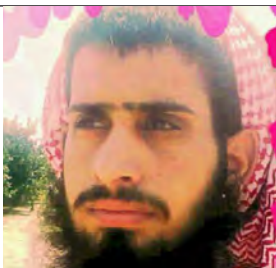


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The government and the private sector have teamed-up in Taiz to modernize the governorates' police stations. Some police stations operate out of rented apartment buildings, and without vehicles, many cannot pursue cases when citizens complain. The governorate will construct new police stations and will distribute 24 military vehicles and one police car. The governor of Taiz, Shawqi Hael, told the Yemen Times that the improvements will resolve many of the governorates security issues. **Read more on page 2.**

Photo by Shawqi Al-Saqqaf



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Yemen's economic situation to worsen as oil revenues continue to shrink

Khalid Al-Karimi & Rafat Al-Nabhani

SANA'A, March 11 — The Yemeni economy will continue to decline if the government cannot improve protection of its oil pipelines, according to economists.

According to a report by the Yemen Central Bank released in mid-February, Yemen oil revenues declined by about \$87 million in the past year. The report tracked oil revenue from January 2013 to January 2014.

The oil revenue was down to \$214,77 million in January 2014. Oil revenue amounted to \$301,68 million in January 2013.

"This decline in oil production has occurred for two reasons. The first reason has to do with the decrease in oil reserves and limited exploration. The second reason is the increase in attacks on oil pipelines, particularly following the 2011 revolution," said Mustafa Nasr, the

head of the Studies and Economic Media Center.

According to Nasr, economic stability largely depends on oil exports, which is the main source of revenue for the government. Targeting this sector, he said, is a clear attempt to affect the performance of the government.

"Yemen's economy will continue to be unstable if this tremendous source of income, oil, continues to [be impaired by attacks]."

Ahmed Saed Shamakh, a Sana'a-based economist, expressed concern over the continued decline in oil production because oil is the backbone of the national economy. "Oil generates 80 percent of national revenues. If this sector continues to be attacked, production will stop, and so will revenues. Attacks on oil infrastructure delay new explorations and investments...," Shamakh said.

As a means to address this problem, on Feb. 26, the U.N. Security Council unanimously passed resolution No. 2140. The resolution stipulates the formation of a committee to monitor those who would obstruct or undermine the political transition in Yemen.

The committee has the power to impose asset freezes and travel bans on specific individuals involved in acts intended to derail Yemen's political process.

Shamakh is hopeful that the U.N. Security Council resolution will, at a minimum, help limit repeated attacks on oil pipelines and the country's infrastructure. "The interna-

tional community and the Yemeni government should cooperate to stop these attacks," he said.

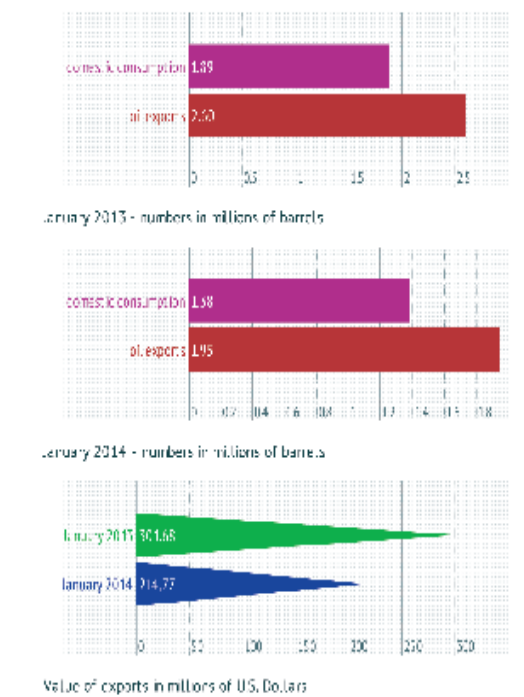
According to the interior ministry, oil pipelines, power transmission lines and facilities, and telecommunications networks suffered 487 attacks nationwide in 2013.

Such attacks have been commonplace since 2011, when a popular

uprising left a security vacuum in its wake.

Armed tribesmen have launched attacks on the oil and electricity infrastructure in order to force concessions from the government. The government has been carrying out repairs, but it has not yet managed to effectively clamp down on saboteurs.

Yemen's oil: exports vs. domestic consumption



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Drone attack in Marib leaves one dead

Jameela Obaid

MARIB, March 12—A drone strike late Monday killed a 16-year-old in the Wadi Abeeda district of Marib governorate, according to a local security source.

Obad Abdulla Al-Shabwani, a young man from the Al-Shabwan tribe in Wadi Abeeda was killed in the strike, according to Brigadier Abdulkhaleq Mohammed Saleh, the operations director for the Third Military Region in Marib. Saleh said Al-Shabwani was a militant with suspected ties to Al-Qaeda.

Al-Shabwani's relatives denied his involvement in the group and told the Yemen Times that 16-year-old's friends and relatives have also been recently targeted by drone strikes.

Mujahid Jabir Al-Shabwani, from the same tribe as Obad Al-Shabwani and a friend of Obad's, according to relatives, was killed on March 3 by an American drone in the same area in which Monday's incident took place.

Mohammed Saleh Maiqan, an activist and resident in Marib, told the Yemen Times that drones have been heavily present in the governorate, particularly in Al-Wadi and Raghwan districts.

Residents of Wadi Abeeda said there has been increased panic in



the district as a result. Reports that drones target individuals based on the monitoring of cell phone conversations has led some residents to turn off their phones.

Abdulrazaq Al-Jaml, a journalist specializing in Al-Qaeda affairs, posted on his Facebook account the news of Monday's killing, including a photograph of Obad.

"Al-Qaeda is the first source of concern for America in Yemen. The second concern is the tribe because the latter cooperates with the former," Al-Jaml said.

Nabil Al-Bukairi, the head of Arab Studies Forum, told the Yemen Times that drone strikes have pushed people to sympathize with Al-Qaeda, encouraging them to stand against the "so-called American invasion of Yemen."

Saudi Arabia blacklists Yemeni groups



Ali Ibrahim Al-Moshki

SANA'A, March 10—The release on Friday of Saudi Arabia's terrorist blacklist, which includes two Yemeni groups, has elicited a mixed response from regional parties. The Houthis and the Muslim Brotherhood-affiliated Islah Party have been placed on the list.

The Yemeni government has not yet commented on the Saudi move.

The Yemen Times contacted leading Islah and Houthi figures, but they declined to give official statements on the Saudi decree. However, a leading Islah member, speaking on condition of anonymity, told the Yemen Times that "Saudi Arabia will change its decree soon because the situation in the Arab World is already conflicted and can't afford more disagreement."

"We prefer not to comment on the decree and others also should not comment because there are millions of Yemenis in Saudi Arabia and they may be affected by such a thing," he added.

The source said that Islah should not have been slapped with a blacklisting because the organization has a legal and constitutional background.

The Islah Party, established on Sept. 13, 1990 by the late tribal sheikh Abdulla Bin Hussein Al-Ahmar, is the second largest political party in Yemen after the General People's Congress (GPC). Mohammed Abdulla Al-Yadomi became head of the party following Al-Ahmar's death on Dec. 28, 2007.

Ali Al-Bukhaiti, a journalist associated with the Houthis, said "the Houthis do not pose any threat to Saudi Arabia or the Gulf countries to warrant being blacklisted."

"The Saudi regime has internal problems and is trying to deflect problems to external powers," Al-Bukhaiti said.

The political-wing of the

Houthis, Ansar Allah, is a political and religious movement positioned mainly in Sa'ada. It was founded by Hussein Badr Al-Deen Al-Houthi who was killed by the military in 2004.

Local media have given varied responses to the Saudi blacklist. Al-Ola and Al-Sharia, two newspapers associated with former President Ali Abdulla Saleh, published photos of several Islah figures who they claim are now considered terrorists by Saudi Arabia.

But the Islah-aligned Al-Sahwa newspaper claimed that Islah is not blacklisted as it was not specifically named. The blacklist includes the Muslim Brotherhood but does not specify Islah, which is widely seen to be the Yemeni branch of the Brotherhood.

GPC spokesperson Abdo Al-Janadi said in a Sunday statement published in the Kuwait-based Al-Seyasya newspaper that Sana'a should follow the steps taken by Riyadh and Cairo and declare Yemen's Muslim Brotherhood a "terror group."

Saudi Arabia also blacklisted Al-Qaeda, Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), Al-Qaeda in Yemen, the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, the Hezbollah Party in Saudi Arabia, Al-Nusra Front, the Muslim Brotherhood and Al-Houthis, as well as organizations linked to or espousing the ideologies of the aforementioned groups.

Saudi Arabia gave a 15-day grace period for Saudi citizens associated with the outlawed groups to renounce their affiliation to the groups and return to Saudi Arabia. Saudi residents involved in armed conflicts outside the kingdom are liable to 3-20 years imprisonment, according to a royal decree issued by the Saudi authorities on Feb. 3.

The same penalty applies to whoever supports or adopts the ideology and beliefs of these groups or even expresses sympathy for them, according to the decree.

Boat carrying 77 people capsizes off Shabwa coast

44 African migrants still missing, feared drowned

Bassam Al-Khameri

SHABWA, March 12—Forty-four people are missing and feared drowned after a boat smuggling African migrants and refugees capsized off the Shabwa coast on Sunday. The remaining 33 onboard were rescued, according to the state-run Saba News Agency.

In a March 10 press release, the U.N. Refugee Agency (UNHCR) said that the boat was reportedly carrying 77 men, women and children—31 Somalis and 46 Ethiopians.

Zaid Alalaya, senior public information assistant at UNHCR,

told the Yemen Times that the survivors were taken to a UNHCR transit center in Maifa'a district, where they received food and first aid. Zaid added that the survivors will be sent to Kharaz Refugee Camp in Lahj for administrative purposes and to determine who among them will be granted refugee status.

The boat reportedly embarked on the early evening of Friday, March 7, from Bossasso in the Puntland region of northern Somalia. It encountered strong winds and rough sea off the coast of Yemen's southern governorate of Shabwa, according to the press release.

Shuja'a Mahdi, the chief of Coast Guard Operations, told the Yemen Times that such incidents are not uncommon off Yemen's coastline, where many Somalis head to after fleeing war at home.

"The problem is that the migrants use small boats and overload them. For example, 50 migrants would use a boat that can carry only 15 people," he said.

According to the press release, a naval patrol by the Society for Humanitarian Solidarity (a UNHCR partner organization) located a number of survivors.

Thirty-two people were located by Sunday afternoon, and another person was found later in the day. The others are still missing, according to the press release.

With one exception all the survivors were male. They were brought ashore at Majdaha by SHS staff and given first aid, food, water and clothing before being taken to a transit centre, according to UNHCR.

At the time of going to print the

Somali Embassy had not responded to requests for comments, while the Ethiopian Embassy was contacted by the Yemen Times but was unable to offer any additional information.

The incident is the most significant loss of life involving refugees and migrants crossing the sea to Yemen in the past year.

The number of people making the dangerous journey sharply declined to 65,319 individuals for 2013, according to UNHCR, compared to 107,532 in 2012.

In a recent interview with the Yemen Times, UNHCR partially attributed the decline to new changes to the Saudi labor law, which has seen the deportation of tens of thousands of migrants from Saudi Arabia. Yemen is often a transit-destination for migrants attempting to reach the Gulf.

Ceasefire and prisoner exchange reached in Al-Dhale

Nasser Al-Sakkaf

AL-DHALE, March 11—The presidential committee formed end the conflict in Al-Dhale secured on Wednesday the release of prisoners held in the governorate during fighting between the military and gunmen, according to Mohammed Al-Oqla, a member of the Al-Dhale Tribal Council.

Al-Oqla said that 13 soldiers were released out of the 29 who were abducted over the past two months.

The committee also managed to secure the release of 30 local residents out of a total of about 50 who had been held by the military since the conflict flared up.

The process of releasing those detained by both parties was supervised by the Red Cross, according to Al-Oqla.

Confrontations in Al-Dhale died down after a ceasefire was reached during Monday's meeting between the presidential committee and the Al-Dhale Tribal Council that comprises local sheikhs and dignitaries as well as leading figures of the Southern Movement.

"Residents of Al-Dhale set a condition that military checkpoints must be evacuated and replaced by new forces to ensure stability in the area. We will replace the soldiers of Brigade 33 with personnel of the Special Security Forces," Al-Oqla said.

In a proposal presented on Monday to the presidential committee headed by

Deputy Interior Minister Ali Lakhsha, the council suggested evacuating Brigade 33 from Al-Dhale, removing the new checkpoints created by security forces, and paying reparations to those killed or injured since the beginning of confrontations in December, according to Al-Oqla.

Waleed Al-Khateeb, the media officer of the Al-Dhale Coordination Council—a body established to maintain stability in the governorate—told the Yemen Times that the situation has been calm in Al-Dhale since the committee arrived in the governorate on Saturday, but that residents are still worried because a previous committee failed to secure a lasting resolution.

However, Al-Khateeb said that the residents trust the new committee because most of its members are from Al-Dhale.

Clashes that broke out between the military and residents of Al-Dhale left about 44 residents dead and more than 80 others wounded, according to Al-Khateeb.

The clashes also resulted in the death of 30 soldiers and the wounding of over 50 more, according to Sadeq Al-Hakami, director of the Brigade 33 Commander's office in Al-Dhale.

Armed confrontations broke out between local gunmen and forces linked to Brigade 33 positioned in Al-Dhale after the latter shelled a funeral tent on Dec. 27, leaving 19 dead and 20 others wounded.

Taiz to modernize police stations

Emad Al-Sakkaf

TAIZ, March 12—Taiz on Monday initiated a program to modernize its police stations in a bid to improve security services in the governorate. Local police stations lack adequate facilities and their staff lack proper transportation.

Local authorities distributed a total of 24 military vehicles and one police car among the 20 stations in the governorate and also initiated a construction program to build modern police stations.

"Providing the police stations with these military vehicles has cost about YR149 million (about \$693,000). Building a modern police station costs YR300 million (\$1.34 million)," Shawqi Hael, Taiz's governor, told the Yemen Times.

"[These steps] will resolve several security problems and constitute a qualitative jump in the area of security in Taiz."

The governorate has allocated YR2.1 billion (\$9.8 million) for security improvements, he said. According to Hael, this amount will be spread over three years, 2014-2016.

The Yemeni government pledged YR200 million (\$930,000) and the private

sector pledged YR800 million (\$3.7 million), according to Hael.

"We are keeping track of the funding and the implementation in coordination with the donors," Hael said.

Abu Bakr Al-Ezi, Taiz's media manager, said that with these changes, the police will improve their crime-fighting performance.

Engineer Abdurqaeb Al-Hadad, the head of project management, said that the new police stations will range in size from 410 to 1,000 square meters and include offices for investigation departments, civil service departments, a meeting hall, a reception hall, a weapons storage area, and restrooms, in addition to living quarters for soldiers who are on duty at the police station.

"The condition of the police stations in Taiz frustrates and discourages people," according to Abdulla Thabet, a teacher who was visiting with friends at the Al-Shamasi police station.

"The majority of them are former apartments that are in a state of disrepair. They look like they have been abandoned.

The prisons in these police stations are not even fit for animals," Thabet said.



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المفوضية السامية للأمم المتحدة لشؤون اللاجئين
الكائن بشوارع الجزائر قرب محطة المختار

إعلان مناقصة رقم
RFP/HCR/BO/14/SPU/ 05

تعن المفوضية السامية للأمم المتحدة لشؤون اللاجئين عن رغبتها في إنزال المناقصة الخاصة بإنشاء مظلة إستراحة إدارة أمن مديرية / حرض :بالدور الثاني وفقا للمواصفات والمعايير الفنية المذكورة في وثائق المناقصة المتعلقة، وبهذا تدعو المفوضية الراغبين من المقاولين المؤهلين لإستلام وثائق المناقصة من تاريخ 13 مارس 2014 من قسم الإمداد في مكتب المفوضية في صنعاء الكائن بشوارع الجزائر قرب محطة المختار و كذلك من مكتب المفوضية في حرض محافظة حجة.

آخر موعد لسحب وثائق المشروع يوم الخميس 27/03/2014 م يقدم العطاء في ظرف مغلق ومختوم بالشمع الأحمر ومكتوب عليه اسم الجهة ورقم المناقصة واسم مقدم العطاء الي مكتب المفوضية في صنعاء الكائن بشوارع الجزائر .

Latest Security Council resolution on Yemen hotly disputed by Yemeni political parties

Ali Abulohoom

The Security Council resolution adopted late February under chapter VII of the UN Charter sparked controversy in Yemen and public opinion on the issue remains highly divided.

The Houthis and the Southern Movement are among those who have denounced the measure as amounting to interference in Yemen's internal affairs.

In a press conference held two days after the resolution was issued, the chargé d'affaires of the US embassy in Yemen, Karen Sa-

sahara, accused local and foreign media of provocatively exaggerating the consequences of the resolution.

Sasahara defended the resolution by saying that it "stemmed from the National Dialogue Conference (NDC) outcomes. It is urgently needed to put the spoilers of the political transition under supervision and in order to allow the NDC outcomes to be implemented in reality." She added that "the resolution does not focus on the names [of "spoilers"] in particular. Instead, it focuses the activities that could be called obstructive. Based on these activities, the spoiler is named."

The Security Council resolution calls for the formation of a committee to monitor and penalize – by means such as travel bans and asset freezes – those who would seek to obstruct the political transition in Yemen.

The General People's Congress (GPC) initially objected to the resolution. However, after consultation among party leaders it was decided that the party should consent to the resolution to avoid being accused of blocking the political process. The GPC ruled Yemen from its establishment in 1981 until it was ousted in the 2011 uprising.

Mohammed Al-Twaiti, a member

of the Standing Committee of the GPC, said the party saw the resolution as a means of facilitating direct foreign interference including possible military intervention. However, after GPC members held a meeting at the party's headquarters the decision to accept the resolution was reached, he added.

Although the leadership of the GPC reluctantly said yes to the resolution, this does not mean that all GPC members and supporters are pleased with it. GPC member Mohammed Yahia said the resolution is a green light for foreign interference in Yemen's internal affairs. "The security council makes this resolution, intending to militarily interfere in Yemen in order to achieve its interests. We should seriously counter this resolution," said Yahia.

The Islah Party described the resolution as a stick which the UN would use to punish anyone attempting to block the implementation of the NDC outcomes. Abu Bakr Mohammed, a leading Islahi member, said the resolution would act as a deterrent to groups employing armed force outside of the state's control.

Mohammed went on to say that "this resolution guarantees Yemenis the return of money looted by the former regime... It also stipulates punishments, the least of which is a travel ban. This serves the interests of Yemen."

However, Abdulla Ali Ahmed, an Islah Party member of parliament, criticized the resolution for what he said was its acceptance of foreign interference in Yemeni affairs. He made it clear that this was his personal opinion which did not



Ali Al-Bukhaiti



Nadia Abdulla

reflect his party's standpoint.

"Accepting this resolution is humiliating to all Yemenis and is an indicator of our failure, inability and subjection. It is shameful to accept this resolution," Ali said.

Nadia Abdulla, a former NDC member representing the youth, said "I clearly upheld the SC resolution because there is no alternative that can stop the spoilers who use the wealth of the country to create instability and insecurity."

She added that as long as militant groups were spread across many areas of the country such a resolution was the right thing at the right time.

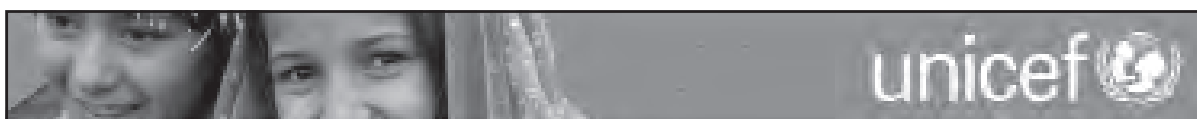
Ali Al-Bukhaiti, a former spokesperson of the Houthis at the NDC, asked rhetorically if people expected "that the permanent member states will send forces to protect electricity lines and prevent road-blocks, kidnapping and assassinations in Yemen?" He described

those who upheld the resolution as "stupid" and ignorant of the consequences of such a resolution.

"This resolution authorizes the Security Council to militarily intervene under any justification. This will make Yemen an occupied country whose sovereignty is violated," said Al-Bukhaiti.

Muad Rajeh, a Yemeni writer, said that the prospect of international intervention is the sole solution that would deter the political powers and militant groups from wreaking havoc and undermining stability.

"The armed Southern Movement and the Houthis are currently the main block to the implementation of the NDC outcomes. The government has attempted many times to reach solutions in order to stop the violence which they create, but in vain. There is no way to crack down on them except by this resolution," said Rajeh.



ANNOUNCEMENT OF CANCELLATION

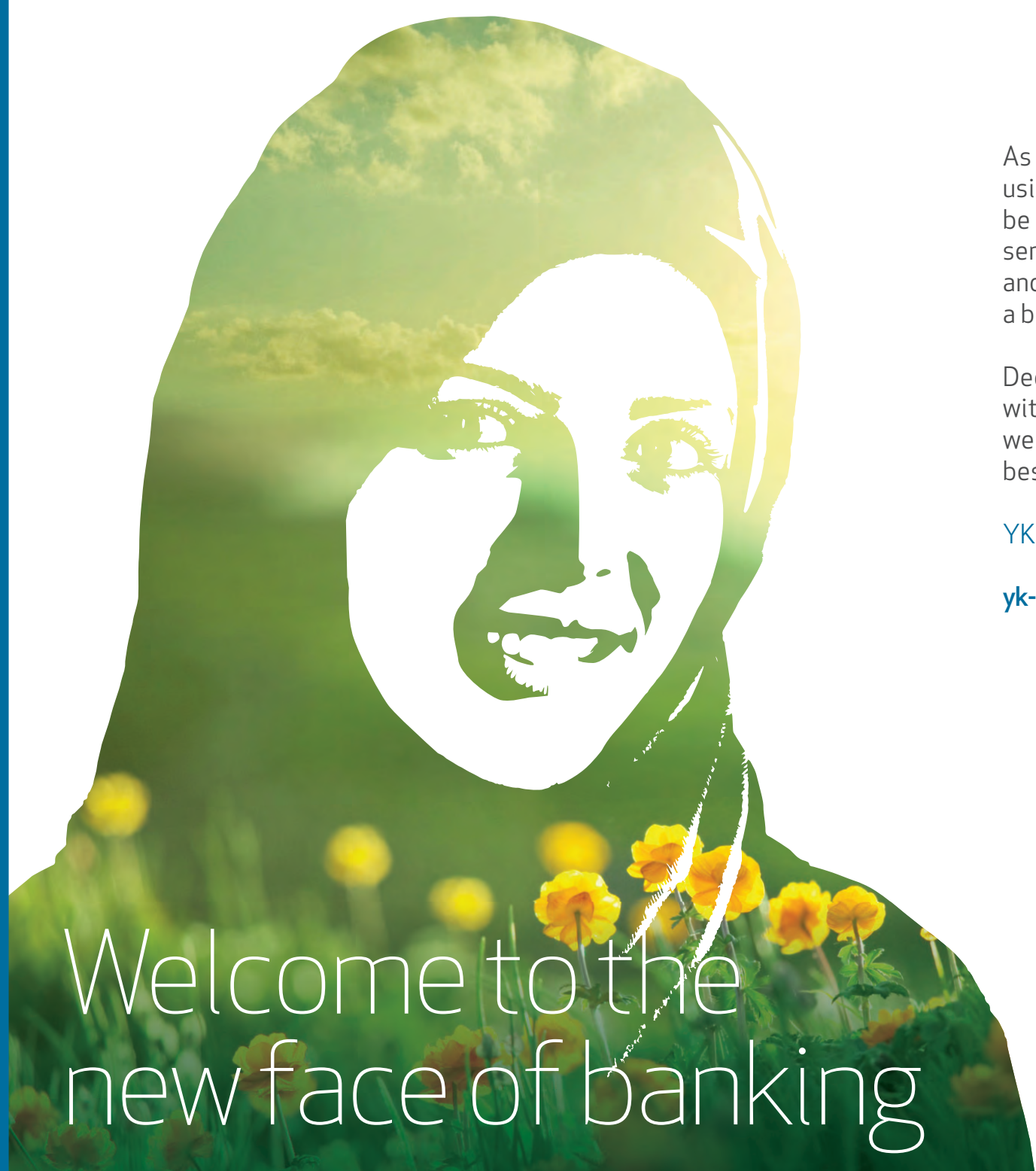
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) would like to announce that vacancy # 04/2014, for the post of Procurement Assistant GS6, Sana'a published on 27 January, 2014 has been cancelled.

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Children's Parliament concludes plenary, takes aim at country's recruitment of child soldiers

Story and photos by
Ali Abulohoom

While describing the plight of children in Yemen during the Children's Parliament, 17-year-old Sara Aziz burst into tears.

"The children of Hodeida lack basic services such as education, health and potable water. Many children are sexually abused, and some are sent to neighboring countries to work, rather than to schools [to study]," she said.

The tears came during the concluding plenary of the seventh round of Yemen's Children's Parliament held on Feb. 27 in Sana'a. Sara Aziz, 17, head of the parliament, suddenly burst into tears.

Aziz, the head of the Parliament, said she then shouted at a Yemeni government representative.

"What is your role? Why do you get paid when you just sit behind your desks and do nothing?"

The Children's Parliament was established in 2000 as a joint initiative of the Ministry of Human Rights, the Ministry of Education, the Supreme Commission on Motherhood and Childhood, and under the umbrella of the Democratic School, a non-governmental organization. The Children's Parliament has proven an effective way to make children aware of their rights and engage them in the political decision-making process. Its members are children between the ages of 10 and 18.

The concluding plenary was held in the presence of Abdulatif Al-Hamdani, a representative of the Supreme Commission on Motherhood and Childhood, which is the state-run authority that develops strategies and devises plans to address childhood issues in Yemen.

The Children's Parliament members had visited Hodeida to observe the situation of children in the governorate.

Al-Hamdani admitted that the government has fallen short in carrying out their jobs.

"We are supposed to set plans for children nationwide and protect them from any crimes but unfortunately the Cabinet does not provide us with [an outreach] budget. We only have a [bare-bones] operational budget."

During the concluding plenary, the 75 members of the parliament reviewed and discussed reports about children's welfare nationwide, and worked to develop recommendations for dealing with the problems that children face, particularly those that have arisen following the 2011 revolution.

Aziz talked about a UNICEF report released last year which indicated that 58 percent of children in Yemen are vulnerable to human rights violations, including military recruitment and physical abuse.

Aziz said that Prime Minister Mohammed Salem Basendwa attended the second session of the Parliament that took place in early 2013, praising the Parliament and pledging to compel the attendance of any government ministers they might summon for questioning.

However, this year, the ministers whose presence they had requested sent representatives instead of coming in person because of the current security situation, they said.

Aziz said that the Children's Parliament had managed to sign a cooperation agreement with the Ministry of Defense to reduce the number of child soldiers who have been recruited since 2011.

Ahmed Obaid, a military analyst and former deputy head of monitoring in the personnel department of the Defense Ministry, said that the official number of registered child soldiers employed by the Defense Ministry is 20,000, in addition to the children recruited privately by warring parties in Yemen from 2011 through 2013. He said that these children are between 14 and 17 years of age.

The concluding plenary focused mainly on the National Dialogue Conference (NDC) outcomes and the role of the Children's Parliament in regard to the outcomes. It also provided recommendations for the constitutional drafting process.

Edrees Al-Mashari, a tenth-grade student from Al-Beida'a and second deputy head of the Children's Parliament, said they are lucky because their concluding plenary took place after the NDC concluding plenary.

"As the Children's Parliament, we had to react to the NDC's outcomes, particularly in terms of drafting the new constitution. So, we came up with a set of final recommendations that convey the dreams of Yemen's children. They will be presented to the government and the committee assigned to draft the new constitution, whose members will discuss them and include the ones that are appropriate," Al-Mashari said.

Al-Mashari said that they had come up with a set of vital resolutions concerning Yemen's children. Their resolutions include demobilizing child soldiers, enrolling them in schools, and providing them with food and medical care. These priorities will be presented directly to President Hadi for urgent implementation.

The Children's Parliament is comprised of representatives from different social groups so that their varied opinions, problems and ambitions can be aired, Edrees said. "We have representatives of the marginalized people [Muhamasheen], Jews, child laborers, the visually-impaired, people with special needs, and orphans," said Al-Mashari.

Reem Abdulla, a ninth-grade student and a representative of the Muhamasheen said the Children's Parliament has shown her that a different future is possible.

"I used to believe that dark-skinned people were simply destined to have a lower social status than other people, but since joining the Parliament I have realized that all people are equal before the law and are entitled—without any discrimination—to equal protection before the law. I will utilize this [knowledge] to defend the rights of the Muhamasheen," she said.



"What is your role? Why do you get paid when you just sit behind your desks and do nothing?" asked an emotional member of the Children's Parliament to a government representative.

Abdulah Al-Riami is deaf and mute and is in the eleventh-grade.

"I wasn't able to voice my opinion when I first joined the parliament because I'm deaf and mute, but now—after two years of meetings, training courses and interrogation sessions for representatives—I feel that I have grown personally by about 20 years and now I have the ability to say what I think and give a voice to the people I represent."

Saeed Yusuf and his sister, children of the Jewish rabbi in Yemen, Yahia Yusuf, joined the

Children's Parliament to represent Yemen's Jews.

"In general, our father wants us to stay at home in order to avoid harassment, but he allows us to attend the parliamentary sessions because Parliament members treat us well. Regarding the constitution, I recommended providing protection to those who have different ideologies, or who adopt different beliefs...I wanted to stress the importance of this."

Membership in the Children's Parliament is not limited to Yemenis

alone. A main requirement is that members must represent children in Yemen who need help. Faiz Fuad is a Somali citizen and a member of the Parliament who represents Somali refugees in Yemen.

"At the Parliament, I feel like I'm a Yemeni citizen. I represent the refugees and contribute to the development of recommendations in terms of vital services such as education, health care, housing, and food for refugee children—regardless of their nationality."

Jamal Al-Shami, the head of

the Democratic School, said that the Children's parliament was established to voice children's issues and draft bills for a better future for children, adding that the government ratified the parliament and allocated a special hall for its meetings.

"Yemen's Children's Parliament is the only [one] worldwide that has lasted this long—14 years—and has held seven elections, because it is supported by all concerned bodies both inside and outside of Yemen," Al-Shami said.

"Unlike Yemen's Children's Parliament, which is managed by civil society organizations, some Arab countries established children's parliaments but they were controlled by the government," Al-Shami said.

Elections for the Children's Parliament are held in schools nationwide every two years. One to three children are selected from each governorate based on the population density of each governorate, for a total participation of between 50 and 80 children.

Transportation, room and board are all provided for the students who travel to Sana'a from other governorates.

The Democratic School was established in 2000 and is funded by partners UNICEF, Save the Children, the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (Foundation), and the European Union. Since its inception, the Democratic School has touched the lives of 30,000 children from across the country, raising awareness of their rights and instilling democratic values.

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**إسادة
19**

Imams raise concern over politicized preaching

Khalid Al-Karimi

On a white wall inside the Zuhra Mosque on Sana'a's busy Hadda Street, a notice has been posted warning against the delivery of lectures following prayers. Set in bold type, the paper clearly states "the delivery of lectures that have not been preapproved by the imam is strictly prohibited. We do not want any fighting [in the mosque]."

Some in the religious establishment are wary of imams who they claim have been delivering inflammatory political speeches cloaked in religion.

In the wake of the turbulence of the 2011 uprising, some imams began to use mosques as a platform to promote particular ideologies and to mobilize people to take action. This misuse of the mosques' pulpits has sparked countless altercations among worshippers, according to the imams who spoke to the Yemen Times. In response, some imams in the capital have placed restrictions on speech in order to exert a measure of control over the content delivered by outside imams.

"I posted that notice in order to stop outside imams from delivering speeches without my approval," said Taha Mohammed Saleh, the imam of Zuhra mosque.

Saleh strongly disapproves of employing religion to serve politics.

Eyeing the notice he posted, Saleh said "mosques are holy places meant to remind people of religion and of God. However, some imams have partisan and political

roots and display a preference for their political parties over their religion."

Yemen is a religiously conservative society where religious institutions provide a potentially effective avenue for influencing public thought. Many religious leaders are concerned by the use of religious discourse to further political agendas.

Imam Saleh is clearly displeased with what he sees as the actions of self-declared imams lacking knowledge of Islamic Sharia. "If someone just memorizes a few verses of the holy Quran and a few of the Hadiths, that does not mean he has become an imam. I have no issues with well-respected imams who are knowledgeable about religion and who honestly want to remind people of God," he said.

Before he posted the notice, he said that quarrels would periodically erupt among worshippers with different political views. "We should think before we speak. This is a policy that imams should always follow."

Ideological differences among religious groups in Yemen did not emerge for the first time in 2011. However, they surfaced with renewed vigor following the revolution.

In July of 2013, fighting erupted between Houthis and Islah Party affiliates during Al-Tarweeh prayers at Al-Teyseer Mosque in Sana'a, leaving more than a dozen worshippers injured. It was reported that the dispute was sparked over the use of loudspeakers during the prayer. The Houthis wanted them turned off and the Islahs ob-

jected. Tarweeh prayer is a night optional prayer performed after Isha prayer every night of Ramadan.

Saleh Mohammed Al-Khwali, the imam of the mosque in the Shumaila neighborhood, said that outside imams would visit and deliver sermons without any need for special permission prior to 2011. However, since then, the situation has become more complicated.

Political partisanship has created conflicts among worshippers. "Now outside imams must coordinate with a mosque's imam to get permission to deliver a sermon. We established this procedure because the intentions of some speakers are to politicize the mosques and create animosity," said Al-Khwali.

Recalling what happened last year during Ramadan, Al-Khwali said, "I was treated disrespectfully by a group affiliated with the Houthis because I spoke out about what I believed was right. The group also beat up a worshipper who stood up to them."

Ahmed Al-Milahi, a former imam of Ali Bin Abi Talib Mosque in the Maeen district of Sana'a, weighed up the issue of banning speeches in mosques. "If this step is taken merely to keep people from talking, it is contrary to God's will. There has to be a strong reason for limiting freedom of speech in the mosques. Not allowing people to speak in mosques is a sin," said Al-Milahi.

However, he claimed that regulating the content of speeches in mosques is very important for certain reasons, for example when a speaker is not deeply knowledge-

able about religion. Such people, Al-Milahi said, should not be allowed to lecture on religious topics.

"There was a man who would come and deliver speeches after prayers. I counted about 17 fabricated Hadiths, or sayings of the Prophet Mohammed. I had to stop him. What he was doing was completely unacceptable."

Even so, he said that some imams intentionally suppress legitimate

speakers in an attempt to control their mosques. "This [pushy behavior] creates conflicts and drives a wedge between people."

During the era of the Prophet Mohammed, according to Al-Milahi, the mosque was used for meetings, debates and even preparing soldiers to go to war. "So if anyone puts limits on the role of the mosque without having a legitimate reason, God will punish them," he said.



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OUR OPINION

Women's Day is over...welcome to 364 days for men

International Women's Day was March 8. On March 9, I received an image via Whatsapp with a cartoon of a caveman who is saying, "International Women's Day is over, welcome to 364 days for men."

The image was meant as a joke and it was sent to me from a friend in Beirut, so there was nothing personal about Yemen. But to me, it really struck a chord because I realized that Women's Day is simply useless.

I think all international "days" are a waste of time. Arbor day, Valentine's Day, every national day, every revolution day, Noxious Weed Protection Day and the Color Purple Day...most such occasions are commercial ploys to sell products and stage events that would not otherwise have had a market.

It is true that many of these "days" have noble roots. Who can argue the value of mothers (Mother's Day) or the importance of fighting HIV/AIDS (World AIDS Day)? But for most of these events, we engage in a publicity stunt, paste concerned expressions on our faces, or congratulate each other on our achievements—and then go back to our daily routines.

I don't mean to underestimate the value of women's issues. I believe women's issues are extremely important and must be taken quite seriously. Yemeni women, for example, have a very long road to walk before being able to legitimately celebrate.

Development indicators for Yemeni women paint a rather gloomy picture. In terms of health, every day eight Yemeni women die due to inadequate medical care during childbirth. When it comes to education, only three in ten Yemeni women graduate from high school and more than 50 percent of women are illiterate. When it comes to economy, women make up only 20 percent of the official labor force. This means that Yemen continues to lose out on the potential contributions of 30 percent of its human resources. This is a missed opportunity in terms of reducing poverty.

No wonder we continually rank at the bottom of gender gap indices.

It is true that Yemeni women's greatest achievement is in our public and political participation. Our most amazing recent accomplishment came at the National Dialogue Conference (NDC), where we established a 30 percent quota for women in governmental posts that carry real decision-making power.

However—and as usual—there is a difference between talking the talk and walking the walk. Although we congratulate ourselves on this milestone integration of women into politics, there was only one woman among nine in the presidency of the NDC, and less than 20 percent sat on its Consensus Committee. Even after the NDC concluded, women's participation was less than 17 percent on the Regions Defining Committee and now, there are only four women on the 17-member Constitutional Drafting Committee (23.5 percent). Even after our 30 percent "win." On paper.

Interim President Hadi should have appointed at least five women to this very important committee.

If this trend continues, then even our one achievement for the future of Yemeni women in the political sphere is rendered moot. It is mere lip service; ink blots on paper.

While we celebrate International Women's Day, it is important to remember that Yemeni women deserve more than one day per year when we are remembered and celebrated as the other half of society, as nurturers, as significant contributors to the economy, and so on. We don't want to be forgotten the other 364 days of the year.

Nadia Al-Sakkaf

A new Arab Cold War: Saudi Arabia Pressures Qatar on Muslim Brotherhood, American think tanks

Juan Cole
juancole.com
First published March 10

Saudi Arabia's listing of the Muslim Brotherhood as a terrorist organization and the withdrawal of the Saudi, United Arab Emirates, and Bahrain ambassadors from Qatar signal a big geopolitical realignment in the Middle East.

Qatar is the Red Prince of the Middle East. Despite being fabulously wealthy because of its natural gas exports, its foreign policy has been populist, showing a special fondness for the Muslim Brotherhood and a dislike of the Middle East's secular authoritarian dictators, including Egypt's Hosni Mubarak. Qatar has used its ties to the Muslim Brotherhood as a form of soft power in places like Tunisia, Libya, Syria and Egypt. Its popular Aljazeera Arabic news channel cheered on the 2011 popular upheavals in the region.

Saudi Arabia's octogenarian princes were furious about the fall of Mubarak in Egypt. Although the Saudi official religious ideology is the hard line Wahhabi sect, the Saudi state likes order and stability more than it likes political Islam. The Saudis have therefore often been entirely happy to back secular leaders, as long as they could help keep the masses quiet. Moreover, Wahhabis are often political quietists and those in Saudi Arabia fully support the monarchy. The Saudis view the Muslim Brotherhood, which took over Egypt for a year from June 30 2012 to July 3, 2013, as a political cult, as a set of secretive revolutionary cells attempting to take over one country after another, rather as Stalinist cells took over Hungary and Czechoslovakia after the end of WW II. I.e., the Saudi leadership now looks at the Brotherhood rather as the American Right wing looked at Communism in the McCarthy period. And it looks at Qatar as the patron of the Brotherhood.

Saudi Arabia has another big anxiety, which is Khomeinism or Shiite Political Islam, the ideology of the Iranian state. Some 12 percent of

Saudis are Shiite and they live over the kingdom's petroleum. The Saudis think Iran is behind the restiveness of Bahrain's majority Shiites (it isn't), and sent troops into Bahrain to shore up the Sunni monarchy. The Saudis are also upset that Iraq has now been taken over by pro-Iranian Shiites (the majority there). And they are disturbed by Bashar al-Assad's alliance with Iran, as well as the role of Lebanon's Hizbullah as foot soldiers for Iran in the Levant.

I suspect that from the point of view of a Wahhabi absolute monarchy, the Muslim Brotherhood and Khomeinist Shiism look very similar. Both are populist movements. Both advocate a republic and are hostile to monarchy. Both challenge the Establishment in the Middle East. So from King Abdullah's point of view, the opening toward Iran conducted by Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood leader Muhammad Morsi last year was confirmation that the two forms of political Islam were operating in tandem.

The Saudis are furious with the Obama administration. It reluctantly acquiesced in the fall of Mubarak and ultimately endorsed the Arab Spring. It accommodated to the Muslim Brotherhood government in Egypt. And now it is trying to make an opening to Iran.

Last year this time, the momentum in the region was with Qatar, the Muslim Brotherhood and Iran. The Brotherhood had taken Egypt and was becoming more powerful in Libya. A religious center-right party was ruling Tunisia (though it wasn't a Muslim Brotherhood affiliate). Qatar and Aljazeera were widely influential. At the same time, Iran's alliance with Syria and Hizbullah was keeping the latter in place and powerful against Saudi allies like Saad Hariri in Lebanon and Sunni Salafis in Syria. Saudi Arabia appeared to be in a vise.

Then the Saudis caught a break, with the Rebellion (Tamarrud) movement in Egypt and the military take-over there last July 3. The Saudis, the Kuwaitis and the United Arab Emirates offered Gen. Abdel Fattah al-Sisi \$24 Billion, with a promise of much more, to stabilize the

Egyptian economy, which is in free fall. In December, the military-appointed government in Egypt declared the Muslim Brotherhood a terrorist organization after the bombing of a provincial state security building, even though it wasn't proven that the Brotherhood was behind it.

The Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood has gone from ruling Egypt to being a proscribed terrorist organization in just a year. Now the Saudis have followed suit in forbidding it. While the fringes of the Brotherhood had violent people in them, the leadership gave up violence in a 1970s bargain with then Egyptian president Anwar El Sadat, and had largely adhered to their pledge. To now declare a major form of Arab political Islam to be simple terrorism is Arab McCarthyism (or Arab Bushism, since W. liked that kind of approach, and the 'war on terror' language in the Arab world is being lifted directly from Bush).

Saudi Arabia is determined to crush its ideological rival, the Brotherhood. Hence the pressure on Qatar and the threat to cut the peninsula off from food and other imports by land. The Saudis also allegedly want Qatar to close branches of the Brookings Institution and the Rand Corp in Doha. This demand is not just a manifestation of a new Saudi anti-Americanism but is likely aimed at particular scholars at those institutions who lean toward the Muslim Brotherhood.

Saudi Arabia isn't supporting any particular alternative to the Brotherhood and pro-Iranian states and movements. Its counter-moves are pragmatic and ad hoc. Secular nationalists will do, like Gen. al-Sisi. They just have to be against populist political Islam, whether of the Brotherhood or the Shiite variety. (How messy this pragmatism can be is shown by the Egyptian military's new preference for the Baathist government of al-Assad in Syria, in contrast to Saudi policy). The Saudis themselves might have supported the Baathists in Damascus (and did, in the 1970s and 1980s) except that the latter made an alliance with Iran. Now Riyadh wants al-Assad overthrown,

but wants to be sure that the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood, with its Qatari ties, isn't the organization that does the overthrowing.

That the Brotherhood can effectively be eliminated seems to me unlikely. My guess is that some 20% of Egyptians support it at least vaguely, even now. The harsh moves taken by Egypt and Saudi Arabia to criminalize Brotherhood membership will push some fringe elements into violence, risking the development of a long-term low-intensity guerrilla war or terrorist struggle. In short, the region could be Iraqized.

Saudi Arabia is also now bruising the induction of Egypt into the Gulf Cooperation Council, presumably with the proviso that Egypt will be allowed to extract enormous strategic rent from the GCC. In return, Egypt will protect the very wealthy but very weak GCC from Iran and Shiite Iraq, and from the Brotherhood.

Anonymous Egyptian sources I saw quoted in the Egyptian press when I was there last week were speculating that if al-Sisi becomes president, he can bring in \$240 billion in investments and aid from the Gulf. Given the high price of gasoline for several years, Saudi Arabia has a rumored \$850 billion in reserves, and other Gulf states like Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates are also flush. That would be a trillion and a half Egyptian pounds. Al-Sisi said Thursday in an interview that Egypt needed a government budget of a trillion pounds in order to back on the right path economically and to re-do infrastructure.

Iraq is pushing back on the Shiite side, accusing Saudi Arabia of being behind Sunni terrorism in Iraq, as a way of keeping the Shiite government weak. Turkey doesn't agree with the ban on the Brotherhood, though it is allied with the Saudis on Syria.

So this is the Saudi grand strategy: prop up anti-Brotherhood Egyptian nationalism, isolate Qatar, overthrow Bashar al-Assad (Iraqis maintain that a. If it all worked, the Saudi Kingdom would have uprooted populist political Islam from the region. It isn't likely to work.

The way forward for gender equality

Twenty years after the Cairo population conference, there is still much to achieve for women's empowerment.

Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka
Dr Babatunde Osotimehin
aljazeera.com
First published March 8

We all remember when the headlines, nearly half a century ago, warned of an imminent population explosion. Governments were scrambling to find the solution and their answer was to limit population growth, especially in the developing world. In 1994, we found what then seemed like an unlikely answer to dealing with changing population dynamics: women.

The International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), held in Cairo in 1994, made news when a number of women groups were able to successfully convince governments of this proposition and shift the debate from population control to women's empowerment. They were successful because they argued that an investment in women's health and education would lead to economic development.

And they were right. During the past 20 years, fertility rates have generally declined as women's rights

and opportunities have improved. The just-released ICPD Beyond 2014 Global Report notes that high fertility rates of 4 children or more per woman are now confined to just 45 of the world's poorest nations, down from 81 nations in the period 1990-1995. These latest statistics suggest that progress has been made, but that more work is needed.

The ICPD report confirms that in most parts of the world today, sexual and reproductive health services have improved significantly, fewer women are dying while giving birth, and more women have access to education and jobs. Much of this has been achieved through the interventions of governments and their partners, including international agencies such as the United Nations, global philanthropic foundations and other non-governmental organisations.

But if so much progress has been made, why are so many women still struggling to realise their full human potential? A key reason is the stubborn persistence of poverty and gender inequality.

There is not a single nation on earth where women enjoy economic and political power equal to men. But meaningful progress in many nations

has empowered a new generation of women who are exercising greater control over their social, economic and reproductive lives. Unfortunately, however, such progress toward gender equality is not universal. In the last two decades, religious and political divisions have grown wider, both between and within nations, with the human rights of and autonomy of women and girls a frequent touchstone of ideological differences. Sadly, women, and especially adolescent girls, have often paid the biggest price in these culture wars.

Today, one in three women worldwide reports having experienced physical and/or sexual abuse. A recent (2013) UN multi-country study on men and violence in Asia found that nearly half of the 10,000 men interviewed reported using physical and/or sexual violence against a female partner. And nearly a quarter of the men interviewed admitted raping a woman or girl.

Also contributing to gender inequality is the indefensible tolerance for child marriage in a number of societies and cultures. In 41 nations, more than 30 per cent of girls marry before 18, and in most cases, these girls will miss opportunities for education and personal growth that would open

doors for them in both society and the workforce.

As the new ICPD report makes clear, a nation's development potential is, in many ways, directly linked to the opportunities it offers to its poorest and most marginalised people, especially its women and girls. Nations that stumble on issues of gender equality are more likely to fall behind their neighbours in global development.

The challenge for the next 20 years, then, is clear. Nations committed to economic growth must put outdated prejudices and cultural preconceptions about the role of women behind them and embrace gender equality in both law and custom. In the final analysis, affording equal rights and offering equal opportunities to women is not just the right thing to do, it's also the smart thing to do as the experience of the past two decades has shown.

Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka is United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women.

The views expressed in this article are the author's own and do not necessarily reflect Al Jazeera's editorial policy.

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رؤيتنا

للإعلام دور كبير ومهم في الدعوة للتغيير السلمي فهو ركيزة من ركائز التغيير نحو الأفضل، ولكن الصراعات السياسية اعتادت أن تفرض أجندات على المؤسسات الإعلامية مما يخلق أثراً سلبياً واضحاً على طابع استقلال الإعلام وأثر بشكل مباشر على معايير أساسية مثل الحيادية والموضوعية.

وهنا تسعى "إذاعة يمن تايمز" لتعزز من دور مؤسساتها الإعلامية المستقلة لتصل إلى كل من لا تصل إليه عبر صحيفتها لتكون من الإذاعات الرائدة في اليمن التي جعلت من الحياد والاستقلال سياسة خاصة لها مواصلة بذلك سمعتها الحسنة التي استطاعت أن تفرضاها من خلال سياسة الصحيفة على الرغم من عدم وجود قوانين منظمة لعمل الإذاعات الخاصة في اليمن.

أهدافنا

يعمل "راديو يمن تايمز" على طرح وجهات نظر جديدة وموضوعات هامة للجمهور اليمني ويعايش قضايا المواطنين الذين يجيدون اللغة الانجليزية والعربية والأميين بشكل مباشر.

ويسعى أيضاً لإيجاد فضاءات جديدة لحرية الرأي والتعبير في اليمن عامة وفي العاصمة صنعاء خاصة ليكون راديو يمن تايمز «صوت من لا صوت لهم» وليعزز مفاهيم الديمقراطية وحرية الرأي والتعبير من خلال دوراته البرمجية المتنوعة التي تعالج قضايا المرأة والطفل وحقوق الإنسان وتدافع عن الحريات بواسطة إعلامها الهادف وبرامجها المتعددة والتي تخاطب بشفافية وموضوعية كل مستمعيها وتتسم بروح شبابية وإيجابية واضحة لكل من يتابعها سواء سكان صنعاء أو اليمن.

التأسيس

"راديو يمن تايمز" هو أول إذاعة مجتمعية في صنعاء، حيث بدأ العمل في هذا المشروع في بداية 2012، والذي كان تأسيسه من أهم رؤى مؤسس يمن تايمز الراحل، البروفيسور عبد العزيز السقاف. ولذلك سعت الأستاذة / نادية السقاف رئيس تحرير صحيفة يمن تايمز إلى تحقيق فكرة المؤسس الراحل، من خلال تأسيس راديو يمن تايمز بمشاركة الكثير من المتطوعين والداعمين ومن آمن بأهمية الإعلام المستقل ودور الإذاعات المجتمعية.

وتعد إذاعة يمن تايمز جزء من مشروع أصواتنا، وهو برنامج دولي يدعم تأسيس الإذاعات المجتمعية في دول الربيع العربي. حيث يتمحور هذا البرنامج حول العرب الذين سعوا لأن تكون أصواتهم المستقلة مسموعة، بعيداً عن الاحتكارات الحكومية، أو التجارية، بحيث تكون نقطة انطلاق جديدة لكل من يريد الخوض في تجربة الإذاعات المجتمعية المستقلة.

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ADVERTORIAL

Emirates Launches New Service to Boston Airline's eighth US gateway connects passengers and cargo to New England hub

Emirates, a global connector of people and places, launched its daily, non-stop service between Dubai and Boston today. Boston becomes the airline's eighth US destination and the 142th on its global network which links key tourism and trading destinations across six continents.

The inaugural flight EK237 departed from Terminal 3, Dubai International at 09:45 hours, carrying a delegation of senior airline executives including: Tim Clark, President, Emirates Airline; Adel Al Redha, Emirates' Executive Vice President & Chief Operations Officer; Hubert Frach, Emirates' Divisional Senior Vice President Commercial Operations West; and Hiran Perera, Emirates' Senior Vice President Cargo Planning and Freighters.

Also travelling on the inaugural flight was a VIP delegation from the UAE including: His Excellency Abdulrahman Saif Al Ghurair, Chairman, Dubai Chamber; His Excellency Mohammad Khamis Bin Harib Al Muhairi, Director General, The National Council of Tourism and Antiquities; Rahul Agarwal, Manager of Recruiting, McKinsey & Co; Chadi Chahine, Chief Financial Officer, Smith Nephew.

Emirates will operate daily flights between the two cities with a Boeing 777-200LR aircraft in a three-class configuration, offering eight seats in First Class, 42 in Business Class and 216 in Economy Class.

"We are extremely upbeat about our new Boston service. From the moment we first announced plans to connect Massachusetts to our global network, we have received a strong and positive response from travellers and our business customers - not only in the US, but



Emirates' Boeing 777-200LR in-flight

More than 50 Boston-based companies operate in the UAE, and in excess of 150 companies have operations throughout Central Asia. Considered a centre for education and research, the region around Boston has more than 270 colleges and universities, and each year as many as 44,000 foreign students call New England home during the school term.

One of the oldest cities in North America, Boston is also a popular tourist destination, with

an abundance of cultural and historical landmarks.

"Boston is one of the leading U.S. destinations for foreign and domestic tourists, and currently opens its doors to nearly 12 million visitors a year. Today we are happy to extend a special welcome to those travelling with Emirates," John Barros, Chief of Economic Development for the City of Boston, said. "Emirates' expansion into Boston underscores this city's stature as a global cultural and business hub and we foresee many benefits to this new partnership."

Beginning today, EK237 will depart Dubai at 09:45 and arrive in Boston at 15:15. The return flight, EK238, will take off from Boston at 23:15 and land in Dubai at 19:30 the next day.

Emirates began passenger services to America in 2004 with the launch of daily non-stop flights from New York JFK to Dubai, and now offers daily flights to Washington, Houston, Dallas, Seattle, San Francisco, and Los Angeles.

For further information about Emirates and to book flights to Boston, please visit www.emirates.com or visit your preferred travel agent.

ADVERTORIAL

5 STARS CRICKET CLUB wins Yemen Cricket League – Edition IV

Man of the match, Raja Anwar scored 26 n.o under pressure after being 12 for 4 in 5 overs and took the team over the line with 8 balls to spare.



5 Stars Cricket Club lifting YCL-IV Trophy.



Raja Anwar, man of the match.

The 5 Stars Cricket Club (Pakistani) won its 1st YCL champion title when it defeated Matica Cricket club (Indian) by 4 wickets at the Sabeen Cricket Stadium on Feb. 28.

Makita Cricket Club (MCC) won the coin toss and elected to bat first. But, due to some fast bowling by 5 Stars bowlers they easily lost their early wickets and scored 48 for 3 in 10 overs. Only Irfan held one end and scored 20 runs and the whole team was bundled out for 79 in 15 overs after electing to bat first. Ameen butt of 5 Stars Cricket Club took 1 wicket for just 4 runs in 3 overs. Kamal Asghar took 3 wickets for 14 runs in 3 overs.

Chasing a small target of 80 runs in 15 overs, it was a rough start to the tournament by 5 Stars—where a win was little more than a dream. MCC bowled excellently, putting more pressure on 5 Stars, who were down as much as 12 for 4 in 5 overs.

5 Stars Cricket Club captain Raja Anwar then held one end together as he scored an unbeaten 26 to guide his team home in the 14th over. Anwar, who faced 28 balls and hit three 4's, was well assisted by Ameen butt, who hit 2 glorious 6's and helped his team to come out on top. Israa contributed 14 runs in a 49-runs partnership for the sixed wicket with captain to help his team recover after 5 Stars was reduced to 29 for 5 after 7 overs.

Man of the match: 5 Stars Cricket

Club captain Raja Anwar was the man of the match for his unbeaten 26 runs.

Player of the Tournament: 5 Stars Cricket Club all-rounder Ameen Butt scored 160 runs (avg. 53.33) and took 11 wickets (avg. 3.90)

Best Bowler of the Tournament: Makita Cricket Club fast bowler Usman declared as best bowler of the tournament, as he took 18 wickets with an average of 4.05.

Best batsman of the tournament: Makita cricket Club Irfan declared best batsman of the tournament with 165 runs with an average of 27.50.

Best Umpire of the tournament: Team Sana'a Challenger Mubbashir was declared best umpire of the tournament.

Chief guest, Mr. Zahid Hussain, general manager of United Bank Limited said that "The tournament has been fantastic, we are so grateful to the YCL Committee, the organizers and every person involved in this tournament for such a great experience. He also infancies that corporate sector should support such tournaments as this the only entertainment available for the communities representing Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh in Yemen.

Sabafon announced that, for the second time, it is going to host and sponsor a full tournament of cricket, start on April 1.

Mr. Mushtaq Ahmed, the manager of 5 Stars Cricket Club, said that "It has

been a great event for everyone and I'm sure this will help the Yemenis also to start playing cricket." He congratulated both teams for their efforts during the tournament and felt satisfied that 5 Stars finally has turn the table and lifted the cup for the first time. He also expresses that 5 Stars will carry on this talent in future tournaments.

Mr. Nadeem Iqbal, the coach of 5 Stars said "This is the first time that 5 Stars has won the YCL event having reached all previous finals of three YCL editions, but couldn't put it over the line. But it happened in 4th edition due to continuous hard work of the players and it's amazing to be part of such a side.

The next YCL-V will be staged soon after completion of Sabafone Cup-II and details will be announced soon.

Scores in brief:

- Final – 5 Stars (Pakistani) beat MCC (Indian) by four wickets.
- MCC 79 all out, 15 overs (Irfan 20 & Shiraz 13; ameen butt 4/1 & Kamal 14/3)
- 5 Stars 83-6, 13.4 overs (Raja Anwar 26 not out, Ameen Butt 15, Israa 14, Usman 8/2)

Special Thanks to Mr. Arshad Ali Bajwa for his excellent contribution towards cricket in Yemen and for arranging such tournaments.



A Year of D

A special report by the National Dialogue Secretariat

Before it all began

A dialogue was not our ultimate goal. Instead a dialogue was a means to achieve a higher goal. This goal was for a new Yemen that recognized and apologized for the tragedies of the past in order to provide a conducive environment for reconciliatory talks. Meticulous preparation and diligent organization were necessary to ensure everyone was rebuilding the nation on equal grounds. Yemenis have proven that the time spent in the preparation process for the conference was well worth it. It was time worth spending. Yemen's thrust into the NDC was a process that could have taken years to prepare, instead the nation had to do it in a truncated time-frame.

The starting point for the dialogue process was the establishment of a liaison committee on May 6, 2012. The aim of the committee was to contact the various political constituencies to prepare for the all-inclusive NDC. Following the establishment of the conference, Yemen began to prepare logistically for the conference with the creation of the Technical Preparatory Committee. The committee was tasked with the organizational preparations for the conference. The Technical Preparatory Committee was established on July 14, 2012. The composition of the committee was diverse and ensured representation of all influential political and social factions as an indication of Yemen's commitment to an inclusive conversation. For months, the committee held meeting and setup sub-committees to formulate the framework for a comprehensive and sincere dialogue. The committee focused on their goal of laying the foundation for a dialogue that would produce meaningful outcomes for the people of Yemen. Guiding principles that framed the conference were formulated, issues to be discussed were

identified, the number of seats to be allotted to various political and social stakeholders was defined, procedures and decision-making mechanisms were all established. Despite the committee taking six months longer than was originally expected to prepare for the confer-

ence, it established a solid foundation for the NDC to begin.

The starting point

The day the conference started, March 18, was picked to coincide with the second anniversary of a

day called the Friday of Dignity. For many, this day symbolized the changing of the tide in Yemen's history when unarmed protestors were killed while demonstrating as part of the nation's anti-government uprising. As the conference began, selected NDC delegates began to trickle in from all over the country, carrying with them concerns from their governorates and ambitions of their fellow citizens. Above all, they came driven by the desire to address the most challenging crises facing the country.

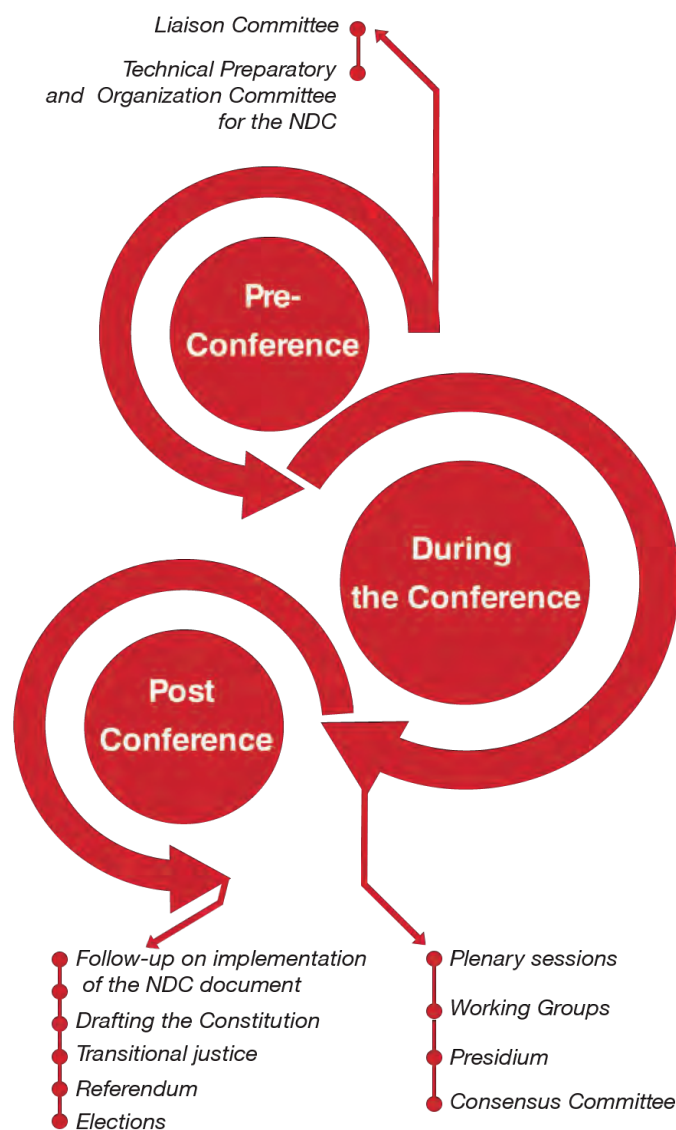
It was clear from the dialogue's opening session that the conference was on its way to becoming something new and unique. For one of the first times in history, political and social factions that would have never sat next to each other were now a mere few inches apart. Representatives came from a broad spectrum of regions, walks of life

knew their objective was to create the framework that would enable individuals in society to determine their futures and fulfill their ambitions. This was all stated in the oath participants took on the second day of the conference. It was a historic moment, when participants lined up to declare their commitment to God, the nation and the people. Members of the conference's Presidium, the governing body of the NDC, were introduced to the general assembly. The conference's Discipline and Standards Committee was also created. The NDC kicked off with speeches from various social and political parties.

Following the opening sessions, the floor was opened up for discussion. Each political and social component was given five minutes to voice initial concerns and aspirations at the conference. Every participating member was then given

times calmly, sometimes very heated, and sometimes in a very constructive manner. For the vast majority of the time, everyone showed a commitment and responsibility to one another, especially when dealing with the most decisive discussions. Throughout the dialogue, the chairman of the NDC and president of Yemen, Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi kept a close watch on the proceedings and meetings. He frequently contacted the working groups and prominent leaders of the major political stakeholders to stay abreast to the conference's proceedings. The president offered praise when he saw progress and encouraged the conference to remain focused on its goals.

At this point, the Secretariat's role was to provide technical support for the working groups. In coordination with governmental and non-governmental agencies supporting



and orientations. The interlacing of the diversity was a mosaic that reflected how unique this event was going to be in Yemen's history. To further the distinctive character of the NDC, a strong regional and international supportive presence reflected a global commitment to a peaceful transition of power in the country. This same scenario did not play out for other embattled nations in the region.

To a large extent, the opening session for the conference was ceremonial, but the participating dialogue members were well aware of the challenges before them. They felt the gravity of this national burden despite the clarity of the target. They

two minutes for a speech. Visions, ideas, demands and slogans were all presented in an uninterrupted fashion, provided the speech did not break any of the conference's rules as outlined in the NDC's official procedures' manual. The podium was accessible to everyone, even those whose voices had long been suppressed. For the first time, many were able to freely voice their grievances as the conference gave them an official forum to do so. The NDC's First Plenary session, which lasted for two weeks, established the tone for the conference. The conference eliminated barriers to the freedom of speech. Members found an audience of attentive fellow countrymen and women who exhibited unmatched tolerance and understanding. It became clear the dialogue was playing a role in creating a new culture for conflict management.

As the conference moved along, nine working groups were established in line with the conference's rules and procedures. Shortly after, the heads of the working groups were elected. As the conference's logistics began to fall into place, it became clear that a new Yemen was emerging. As evidence, independent and newly-emerging political and social forces won the majority of the seats for the heads of the working groups. Three women and two youth were selected as chairs of five of the working groups. Ten women and a number of independent youth and civil society representatives won additional leadership roles in the working groups. The internal election process went ahead without obstacles except for a dispute in the Sa'adah Issue Working Group about the group's elected leader. As a compromise, the selection of the working group's chair was delayed until later in the conference.

At the heart of the matter

Following the creation of the working groups and the elections of their leaders, NDC members began to develop work plans, implementation schemes and time tables. Members soon began actually discussing many substantial issues their groups had been tasked with. Discussions moved along, some-

the dialogue, it secured local and international expertise to offer advice when necessary. The Secretariat followed the working groups' proceedings and made them accessible to the public to promote conference transparency.

This allowed for a continuous link between citizens and the dialogue. The almost daily protests organized by members of the conference were always made public, reinforcing this link. The NDC monitored events outside the venue. It became a mailbox through which popular demands were delivered to the relevant bodies.

Building bridges

The strongest manifestation of the connection between the dialogue and citizens were visible in the conference's field visits. Members broke away from the confines of the conference's halls to the spaces that are often overlooked. Armed with questions and concerns, they met with ministers, governors, local council members and central departments in 18 of the nation's governorates. They exhibited patience as they heard people air their demands. They also met with representatives of civil society, syndicates and unions. This activity, which had no precedence in Yemen or in the region, set an example for the kind of engagement that public participation can lead to. It demonstrated that a dialogue is not confined to its members, but is an open and accessible exercise for all segments of society and the nation. Via the field visits, everyone was allowed to participate and contribute to the formulation of the conference's outcomes.

The field visits were not easy. They were not only complicated in terms of organization and logistics, but they also proved to be quite risky in some parts of the country. In one such case, a helicopter that transported NDC members to the Al-Baydha area for a field visit was shot at. However, the complications and risks were a test of the tenacity of the conference's participants. Members demonstrated determination and resilience in the face of adversity to forge ahead with their national mission.

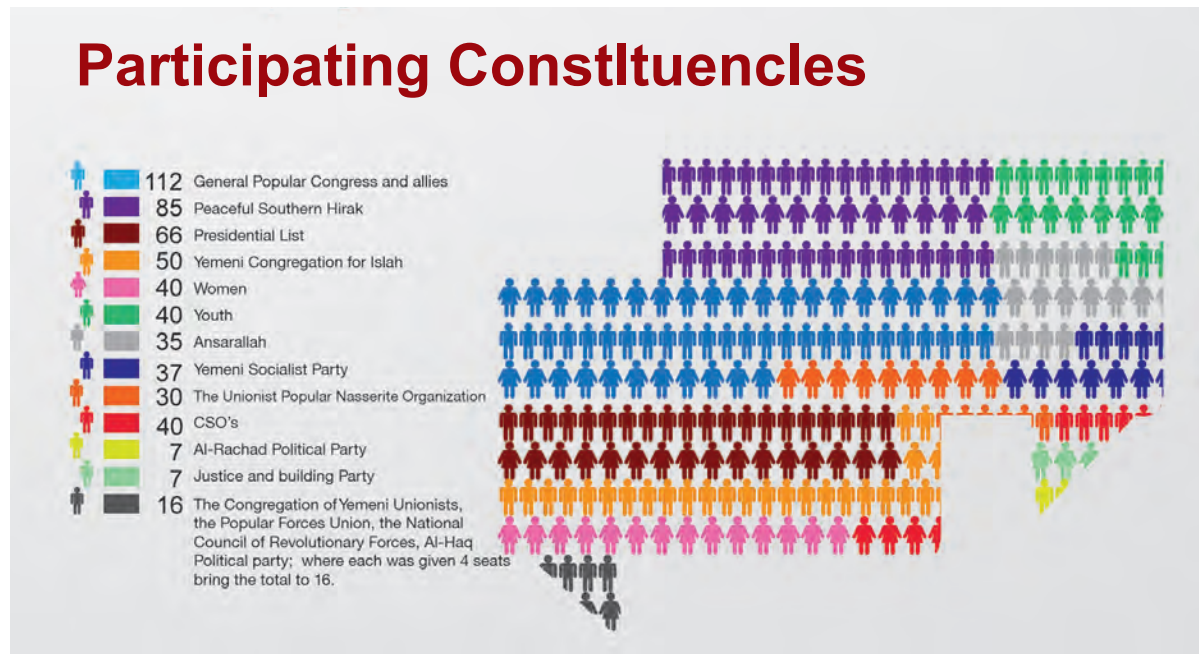
«الدولة الاتحادية بداية جديدة تضمن معالجة أخطاء وصراعات الماضي وإعادة الاعتبار للجنوب على أسس الشراكة والمواطنة المتساوية»



تمثل الدولة الاتحادية الجديدة قطيعة كاملة مع تاريخ الصراعات والإضطهاد وإساءة استخدام السلطة والتحكم في الثروة... مع اعتراف كامل بالأخطاء المؤلمة والمظالم التي ارتكبت في الجنوب.

من مخرجات مؤتمر الحوار الوطني

Dialogue



Steady steps

The unmatched determination demonstrated by members of the NDC was tested as the working groups submitted their reports to the Midterm Plenary on 8 June, 2013. The majority of the working groups submitted their interim reports to the Consensus Committee, which had been established only few days earlier to deal with issues that were in a deadlock and bring about compromise.

The committee studied the reports and endorsed the content. Following review by the Consensus Committee, the recommended outcomes included in the reports were presented to the plenary for deliberation. Yemenis all over the country followed the deliberations live on TV for a month. After the intense, month-long discussions, many of the recommended outcomes were fully endorsed by the conference, again restoring faith in the NDC's proceedings.

The success of the Midterm Plenary and consensus around the decisions created an additional incentive for an exciting resumption of deliberations. Members continued their discussions, some at accelerated rates, and others with less fervor, but members pushed through the month of Ramadan. The conference continued meeting through the holy, fasting month and finally took a break right before the Eid-ul-Fitr holiday.

Following the holiday, the conference resumed, knowing that it was in its critical final stages. Members continued to confront core issues, develop future visions and come up with comprehensive and fair solutions. The question of how to deal

with grievances in the South, posed the biggest but not unexpected challenge. There was a general consensus in the conference about the roots of the problem, which many thought would contribute to a serious and responsible discussion regarding ways to address both social and political unrest in the South. However, extraordinary issues, that often had nothing to do with the dialogue, led the Southern constituency, known as HIRAK, to temporarily suspend their participation in the talks.

A rosy return

HIRAK's boycott lasted three weeks. The conference's Presidium and the United Nation's envoy to Yemen, Jamal Benomar, both worked to create an environment at the conference that would invite the HIRAK members back. Their actions finally enticed the HIRAK to return to the conference. The group's return led to one of the most emotional moments of the conference. As a group, HIRAK offered roses to the conference's other members as a sign of their willingness to continue in the ongoing national discussions. There were many tears of happiness shed on that day.

However, such a joyous occasion did not mask the escalating challenges that were continuing to accompany progress. It was clear that as the conference drew to a close, emotions were running high. However, this didn't prevent efforts that were pushing the dialogue towards a successful consensus and closing. Some of these efforts were reflected in the establishment of the Southern Issue Sub-committee on 10 September, 2013. This group was created to discuss and formulate a

document on proposed solutions and guarantees for the South.

The NDC was slated to conclude on 18 September, 2013, six months after it began. However, the importance of finding solutions to grievances in the South and other major issues gave reason to extend the conference's discussions.

Pushing through

In spite of the challenges and delays, five working groups managed to wrap up their work and submit their final reports to the Consensus Committee. These included: the Army and Security, the Development, the Rights and Freedoms, the Independent Entities and the Good Governance Working Groups. The Sa'adah and Transitional Justice Working Groups had almost finished their reports, but they received a systematic objection from a major political party. The solution to the Southern Issue continued to be the biggest unknown at the dialogue. This was reflected in the work of the State Building Working Group. The State Building Working Group's report could not be completed until the Southern Issue Working Group's report was finished.

The number of reports finalized and close to being finished allowed for the launch of the third and final plenary of the conference. The Final Plenary took place on 8 October, 2013. However, the proceeding did not go as planned. Some political parties boycotted, and others objected to the way the conference was concluding.

Some of the emerging problems were dealt with by the conference's Presidium. The Consensus Committee also looked for solutions to

disagreements.

It was clear the conference would have to be extended in order to support the progress that was being made in the face of a very difficult situation. Such difficulties eventually led to the intervention of the international community via its envoy to Yemen.

Finally a breakthrough took place. A solution for the Southern Issue was outlined in document and signed off on by representatives from all major political and social parties.

The only remaining thing stopping the Conference from closing was the final NDC outcome document and the guarantees document for the roadmap.

Following deliberations and discussions between various groups on the content of the document, a final draft was reached paving the way for the 21 January 2014 successful ending of the NDC with, an unprecedented consensus in Yemen that lent credibility to the dream of building a modern civic state in the country.

The NDC Secretariat

When the Secretariat initiated its work in January 2013, it had only few weeks to organize the biggest and longest political gathering in the history of Yemen. It had to do this in spite of the fact that it was severely understaffed and underfunded. Initially the task seemed impossible.

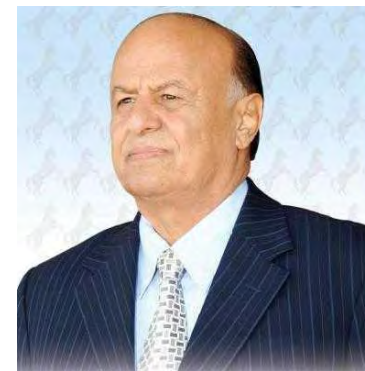
The Secretariat's Secretary General, two deputies and handful of staff had to organize this major national event in less than two months. To carry out this mandate, there was a need to think outside the box. There was strong tendency to invest in the enthusiasm of Yemeni youth who stood for change and had fervent hopes. In order to assemble the Secretariat's national staff, it selected enthusiastic male and female youth who were passionate about the country's future. Compensation was of little significance to them as no contracts were available at that time.

A race against Time

Up until the first few days before the conference began, the Secretariat, together with the Office of the Special Advisor to the United Nations Secretary-General, continued their efforts with the international donors to convince them to speed up the transfer of the pledges they had made to NDC's trust fund.

Meanwhile, the Secretariat started actual preparation and organization of work for the conference. It completed its staffing and devel-

“You have astonished the world by prioritizing the spirit of patriotism over tiny differences. You have set a remarkable example by managing your political differences in a civilized and uniquely responsible manner. You reached consensual agreements that couldn't have been reached in the past. This was possible because you freed yourself from fear and narrow-minded calculations and shattered long-standing barriers. [This is all] thanks to the youth revolution and the launch of a project that enacted change with wide national implications.”



Abdu-Rabbu Mansour Hadi
President of the Republic, Chairman of the NDC

oped detailed plans based on assessments of expected needs for the NDC.

An urgent media plan was quickly developed and implemented within one week that aimed to introduce the NDC and the issues it would tackle to the public. This represented the conference's first success story, although many others would follow. Within only few days, the streets and squares of cities in the nation's 21 governorates were already covered in the NDC logo. Television and radio stations began promoting the conference and introducing the issues it would address. Three days before the opening of the conference, the NDC's media center was officially ready to receive journalists and provide media services, thanks to the generous support of the International Office of Migration. The NDC's website and social networking platforms were established and ready to bring the Conference to the outside world. Literature on the conference was prepared, printed and distributed to partner organizations.

The Secretariat demonstrated its ability to work and deliver under tight deadlines. Within a day and a half, it had to deal with the registration and transportation of around 350 NDC participants whose names were delayed until the issuance of the presidential decree nominating the NDC delegates.

Quick response

With so much at stake, the Secretariat remained apprehensive for the first two days of the NDC: the day of the official opening ceremony and the day of the first plenary. However, the organization was outstanding and reflected a high sense of professionalism and initiative of the young Secretariat team.

The creativity and flexibility demonstrated by the Secretariat was further seen in its quick response to create new units to cope with such a large event. A new unit was established for delegates affairs to respond to dialogue participants' requests and needs. Two documentation units were also established; one in charge of preparing reports and minutes for meetings while the other one was entrusted with the full video-taping of all the sessions.

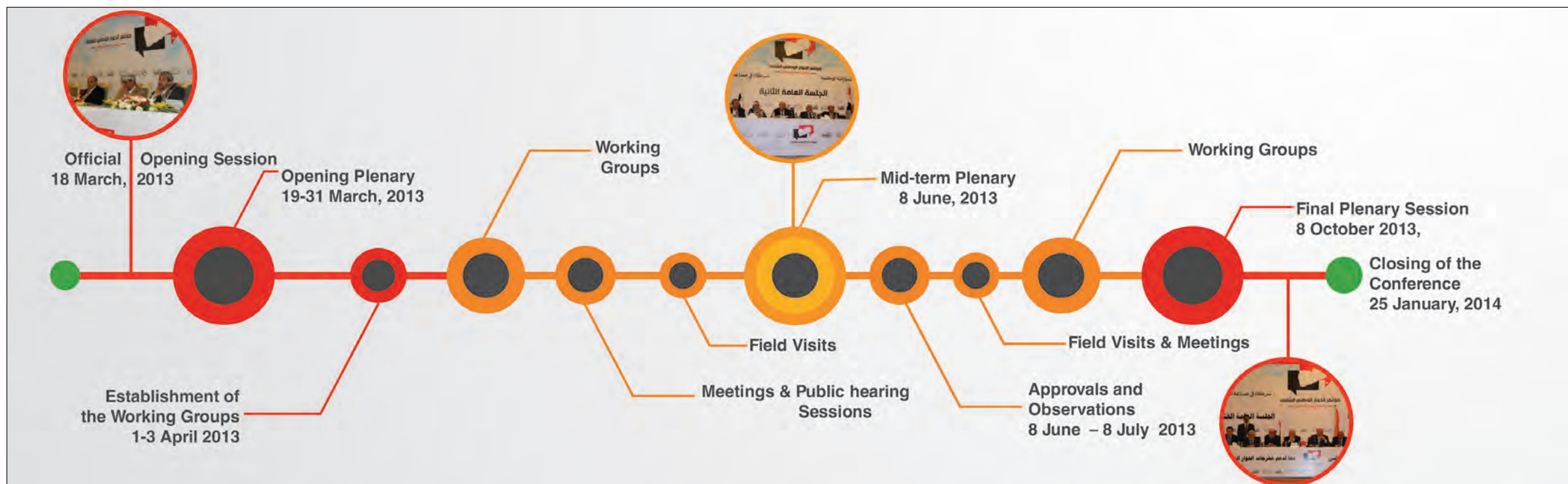
On to the next chapter

With the astonishing success that has been secured with the closing of the NDC, a major burden on the nation has been removed. One can now breathe easily, and more than any other time in the past, the dream of building a new Yemen has become more than ever. However, the dream can only be complete if we continue with the same passion, commitment and patriotism to achieve success of future entitlements. First and foremost is the drafting and adoption of the federal constitution.

In the next phase, the NDC will be represented by its valuable outcomes that have fed into the process of change and enriched it. The next phase should take-up the process in and steer the course to implementation of such outcomes. These outcomes should be reflected in the constitution, the legislative framework for the nation and the policies and plans of the Consensus Committee which would be transformed into a national body.

The citizens should remain the watchful eye to ensure that such outcomes are implemented; for they are the rightful owners thereof.

Dialogue has ended, but the journey to change and build the new Yemen has just begun.





Presidential delegation aims to end fighting over Taiz water source

Ali Ibrahim Al-Moshki

A presidential delegation tasked by President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi met on Tuesday with two tribal groups involved in a 17-year-old water dispute.

The conflict has so far claimed the lives of 17 people of the Qurada and Al-Marzooch tribes, two warring parties in Sabr district in Taiz, while a further 100 people have been injured since 1997, according to Jameel Al-Samed, a local leader from Sabr who spoke with the Yemen Times over the phone.

The delegation includes Sultan Al-Atwani, a presidential advisor, and Abduljabar Hayel, a prominent businessman, in addition to tribal leader Sheikh Abdulqader Al-Junaid.

The delegation arrived in Taiz on Tuesday and commenced meetings with the governor of Taiz, Shawqi Hayel, local military and security leaders, and other prominent local figures, according to a statement by Al-Junaid published in the state-run Al-Thawra Daily Newspaper.

Al-Junaid added that the delegation will work in coordination with the local authority to resolve the dispute.

Al-Samed said that both parties claim ownership of the water springs and the case is still pending in the courts.

"The delegation held meetings on Tuesday and Wednesday with ten persons from each party and are optimistic that these meetings will end clashes," said Al-Samed.

There are about 8,000 people living in Qurada and a further 800 in Al-Marzooch, but the water source is no longer sufficient for the com-



The 17-year-old dispute over water resource has claimed the lives of 17 people.

bined population after a water dam built by the government was blown up in 2001.

Six people were killed from both sides this year but calm returned when the delegation arrived on Tuesday.

Najeeb Qahtan, a lawyer at the National Organization for Defending Rights and Freedoms, known as HOOD, told the Yemen Times that the issue was partly resolved 17 years ago by a tribal agreement, which broke down in 2012 when Shawqi Hayel was appointed governor of Taiz.

"Some parties who want to derail the political transition in Yemen and want to fail the governor have ignited the dispute again," said Qahtan.

Many delegations were formed in the past by the government and the governor to resolve the dispute. The latest one was formed last week by the president and is composed of 30 leaders who are originally from Taiz.

Both parties agreed on Wednes-

day to remove barricades, but as of yet this has not been done.

Many areas in Yemen witness similar disputes over water sources because of water scarcity. Most of these disputes take place in Taiz, Dhamar, Sana'a, Al-Jawf, Ibb and Amran. Water-related disputes have led to dozens of deaths and many more injuries, according to the Ministry of Water and Environment.

"Yemen suffers from water crises because of low rainfall and because underground water is being depleted through random digging for water, which results in further water scarcity, which in turn leads to increased fighting over water in many governorates," said Abdul-salam Razaz, Minister of Water and Environment.

"The ministry has no authority to end fighting over water or even random digging for water because this is the job of the security services, and security is lacking in Yemen at the moment," he said.

هل أنتِ...؟

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منتدى اليمن 21
Yemen 21 Forum

In Libya and Yemen, tribes with flags

Rami G. Khouri
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In Libya and Yemen, two Arab countries that are experiencing complicated, slow-motion transitions to more representative and accountable rule, we can clearly see a

structural issue of troubled statehood that may also bedevil other Arab countries.

Both countries face a problem of strong regional or tribal identities that never fully accepted their inclusion in the independent Arab countries that came into being in the 20th century. As Libya and Yemen move ahead with plans to draft

new national constitutions, they remain threatened by destabilizing regional tensions, including armed clashes and threats by certain regions or tribal groups to break away from the state.

In Libya, the problem has reached the point where rebel groups who seized control of oil export facilities in the eastern part of the coun-

try and have started shipping oil have now triggered an assault on them by the government in Tripoli. The government said Monday that the Libyan navy had seized one tanker that was leaving the rebel-controlled port of Sidra with \$36 million worth of crude oil destined for international sales outside the control of the Libyan National Oil

Company.

Rebels have seized three ports and partly control a fourth in the eastern region of the country, which had accounted for the export of some 700,000 barrels of oil per day. They have ignored government threats to bomb any ship that attempts to export oil without NOC approval. The Libyan parliament in Tripoli Monday also ordered the formation of a military force made up of regular soldiers and allied armed groups from across the country that would liberate the ports within weeks.

The rebels seek political autonomy for eastern Libya and a share of oil revenues that previously had been managed by the central government. They have also said that they would view any attack on the tanker as "a declaration of war."

This is just the most dramatic example of the problems that Libya has experienced in keeping the country together since the overthrow of Moammar Gadhafi in 2011. Work continues on writing a new national constitution and having it ratified by popular ballot. However, as the oil export incidents show, it will be rough going to achieve a consensus over this from Libyans in the three principal regions of Tripolitania in the west, Cyrenaica in the east and Fezzan in the south.

Yemen suffers a similar problem of strong differences in tribal and regional identities that have always plagued the country and instigated bouts of civil war and clashes over decades. After President Ali Abdullah Saleh was removed from office in 2012 in a deal brokered by neighboring Saudi Arabia, Yemen entered into a transitional process. Its toughest challenge has been agreeing to a constitution whose power-sharing formula satisfied all major segments of the population. After a year of negotiations and dialogue, it was agreed that the constitution would reflect a decentralized system of governance comprising six regions, four in the former north

and two in the former south.

While this major issue continues to be debated and finalized, fighting persists among Shiite Houthi militants and Sunni tribes in Al-Jawf province, and in the last four days, over 40 people have been killed. These sorts of clashes have been going on for nearly a decade in the northern regions of Yemen, especially in Saada governorate along the Saudi border, but are now occurring closer to the capital Sanaa. Some analysts believe the fighting reflects the desire by pro-Houthi militants to tighten their grip on the north before a new decentralized federal system is implemented.

As in most such tensions and clashes within individual Arab countries, the situation has been complicated by the involvement of other Arab and foreign countries that have used their material, financial, political or military power to help their allies and defeat their foes. This divide in recent years has often coincided with Shiite-Sunni tensions, which also coincide with Iranian-Saudi or other foreign rivalries.

At the heart of this problem in Libya and Yemen is the frailty of some Arab states that were never created or validated by their own citizens, but rather by the decisions of foreign colonial powers or victorious local tribal warlords – and after independence were ruled by autocrats. The constitutional processes through which Libya and Yemen are still trying to navigate are the best antidote to this troubling legacy of frail states held together by dictatorial central authorities – usually comprising a family with hundreds of thousands of armed guards, as Libya and Yemen were under their former rulers.

Rami G. Khouri is published twice weekly by THE DAILY STAR. He can be followed on Twitter @RamiKhouri.

«قوانيننا مبنية على الإسلام وأصحاب الاختصاص هم المشرعون»

مش من جاء عمل فتوى»



الشريعة الإسلامية مصدر التشريع، والاجتهاد في تقنين أحكام الشريعة مكفول حصراً للسلطة التشريعية.

من مخرجات مؤتمر الحوار الوطني



The false promise of a piecemeal approach to a WMD-free Middle East

By Bilal Y. Saab

Almost two decades have passed since the Middle East Resolution—agreed by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty—called to rid the region of all weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Yet the Middle East remains a heavily militarised theatre of conflict awash with such capabilities, and is still very far from the goal of disarmament.

There is no single reason why regional states have failed to create a WMD-free zone. A mixture of politics, prestige and security considerations have conspired to delay indefinitely one of the world's most prized security goals, and international non-proliferation diplomacy's most urgent priority.

The intention behind the proposed zone was, and still is, to induce security co-operation by addressing head-on the worst fear of regional states: the effects of WMD. The potential elimination of these most lethal weapons, it is assumed, would drastically assuage threat perceptions and thus encourage further self-restraint and co-operation.

It is hard to argue with this idea given its tremendous potential benefits. Yet the reason it has not seen the light of day is that it is an impractical shortcut in dealing with such a complex issue. In a nutshell, it pursues a top-down approach to a problem that can only be solved from the bottom up. It asks too much, too soon, of regional parties who do not yet trust each other and who exist in a dangerous and fluid environment. Disarmament, especially under the present regional circumstances characterised by heightened security concerns and hardened security thinking, is seen by some regional states as pure fantasy. For them, even mere talk of disarmament is a non-starter.

Over the years, frustration with

the lack of progress on the WMD-free zone has prompted non-proliferation analysts to think hard about more creative ways to break the diplomatic logjam. Some proposed disaggregating the concept and focusing, in the near term, on the less ambitious goal of a chemical-weapons-free zone, a biological-weapons-free zone or both, if possible. Others counselled, in the spirit of pragmatic gradualism, the adoption of conventional arms-control measures as a way of building confidence between rivals. Such steps include the removal of—or imposition of limitations on—delivery systems, including medium- and long-range missiles.

Given Syria's current path toward chemical disarmament, if there were ever a time to push aggressively for the elimination of all chemical weapons in the Middle East—and, as such, the fulfilment of one crucial pillar of the WMD-free zone—this is it. In September 2013, Syria was forced to accept the dismantlement of its highly sophisticated chemical-weapons programme after using sarin against its people in Damascus in August—an attack which reportedly killed hundreds, resulting in international outrage and the US-Russian-brokered deal to destroy the weapons.

Because of the civil conflict and the size of the regime's chemical stockpiles, the full process of de-commissioning will be complex, slow and dangerous. It is being conducted in stages, according to an internationally agreed timetable, with the financial, logistical and technical assistance of more than a dozen countries. This process involves, first, weapons being transferred by Russian armoured vehicles from twelve storage sites (mainly in the suburbs of Damascus) to the Russian-secured port of Latakia, tracked by US satellites and Chinese surveillance cameras. At the port, a Danish-Norwegian flotilla is then tasked with transferring the chemicals to international waters,

accompanied by naval escorts provided by Russia, China, Denmark, Norway and the UK. The plans then see the stockpile being transported to the port of Gioia Tauro in southern Italy, loaded onto the US vessel Cape Ray, and taken back into international waters to be destroyed by hydrolysis in a titanium tank onboard.

This process is now underway, with the first batch of Syria's chemicals having been safely loaded onto a Danish cargo ship in the port of Latakia in January. Several previous deadlines established in line with the internationally agreed timetable have, however, been missed. Ambassador Ahmet Uzumcu, director-general of the UN's Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), the body responsible for the operation, recently said that the process had been delayed due to security concerns, but expressed confidence that the entire stockpile would be destroyed by the new deadline of 30 June. Meanwhile, on 10 February, the OPCW announced that a third shipment of chemicals had been removed from the country. Yet, ultimately, the completion of the job depends on the continued co-operation of the Syrian government and all international actors involved, as well as the ability to secure vehicles travelling overland to Latakia.

The precedent set by this operation is promising. Chemical weapons have inflicted tremendous suffering on the people of the Middle East—in northern Yemen in the 1960s, Iran in the 1980s, Iraq in 1988 and, most recently and tragically, in Syria. It would certainly be a net strategic and moral gain for Middle Eastern countries to outlaw these horrific weapons once and for all. If Egypt and Israel can be incentivised, as well as pressured, to join the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC)—which Egypt has not signed, and which Israel has signed but not yet ratified—the Middle East stands a chance of freeing itself of

the worst poisons on the planet. (Iran ratified the CWC in 1997.) The same goes for biological weapons. Although there is no evidence of the usage of such weapons in the Middle East, poisonous biological agents are believed to exist in Israeli and Egyptian military arsenals and research labs. Unlike Israel, Egypt is a signatory to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC), but Cairo has yet to ratify it. Iran, by contrast, signed the BTWC in April 1972 and ratified it the following year.

If only things were so simple. No matter how historic the opportunity provided by Syria, it appears that this will not be enough to fundamentally change the political, psychological and security calculi of regional states regarding WMD disarmament. This is because a pick-and-mix diplomatic approach to a WMD-free zone, regardless of its creativity, will not do the trick. This is not to argue against the formulation of new ways to break the diplomatic stalemate. Perhaps with luck, a truly imaginative political means of solving this intricate challenge might yet emerge. But the point is that, before worrying about style and approach, it is first necessary to understand the basic hurdles: namely the reasons for regional positions and their long-standing persistence. It is not enough to know each country's preferences and interests; it is necessary to appreciate more fully why they have consistently refused to compromise.

It is essential to assess, for example, why Egypt and Israel have not given up their chemical- and biological-weapons programmes despite the huge security benefits to be gained from doing so. In the case of Egypt, it must be asked what good sarin gas brings the country, other than some imagined diplomatic leverage, and why Cairo has held onto its stockpiles since the First World War. As for Israel, it must be asked why the country has snubbed both the CWC and BTWC in light of the

arguably minimal difference this would make, in relative terms, to its security given the country's possession, unlike any other in the region, of nuclear weapons.

On 25–26 November 2013, Israeli and Arab diplomats met in Switzerland to resume preliminary talks on the WMD-free zone and, specifically, to reach consensus on items and modalities relating to the postponed conference on a WMD-free zone originally due to take place in Finland in 2012. However, as if nothing had changed since the early 1990s, Arab and Israeli envoys could not agree which weapons should be discussed. Israel has always favoured a holistic approach and recommended the inclusion of conventional arms and their delivery systems. Arab states have been adamant in their desire to focus solely on unconventional arsenals.

It is pointless to assign blame for the continued deadlock to one party or to argue which side has a more convincing argument. None has a slam-dunk case, and if all regional parties maintain their positions, the goal of zero WMD will continue to be eluded. The only way to break the cycle is for regional parties to agree to discuss—openly, comprehensively and consistently—their hopes and fears in a collective fashion. This does not have to occur through a major regional security conference, although the benefits of this would be considerable. A series of smaller, more private meetings may do the job. When disagreements are as profound as they currently are, the nature of the venue is, arguably, secondary.

The primary goal is to correctly diagnose this multifaceted problem. All states should come prepared to leave no stone unturned in breaking down traditional barriers and dichotomies—such as conventional-versus-unconventional weapons and notions of 'peace first, arms control second'—that are based on faulty logic. Despite having battled in non-proliferation fora for over

twenty years, Arabs, Israelis and Iranians still misunderstand each others' positions and concerns. If this does not change, no progress will ever be made.

Yet it is also clear that the context has shifted dramatically since the arms-control and regional security talks of the 1990s. Most importantly, the issue no longer revolves around a political and legal feud between Egypt and Israel (though it persists to this day), and these countries no longer dominate non-proliferation and regional security talks. Instead, the rise of Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Qatar and Turkey will force non-proliferation diplomacy to take the views of these states into account as well; gone are the days when Egypt spoke for all Arabs. Then, of course, there is Iran, whose nuclear programme was not a major item of discussion two decades ago, but has now completely reshuffled the deck in terms of non-proliferation diplomacy. These emerging actors add an additional layer of complexity to discussions, which makes the task of understanding their interests and concerns even more important.

Such diplomatic and information-gathering discussions will obviously not suffice to create a Middle East free of WMD. Yet even if this goal is not achieved any time soon, such an exercise would hopefully accomplish one major task: namely the formulation of more accurate assessments of the real causes of the continued lack of progress and the real reasons for regional states' rigid positions. This is the toughest nut to crack. But if these murky issues can be clarified, further discussions around the optimal approach to a WMD-free zone in the Middle East are likely to be much more fruitful.

Bilal Y. Saab is senior fellow for Middle East security at the Brent Scowcroft Center on International Security at the Atlantic Council. Re-published with permission from the Atlantic Council.

Republic of Yemen
Ministry of Electricity and Energy
Public Electricity Corporation

SELECTION OF INSPECTION COMPANIES REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST PEC TENDER NO. 3 /2014

SELECTION OF INSPECTION COMPANIES
CONSULTANTS SERVICES
Expressions of Interest

The Public Electricity Corporation has made budgetary allocation of fund for Selection of Inspection Companies and intends to apply of the fund for the procurement of consultant's services.

The services include Inspection of Materials, Equipments, spare parts, substations, power stations... etc.

The Public Electricity Corporation 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 in accordance with the procedures set out in the High Tender Board's Manual for the procurement of Consultants Services.

Interested consultants may obtain further information at the address below from (09:00AM to13:00 PM)
Expression of interest must be delivered in a scaled envelope to the address below by at 11:00 a.m on 15/4/2014.

Republic of Yemen
Public Electricity Corporation
3rd Floor . Tenders Management
Al- Jiraf, Airport Street,
Sana'a P.O. Box No. 178
Tel: 967 1 328126
Fax: +967 1328150/or +967 1328151/+967 1329026
E.mail: pectender@yemen.net.ye
Website: www.pec.com.ye

Request For Expressions of Interest (EOI) No. 1/C/QCB/IWRM SB/WSSP

Country and Beneficiary: Republic of Yemen - Ministry of Water & Environment
National Water Resources Authority-Sana'a Branch (NWRA- SB)
Water Sector Support project (WSSP)

CONSULTING SERVICES: Geophysical & Hydrogeological Investigation of the Tawilah Group Aquifer System in the Southeastern and Southwestern Groundwater Zones of the Sana'a Basin

Grant No: (IDA Grant No.H449 RY).

The Government of Yemen has received a grant from the International Development Association (IDA) and intends to apply part of the proceeds of this grant to hire a qualified consulting firm under the contract for **Geophysical & Hydrogeological Investigation of the Tawilah Group Aquifer System in the Southeastern and Southwestern Groundwater Zones of the Sana'a Basin**

The main objective of the study is to assess the capacity of the aquifers storage 400 m below the surface in the southern, SW and SE parts of the Sana'a Basin. In particular, the services will include a preparation of a conceptual model of the volcanic aquifer and Tawilah Group Aquifer System that allows for a pre-feasibility assessment of its exploitation and provides the information gaps needed for a full feasibility assessment to establish well fields for future Sana'a City water supply. A series of studies, surveys, and data analysis will be conducted to build up the basic information for that conceptual model. This series includes analysis of available information, hydrogeological assessment, aquifer characterization, wells inventory, geophysical, hydrochemical, isotopic analysis, and ...etc. the time frame for the whole assignment is defined to be six months.

The Ministry of Water & Environment- Water Sector Support project(WSSP)-National Water Resources Authority-Sana'a Branch(NWRA- SB) -Project Management Unit(PMU) 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 in accordance with the procedures set out in the World Bank's *Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants by World Bank Borrowers*, January 2011

Interested consultants may obtain further information at the address below

Water Sector Support project (WSSP)
National Water Resources Authority-Sana'a Branch (NWRA- SB)
Project Management Unit (PMU)
Mujahed str. , behind Samsung Agent beginning of Arwa Rd.
Tel: 00 967 01 – 504377
Fax: 00 967 01 – 504021
E-mail: nwrasb@hotmail.com, saldubby@gmail.com, asas777046308@gmail.com

from 8:30 am to 14:30 pm during official working days (Sunday to Thursday).

Expressions of interest must be delivered to the address below by 11:00 am at March 27, 2014

National Water Resources Authority-Sana'a Branch (NWRA- SB)
Project Management Unit (PMU)
Mujahed str. , behind Samsung Agent beginning of Arwa Rd.
Tel: 00 967 01 – 504377
Fax: 00 967 01 – 504021
E-mail: nwrasb@hotmail.com, saldubby@gmail.com, asas777046308@gmail.com

YEMEN TIMES
Radio

FROM THE AIRWAVES



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

The program airs on Radio Yemen Times, 91.9 FM, on Wednesdays at 8 p.m. and is rebroadcast on Saturdays at 11 a.m.

المادة 19 هو برنامج توعوي يتحدث عن حق الفرد والمجتمع في حرية التعبير عن الرأي التي كفلتها كفاً كاملة بالنص الصريح بالمادة 19 في العهد الدولي للحقوق المدنية والسياسية، والإعلان العالمي لحقوق الإنسان والتي نصت على أنه لكل شخص الحق في حرية الرأي والتعبير، ويشمل هذا الحق حرية اعتناق الآراء وإداعتها بأي وسيلة كانت دون تقيد بالحدود الجغرافية.

هذا البرنامج يبث كل أربعاء الساعة 8 مساءً ويعاد يوم السبت الساعة 11 صباحاً على أثير راديو يمن تايمز 91,9.

Marginalized people and women rights

The Article 19 radio show this week discussed the marginalized people, their plight, and society's attitudes toward them. It also examined the plight of women and the state of women's rights in light of the recently celebrated International Women's Day. **Nadia Al-Kawkabani**, a writer, novelist and member of the Special Entities Team of the National Dialogue Conference (NDC) discussed these issues on the program.

Is there a societal taboo that keeps people from talking about the Muhamasheen? If so, why?

In the past, people [were well] integrated with each other and minorities were accepted by society. However, later on they were marginalized and shunned by other social groups.

Al-Kawkabani:

What is happening with the Jews and the marginalized is a matter of human rights. They want their rights and they want be valued [by society].

Are women also considered to be a marginalized group?

Yes...and this is supported by politics, religion and the tribal system.

Didn't those demanding rights of the Muhamasheen didn't represent them as requested?

Yes, the Muhamasheen were not included in the existing projects. They are marginalized but we call on them to gradually voice their opinion and demand their rights until the society recognize them.

Were the Jewish Muhamasheen isolated from the capital?

They were isolated, but this was initially by choice. It was later on that a political decree was issued to ban them from employment, from education and from attendance at weddings or any other social events because [of their religion]. Apathy is the reason behind their current situation.

Is there shame attached to women speaking in public?

This used to be true, but in the wake of the youth revolution, a woman's voice is no longer considered shameful because [woman are respected for having] contributed to creating change.

Why are there no intermarriages between the Sayyeds, [who claim to be descendants of the prophet Mohammed], and the tribes?

If they don't want [intermarriage], that is their business. It doesn't bother me. What is happening with the Jews and the marginalized is a matter of human rights. They want their rights and they want be valued [by society].

What are the topics that women are denied from speaking over?

Traditionally, girls have been trained not to socialize with males- teachers and classmates.

Why do the woman accept to be humiliated by her husband or parents?

This is her personal decision, and this happens for reasons. But if violence continues to increase, she should rethink about her situation and seek a solution from herself, the family and the society.

حقوق النساء والمهمشين

ناقش برنامج المادة 19 هذا الاسبوع موضوع المهمشين وسوء أوضاعهم ورأي المجتمع تجاههم، كما استعرض أيضاً وضع النساء وحقوقهن في ضوء اليوم العالمي للمرأة الذي تم الاحتفال به مؤخراً. استضافت الحلقة نادية الكوكباني كاتبة وروائية وعضو فريق استقلال الهيئات في مؤتمر الحوار الوطني.

لماذا لا يتم الزواج بين السادة والقبائل؟

الامر ليس فيه حق بل وجهة نظر ومعتقد طالما أنه لا يضرنني أو يؤذي الغير بوجهة نظرة وما يحدث مع اليهود والمهمشين، المطلوب ليس زواجهم ولكن يحق لهم المطالبة بحقوقهم وظهورهم على ارض المجتمع...

ما هي المواضيع التي لا يسمح للمرأة بالتحدث فيها؟

هي عبارة عن معتقد في تربية البنات حتى عند الامهات المتعلمات في تربية بناتهن بمنعها من

نادية الكوكباني:

يحق لهم [اليهود والمهمشين] المطالبة بحقوقهم وظهورهم على ارض المجتمع...

التعامل مع المدرس وزميل الدراسة وغرس الخوف في نفوسهم منذ الصغر

لماذا ترضى المرأة الذل والإهانة من زوجها أو والديها؟

هذه في البداية قرارها الشخصي ولها أسبابها ولكن ان زاد العنف فلا بد ان تعيد منظومة افكارها وتطلب الحل ومن ذاتها ومن ثم من اسرتها ومن ثم من المجتمع...

هل توجد في مجتمعنا ثقافة تعيب وتمنع التكلم عن المهمشين؟ ولماذا؟

كانت الفترات الماضية مدمجة وكان هناك قبول اجتماعي للأقليات ولكن تم تهميشها ووضع حدود بينها وبين المجتمع.

هل لا زالت المرأة ضمن الأقليات؟

نعم لا زالت من الأقليات وكان هناك تحالف ثلاثي على المرأة لكي تكون من ضمن الأقليات هم القبلي والديني والسياسي ...

لماذا من مثلوا المهمشين في المطالبة عن حقوقهم لم يمثلوهم بالشكل المطلوب؟

نعم تم نسيانهم تماماً من المشاريع التي هي موجودة. هم مهمشون في المجتمع ولكن ندعوهم إلى إعلاء أصواتهم والمطالبة بحقوقهم خطوة بخطوة إلى ان يعترف بهم المجتمع.

هل تم عزل فئة المهمشين اليهود من العاصمة؟

العزل الذي حصل لهم أولاً كان بسببهم ومن ثم بقرار سياسي لان لا يتم توظيفهم او تدريسهم او السماح لهم بحضور مناسبات الزواج أو أي فعاليات اجتماعية لأنهم يهود... والسبب في تدهور أوضاعهم في هذه الفترة هو غياب التشجيع.

هل لا زال صوت المرأة عوره حتى الان؟

كان في السابق ولكن بعد ثورة التغيير لم يعد صوتها عوره لأنها شاركت في التغيير...

YOUR TURN

Callers, Facebook followers and citizens on the street have their say:

CALLERS

❖ **Mohammed Naji**, one of the Muhamasheen: Discrimination exists throughout society and the reason for it is the Muhamasheen themselves. To end our marginalization, we should educate [ourselves] in order to be able to demand our rights.

❖ **Caller Yusuf Hamdi**, one of the marginalized Jews: We are all the people of one country and we all love this country. I live a normal life in Yemen like any other citizen and I have all my rights. Discrimination doesn't exist in society but we must demand our rights and the rights of all people such as [the rights to] security, stability and a strong economy.

FACEBOOK COMMENTS

❖ **Saqr Abdo**: The society we live in is the biggest hindrance. Differences among social classes still exist up to the present day.

❖ **Ali Al-Moshki**: Traditions and customs are the biggest obstacles facing minorities. Though there are laws that guarantee these minorities their rights, these laws are not reinforced. We hope these laws will be put into practice.

❖ **Fuad AL-Gadi**: We cannot say that all societal restrictions have been conquered. However, I can say that restrictions have diminished. The obstacles of that confront women, the marginalized, and the Jews are different. The marginalized are responsible for their own apathy. The situation of women and the marginalized people is tied up with traditional and religious beliefs.

مداخلات هاتفية

❖ **يوسف حمدي**، أحد المهمشين من فئة اليهود: نحن شعب واحد وحب الوطن يجمعنا ونحن حياتنا في اليمن كأى مواطن عادي واتمتع بكافة حقوقى الاجتماعية وأنا كأى مواطن يمنى ولا يوجد تمييز بيننا بين المجتمع ولكن هناك حقوق لا بد أن نطالب بها لنا وكذلك حقوق لكافة أبناء الشعب اليمنى مثل الامن والاستقرار والاقتصاد.

❖ **علي ابراهيم الموشكي**: الاعراف والعادات والتقاليد هي اكبر معرقل لتحقيق مطالب الاقليات، اما بالنسبة للقوانين فهناك قوانين تكفل لهم حرية التعبير ونيل حقوقهم لكن هذه القوانين غير مفعلة، وما تمناه هو تفعيل تلك القوانين.

❖ **Fuad AL-Gadi**: لا نستطيع أن نجزم بتكسر كافة الحواجز.... أنما قلت تلك الحواجز وأصبحت أفضل مما كانت عليه في السابق... وتتفاوت المعوقات بين كلاً من المهمشين والمرأة واليهود... المهمشين يعود بالدور الأكبر عليهم هم أنفسهم ومدى اقتناعهم بذلك. أما موضوع المرأة والطائفة اليهودية يعود لمعتقدات دينية وعادات وتقاليد....

❖ **محمد ناجي**، أحد المهمشين: التمييز قائم في المجتمع المدني والسبب هم المهمشين أنفسهم ولعلاجها لا بد أن نهتم بتعليمهم قبل كل شيء لان التعليم هو اول طريق لتمكينهم من المطالبة بحقوقهم.

تعليقات الفيسبوك:

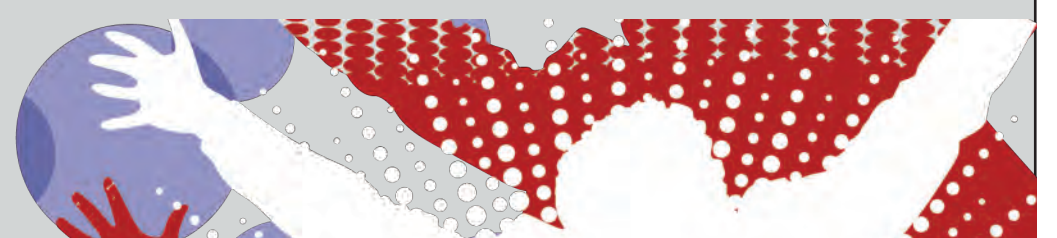
❖ **واعده ناشر**: " الفن بأنواعه المختلفة يستطيع أن يعبر عن الرأي والحرية بطريقة بناءة وخلاقة".



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Aid workers adjust to increasing violence in Lebanon

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A few weeks ago, the head of security for a charity in Lebanon got the kind of call you never want to get. "One of our staff has been kidnapped," the voice on the other end said. "She was at a checkpoint an hour ago and no one has heard from her since."

The panic turned out to be misplaced—the woman had taken an unexpected turn and had forgotten to radio in—but it indicates the difficulties of working in an increasingly violent country.

Lebanon has averaged over a car bomb per week so far in 2014, with the majority on the outskirts of the capital, Beirut. The alleged culprits have largely been Al-Qaeda-affiliated groups often targeting areas traditionally run by the Shiite political party Hezbollah, which is fighting in Syria on behalf of Presi-



NGO aid workers go door-to-door distributing aid to refugees.

dent Bashar al-Assad. On top of this, there have been a string of kidnappings in recent years, while the country's second city Tripoli is trapped in a low-level civil war.

For a country that underwent a relative period of peace from 2007 until late 2012, the uptick in violence over the past 18 months has been severe, with fears of a return to the civil war that tore the country apart from 1975 until 1990.

At the same time, hundreds of thousands of Syrian refugees have fled the civil war next door (UNHCR has registered over 935,000 in Lebanon). To adjust to this, most charities in the country have scaled up their operations rapidly. The Danish Refugee Council (DRC), the largest NGO in the country, had 15 Lebanon staff when the Syria crisis started in early 2011. Currently they have more than 500.

Trying to manage these huge increases in operations while ensuring staff are kept safe has been a challenge that requires increasingly complicated responses. The primary move has been to scale up their security teams: until 2012 almost no NGOs had dedicated international security experts, now the bulk of major NGOs do.

More institutionally, there has been a drive to seek better information-sharing. As such, leading International NGOs, (International Organizations) as well as UN bodies and local stakeholders, have come together to form a joint body—the Safety Security Committee for Lebanon (SSCL).

Set up informally after a top security official was assassinated in late 2012, the body was formalized last July when it received additional funding (until July 2014). Now over 50 members strong, it works on the principles of the 2006 Saving Lives Together framework, which seeks to improve coordination between different international NGOs and UN organizations.

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Lawrence Tucker-Gardiner, director of the SSCL, says the principles of sharing security information between NGOs have been successful in other conflict zones—most notably in Afghanistan, Somalia and Pakistan. He believes that while Lebanon's security climate is worrying, the lack of direct involvement in the conflict by international actors makes the situation less inherently dangerous for NGO workers.

"There are no areas where organizations have reduced activities where there is still a need [for services]. This is because the characteristic of the conflict is predominantly indirect," he said. "As such the greatest risk to the members is collateral damage, so it is quite easy to develop strategies around this."

Sectarianism in Tripoli

Tripoli's conflict has taken on an increasingly sectarian tint in recent years, with predominantly Sunni

said, thus reducing the impact of the violence on the work of NGOs.

Despite this, organizations are scaling back their operations in Lebanon. "Most organizations are just rationalizing—we can hold this event in Amman, or Larnaca, or Istanbul. We don't have to hold it in Beirut and expose them to unnecessary risks," he said.

Hoping for better, preparing for worse

In mid-February, the Lebanese political classes finally came together to form a cabinet—after 11 months without a government. This has somewhat raised hopes that the security situation may improve in the coming months.

Despite this small chink of optimism, Tucker-Gardiner said organizations are making sure to prepare for the worst. "We have done some capacity work with members looking at alternative access strategies if there is a rapid deterioration. Strategies include the recruit-



Like Lebanon, aid workers in Yemen are responding to increasing violence in the country since Yemen's uprising in 2011. On Feb.15, Doctors without Borders had to withdraw from Al-Dhale governorate following continuing clashes between the military and residents.

Muslims in the Bab al Tabanneh area clashing with those from the neighbouring Jabal Mohsen District who are majority Alawite - an offshoot of Shia Islam. "Generally we know the sect of our drivers, and we try not to send Sunnis into Jabal Mohsen or a Shia into Bab al Tabanneh," said the head of security at one charity. "A couple of years ago we wouldn't have needed to do that."

The spate of car bombings in southern Beirut and north Bekaa in recent months have not generally been followed by immediate retaliatory attacks, Tucker-Gardiner

ment of more local staff [to replace foreign ones], capacity-building of alternative organizations, and negotiated access agreements," he said.

He added that he had no major expectation that aid workers would become primary targets in the coming months, but that unexpected events could lead to an uptick in violence with the potential for direct clashes between rival militias. This would significantly increase the risk.

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