is processed and if readily available we send it via email free of charge. If it needs more research or if the information is not available we put a note on it and plan for it in our own research and data collection.

Many students come to do their research in our research room; we provide them with a quite place to work while accessing the huge archive of digital and hard copy publications.

## In which language is the information, and is there a readily-available translation of it?

Basically the information is presented in Arabic. Sometimes, the information is hard to be translated because there is so much to translate.

We mostly present information in its original language, and sometimes translate. There are parts where we translate, but because the site is so big, it is hard to translate all of it.

## Do you have any projects with donors?

Yes, we have many useful projects, but until now we do not have any support. For example, we have the National Information Network project which aims at building information policies in all official institutions. This project's main focus will be to find a basis for information on the national level.

## Do you mean that the center does not work at a national level?

No. The center now works nationwide.



Library



Aliya Al-Shami head of the library division explains to a higher education student how to use the electronic database system

The network will be like a working mechanism for the center. By establishing this network, the information will be provided directly to us through our representatives in each different official body. We will have a direct access to the different official bodies.

## Do these bodies mind your presence in their institutions?

Not at all, they know that we are officially supported and it is their duty to let us have access to any information from any official body and our aim is to seek accuracy.

## What do you want to conclude?

I want the media to present the duties and activities of the center to the public, because until now only researchers know about our services whereas most people do not have.

For example we have a building for training and qualifying people in information technology in which we train officers from the official bodies.

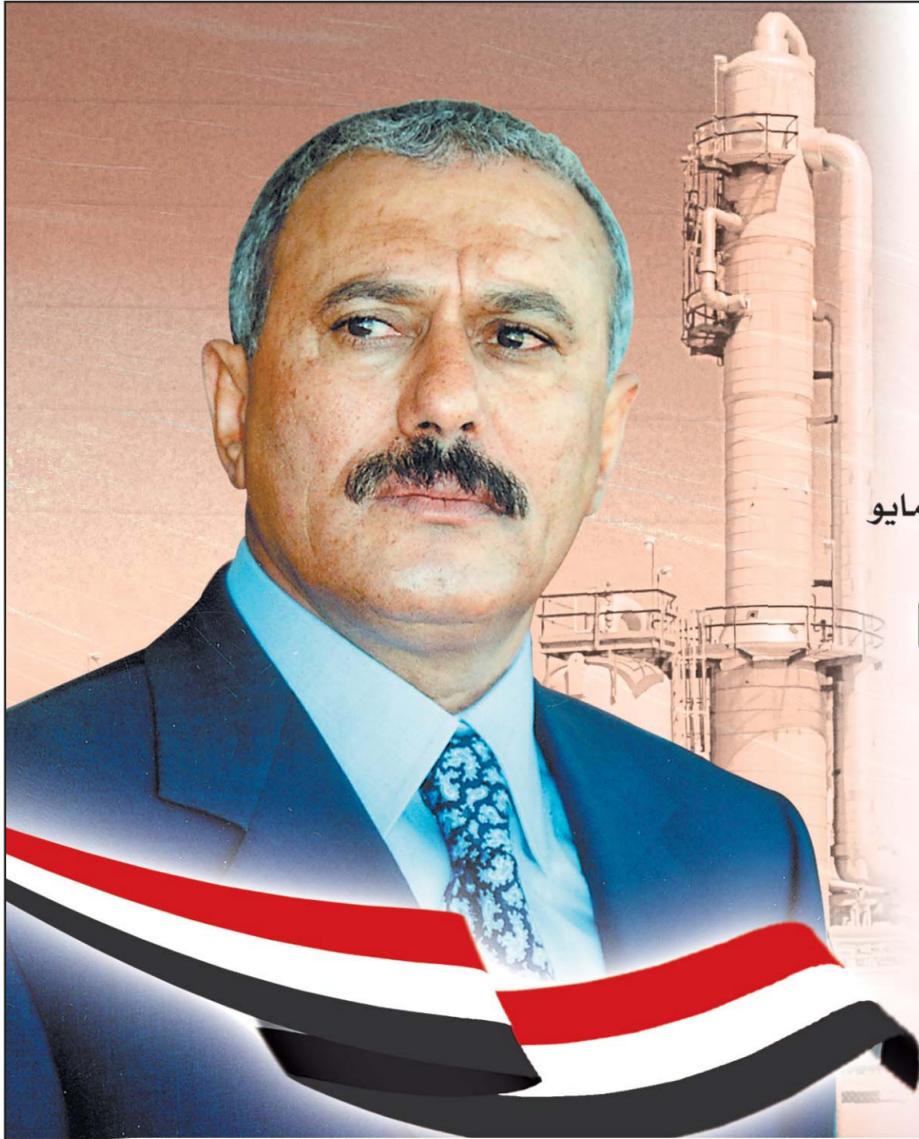
Also, we provide technical support and consultative services to ministries to develop the information systems. Finally, I would like to say that more attention needs to be paid to the importance of accurate information so necessary for both decision makers and ordinary people.



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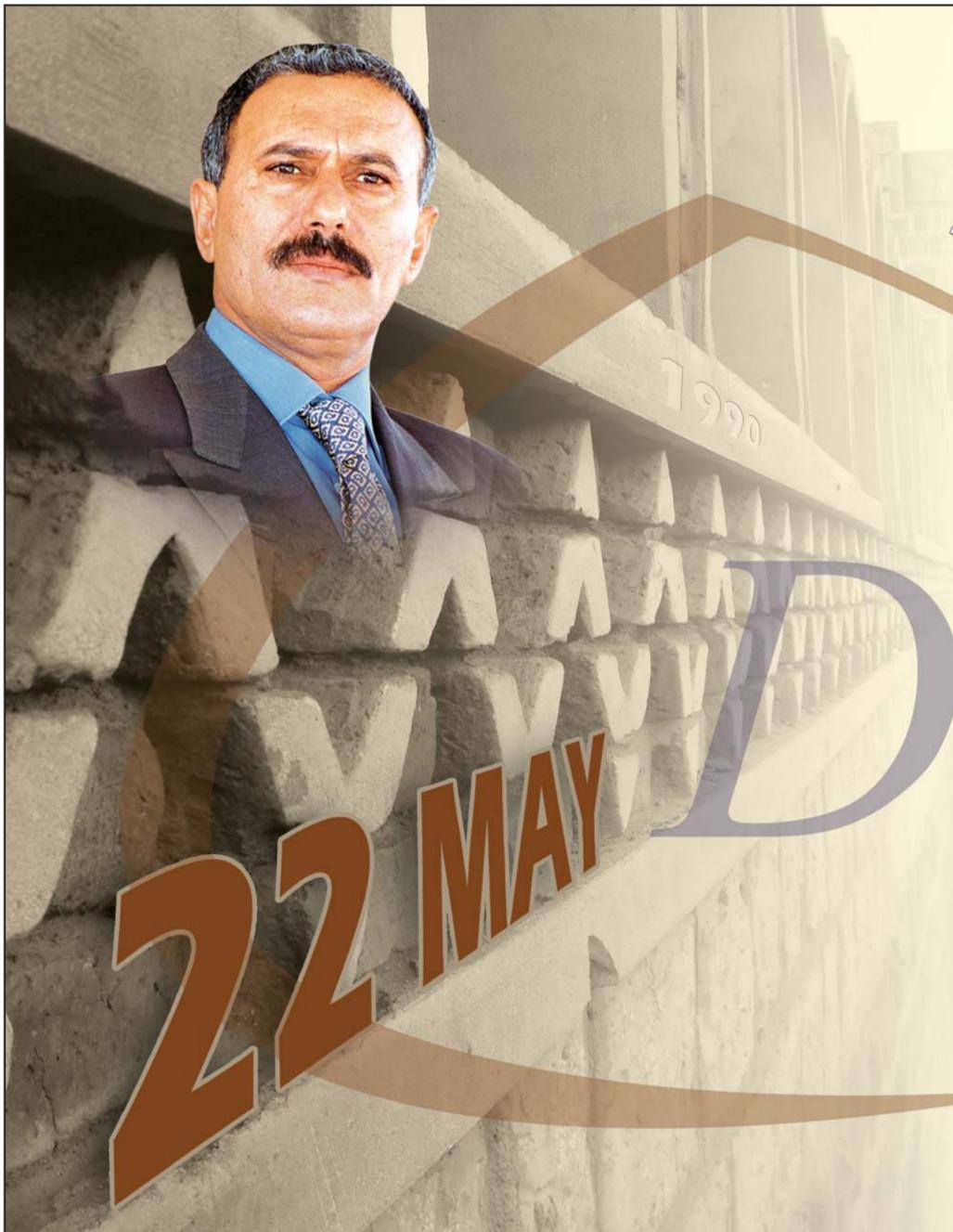
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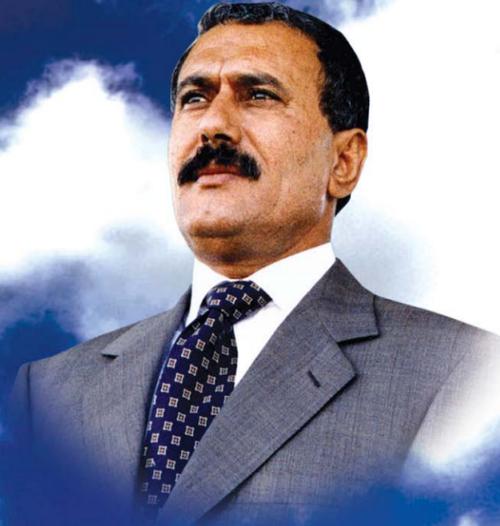
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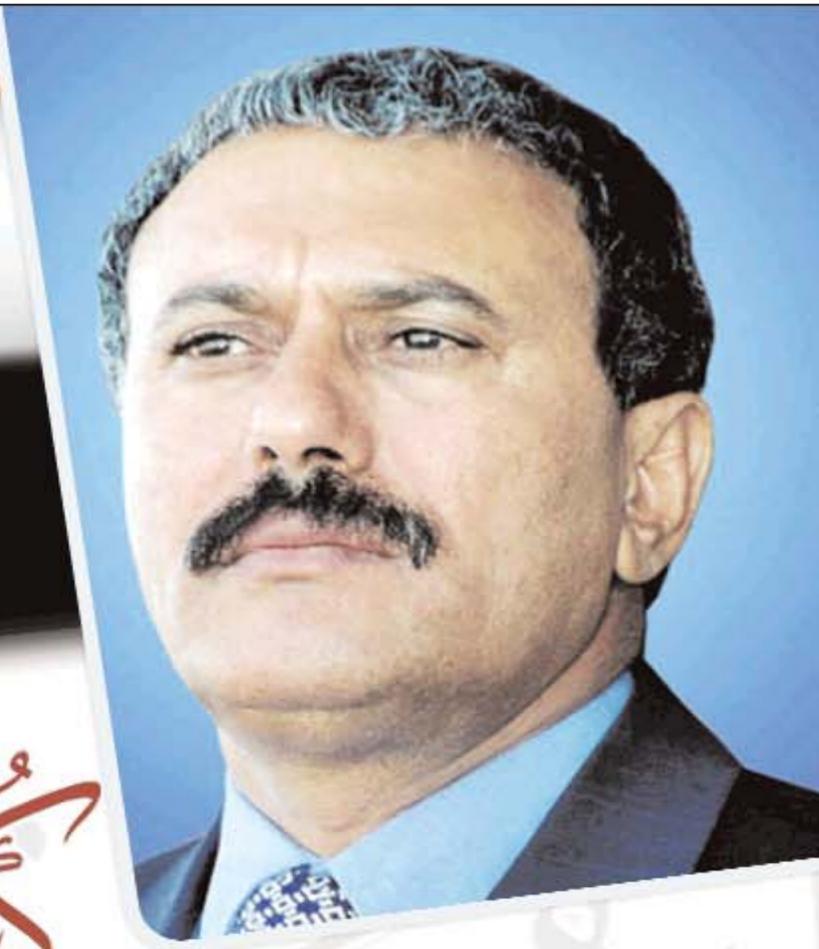
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# Prisoner Organization, a voice for the voiceless

By: Salma Ismail

All too often the state of prisons and prisoners in Yemen is ignored, whether by local or international organizations. Often citizens, not always criminals, are held illegally and incarcerated without trial. Being one of the few nations in the region with a "democratically styled" government, Yemen must uphold the fundamental human right to a fair trial with adequate defense.

The right to a fair trial is explicitly proclaimed in Article Ten of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which Yemen ratified. Although Yemen's constitution mentions nothing of the "right to a fair trial," it does stipulate that the accused is innocent until proven guilty by a final judicial sentence and no law may be enacted to put a person to trial for acts committed retroactively.

The constitution also confirms Yemen's adherence to the UN Charter, the International Declaration of Human Rights, the Charter of the Arab League, and dogma of international law which are generally recognized. Moreover, the country's penal code, gives citizens many rights.

However, in Yemen prolonged pre-trial detention is a serious problem, and judicial corruption, inefficiency, and executive interference undermine due process, according to lawyers.

It is not easy to investigate prisons and jails in Yemen. Written permission must be obtained from the Ministry of Interior to enter the cells described only with horror by former inmates who recount the abuse they endured there. Although Yemeni law prohibits imprisoning children without charge, according to tales from former inmates and lawyers, many remain in dire circumstances in jail.

The Children's Parliament visited children in detention found them in miserable conditions, beaten, malnourished, sexually exploited, held without trial and for minor crimes. According to a study by the Ministry of Interior, up to 77 percent of juveniles -aged 15 and under- in jail had not been charged. Another report documented over 500 juveniles in adult jails.

Hopefully the future will look brighter as this is about to change with the birth of the Prisoner Organization, under the helm of human rights activist and lawyer Abd Al-Rahman Barman: "We will be a voice for the voiceless," he says.

Barman and another 34 volunteer lawyers will use the court system to provide adequate legal aid for prisoners, many of whom are uneducated or illiterate. They will attempt to win the freedom of the innocent, and lobby through filing suits to improve the overall health, education and well-being of prisoners. The organization will also pay special attention to women on death row.

Yemen is divided into twenty governorates and one municipality. Hodeida and Ibb are two of the largest governorates, each with populations of more than 2 million. Barman's plan is that the Prisoner Organization will be present in each governorate and even in Saudi Arabia. "We already have small offices in Saudi Arabia's Aseer Province and in Hodeida," he said.

There are allegedly around 350-600 Yemeni detainees in that prison alone: "Yemeni inmates there have been subject to much abuse, most importantly lack of a free trial. They entered by illegal means and they have been stripped of their rights," said Barman.

With insight, respect and empathy, Barman carries the words and experiences of prisoners' horror stories. He has personally known many of the prisoners and their families.

Most prisoners fight their cases in unfamiliar territory because they do not know their rights before they ended up in prison. They have learned the law on their own, usually with the help of other, more experienced prisoners or lawyers such as Barman, Shatha Nasser, Mohammed Al-Arrosi, Hizam Al-Miraisi, Mahidi Shaiban, who have painstakingly adopted prisoners' cases voluntarily out of pure empathy and love of their profession and defending human rights.

Fahd Al-Qarni is chairman of the Prisoner Organization's board of 15 trustees. He was a former inmate and also plays a role in promoting human rights. As a human rights defender and pro-democracy activist he has campaigned for freedom of expression in



Detainees in Hajja prison during 2008 when arbitrary arrests on accusation of Houthisim were common. Over 25 detainees are cramped in one cell.

Yemen through his work as a musician and comedian. He was imprisoned last year for insulting the president. Others like him, including journalists like Salih Al-Suraymi, Fahd Al-Munayi and Mosa Al-Namrani among others, are joining 'Prisoner' in the hope of actively making a difference.

The main goals of the organization include offering legal aid and support to families of inmates. The organization will also investigate torture claims and illegal acts in prisons. By educating citizens and lawyers, it aims to raising the level of legal awareness in the country. More importantly it will attempt to close all illegal prisons.

#### Tribal prisons

Up to 75 percent of Yemen's 21 million inhabitants live in rural areas, where tribal sheikhs play a key role in society, and have been known to lock people up in private prisons. There are about 6,200 sheikhs nationwide, according to Dar al-Salaam Organization for Combating Revenge and Violence, a local NGO.

"Imprisoning people without a fair trial is against the law," says Ahmed Arman, a lawyer and executive secretary at the National Organization for Defending Rights and Freedoms, an NGO commonly known as HOOD, and said "But in practice, this is not applied as private prisons are full of imprisoned citizens," he added.

#### Inadequate or no defense

Although it could mean the difference between life and death, inept court-appointed attorneys, who have given absolutely no background in the case they are defending, has frustrated prisoners and discouraged them from mounting appeal cases. This is where the lawyers of 'Prisoner,' will make a difference. They will take around 2 to 3 cases a year and given the prisoners a chance at justice.

Scorned by society, unsympathetic judges and district attorneys and faced with a serious lack of resources and public apathy, prisoners, not always guilty, often lose their cases. 'Prisoner' will open doors that society has otherwise shut, and make possible their reintegration into society.

The US State Department report on human rights in Yemen for 2006 said arbitrary arrests and prolonged detention without charge or, if charged, without a public preliminary judicial hearing within a reasonable time, were common practices in the country.

The report, released in March this year, said, "Unauthorized 'private' prisons in rural areas, often controlled by tribes, remained a problem. Tribal leaders misused the prison system by placing 'problem' tribesmen in 'private' jails, either to punish them for non-criminal actions or to protect them from retaliation."

According to the report, people were detained in such prisons often for strictly personal or tribal reasons without trial or sentencing: "Although senior government officials did not sanction these prisons, there were credible reports of the existence of private prisons in government installations," it added.

"These jails are illegal, and imprisoning a person in them is another crime. When we talk to the general prosecutors, the justice system is weak and cannot do anything," Barman says.

#### The Snake

"There is one prison in Ibb that we will attempt to close down," said Barman. "It is called Al-Hibla, which mean 'The Snake,' because there is literally a snake there which it terrorizes detainees. This sheikh owning this prison owns more jails than that the whole governorate

4U

Prisoner Organization is also aiming to train journalists on how to report legal issues and familiarize them with legal terms. Lawyers or activists that are interested can contact Prisoner by fax: 01486314 or email at sageen.ye@gmail.com Support and donations are welcome.

does!"

Although the General Prosecutor formed a committee to investigate the sheikh's prisons, it's been five months and nobody has done anything. Authorities cannot even enter these prisons, according to Barman.

"Prisoner will aim to collect a database and won't let issues like this die out. We will knock on this door until this prison is closed. We will bring the perpetrators to justice," he assures.

"The prison system is misused by tribal chiefs who jail 'problematic' members of tribes either to punish them, or because their wrong actions are not of a criminal nature, or in order to protect them from reprisals or acts of violence resulting from revenge," according to a report issued by the American Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2003.

If Yemen is to implement the international agreements it ratified, it needs to look into violations and accusations of torture in the prisons of Yemen, and the court and prison system must be revamped in order to meet the international standards it claims to adhere to.

'Prisoner' will also assist former inmate to reintegrate into society. Despite the odds, there are tales of success that give a glimmer of hope for prisoners that served their time and now only want to live a normal life. One such example is a woman of admirable courage.

Rania (not her real name) is a former prisoner, turned prisoner rights activist, who will soon launch a book describing her years behind bars and struggle to survive in Yemen's dungeons in the hope of being heard.

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# Crisis is how the ruling regime manages crises in Yemen

By: Ahmed Mohammed Abdul Ghani

Management is considered the criterion of success or failure of countries and societies. In Yemen, the ruling regime is characterized by the fact that it never pays attention to management issues. It doesn't concentrate on achieving the public interest in a practical, realistic and visible way. Moreover, the ruling regime believes that rules of modern management are a mortal enemy, as it cannot achieve its individual objectives through them. Consequently, it often uses the methodology of crisis as the sole means to manage different political, economic, and social national issues.

As a result, Yemen hasn't witnessed any public management development. There has been no progress in regulations, laws and executive rules that can enhance development in the country. Instead, the government has been devoting its efforts to creating a state of instability. On the one hand, it never takes into consideration the necessity to select competent and capable people for the different management levels and positions. It works on creating a state of permanent conflict between officials and their deputies and managers as if it doesn't want to see any harmony or a state of accord.

It seems that not confessing mistakes is fixed policy with the ruling authority in Yemen to the extent that it completely ignores voices that demand it correct any mistakes. The government even supports the sources of these mistakes and protects people who commit them as well as gives them more opportunities to expand the area of their mistake. It gives them the chance to continue these mistakes and turn them into a de facto matter which people must deal with as if

it is a fixed truth and anything else is inconstant.

In this context, one can look at the way the ruling regime is dealing with the southern issue. After the 1994 war, the government refused to confess that there are social, political and economic impacts from the war. It talked about the economic loss only within its own framework. From its viewpoint, there were no negative impacts with regards to Yemeni society.

Therefore, the government reacted to all voices that demanded the "eradication of impacts of the war" through exhibiting indifference, rejection, and considering people who talked about this issue as merely foolish traitors. Here appears a strange inconsistency: how can a war continue for over two months without creating social, economic, political, cultural and psychological impacts among its society and in all fields of life? How can the government talk about the big losses that it sustained and reject the issue of losses that society sustained?

When the ruling regime attempted to escape the facts and covered up the nature of the practices that influential people, opportunists, and corrupt groups and leaders committed against the south, the continuation and aggravation of mistakes only increased the problems. In addition, although the ruling authority attempted to manipulate the south within the context of extorting and exerting pressure on the Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP) and within the context of allotting roles in the south to its own stooges in the ruling regime, the authority failed to understand the southern issue and its interactions within the developments in the region. This includes developments that came after the September 11 attacks in 2001, challenges that accompanied the progress of the War on Terror, and the developments that resulted from the US occupation of Iraq in March 2003. It

didn't deal with the subsequent new initiatives in regimes around the world as well as progress of the Sudanese situation with regard to issue of the south and Darfur in the north.

On the national level, the ruling regime in Yemen didn't fully comprehend the southern issue in light of the war in Sa'ada. Furthermore, the regime didn't take heed to the subject of the southern issue in light of the national political developments since the General People's Congress (GPC) ruled the country singlehandedly in 1997. The GPC created defects in the structure of the state and society and ruined aspects of the relationships that should rule the political system and its different groups.

Method of treatment through tranquilizers

The emergence of the so-called southern movement early in 2007 became the sounding of an alarm for all. This alarm should have been faced head-on with a national and pro-unity plan, not the indifference and clowning around that remained in place. However, the government, as usual, dealt with this issue by calmness and tranquilizers. In the beginning, a ministerial committee was formed to monitor facts chaired by Dr. Saleh Basurra, who, in turn, presented his famous report in which he specified the major causes of mistakes and demanded the government take urgent corrective procedures. Instead of considering that report a practical entry into detecting problems and conducting the immediate required remedies, the government did its best to annul the legality of that ministerial committee and make people forget the subject of the report that the committee presented.

The report was a clear and frank condemnation against the poor practices which a number of influential people inside the structure of the ruling regime committed. Thus the government couldn't tolerate facing facts as a

presidential resolution was issued in August 2007 to form an expanded committee consisting of 70 people. Chaired by Salem Saleh Mohammed, the committee was called "Committee of Assessing Social Phenomena." Through the nature of tasks the committee was given, it was clear that this committee was given a task above and beyond its ability and that it wouldn't be able to do anything. This is because it didn't depend on any official institutions and didn't hold any authority to carry out those major tasks. In addition, it didn't have any legal authority to deal with the concerned institutions inside the system of the state. Therefore, it was natural that the committee was buried and its validity ran out before even really starting its job. The committee presented only a routine report prepared under supervision of influential leaders in the government, and then the committee was dissolved.

In this context, the Yemeni government's efforts were devoted to tackling the situation of the military layoffs without addressing the other issues. It was thought that by concentrating on one issue, everything else ended and nothing else might require any further research or remedies.

As usual, the government neglected the nature of interactions that the Southern Movement started to exhibit since the reconciliation conference was held in January 2008. The conference however only focused on the instigative media speech that raised grudges and created a state of enmity that unified feelings against, ironically, Yemeni unity.

This prompted many southern leaders that were allied with the government to decide to join the Southern Movement. Some of these leaders opted for political asylum abroad and others turned to streets directly, as is the case with Sheikh Tareq Al-Fadhli who officially

announced joining the movement early this past April.

In his statement issued on April 1, 2009, Al-Fadhli said, "Our experience in official work didn't express the national trends that we sacrificed and struggled for. Through this experience, we have a belief that nothing [beneficial] will happen for the south, which is precious for us. Therefore, we found that continuing on this path will take us through a big and futile labyrinth. Therefore we realized that we should do something to save our people in the south and started to think seriously about supporting the peaceful national struggle which our brothers embodied in the Southern Movement."

Fixing mistakes

The government felt the seriousness of the situation and started conducting extensive military mobilizations. In addition, the so-called consultative meeting of senior leaders of the government, which was attended by President Ali Abdulla Saleh himself, reflected one of the mistakes in dealing with the southern issue. The president's speech was like a declaration of war and words of the vice-president and prime minister supported this initiative as they included justifications and accusations against other parties by using terms that prevailed during stages of past conflicts. Instead of giving all participants an opportunity to discuss and introduce their points of view to come up with an objective joint vision, this important and big meeting turned into nothing more than a meeting aiming to hold everyone responsible for what is going on.

The successive steps taken by the government confirmed that the ruling regime doesn't hold a clear vision or national strategy to tackle the southern crisis after it escalated in such an unprecedented way. This is particularly in light of the impact of the demonstrations that groups of the

Southern Movement organized in Aden, Al-Mukalla and Zinjubar on April 27, 2009. As a result, a presidential committee was formed that was chaired by Abdul Qader Hilal to monitor facts and conduct a dialogue with the main parties to reach understandings and offer the necessary urgent remedies.

At the time the committee started its dialogues and could reach primary preparations and agreements with a number of personalities and social figures, the stand of the government went in a completely different direction through sending military reinforcements to areas of conflicts in Lahj and Al-Dhal'e Governorates. Additionally, the Ministry of Media stopped the issuance of six independent newspapers to prevent the circulation and spread of information related to the events taking place on the ground. The government exploited the crisis to target public liberties and to take punitive procedures against press and journalists, making them remain under continuous threat.

It has been noticed that the government's escalation coincided with the regional and international political stances that supported the ruling regime which received signs of the importance of the stability and unity of Yemen.

Here comes a new problem within the progress of the way the ruling regime in Yemen deals with the southern issue. The regime sees that depending on the support of foreign countries may exempt it from exerting necessary and urgent efforts to solve the current problem completely. It didn't realize the complications and political and social complications of this initiative on the level of the Yemeni stability. It certainly didn't realize that regional and international stands are connected with temporary interests and can never be permanent and steady.

Source: Al-Quds Al-Arabi

## Saudi policy is vital to enhancing the stability of Yemen

By: Mai Yamani

In a prominent hadith, the Prophet Mohammed said: "If disorder threatens, take refuge in Yemen." The Prophet was referring to the prosperous and civilized Yemen. But today disorder and radicalization in Yemen are beginning to infect Saudi Arabia, and thus the safety of the world's largest oil producer.

The Prophet's hadith about Yemen has enjoyed new resonance ever since the 1980s, when Saudi Arabia - in line

with American policy - sought to export domestic dissenters, most prominently Osama bin Laden, a Yemeni of Saudi birth, to fight Soviet infidels in Afghanistan. Although dissent was mostly diverted to Afghanistan, bin Laden's most trusted companions (his wife, too) have remained mainly in Yemen.

In the wake of the Taliban's ouster in Afghanistan, bin Laden and his followers have come to regard Yemen, alongside Pakistan, as a haven. Indeed, Yemen is now a bubbling cauldron of jihadists who have flocked there

because, like Afghanistan and Pakistan, it has weak, easily manipulated state institutions.

US President Barack Obama's recent order to shut down the Guantanamo Bay detention facility has made the problem of Yemen's weakness a leading international issue. One-third of the Guantanamo detainees are Yemeni, but Yemen cannot guarantee the United States that the detainees will be controlled effectively if they are returned home. This fear is real. Many previously released Guantanamo inmates have disappeared underground.

Saudi Arabia, unlike Yemen, has supposedly created a "model" system for reintegrating Guantanamo returnees. The Al-Munasaha rehabilitation center is supposed to "cure" jihadist passions, and Saudi returnees from Guantanamo who spend time at Al-Munasaha are later offered jobs and wives.

But many of them relapse and escape to Yemen. Most notorious among these recidivists is Abu Sufyan al-Shihri, now "Deputy Leader of Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula." Seven other Saudi jihadists who escaped to Yemen are also known to be active in Al-Qaeda there.

Thus the two largest countries on the Arabian Peninsula - Saudi Arabia, the biggest in terms of landmass and oil wealth, and Yemen in terms of population - are now locked in life-and-death struggles with internal enemies. The paradox is that, although the threat to both countries is the same, each is worsening the outlook for the other by the policies they are pursuing.

For example, in the 1980s, millions of Yemeni men worked in the Saudi kingdom. Remittance income formed a big part of Yemen's budget. But in 1991, 800,000 Yemenis were expelled because they were seen as a domestic security threat in the run-up to the first Gulf war. Since then, Yemeni labor has been banned from Saudi Arabia.

Embittered and unemployed, young Yemeni men often become subject to another Saudi policy gone awry - its propagation for export of the Sunni Wahhabi form of Islam. With new Wahhabi religious schools popping up everywhere in Yemen because of Saudi financial support, it is small wonder that the number of Yemeni jihadists has

grown exponentially. But Yemen, too, is engaged in its own destructive policies. President Ali Abdulla Saleh has regularly used Yemeni Wahhabis to defeat his domestic opponents - first the communists, then the Zaidis, and then the Huthis.

Saudi Arabia's relationship with Yemen is unlike that with any other Arab country. The two countries are joined through historical, ethnic, and tribal ties, yet neither has the means to resolve popular resentments and resistance. Saudi Arabia's traditional "soft power" foreign policy tools - lavish spending of oil money and Daawa, "the Call," are no longer effective. Building fences and sending helicopters to police the borders will not be sufficient, and the idea that jihadists can be rehabilitated is a myth. No medicine will work if, when the patient is released, he encounters the same virus: institutionalized Wahhabism.

Yet there are things the Saudis can do to vaccinate themselves, and Yemen as well, from fanaticism. The tentative moves toward liberalization that King Abdullah has made over the past two years need to be accelerated, made more daring, and become more effective in removing the Wahhabi ideology as an incubator for radicalism.

This should not be impossible, because both Saudi Arabia and Yemen have moderate, indigenous Islamic traditions that can be mobilized against jihadism. If given the financial support that the Wahhabis received, these forces could reverse the current drift to fanaticism. Both King Abdullah and President Saleh understand the problem; they need to stop using the old tac-

tics and grasp the strategic need for change.

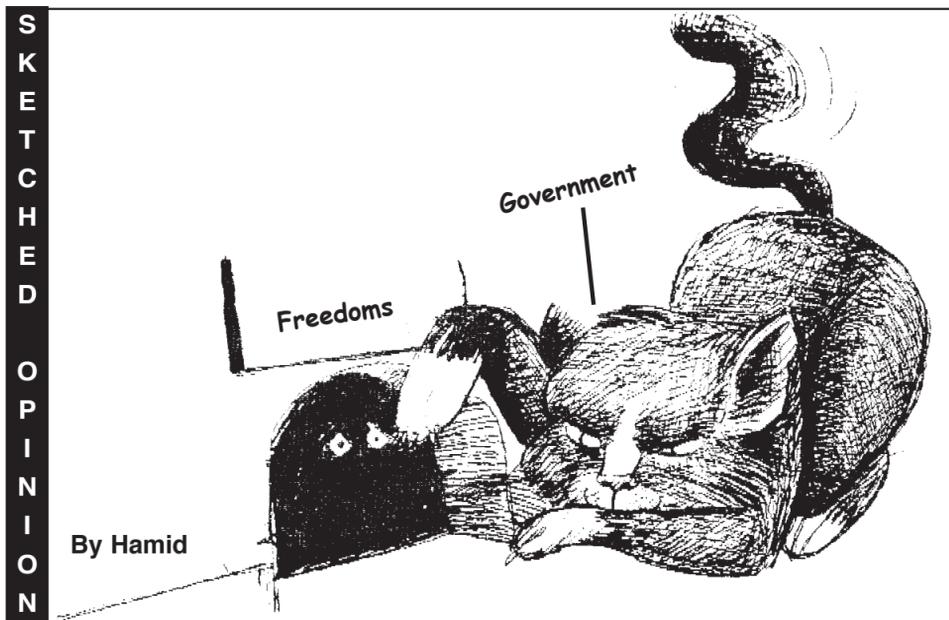
The first change is economic. Instead of exporting radicalism, Saudi Arabia must start importing Yemeni manpower by lifting its ban on Yemeni workers. Yemeni officials have also requested admission to the Gulf Cooperation Council. Up to now, the GCC has spurned Yemen's membership for the same reasons the European Union fears admitting Turkey: Yemen would instantly become the bloc's most populous country.

Indeed, Yemen's population exceeds that of all six GCC members - Qatar, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Oman, and Saudi Arabia - combined. But if Yemen's masses are not to become more radicalized, they will need to be incorporated into an economic zone that offers hope for the future. The GCC can and must assume that role.

Yemen is strategically important, not only for Saudi Arabia, but for the world, because it is the only country on the Arabian Peninsula from which oil can reach the open seas without passing through a narrow strait - either the Strait of Hormuz or the Suez Canal. To endanger this passage is to endanger the world economy's energy lifeline.

When considering Yemen's future, therefore, the stakes could hardly be higher.

Mai Yamani is an author whose most recent book is "Cradle of Islam." THE DAILY STAR publishes this commentary in collaboration with Project Syndicate (c) (www.project-syndicate.org).



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# The truth of tolerance, moderation, worship freedom & coexistences in Islam

**I**slam is a divine brotherhood mission. It intends to take people out from the darkness of ignorance, deterioration, blood-shedding and slavery to the light of faith, freedom, reasoning and promotion. Believing in divine books is one of its pillars. It does not apply coercion or compulsion to have people believe in it. Instead, it applies dialogue, enablement and choice. It respects human dignity and the sanctity of his personal rights. It orders justice, beneficence and fairness with non-Muslims residing in the Islamic state and with those with whom treaties are made, and it also orders fulfillment of treaties and conventions with others.

By: **Ishak M. Salah**  
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With its divine rules and moral and human values, it applies wisdom and kind preaching in proclaiming its message to all creatures and it also applies peace and intimacy even with enemies. It is the religion of mercy and moderation, and it refuses excessiveness, extremism, spite and hatred culture. The value of tolerance and moderation in Islam is obvious in the principles of honoring humans, coexistence with others, prohibition of terrorism & colonization, righteous deed is the preference standard among people, tolerance and forgiveness, justice for others and appreciating the divine religions.

## Honoring humans

When Islam rose, people were used to have been sold as slaves and bondmaids in the slave-trade markets of Mecca. They were sold like animals and objects. Islam came to prevent so *"017.070 We have honored the sons of Adam; provided them with transport on land and sea; given them for sustenance things good and pure; and conferred on them special favors, above a great part of our creation."*

In this context, Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) says (All of you are equal like the comb teeth) and he considered Aba Thar's offense against Bilal when he called him "You! The son of the black maid", as a state of ignorance. Aba Thar was angrily chided by Prophet Mohammed for such an offense; "You

are a man of ignorance.", because he did not observe the verse mentioned which had come to end slavery, party spirit and distinction making.

## Coexistence with others

The Arab region was the landing field of the divine missions and the land of prophecies. Islam came to assert the contents of the divine books and respect believers' options in respect to such books. Further, Islam respects human's reason and thinking. It also respects wise men's and reformers' recommendations on humans reforming in that it does not apply coercion or compulsion but it applies enablement and choice.

*002.256 Let there be no compulsion in religion: Truth stands out Clear from Error: whoever rejects Evil and believes in God hath grasped the most trustworthy hand-hold, that never breaks. And God heareth and knoweth all things.*

Because human fraternity necessitates coexistence between people even if their beliefs are different; a matter which is counted a basic principle in Islam, the principle of equity is then an ultimate matter. The Mohamadian's tolerant mission does not meet with racial discrimination, religious fanaticism or any other discrimination between people.

## Prohibition of Terrorism & Colonization

Islam prohibits all kinds of aggression *005.087 O ye who believe! make not unlawful the good things which God hath made lawful for you, but commit no excess: for God loveth not those given to excess.*

Therefore, the greeting in Islam is to say Al Salam Alaykum (Peace be upon you) to anybody we know or do not know. Prophet Mohammed used always to say spread Al Salam (saying: peace be upon you) between you. The first simple definition of a Moslem by Prophet Mohammed was (A Moslem is the one from whose tongue and hand people are saved.). It has been also mentioned in the prophetic tradition that a person remains in a safe side if he does not shed blood.

Prophet Mohammed illustrates this prohibition by saying "Ruing Kaaba – (the Sacred House of Allah) stone by stone is lesser to Allah than killing a person. He further said in the farewell speech (Oh People! Your bloods, monies and honors are forbidden among you.) He even said in the prohibition of the suicidal crimes which have not been known during the Islamic history: (whoever kills himself in consideration of something in this life will be tortured by Allah with it on the doomsday.)

## Righteous deed is the preference standard among people

Islam is the religion of justice, truth, and humanity. The Righteous deed is the preference standard that is taken for granted. This standard does not consider Genealogy and wealth. Many verses in the Holy Koran appreciate The Righteous deed and people who do The Righteous deed are highly appreciated and promised to be rewarded by the God: *(But give glad tidings to those who believe and work righteousness, that their portion is Gardens, beneath which rivers flow. Every time they are fed with*

*fruits there from, they say: "Why, this is what we were fed with before," for they are given things in similitude; and they have therein companions pure (and holy); and they abide therein (forever).{ Al Baqarah 25}*

Based on Islamic beliefs, Allah created the human beings just to worship him as well as to test them, and to see who will do good and who will do bad;

## Tolerance and forgiveness

Tolerance, love and forgiveness are the morals of Islam: *(Those who spend (freely), whether in prosperity, or in adversity; who restrain anger, and pardon (all) men;- for God loves those who do good). {Ali 'Imran 134}.*

*"If thou dost stretch thy hand against me, to slay me, it is not for me to stretch my hand against thee to slay thee: for I do fear God, the Cherisher of the Worlds). { Al Ma'idah 28}.*

The prophet Mohammed said that "whosever calls for fanaticism is not one of us, , whosever fight for fanaticism is not one of us, and whosever died for fanaticism is not one of us".

When the prophet Mohammed started to establish the Islamic state in Al-Madina, he was tolerant with everyone around him including unbelievers, Christians and Jews. When he traveled to Al-Madina, he did not know the road or the directions to get to his destination. So he asked one of the unbelievers to guide him. Actually the unbelievers in Mecca city was eager to kill him, however he asked one of them to help him to escape.

## Justice for others

Islam does not allow fanaticism, racism or oppression. Justice is one of the main principles of Islam. All people are equal in front of the justice even if they are not Muslims as long as they have the right. Giving others their rights is one of Islamic values, even if they are Unbelievers. This value is one of duties that a Muslim should perform, even if

he/she hates them as stipulated in the following verses: *O ye who believe! stand out firmly for God, as witnesses to fair dealing, and let not the hatred of others to you make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. Be just: that is next to piety: and fear God. For God is well-acquainted with all that ye do. {Al Ma'idah 8}.*

## Appreciating the divine religions

Islam is the religion that complete, conclude and approve all other divine religions. All divine religions believe in and agree upon one God and the doom day. The Holy Koran is the complete and comprehensive book of Islamic regulations.

It is not in contrast with previous divine books. Islam believes in all prophets and many verses of the Holy Kuran contain their biographies and show them as examples to be considered. The Prophet Mohammed said that *"I have been sent to complete noble morals"*. Based on the Islamic principles, Muslims are obliged to believe in all divine books, prophets, and messengers, otherwise they are not Muslims: *(Say ye: "We believe in God, and the revelation given to us, and to Abraham, Isma'il, Isaac, Jacob, and the Tribes, and that given to Moses and Jesus, and that given to (all) Prophets from their Lord: We make no difference between one and another of them: And we bow to God (in Islam)."* {Al Baqarah 136}.

Faith principles in Islam are as follows: the faith in Allah, the faith in Angels, the faith in Divine books, the faith in Messengers, the faith in the doom day, and the faith in fate.

## Conclusion

Many people mix between the reality of Islam and the wrong practices by some terrorist and extremist groups of people.

This is particularly because some try in the Islamic arena to control the reli-

gious speech, and they belong to groups which kindle hatred and weaken the voice of moderation and dialogue with other religions, cultures and civilizations.

This has encouraged the extreme right in the other side, and the scope has become open to terrorists from both sides. They counterfeit people's awareness and spread hatred culture, violence and colonization on the account of fraternity and peace. Nations need cooperation to encounter common problems in economy, environment, poverty, unemployment, fatal diseases, deforestation, alternative energy, thermal occlusion, food crisis, people's money plundering and laundry and armament expenditure decrease.

Therefore, we call upon all specialized institutions, social forums and research centers from both sides to bear their historical responsibilities and resume meeting and dialogue which should not only be among believers but among all people. The problem in its roots is a set of irregular ideas which have made use of economic and political conditions and global corruption. These ideas need to be unmasked before it is too late.

In conclusion, I address an invitation of peace to all the People of the Book on the tongue of our God and their God as mentioned in the Holy Quran 003.064 Say: "O People of the Book! come to common terms as between us and you: That we worship none but God; that we associate no partners with him; that we erect not, from among ourselves, Lords and patrons other than God." If then they turn back, say ye: *"Bear witness that we (at least) are Muslims (bowing to God's Will). All creatures are brothers and sisters, and this is confirmed by Prophet Mohammed (Oh God! I witness that all people are brothers and sisters)."*

The prophet of humanity, on whom Allah says *"021.107 We sent thee not, but as a Mercy for all creatures"* is right.

# Building Palestine from the bottom up

By: **Shlomo Avineri**

**A**s President Barack Obama's special Middle East envoy, former US Senator George Mitchell, learned during his visit to the region, America's efforts at Israeli-Palestinian peace-making are running up against three major obstacles. They will, no doubt, also arise in Obama's upcoming meetings with the region's leaders.

The first obstacle – indeed, the issue that stands front and center today – is the ongoing Palestinian civil war, with Hamas controlling the Gaza Strip in defiance of Abu Mazen's Fatah-led Palestinian Authority.

The Palestinians' basic failure at nation-building makes any meaningful peace talks with Israel – let alone an agreement – almost impossible at the

moment. With Palestinians unable to agree among themselves on a minimal national consensus, how can peace be established between them and Israel?

Second, with Likud's Benjamin Netanyahu as prime minister, Israel now has a government which is far less likely to be willing – or able – to make major concessions and evacuate hundreds of thousands of Israeli settlers from the West Bank.

Third, and most significantly, the 1993 Israel-PLO agreement has until now failed to achieve its aim. Attempts to revive the Oslo peace process – the "Road Map" and the Annapolis process – have similarly failed to achieve more than vacuous declarations and hollow photo opportunities. The causes of these 15 years of failure should be considered, so that Mitchell's mission does not become another stillborn effort.

Both the Palestinians and Israel can

easily and rightly be blamed for the failure of the Oslo process. But there is a more fundamental cause at stake, and it should not be overlooked.

The Oslo process tried to build a Palestinian state from the top down: create a Palestinian national authority, hand over territory to it, give it increasing power, arm it and finance it, hold elections, and a Palestinian state would emerge.

Instead, the consequence was a corrupt, militarized Palestinian Authority, with competing security services proved incapable of providing security. Nor could it conduct credible negotiations with Israel or deliver necessary services to ordinary Palestinians.

Two reasons for this failure stand out: the institutional weakness of Palestinian civil society, which lacks the infrastructure necessary for nation-building; and the impossibility of simultaneous

nation-building and peace-making. There is no precedent anywhere in the world that suggests that such a two-tier process can succeed.

A fundamental change of paradigm is needed: the effort should shift to building a Palestinian state from the bottom up, for which there are encouraging signs, even in the midst of the failure of the top-down process.

In the last two years, former British Prime Minister Tony Blair and US General Keith Dayton have succeeded in effective institution-building in three West Bank districts – Jenin, Bethlehem, and Hebron – turning them into the most peaceful areas in the West Bank, with a minimal Israeli military presence.

Local authorities were supplied with adequate funding and advice; independent chambers of commerce became the backbone of a local commercial middle class, which is interested in keeping the

region peaceful, even absent an overall agreement; local police were trained (in Jordan), and now function effectively as police forces, not armed militias; and business relations with adjacent Israeli regions have been renewed.

This empowerment of an effective local leadership was done with much persistence – and little fanfare. But these nuts-and-bolts projects created – for the first time – the building blocks necessary for effective Palestinian nation-building.

Admittedly, this process will take time and patience. But, until now, it has been the only approach proven to succeed, while everything else has failed. As Blair recently put it, such a bottom-up process may even go hand-in-hand with Netanyahu's goal of an "economic peace," though it would eventually have to go beyond it. That such an approach would have to include a total halt to

Israeli settlement activities goes without saying. If carefully crafted, it may even be implicitly accepted, albeit without much enthusiasm, by the Israeli government.

The Oslo process has failed; an attempt to revive it – say, by way of the Beirut Arab peace initiative – will merely bring into the open all of the existing disagreements between the two sides, and will not overcome the Palestinian failure at nation-building. After all the breakdowns in efforts to create a Palestinian state from the top down, only the old-fashioned way – from the bottom up – remains viable.

*Shlomo Avineri, Director-General of Israel's Foreign Ministry in the first cabinet of Yitzhak Rabin, is Professor of political science at Hebrew University. Copyright: Project Syndicate, 2009. www.project-syndicate.org*

# We don't torture

By: **Ian Buruma**

**A**sked in September 2006 whether there was anything wrong with the way American interrogators were handling "high-value" prisoners in Guantánamo Bay, and elsewhere, President George W. Bush famously responded: "We don't torture."

The definition of torture is notoriously slippery, but we have known for some time now that the former president was being, shall we say, economical with the truth. At the very least, American interrogators were in breach of the Geneva Conventions, ratified by the United States, against "cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment."

Tying a person to a board and bringing him to the point of drowning, over and over, or forcing a prisoner – stripped naked and covered in his own excrement – to stand with his hands shackled to the ceiling for days, until his legs swell to twice their normal size, may not have

constituted torture in memos prepared by government lawyers, but such practices are surely cruel, inhuman, and degrading.

Barack Obama's first act as America's president was to ban torture immediately. The question now is how to deal with the past, and specifically with the fact that these acts were not just condoned, but ordered by the highest US officials.

Should the responsible officials, including Bush, be prosecuted for breaking the law? Should all the details of what was done be released and publicized? Should there be a special commission to investigate? Or would it be better, in Obama's words, to "look to the future, not the past"?

In fact, as Obama quickly realized, his preferred response is proving to be impossible, for a refusal to look back will burden the future with greater perils.

Ex-Vice President Dick Cheney has stated on several occasions that he has no regrets about what he likes to call "enhanced interrogation" techniques, such as near-drowning, because they "kept our country safe" from terrorist

attacks. Obama's ban, in his view, leaves the US "vulnerable." In short, liberal scruples about morality, legality, and international torture conventions are foolish and irresponsible. The implication is clear: if the US were to be attacked by terrorists again, we will know whom to blame.

The stakes, then, could not be higher in the "torture debate" gripping the US. On one side are Cheney and his allies, who see torture in pragmatic terms: if a severe threat to collective safety is perceived, even a liberal democracy must get its hands dirty. Nobody likes to torture, but security is more important than moral scruples, and the laws will simply have to be adjusted or finessed.

On the other side are those who condemn torture as a moral abomination that cannot be allowed under any circumstances. This, in fact, is also the legal position of those who ratified the Geneva Conventions: "No exceptional circumstances whatsoever, whether a state of war or a threat of war, internal political instability or any other public emer-

gency, may be invoked as a justification of torture."

But these are not the main grounds upon which the torture debate is being fought out in the US today. For understandable reasons, many defenders of Obama's decision to ban torture are attempting to answer Cheney's pragmatic view with an equally pragmatic counter-narrative. They argue, contrary to Cheney, that torture is not the best way to keep us safe. A person in extreme pain will say anything, thus providing unreliable information. They claim that other, more sophisticated, interrogation techniques are not only more humane (and legal), but also more effective.

To drive this point home to the general public, which, in the US, is still easily persuaded by Cheney's point of view that torture is justified if it saves lives, liberal commentators and politicians have called for a special commission to investigate fully the last administration's record. This, they believe, will show clearly that torturing is counter-productive. Not only does it do great harm to the country's

image, and the rule of law, but it is likely to cause more, not less, terrorism.

The intellectual and political merits of such an argument are obvious. The current administration cannot afford to walk into the trap set by Cheney, and be held responsible for another possible terrorist attack just because it abolished torture.

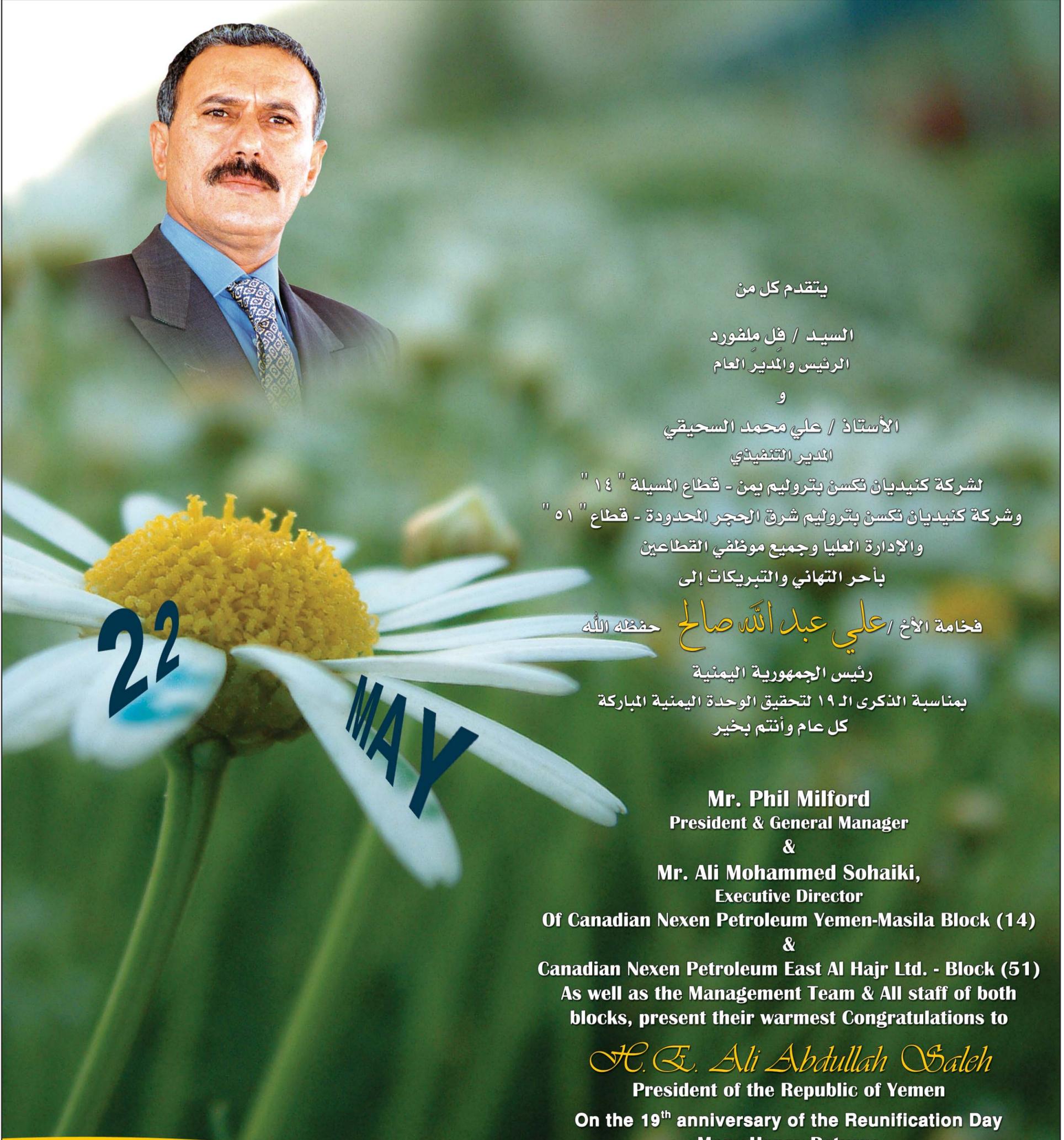
But are these really the proper terms on which this debate should be held? If torture is an absolute wrong, whatever the circumstances, the question of its effectiveness is irrelevant. To hold the debate on those terms threatens to dilute the moral principle.

This leaves the question of why torture should be condemned absolutely, whereas other acts of war, such as bombing, which cause more damage to human life, might be acceptable as inevitable consequences of national defense. Bombing can, of course, be a war crime if it is used as an act of terror against unarmed people. But military operations that kill or injure civilians often do not automatically qualify as crimes, as long as deliberately inflicting pain or humiliation on a

helpless individual – even if he or she is an enemy – is not the aim. In the case of torture, that is the aim, which is why it is different from other acts of war.

A prominent American right-wing commentator recently opined that any attempt to hold the torturers, and their masters in the Bush administration, accountable, would make a mockery "of the efforts of the tough and brave Americans who guard us while we sleep." Aside from the fact that torturing people is not the same as combat, and requires little bravery, this gets it exactly wrong. After years of torturing people in one of South America's most savage "dirty wars," Brazil's generals decided to stop it, because its institutionalized use was undermining the armed forces' discipline and morale. It was making a mockery of men who should be tough and brave, but had become thugs instead.

*Ian Buruma's latest book is The China Lover. Copyright: Project Syndicate, 2009. www.project-syndicate.org*



يتقدم كل من

السيد / فل ملفورد  
الرئيس والمدير العام

و

الأستاذ / علي محمد السحيقي  
المدير التنفيذي

شركة كنيديان نكسن بتروليم يمن - قطاع المسيلة " ١٤ "  
وشركة كنيديان نكسن بتروليم شرق الحجر المحدودة - قطاع " ٥١ "  
والإدارة العليا وجميع موظفي القطاعين  
بأحر التهاني والتبريكات إلى

فخامة الأخ / **علي عبد الله صالح** حفظه الله

رئيس الجمهورية اليمنية

بمناسبة الذكرى الـ ١٩ لتحقيق الوحدة اليمنية المباركة  
كل عام وأنتم بخير

**Mr. Phil Milford**  
President & General Manager  
&

**Mr. Ali Mohammed Sohaiki,**  
Executive Director

Of Canadian Nexen Petroleum Yemen-Masila Block (14)  
&

Canadian Nexen Petroleum East Al Hajr Ltd. - Block (51)  
As well as the Management Team & All staff of both  
blocks, present their warmest Congratulations to

*H. E. Ali Abdullah Saleh*  
President of the Republic of Yemen

On the 19<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Reunification Day  
Many Happy Returns

Canadian Nexen Petroleum  
Yemen and its Masila Block  
(14) partners

كنيديان نكسن بتروليم يمن وشركاؤها في  
قطاع المسيلة ( ١٤ )

**CANADIAN**  
**nexen**

Canadian Nexen Petroleum  
East Al Hajr Ltd. - Block (51)

كنيديان نكسن بتروليم شرق الحجر المحدودة  
قطاع شرق الحجر ( ٥١ )



العيد الوطني التاسع عشر  
للمهورية اليمنية

دوف انرجي ليمن . يمن  
تتقدم بأحر التهاني والتبريكات إلى  
فخامة الأخ / **علي عبد الله صالح** حفظه الله  
رئيس الجمهورية اليمنية  
بمناسبة الذكرى الـ ١٩ من تحقيق الوحدة  
اليمنية المباركة  
كل عام وأنتم بخير  
**جيمس مكرم**  
المدير العام  
وجميع موظفي شركة دوف انرجي ليمن . يمن

**DOVE ENERGY LTD. YEMEN**  
Express their best wishes to H.E. President  
**Ali Abdullah Saleh**  
And the people of Yemen  
on the 19<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
of Reunification Day  
**James McCrum**  
General Manager  
& All Staff of Dove ENERGY LTD. YEMEN

**DOVE ENERGY LIMITED**

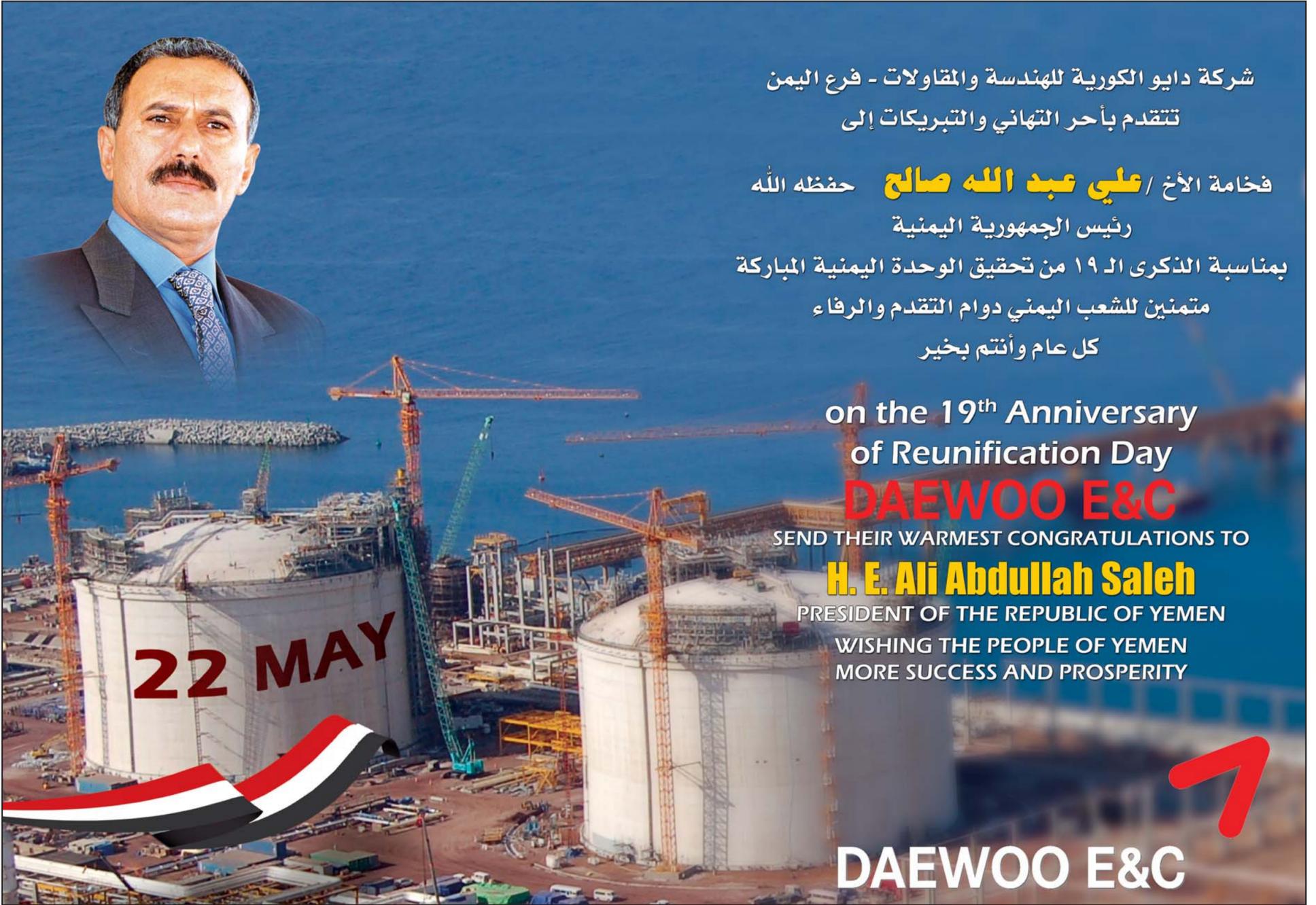


مبروك أفراح ما هو المجيب

بمناسبة العيد الوطني التاسع عشر لقيام الجمهورية اليمنية  
نتقدم  
بأسمى آيات التهاني وعظيم التبريكات إلى القيادة السياسية ممثلة  
بفخامة الرئيس علي عبدالله صالح  
رئيس الجمهورية اليمنية  
والى كافة أبناء الشعب اليمني العظيم  
متمنين لليمن وشعبه المزيد من الرفعة والتطور والرخاء  
السيد / مارتن ديفونتين  
مدير عام شركة توتال للاستكشاف والإنتاج في اليمن  
وشركاؤها: أوكسيدنتال وكوميكو وكوفبيك  
وكافة موظفي الشركة

كل عام واليمن بخير

**TOTAL**



شركة دايو الكورية للهندسة والمقاولات - فرع اليمن  
تتقدم بأحر التهاني والتبريكات إلى  
فخامة الأخ / **علي عبد الله صالح** حفظه الله  
رئيس الجمهورية اليمنية  
بمناسبة الذكرى الـ ١٩ من تحقيق الوحدة اليمنية المباركة  
متمنين للشعب اليمني دوام التقدم والرفاء  
كل عام وأنتم بخير

on the 19<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
of Reunification Day  
**DAEWOO E&C**  
SEND THEIR WARMEST CONGRATULATIONS TO  
**H. E. Ali Abdullah Saleh**  
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF YEMEN  
WISHING THE PEOPLE OF YEMEN  
MORE SUCCESS AND PROSPERITY

**DAEWOO E&C**



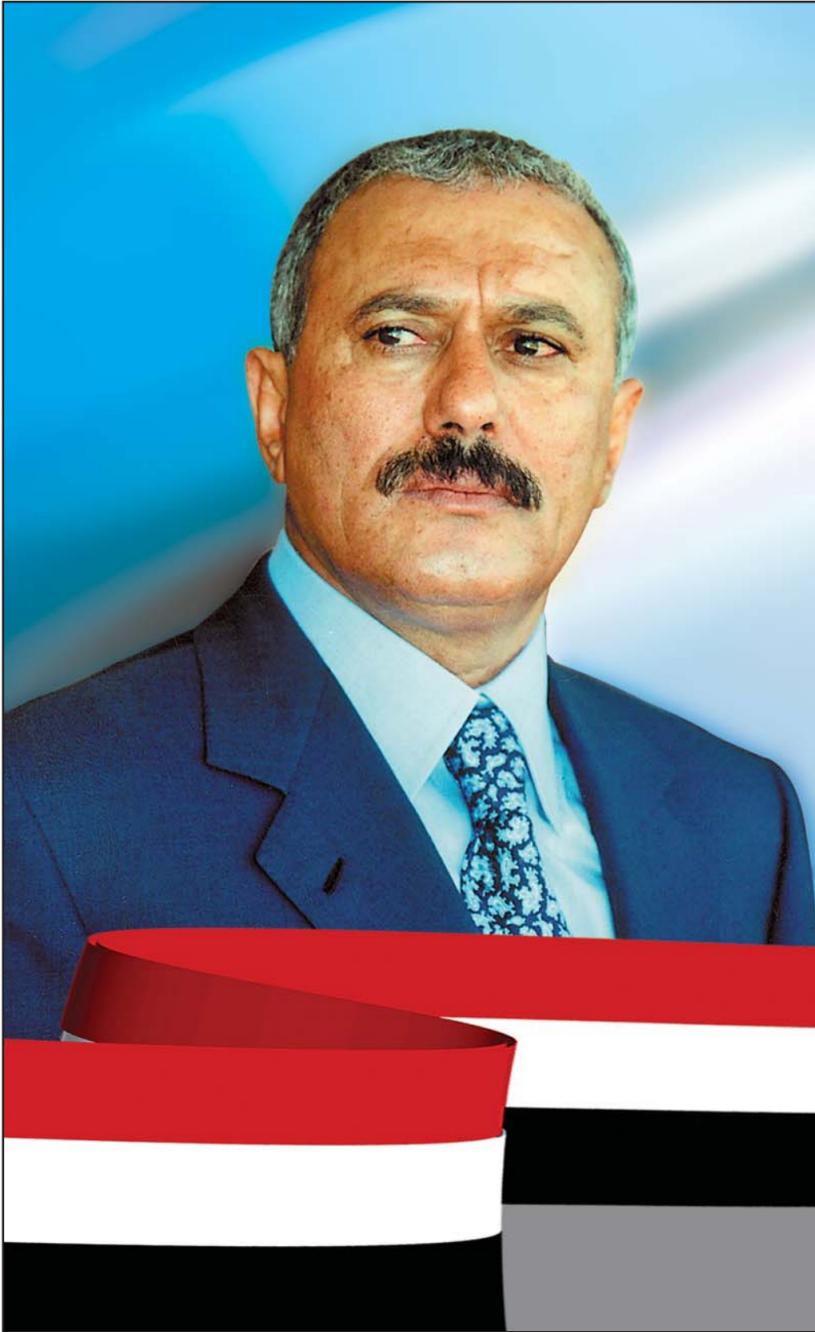
**The National Cigarettes  
& Matches industries ltd.**  
Represented by the chairman  
Executive,  
Sheikh Saleh Salem Bathawab,  
and all its employees  
and workers presents its  
heartfelt  
congratulations to the maker  
of Yemen's development  
His Excellency President Of the  
Republic

**Ali Abdullah Saleh**  
On the 19<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of  
Reunification Day

We beseech to the Almighty  
the recurrence of this occasion  
with prosperity and welfare.  
Many Happy Returns

شركة صناعة السجائر  
والكبريت الوطنية المحدودة  
ممثلة برئيس مجلس الادارة التنفيذي الشيخ /  
صالح سالم باثواب  
وجميع موظفيها وعمالها  
تتقدم بخالص وأطيب التهاني والتبريكات القلبية  
إلى فخامة الأخ المشير /  
**علي عبد الله صالح**  
رئيس الجمهورية اليمنية  
وإلى كافة أبناء الشعب اليمني الكريم  
بمناسبة الذكرى الـ ١٩ لتحقيق الوحدة اليمنية المباركة  
سائلين المولى العلي القدير أن يعيد مثل هذه المناسبة على  
شعبنا اليمني بالخير واليمن والازدهار  
كل عام وأنتم بخير

**22 MAY 1990**



الإدارة وموظفي  
**الشركة المتحدة للهندسة والسيارات المحدودة**  
**UEACO**  
يتقدمون بأحر التهاني وأطيب التبريكات  
لفخامة الأخ الرئيس /  
**علي عبد الله صالح**  
وإلى كافة أبناء الشعب اليمني  
بمناسبة الذكرى الـ ١٩ للوحدة اليمنية  
متمنين لليمن السير قدما في طريق التقدم والنجاح والإزدهار.  
وكل عام وأنتم بخير



Mercedes-Benz  
**UEACO**



**YICOM**

يتقدم كل من  
الأستاذ / علي صالح القاضي  
المدير العام التنفيذي  
والأستاذ / منير محمد الكاف  
نائب المدير العام التنفيذي  
وكافة الموظفين في  
**الشركة اليمنية للاستثمارات النفطية والمعدنية**  
بأحر التهاني والتبريكات إلى  
فخامة الأخ / **علي عبد الله صالح**  
رئيس الجمهورية اليمنية  
بمناسبة حلول الذكرى الـ ١٩ لقيام الوحدة اليمنية المباركة  
في ٢٢ من مايو  
كل عام وأنتم بخير

Mr. Ali S. S. Al-Kadi  
Executive General Manager,  
Mr. Munir M. Al-Kaff  
Vice Executive General Manager  
and all staff and employees of  
**Yemen Company for Investment  
in Oil and Minerals**  
offer their warmest congratulations to  
*Ali Abdullah Saleh*  
President of the Republic  
On the occasion of the 19<sup>th</sup> anniversary of  
**Reunification Day, 22 May**  
Many Happy Returns

# Lack of marketing strategy threatens agricultural sector

By: Mahmoud Assamiee

Following Saudi Arabia's recent restrictions on Yemen's agricultural produce that coincided with an increase in the production of produce, the lack of a solid marketing strategy is threatening the agricultural sector of the country.

Outside of local markets, Yemeni agricultural products have only the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia where exporters can sell their produce. While Saudi industrial products, including iron, aluminum, drinks and chocolates, are flooding Yemeni markets, Yemeni agricultural products sit to rot at the Saudi border outlet of Attiwal due to prolonged inspection routines.

"This year, farmers and exporters suffer the dire consequences of the new and very sudden measures taken by Saudi Arabia, which consumes a large part of our agricultural production during this time of year," said Ali Taher, vegetable and fruit exporter to the Kingdom.

"This season witnessed a greater production of vegetables and fruits, especially onions and mangos, due to heavy rains and an expansion of cultivation," said Manager of Agricultural Marketing Farooq Qasem. He added that 1,000 new mango trees are planted every year.

## Mango prices drop

Mangos are currently swamping local markets, causing prices to drop drastically. This year mangos only cost YR 70 per kilo as compared to YR 150 at this time last year.

"I used to sell the best type of mango for YR 400 last year. This year I am selling it for only YR 200," said Ali Najji, a produce retailer.

"I will sell you this box of mangos (nearly 30 kilograms) for only YR 1,500," said a mango wholesaler who stopped his car in Assunaina market, shouting for people to buy at lower prices he offers. "I used to sell this same box for YR 2,800 last year," said another wholesaler.

## Farmers selling their farms

Farmers complain that they recorded huge and unprecedented losses this year. There is a great production of vegetables and fruits without markets to export.

"The reality is complicated and it is a long story. Many producers announced that they are selling their farms because of great losses," said Mohammad Al-Iryani, owner of a mango farm in Abs, a vast fertile agricultural area between Hodeidah and Hajjah governorate.

He explained that the first problem starts with the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation which distributed uneconomical seedlings and seeds imported from Egypt and Sudan. "These agricultural products take a long time to harvest as compared to other categories planted in India and



This season witnessed a greater production of vegetables and fruits, especially onions and mangos, due to heavy rains and more widespread cultivation

other countries," Al-Iryani said.

"The second problem is that there are so many farms in Abs that are growing mangos, guava and other products. There is no coordination between farmers to organize a profitable cultivation process," Al-Iryani continued, who blamed agricultural bodies for not educating farmers and giving them advice on how to organize cultivation.

Al-Iryani does not blame concerned authorities only; he also places the blame on producers and farmers for their lack of awareness and carelessness towards good planning, such as coordinating with each other to diversify cultivation each season.

He said fruits have become unprofitable economically. "I know a producer who spent YR 5,000,000 on his farm this year and sold the production for only YR 600,000," Al-Iryani noted.

## Lack of strategy for marketing products abroad

Exporters and producers blame the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation and other concerned bodies for failing to adopt strategies to market the products abroad.

"Our problem is the absence of exterior markets other than Saudi Arabia," said Ali Taher, exporter.

He explained that there is a coherent relationship between agricultural production, marketing policies and exterior markets. "Agricultural production is excellent and there are good markets inside and outside the country but there is a bad marketing policy," Taher said.

"The Agricultural Cooperative Union and the Supreme Council for Exports not only exhibit a total lack of planning but also do not exert any efforts to market Yemeni agricultural

products abroad," said Al-Iryani, who wants to sell his farm for YR 50 million while experts said earlier that the farm was worth YR 100 million.

## Kingdom of Saudi Arabia hinders Yemeni exports abroad

"The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia presents a great barrier to exporting Yemeni products via truck," said Secretary General of Yemen Supreme Export Council Noman M. Al-Mulsi.

"If we want to export to Syria, Jordan, Lebanon or the gulf countries, we have only the Saudi Attiwal outlet where authorities impose tough security and inspection measures against Yemeni exports," said Al-Mulsi.

He explained that prolonged inspections measures at the outlet are spoiling vegetables and fruits before reaching the target markets. He also said that other countries like Jordan are exercising some abusive measures against Yemeni exports.

## Importers apply double standards

Exporters and officials say that importing countries are applying double standards in dealing with Yemeni agricultural products and are facilitating the importation of goods coming from other countries.

"Our trucks are stopped in Saudi Attiwal outlet for days for security inspections and are not allowed to enter Saudi directly. Meanwhile, trucks coming from Syria or other exporting countries enter Saudi with no problems," said exporter Ali Taher.

He added that authorities at the borders ask to unload Yemeni trucks in hot places and then upload the produce into Saudi trucks. "These processes are devastating the products before they reach Saudi markets," Taher remarked.

These measures are not happening

only in Saudi Arabia, as there are similar issues in Jordan as well. "Jordanian authorities take two weeks to investigate Yemeni goods before distributing them to markets," said Al-Mulsi, adding that Yemeni produce is devastated before distribution because of this long delay.

## Failed attempts to export to European markets

Yemeni exporters tried to export mangos and bananas to European markets but the attempt resulted in great losses due to the high expense of air transportation.

"We tried to export mangos to Germany and France via air but the expenses of transportation caused losses to exporters," said Chairman of Cooperative Agricultural Federation Ali Ba-Hamaish.

He explained that the cost of shipping a kilogram of mangos via the Sana'a Airport reached \$1.20 per kilogram, and the cost of transportation from Sana'a to Berlin is \$1.60, which means the total cost of one kilo of mangos in Berlin is \$ 2.80.

He also said they even tried to export Yemeni vegetables to Lebanon and the nearby countries via the air, but this also led to losses because of the high cost of transportation.

"This kind of transportation is very expensive and the country is neglectful in supporting such exports," said Ba-Hamaish, adding that Yemeni exports need direct support from the government such as subsidizing transportation wages by 50 percent.

## A marine line for exportation

Exporters wanted the government to create a marine line to export their goods via the sea as do other exporting countries. This shipping line, which is called a fast marine line, has very low

transportation costs, even lower than that of ground transportation to nearby countries.

"Yemen is the only country that does not have a fast marine line for exportation. If the country created this line, our problem would be solved," said exporter Ali Taher.

He explained that greatest exporting countries like China and Turkey are exporting goods to countries far away from them via this system. "I think there is a big problem with Yemen's lack of having a marine line to facilitate exporting," stated Taher.

Regarding this suggestion from Taher to create a marine line, Noman Al-Mulsi said, "We are preparing to create this line."

## Exporting treaties with other countries

After great losses Yemeni exporters suffered last month because of the 1,200 trucks stopped at the Attiwal outlet on the Saudi border, exporters called on the government to conduct trade treaties with other countries to find new markets for their products.

Concerning this issue, Al-Mulsi said that all Yemeni exports must go through the Attiwal outlet, with 95 percent of Yemeni exports going to Saudi Arabian markets. 85 of these exports are vegetables, with onions topping the list by 85 percent, while bananas represent 65 percent of fruits and mangos 30 percent.

Regarding treaties with other countries for exporting Yemeni agricultural products, Al-Mulsi said, "We have cooperation treaties with some countries but they are not effective. These treaties do not bind these countries to buy from Yemen."

## Lack of a basic exporting service

Exporters and officials agree that there

are no basic services to improve exports. There are no units or factories for organizing vegetable and fruit products like cleaning or categorizing the size of fruit.

"If importers wanted a particular kind of fruit, for example, larger fruits, we are not able to provide for them because we do not have factories categorizing products according to their size," said exporter Taher. He called on the government to establish such units and other basic services before starting to export to other countries.

## Another problem threatens agricultural products

Agricultural lands in Abs area, where there are plenty of farms for sale for investors, are facing a new threat: salinization.

"Salinization of the land is threatening the farms in Al-Majar area," said Mohammad Al-Iryani, a farm owner who admits that this is another reason for selling his farm. He also indicated that other farmers have started thinking about this problem.

Meanwhile, the Dhamar governorate, which is famous for exporting potatoes and other vegetables, is threatened by drought.

"The problem of drought started in the Ans area. People fear this problem," said Ali Saleh, the owner of a potato farm who traveled from Dhamar to Sana'a with his car full of potatoes for Sana'a's markets.

He said that potato farmers are also facing the problem of lower prices in local markets and the absence of foreign markets to export. "Farmers are losing money now, and in the future their losses will double. The money they get from selling their produce does not cover the costs of cultivating," Saleh said.

## The dollar's last days?

By: Onno Wijnholds

Zhou Xiaochuan, the governor of the People's Bank of China, recently suggested that replacing the dollar with the International Monetary Fund's Special Drawing Rights as the dominant reserve currency would bring greater stability to the global financial system. The idea of reforming the system by introducing a supranational reserve currency is also, it appears, supported by Russia and other emerging markets. And a United Nations advisory committee chaired by the Nobel laureate Joseph Stiglitz has argued for a new global reserve currency, possibly one based on the SDR.

Transforming the dollar standard into an SDR-based system would be a major break with a policy that has lasted more than 60 years. The SDR was introduced 40 years ago to supplement what was then seen as an inadequate level of global reserves, and was sub-

sequently enshrined in the IMF's amended Articles of Agreement as the future principal reserve asset.

But the world soon became awash in dollars. So, instead of becoming the principal reserve asset of the global system, the proportion of SDRs in global reserves shrank to a tiny fraction, rendering the SDR the monetary equivalent of Esperanto.

Although the euro, created in 1999, turned out to be a more serious competitor to the dollar, its share in total international reserves has probably remained below 30%, compared to 65% for the dollar (these shares are in part estimates, as China, the world's largest holder of reserves, does not report the currency composition of its holdings).

There are two ways in which the dollar's role in the international monetary system can be reduced. One possibility is a gradual, market-determined erosion of the dollar as a reserve currency in favor of the euro. But, while the euro's international role – especially its use in financial markets – has

increased since its inception, it is hard to envisage it overtaking the dollar as the dominant reserve currency in the foreseeable future.

Such an outcome is probably only possible if two conditions are met: first, the United Kingdom joins the euro area, and, second, the United States makes serious, confidence-sapping mistakes. The latter condition may already have been partially met, but US policies to stabilize its financial system should help avoid a major dollar slide. Moreover, the European Central Bank has repeatedly stated that it neither encourages nor discourages the euro's international role.

With the dollar's hegemony unlikely to be seriously undermined by market forces, at least in the short and medium-term, the only way to bring about a major reduction in its role as a reserve currency is by international agreement. The Chinese proposal falls into this category.

One way to make the SDR the major reserve currency relatively soon would be to create and allocate a massive

amount of new SDRs to the IMF's members. While the G-20 leaders have decided to support an SDR allocation of \$250 billion, this will increase the share of SDRs in total international reserves to no more than 4%. In order to make the SDR the principal reserve asset via the allocation route, close to \$3 trillion in SDRs would need to be created, an unrealistic proposition.

But there is a more realistic way for the SDR's importance to grow. Back in 1980, the IMF came close to adopting a so-called SDR Substitution Account. The idea was to permit countries whose official dollar holdings were larger than they were comfortable with to convert dollars into SDRs. Conversion would occur outside the market, and thus would not put downward pressure on the dollar. Member countries would receive an asset that was more stable than the dollar, as it was based on a basket of currencies, thereby providing better protection against losses.

The plan fell apart when some major IMF shareholders could not accept the

burden-sharing arrangements that would be necessary in case of losses due to exchange-rate movements. The US also lost interest in the scheme as the dollar strengthened.

What are the chances of adopting a scheme of this kind today? Is the US prepared to go along with a reform of the international monetary system that reduces the dollar's role?

Until recently, I would have considered this unlikely. But the changed international climate, and the possibility of a bout of severe dollar weakness, could convince the US to go along with a conversion scheme that would alleviate excessive pressure on the dollar. And, apart from possible political considerations, large holders of dollars would find a substitution account attractive as a form of protection against strong fluctuations in the dollar's value.

What about possible losses suffered by the Substitution Account? This can be dealt with by setting aside part of the IMF's large gold stock.

Even if an SDR Substitution

Account is established, it is unlikely that the dollar's share in international reserves would fall to an insignificant level.

The dollar will remain important for many countries as a vehicle for intervention in foreign-exchange markets, as well as for invoicing and for denominating internationally traded securities.

But one can envisage a system in which international reserves are held each in roughly equal shares of dollars, euros (assuming a further gradual increase in its share), and SDRs. While there are currently other priorities, it would be useful for the IMF to study anew an SDR substitution account and similar schemes. If it does not, the debate will take place elsewhere.

Onno de Beaufort Wijnholds is a former executive director of the International Monetary Fund and a former permanent representative of the European Central Bank in the US.

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تتقدم

**الشركة العربية اليمنية للأسمنت المحدودة**

مستقلة برئيس مجلس إدارتها

**الهندس / عبدالله أحمد سعيد بوشان**

بمخاض التقاني والتقنيكات التي فخامة رئيس الجمهورية الأخ /

**علي عبدالله صالح**

والتي كافة أبناء الشعب اليمني

بمناسبة الذكرى الـ ١٩ لقيام الوحدة اليمنية المباركة

وكل عام وأنتم بخير

**Arabian Yemen Cement Company Ltd.***Represented by its Chairman***Eng./ Abdullah Ahmed Saeed Bughshan***Presents its warmest felicitations To**H.E. President***Ali Abdullah Saleh***And to all people of Yemen**On the occasion of the international Labor Day**Many happy Returns***MAY****2009**الشركة العربية اليمنية للأسمنت المحدودة  
**Arabian Yemen Cement Company Ltd.**الشركة العربية اليمنية للأسمنت المحدودة  
بمخاض التقاني والتقنيكات التي فخامة رئيس الجمهورية الأخ /

## How to Speak Idiomatically!

By: Mohammed Aish Hejash,  
Demonstrator, English Department,  
Faculty of Education & Science,  
Rada'a,  
Thamar University, Thamar.

**L**earning the English language turned out to be a pain in the neck for most students. The last resort would be in making English look like a piece of cake. Some learners may say that being out of touch with the common English lingo cost them their English speaking abilities, and some teachers may say not being updated with the latest English slang made teaching classes like pulling teeth.

"This book is for you if you already speak some English and now would like to speak like a native.<sup>1</sup>" This quote is from Amy Gillett, author of Speak English Like An American, who had a career in teaching English for years and so became familiar with the kind of difficulties that English learners face. Her book is a remarkable contribution in the field of teaching American English and solved a lot of burdens for those novice learners who don't know how to be tactful.

Her book can add a beautiful color to a learner's language who spends too much time thinking of speaking English like a native instead of actually speaking. This book deals with the matter of interpreting and using American idioms, which can make all the difference in the world to a language learner.

In this humble and educational article, I found a method to help

learners to speak English like an American, and that by following several important steps they can take their language to the next level. This method can improve the way that they speak and will benefit them in so many ways.

Let's start by giving an example, because examples are often the best way to teach. Here is a speech given by a student:

"Yesterday, I took a chemistry test and I feel that I'm going to fail because I don't attend my classes. My father always advises me to study harder because he saw me not being serious enough. I want to tell him that I don't like chemistry classes because they are beyond my abilities and I want to clarify that nobody will care if I get high marks, but my father tells me if I really want something I must work hard."

If we look at the previous speech, we will find that the speaker described his resentment of chemistry classes and gave reasons for his resentment. The normal listener will find the speech grammatically correct and appropriate, but those who are acquainted with native ways of speaking will find another way of saying the same thing. The following steps can help in the process of native paraphrasing:

- 1 - Underline those phrases which you think can be paraphrased.
- 2 - Paraphrase those phrases using an American idioms book.
- 3 - Repeat the paraphrased sentences more than one time.
- 4 - Record your speech and replay it, using a tape recorder.

Let's implement those steps and see

what would happen at the end. Here is the first step, which says to underline those sentences that can be paraphrased.

"Yesterday, I took a chemistry test and I feel that I'm going to fail because I don't attend my classes. My father always advises me to study harder because he saw me not being serious enough. I want to tell him that I don't like chemistry classes because they are beyond my abilities and I want to clarify that nobody will care if I get high marks, but my father tells me if I really want something I must work hard."

Step number two says to start paraphrasing those underlined phrases. Let's do it using any book of American idioms.

"Yesterday, I had a chemistry test and I feel that I'm going to blow it because I cut class. My father always advises me to stop slacking off and start hitting the books. I want to tell him that I can't stand chemistry classes because they are way over my head and I want to clarify that nobody will give a hoot if I get high marks, but my father tells me if I set my heart on something I must buckle down."

Step number three says to keep repeating those paraphrased clauses, as repetition will help the student to memorize.

Finally, regarding step number four, the process of recording and replaying will either show the kind of change in your regular speech or not.

*I Speak English Like An American,*  
Amy Gillett

## Corruption overcoming all

Dear Yemen Times,

**W**e are Yemenis expats a thousand miles away from home, and we are following what is going on back in Yemen very closely. We are all against the corruption, and we are indeed unsatisfied with the president and the government performance in Yemen. This is why we are living in the USA. We all came here in order to escape corruption and the mess that happens in Yemen on a daily basis. Everything is so hard and bad in Yemen, even walking in the street or driving is really stressful and hectic. It is impossible to live a decent or peaceful life in Yemen, and this has been going on and on for years and years. Can we have different people to man-

age our life and our country the right way? Is it too much for us to have real honest people take over the government and lead the country in the right direction???

I came to Yemen for a visit last year for one month, but you know what? I spent the whole month running from one governmental office to another just to renew my wife's passport, and they gave me such a hard time that I hated the day I decided to visit Yemen and spend my vacation there. I could have spent it relaxing at a quiet and peaceful place.

Anyway, despite all these negative views and points about Yemen, I am against those people that are against unification and are calling for separation. I really say to those people: go and drink from the sea, and do not waste our time and effort with non-

sense. We are all Yemenis, north and south, east and west, and we are all suffering from what is going on in Yemen and are all unsatisfied with the government's performance, period. Now, instead of wasting time and effort in something that is not beneficial for all of us, let's find a way to solve the real problems that make everyone suffer.

We have resources in the country, we have the man power, and we have the brains that can lead to a peaceful change in Yemen. What we need to do is to find those brains and give them a chance to prove themselves. I say we do not want a police state; we want a modern, civilized and well-organized country, and we cannot achieve this without a unified Yemen.

Yours  
Nabeel Albadany

## Home

By: Mahdi Khalil  
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There is no train in Yemen  
No highways  
Nothing that we make is deep rooted in  
the earth  
Nothing touches the sky  
Our frozen flames  
Fall in despair  
And our half-dead lives remain  
untouched  
Undiscovered  
Our eyes only see backwards  
There are swords  
But there aren't many hands to carry  
them  
It is so dark  
but there is always a sun  
If someone opens the window  
Why do we have to look through the  
key-hole?  
If we can open the door  
In the middle of Winter  
When the frost bites my heart  
I wrap it in the love of my native land  
In the same ocean  
Where the warm sweet memories  
Of my childhood  
Are still flying  
I looked through the mirror  
And I saw myself in the other side  
Heavy with sin  
My sails are broken  
My wings are tied  
My long journey  
Back to the no-where  
Is about to start  
The thousand miles journey  
That starts with a thousand miles  
And ends with nothing

## Who is he?

By: Mayasa Ali  
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Once the sun disappeared behind the  
clouds  
So my soul sought out a glimpse of  
hope and light  
On my way to search for the  
vanished light  
I entered a very dark cave full of  
wild bats  
The road through it was very long,  
gloomy and frightful  
Skinny ghosts were dancing on the  
sliding walls  
Fear began slipping into my fatigued  
heart  
I ran and ran to pass through this  
critical period of my life  
Suddenly I hit something in front of  
me  
I waited for bats to fly everywhere  
but nothing happened  
I heard nothing except silence and  
more silence  
I opened my eyes to see someone  
standing silently  
I quickly asked him, "Who are  
you?!"  
He calmly said "I'm the one who  
guards the exits of this cave"  
Then looked at a point in the  
darkness and continued  
"I'm the white flowers that grow  
among the thorns,  
And the hope disappearing behind  
the black clouds,

I'm the sun that rises to erase the  
night's darkness,  
I'm the magic that melts hard stones  
Changes desert to green meadow  
And ice to fresh water"  
Then he took my hands in his warm  
ones  
At once I felt a strange power  
Flowing out from his hands to my  
shaky ones  
The dark clouds and sliding walls all  
disappeared  
And finally sunshine found its way to  
my sky  
I looked at him and asked again,  
"Who are you?"  
By one touch from your hands,  
You helped me to go out from a cave  
My soul was imprisoned in for a  
long time"  
Smiling he said, "Seek the answer  
inside you,  
You'll find it as the bright sun found  
its way to you"  
He said that and vanished behind the  
white clouds  
A question was resounding in my  
mind  
"Who is he, Who is he?!"  
Everything around me repeated the  
answer  
"He is love...  
He is love...  
Hearts' medicine and souls'  
happiness  
The sun of the hope that doesn't  
disappear at all"

## Through The Mind's Eye

By: Maged Thabet Al-Kholidy  
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### Is there love for the sake of love?!

**L**ove has many different definitions for many different people, especially nowadays. This is because it is mostly used as a means to achieve personal interests rather than being a real supreme feeling that no power in the world and no external influences can shake. It is true that love exists among all creatures; friends love each other, a child loves his pet, and so on. However, I will shed light on the nature of love between men and women as husbands and wives or as fiancé and fiancée. Many times I am surprised by how love becomes cheap and worthless among people. Trying to find the reasons for this, I realized the main reason is the way in which people use love only as a means to achieve certain personal interests. Rejecting this low and valueless love myself, I thought for a long time, examined many love relations, and finally reached the decision to call for more precious and more valuable love. I call this 'Love for the sake of love.'

I criticize those who use love only as a means to achieve personal interests like sex, marriage, business and so on. That is to say, a man and a woman may claim they love each other, but this claim is only for the sake of a physical relationship. They use love only as a means to achieve this interest. On the other hand, a man may want to get married to a particular woman or vice versa. Such a man or woman uses love as the easiest means to make the other party accept his/her marriage proposal. For this purpose, he/she tries to create a feeling of love just to push him/her towards marriage. In this case, love is not real and it is only a means to get married. For this reason, love disappears immediately after achieving this purpose. That is why we find husbands

and wives who got married under such circumstances end up facing many troubles which many times lead to divorce

I maybe wrong in my viewpoint, but I am interested to give more evidence that proves how this kind of love is not real and has no value. This is revealed when those who use love only as a means to achieve personal interests, but when they end up unable to achieve those interests, the marriage dissolves. To make the idea clearer, let us consider a case of a man and a woman who claim their love for each other in order to get married. If the woman, for example, gets married to a man due to family problems or social circumstances, the man's love will turn into hatred. He may end up abusing, cursing, blaming or defaming her. The same thing is done by a woman if the man gets married to another woman, taking a second, third, or even fourth wife. What kind of love is this? It stops immediately whenever the personal interests of marriage stops. If it is real love or it is 'love for the sake of love,' they will keep at least respecting (if not loving) each other, taking their past relationship as the best thing in their lives.

I think the two cases mentioned above are enough to illustrate how love loses its real value when it is taken only as a means for achieving personal interests. To give love its real value, I think, 'love for the sake of love' is the best. Love for the sake of love means to love someone just because he is the one for her, or she is the one for him. A woman loves a man because he is a man with qualities and personal features she appreciates. This woman loves that man without any personal interest to achieve. So she is ready to deal with him as a brother, as a friend or as a colleague within the moral lim-

its of her relations with him. The man may get married and the woman will feel happy for him, pray to Allah for him and may give him a gift on this occasion.

More evidence for the value of 'love for the sake of love' is its continuity. Since there are no personal interests in this kind of love, it is not influenced by achieving such interests or not. If marriage takes place between the man and woman mentioned in the above example, the feeling of love between them will grow stronger or at least will remain the same. Even if they cannot deal with each other as husband and wife, they will try as soon as possible to avoid problems. They may decide to divorce each other just to save the feeling of love between them instead of hurting it by continuing in a difficult marriage. In such a case, divorce will not negatively harm their love feeling and they may continue dealing with each other as friends or a brother and sister with all kinds of respect and appreciation.

'Love for the sake of love.' This is, I think, the best solution to rescue the real value of love. This may seem strange to some of you, dear readers. Some others may look at it as a silly idea, and others may take it seriously as something valuable. In any case, this is my viewpoint and I welcome any comments or responses either for or against my idea. The discussion is open to all readers who can send their responses in the form of comments or articles either to my personal email or to the newspaper address.

Maged Thabet Al-Kholidy is a contributing opinion writer from Taiz. He holds an MA in English, and is the former editor of Taiz University's English-language magazine.

## Cloned human stem cells

By: Paul Kokoski  
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**I** am disappointed with South Korea's bioethics authority for conditionally lifting its three year ban on research using cloned human stem cells. The decision confuses scientific integrity with Frankenstein science.

Human welfare does not demand that scientists pursue every avenue available. On the contrary, it depends upon a shared responsibility that involves moral limits.

Science has confirmed with objective certainty that full human life begins at conception with the formation of a genetically complete, self-directing human entity, the embryo. Life does not result from an organism when it has been built up, but rather it is the vital principle of life that builds up the organism of its own body. This was established over 120 years ago by Wilhelm His, the father of human embryology.

The main objection then to current

methods of embryonic stem-cell research is that they involve the destruction of living human embryos, that is, human beings at the embryonic stage in their lives. This is a principled objection to the direct and intentional killing of human beings.

Amazingly, though embryonic stem cell experiments have failed to produce a single, unqualified, therapeutic success, even in animal models, supporters of the embryonic model continue to laud their unproven and currently unethical methods and ignore the fact that adult stem cell therapies are being used extensively today in treating over seventy diseases.

To divert tax payers funds away from these promising avenues for research and treatment toward the avenue that is most morally controversial as well as most medically speculative would be a sad victory of politics over morality and science.

The justification for embryonic stem cell research was always based on the arguments that such cells were "pluripotent". Pluripotent stem cells are those

miraculous building block cells that can be coaxed into becoming any type of tissue found in the human body. However, a major breakthrough in November of 2007 showed that pluripotent stem cells (embryo-like stem cells) can ethically be derived from human skin cells, by "reprogramming" them with special genes. This renders obsolete any and all research on human embryos which is, in reality, the direct and intentional killing of human beings.

The smart plan would be to encourage the myriad of available alternatives, rather than funding the most unethical type of research that relies on a form of discrimination against an entire class of humans - embryonic humans - being singled out for targeted destruction at the hands of researchers.

Human beings are not raw materials that can be exploited or commodities that can be bought and sold. If a man takes on the power to fabricate man, he also takes on the power to destroy him.

The respect for every human life is an essential condition if a societal life worthy of the name is to be possible. When

## Why do we need foreign language departments in our universities?

By: Mohammed Al-Kaladi  
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**I**t is widely known that the foreign languages and arts departments in Arab universities are considered among the important departments in any university, particularly the English and French departments. This importance arises because these departments provide chances for Arab students to study and explore the beauties of the foreign arts. Thus, these departments are among the top specializations in any college or university.

However, the bitter fact is that these specialities do not provide the proper

training and education for the real roles that graduates are expected to play to serve society both scientifically and culturally. It is true that universities graduate batches of teachers to teach these languages in schools, institutes and universities. But such a function should not be the sole aim for these specializations.

One of the jobs that such specialities should carry out is to insert Arabic literature in their syllabus materials and also in theses of MA and PhD degrees. Such a trend will contribute in bridging the gap between Arabic literature and the arts of the target languages. It also provides chances for researchers to compare Arabic literature either in poetry or prose with

western literature. Moreover, it reveals the status of our literature among the world arts.

The second role for these departments is translation. This means interpreting literary works as well as modern sciences from and into Arabic. Translation helps to bridge the knowledge gap between the Arab world and advanced countries.

It seems clear that these two subjects are still absent from the universities' agenda. So when on earth will the departments of foreign languages be activated and operated well in order for students to work at real jobs where they can serve society? It is a question directed to those in charge of higher education.

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# Yemeni food habits between tradition and variety



For people in Sana'a, shafout, or bread soaked in yogurt with coriander, is also served for lunch on Fridays and social occasions. It is also served daily during the fasting month of Ramadan

By: Khaled Al-Hilaly

The average Yemeni family's meal is a combination of culinary influence from different parts of the world such as India, Turkey, and Africa. However, most families serve exclusively Yemeni meals. Throughout the week, although healthy, the meals are of little variety. Fridays are the days most people look forward to because it's usually a special meal. Social occasions also call for special foods.

For families that cannot afford to eat meat throughout the week, they do so on Fridays. For others, it's just a way to add variety or even to introduce new foods. "It's fun when we go to the fish market every Friday morning and select the finest and freshest catch for my mother to cook at home," said 7 year-old Mohamed.

For some it is the only day where there is time to change the daily dishes, add meat or fish, or prepare their favorite meals. "My mother and I always prepare Egyptian, Lebanese or Moroccan foods on Fridays," said Ezdihar Al-Siraji from Sana'a.

There are foods that can be eaten at breakfast or dinner and there are foods which are only for lunch, such as rice or aseed. Also, many Yemeni families have developed their own routine.

## The largest meal is lunch

Lunch is the main Yemeni meal and is considered the most important and largest meal of the day. It is usually served between 11:00 and 1:30, and sometimes as late as 2:00 or 3:00. The most popular dish that is served for lunch is a thick and spicy green stew called saltah that consists of lamb or chicken with lentils, beans, chickpeas, coriander, fenugreek and other spices. However, habits have changed over time and increasingly families are having saltah for dinner too.

In the northern part of Yemen, you can find fatta, a dish made from dry bread soaked in honey, broth or milk.

For people in Sana'a, shafout, or bread soaked in yogurt with coriander, is also served for lunch on Fridays and social occasions. It is also served daily during the fasting month of Ramadan. Both bint al-sahin, a sweet bread dish covered with honey, and al-hamedah, a sweet and sour dish eaten with radishes, are foods prepared for special occasions, such as when guests are present, as these dishes are time consuming and take a long time to prepare.

Ezdihar Al-Siraji from Sana'a says that her family has fish for lunch every weekend, which in Yemen is on Thursdays and Fridays. Some imported dishes from other cultures are also found on her table, such as mahshi, vegetables stuffed with meat and rice, and susi, which is a bread-like dish mixed with eggs, milk,

black cumin and shafout.

**Breakfast: light, quick and healthy**  
Breakfast and dinner have a lot in common, and in Yemen many families can have the same kind of food for either meal, such as beans, eggs, peas, pizza, yogurt and olive oil.

Rice is a basic diet for many people who have it every day for lunch. However, rice for dinner is unusual because it is considered to be a heavy meal.

Mahshi, made of grape vine leaves, is served during grape season. During winter, soups are consumed more, especially soups made of vegetables, lentils, and wheat with meat or milk.

On Eid Al-Fitr, after a long month of fasting during Ramadan, Yemenis' first breakfast in a month is usually fatah which is bread pieces with milk and honey.

Madahil, also known as kubana, is served two to three times a year because it is difficult to make and its preparation is a lengthy process. It is a kind of bread made from different kinds of grains and is famous throughout the rural areas of Taiz and Ibb.

Aseed, or porridge, is a very popular dish in Yemen and is eaten throughout the year, especially in rural areas. Some people particularly like to have it during cold weather or during the rainy season. It is normally served with chicken or meat.

Across the country, meat, although a special feast everywhere, is prepared in many different ways. There are several Yemeni grilled dishes such as kabab, haneeth, or a tender meat cooked for a long time, and mandi, a meat dish cooked in a special way using the sand's heat in hot rural areas via a special wood oven.

During cold weather, many people in Yemen prefer to have meals served in pottery dishes called haradha. These pottery dishes keep the food sizzling hot.

In rural areas, especially in the mountainous areas of Ibb and Taiz, food is served in larger quantities where there are guests or laborers working in construction or agriculture on the family's premises.

In these agricultural areas, the food changes according to the season. For example, during springtime the family table is full of dishes made directly from the fields' products such as beans, corn and pumpkins.

Yemenis take pride in their national food and it is not easy to seduce their taste buds with flavors or aromas of international variety. A

young journalist Ali spent a week in Doha at a 5-star hotel that served various types of international foods, but none from Yemen. He came back

saying, "I only ate cucumbers and carrots for the whole week I was there!"

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