

Yemen to face smoother transition without Saleh

By: Nadia Al-Sakkaf

SANA'A, Jan. 25 — Since Saleh's departure for Oman on the evening of January 22, politicians from both sides of the political spectrum have expressed that political tensions have eased — both within Saleh's General People's Congress party, and between the GPC and opposition parties.

"The elections will definitely be smoother in terms of a reduction of problems, whether based on politics or security, because Saleh's supporters will think a thousand times before causing problems in his absence," said Dr. Mohammed Al-Maitani, coordinator for the Economic Crises Advisory Group.

He added that the decision for Yemen's transition was not unanimous, as there are some people whose interests were affected by Saleh's removal from power.

"It is true that his son and relatives continue to hold key positions in the country, but it was always a one-man show...now that he is temporarily out of the picture, I believe things will work out well," he said, before adding that commitments on the part of the international community and youths in squares across the nation represent a balance of power.

Saleh's hold on power for over three decades has made it nearly impossible for the country he has ruled to be managed without his interference and/or involvement. Set to be elected president on February 21, Abd Rabo Mansour Hadi has more than once expressed that he felt his hands were tied as a result of meddling by Saleh.

However, in a speech by Saleh prior to his departure, he promised that he would return as the head of

the GPC, in time to show support for president-to-be Hadi.

"My ambition was to offer myself and to offer services for the sake of the country. Services have been provided, especially in the fields of development, national infrastructure, and oil, gas, and metal prospecting," said Saleh in a televised speech on Sunday. He also said, "I call upon all Yemenis to rally around the vice president and to cooperate with him and the national consensus government...in the country's interest, to restore and reform what was destroyed over 11 months. As for the years to come, the vice president will have his own platform and he now stands as the president of the future."

The public's sentiments regarding his departure were those of mixed feelings, especially since he asked the nation with a sad face to "forgive him" the night before leaving for medical treatment to USA by way of Oman.

"The president asked the people to forgive him...I am not sure we can, but if he gives us time by staying away we may consider it," said a shopkeeper in Sam Mall on Sana'a's Al-Dairy Street.

However, Saleh's departure did not happen before the immunity law was passed - albeit with reservations held by many regarding who would escape possible prosecution. With guarantees that Yemeni politicians will not pursue him or other influential figures in his regime, Saleh now looks towards at least a month of medical care and recreation in the States.

"We believe that his absence from Yemen at this critical juncture will help facilitate a transition that completes the end of his rule, helps Ye-



In his farewell speech to Yemenis, Saleh said he will go to the US for treatment and come back to Yemen as president of his GPC party. "It is time for me to go and I call on all Yemenis to support Yemen's future president Hadi," said President Saleh on a televised speech on January 22, 2012

men, and ultimately has a positive effect on the rights and dignity of the Yemeni people," White House spokesman Jay Carney said Monday. He added that Saleh's stay in the US will not be of an indefinite duration.

Political analyst and former president of SABA News Agency Nasr Taha Mustafa said that Yemenis' happiness following the parliamentary endorsement of Saleh's immunity was higher than when he signed the gulf initiative because "the en-

dorsement truly ended this president's rule and closed the door for the potential for civil war."

Regime-turned-opposition

Despite repeated statements by Saleh that he supports the new government, he has also said more than once that he will show the new government what "real opposition is like."

"There is a legitimate concern that he may return to Yemen after Hadi

becomes president in order to prove that the new government is a failure," said Mustafa. "The old regime still has points of power and will most definitely use them to create trouble and tell Yemenis that his rule was the best they ever could ask for - exactly as he said in his speech on May 21, 2011, when he backed away from signing the gulf agreement."

Several sources within the UN and diplomatic community also said that the possibility remains that

Ahmed Ali Saleh, the president's son and Commander of the Republican Guard, is considering running in future presidential elections, in what would be attempts to reclaim power he once thought would be passed on to him if it hadn't been for the Arab Spring.

He will however, need to resign from his military post and join the GPC or another political party unless he wishes to run as an independent candidate.

15 Houthis killed in Hajja clashes

By: Mohammad Bin Sallam

SA'ADA, Jan. 25 — At least 15 Houthis were killed and a further eight were taken as hostages in clashes between Houthis and Islah Party-supported Hajoor tribesmen, according to tribal sources in Kasher district, Hajja.

According to the sources, four civilians were killed and dozens were left injured as Houthis desperately attempted to seize the district of Kasher and the area surrounding A'him Market.

Clashes between Houthis and armed groups aligned with the Islah Party also took place in Al-Mandla, Hajja.

Starting last Monday, Houthis have attempted to seize A'him market because of its strategic location. They have tended to attack the market from its western side.

Houthis deny alliance with JMP Houthi spokesman Saleh Habra denied on Sunday that there is an alliance between his people and the Islah Party, which is part of the opposition Joint Meeting Parties (JMP).

Habra told the Yemen Times that while "there was a meeting between the young Houthi Ali Al-Emad, and a group of Islahis...the meeting was an informal one aimed at inhibiting any possible conflicts between Houthis and Islahis at Change Square."

He said that the statement published on their website made it clear that it was a "reconciliation effort between both sides at Change Square in Hajja" but not an "agreement." The statement said that the aim of the reconciliation effort was to ensure security for the country but also that it should be understood that the revolution will never



Armed Houthi men around the Bab Al-Yaman historical site in Sa'ada where Houthis posted their slogan "God is Great, Death to America, Death to Israel, Damned be the Jews, Victory to Islam."

end.

Salafis earlier this week assumed that the reconciliation between the Houthis and Islah — the Salafis' steadfast enemies in terms of ideologies and religious trends — did in fact comprise an agreement.

Salafi spokesman Soroor Al-Wede'e condemned the assumed collaboration between the Houthis and the JMP, as represented by the Islah Party.

"We were shocked when we heard that there was an agreement between the Houthis and the JMP. This news made people in the governorates of Sa'ada, Hajja, Al-Jawf and Amran anxious," said Al-Wade'e.

"The people in these places have not forgotten that during two months, 71 civilians — including women and children — were killed and injured without mercy by Houthis."

Salafi representatives have issued demands that Houthis be tried as

"war criminals for the crimes they committed."

Southern movement refuses to participate in elections

Naser Al-Khabji, a leader for the Southern Movement, has called on the movement's supporters to join forces in order to re-establish the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen.

Al-Khabji told Al-Syasia Today, a Kuwaiti news website, that the Southern Movement is going to prevent presidential elections from taking place in the south. The elections are supposed to be held on February 21st.

In a Southern Movement press release published in Al-Umana newspaper on Wednesday, Al-Khabji said "Everybody should respect the will of people looking for freedom and respect the martyrs."

He went on to express understanding for the Sa'ada issue and the six wars fought by the regime

from 2004 to 2010. He said that the wars were unfair to people but that "this does not necessarily mean the Houthis don't have rights to reclaim...They are part of Yemen."

He said that the elections are "actually an embodiment of Saleh's regime, a theme which will repeat itself with the new government."

Al-Khabji added, "We do not approve the government of Basundwa as it is no less worse than Saleh's regime."

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Al-Sabeen hospital employees seek change



By: Nadia Haddash

SANA'A, Jan. 25 - Doctors, medics and employees at state-run Al-Sabeen Hospital in Sana'a commenced a strike on Tuesday, and are demanding administration changes and an end to corruption. The demonstrators also demanded worker equality, salary increases, and that employees be provided with awards and privileges. Dr. Sameera Abbas said that the situation at the hospital should be changed. "Corruption is rampant in every department at the hospital and it's time for us to change. This change would be in the interest of all our hospital's employees." Dr. Abdul-Wahab Al-Madhaji stressed the importance of equal treatment for the staff, and indicated that there is a big difference between Al-Sabeen hospital and other governmental hospital that

provide their staffs with better salaries and awards, such as Al-Thawra and Al-Askari hospitals. Dr. Kozzet Al-Aseeri told the Yemen Times that one-hour strikes will continue every day. "We will continue until our legal demands are met," she said. "Those employees have been working for many years and they simply demand their basic rights." Al-Aseeri, who has received two anonymous threats because of her demands, indicted that she felt the eradication of the outgoing administration and creation of a more able administration will change the hospital's situation for the better. Elsewhere, large-scale protests have erupted in hundreds of state military and civil institutions with demands that corrupt officials be changed and better livelihoods afforded.

UNICEF to grant \$140 Million to Yemen

By: Shatha Al-Harazi

SANAA, Jan. 25 - The Number of the malnourished children of those under the age of five grown as the result of 2011 unrest to be 750,000 children according to the UNCF. 500,000 of them are at the risk of Dying or at the risk of physical or mental disability as a result of malnutrition. An estimated 149 children were killed, 24 of them were girls and the youngest were three months old in 2011 unrest. 568 children were wounded by live ammunition. Moreover, many children were affected by physical violence; hundreds have been affected by tear-gas suffocation. The UNICEF director for Middle East and North Africa, Maria Calvis, promised on Tuesday that the UNICEF will grant Yemen US\$ 140 Million to be spent in the next four years on Children health, education and protection. "There is a very big risk that nobody will do enough, and not enough will be done and there is another priority of the government and these crises will be forgotten" she said. Calvis conclude a two days visit to Yemen on Tuesday. Saying that the malnutrition problem is not only about food, it is also about water, sanitation, hygiene, health and education. "I came to draw the attention of the authorities and the international community that there is another crisis that has not been addressed" she said. Calvis on Monday met with some ministers including the prime minister Mohammed Salem Basundwa in which they signed the agreement and discussed how to address the negative effect on 2011 events on children.

Calives stressed on the importance of prioritize Malnutrition problem by the National Unity Government. "Now that there is peace and the government is discussing their priorities of the future, it is important that they discuss the crises of malnutrition" she said. As locals complained of no access to food in Abyan, and the risk of fights between militants and the state in other governorate is there, the UNICEF commented that "As soon as there is peace in these governorates" they will be the first to help, encouraging other NGOs. Explaining that two months ago they hardly could access to Sa'ada in the north but today the situation is different and by the help of their partners the UNICEF started working in Sa'ada. Gert Capilery the Excutive Director of the UNICEF office in Sana'a, told the Yemen Times UNICEF gave help to nine districts in Abyan except two districts in which the state use militant who belongs to al-Qaeda. "We gave help to nine districts in Abyan except Zunjubar and Khanfer, in access to water, in ministration and other fields" he said. The effects of last year's events have to be dealt with on different scales according to the UNICEF. Before 2011, only 70% of the children were able to go to schools, currently 90,000 students unable to access to schooling. "After the crises of last year, half million child were deprived from schooling," said Capilery. Adding that some of the schools were occupied by security forces, others were occupied by displaced people moreover; when things were better people were still afraid to send their children to schools. 92 schools have been occupied by armed forces in Sana'a only. Pre-



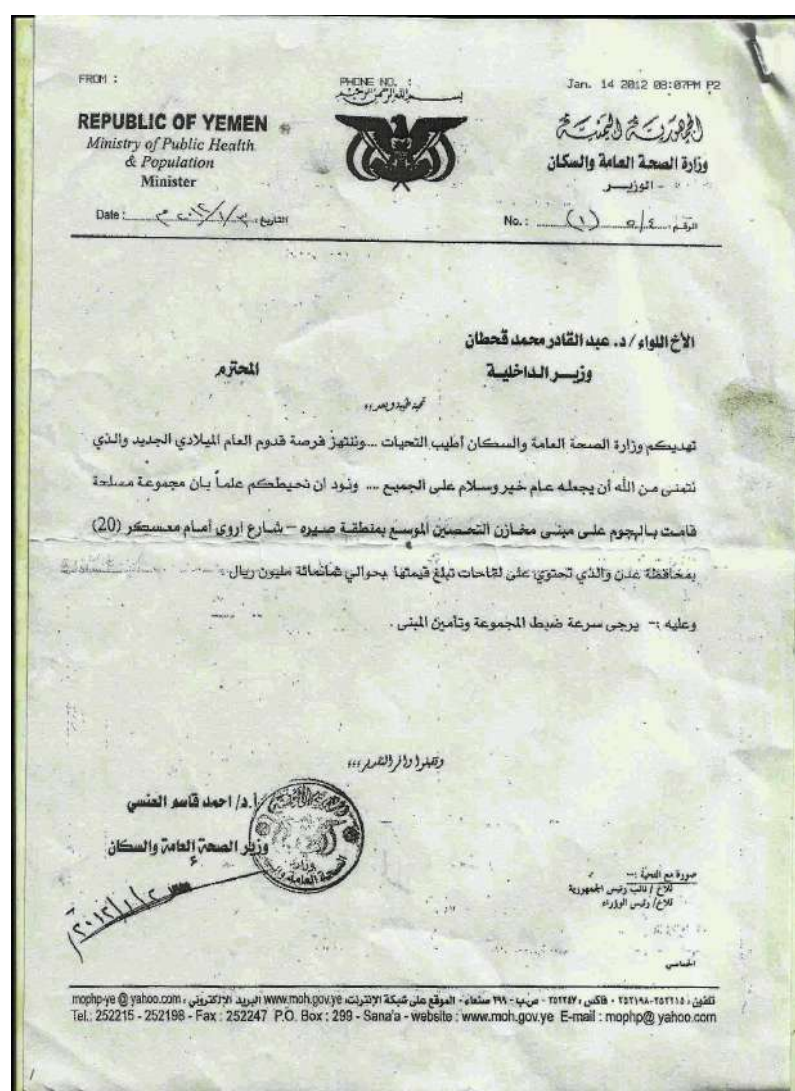
Displaced family in one of Aden's school

venting over 150,000 children from attending schools. AP reported that Yemen's Education Ministry said at least 54 schools had been occupied by military forces and militias from both the pro and anti-Saleh camps during the height of clashes. Another kind of help the UNICEF gives to children in Yemen is psychological rehabilitation after the violence increased last year. "It is happening now that support is given to Children and their parents to tackle traumas". Many children participated in pro anti government protests which increased their exposure to violence and the psychological effects of witnessing violence

Vaccines for children under damage threat

Yemen Times staff

ADEN, Jan. 25 - Groups of armed men entered a vaccine storehouse belonging to the National Immunization Program (NIP) in Sira, Aden, on Monday. The armed men have now taken over the building, exposing the vaccines - estimated to be worth YR eight million and used to protect children in Yemen's southern and the eastern governorates - to the risk of contamination. The armed group informed workers at the stores to evacuate the building, which is the former headquarters of the pre-unification immunization program, threatening to destroy the vaccines if they refused. The branch of the NIP in Aden claimed that the groups were sent by



A letter of complaint from the Ministry of Health regarding armed men occupying the vaccine storehouse in Aden.

Haidara Nasser, the city's deputy governor. The group was meant to seize the building where the vaccine store is located. This puts the Ministry of Public Health and Population in an embarrassing situation as international organizations, especially the World Health Organization and the Global Vaccine Alliance, provide assistance. According to a source from the Ministry, these events threaten the relationship between the NIP and international organizations donating vaccines to prevent childhood diseases. The source added that specialists in the program reported the attack to Aden's security forces but received no response. He said that the vaccines might now be at the risk of contamination as the store's air condition system needs constant observation. According to another source, who wished to remain anonymous, the armed men threatened to throw out the vaccines if the building was not evacuated. This is not the first time the armed group had come to the building, the source added. According to a local source, President Ali Abdullah Saleh gave orders

to make the building a house for the Al-Jahma, apparently because the latter had told the president the building was empty and unused. The Yemen Times has obtained a copy of the president's orders No. 717, which in 2010 granted the building, in front of Al-Eshrieh Camp, to the deputy governor. Vice President and soon-to-be-president, Abd Rabbo Mansour Hadi issued a confirmation memo dated Sep. 16, 2010 to the governor of Aden. In response, the head of the NIP

program Majed Al-Junaid sent a letter to the First Aid & Health Care office at the Ministry of Health and Population, explaining that the building was needed as an alternative in case the air condition system at the central stores failed. The letter also pointed out that new vaccines were on the way to the stores. According to a source at the Ministry of Public Health, which is supporting the NIP, the ministry has not yet received a response to resolve the issue.

Militant withdrawal brings joy to Rada'

By: Sadeq Al-Wesabi

AL-BAIDA, Jan. 25 - Yemen's Military Committee has confirmed that Al-Qaeda militants have withdrawn from Rada' on Tuesday after taking control of the city for ten days. Residents of Rada' celebrated the news, setting off fireworks and shooting into the air, after their peaceful city was taken over by armed extremists forcing some to flee to safer areas. Government security forces and the elite Republican Guard were criticized for not taking part in the matter. The men's withdrawal came after the brother of militant leader Tareq Al-Dhahab and another prisoner were released from captivity. Sheikh Zaid Al-Riyami, one of the mediators, told the Yemen Times that Al-Dhahab and his militants had vacated the city following a "complicated mediation". "They were stubborn and wanted to impose unreasonable things on us," explained Al-Riyami. "They said that they sought to establish a caliphate and enforce sharia law." Al-Riyami added that the militants had wanted to release around 150 prisoners indicted on terrorism charges. "We refused that and



Armed Islamists thought to be of Al-Qaeda have left Rada' after taking control of the district for around ten days.

insisted on their withdrawal. "Fortunately, there has been no damage in Rada'. Many people were worried that fierce clashes would erupt and Rada' would be damaged," he explained, pointing out that there are still some problems with prisoners released by the militants last week. "Those escaped prisoners are still at large. They may cause trouble in our city," he said.

Criticizing the militants, Al-Riyami said, "Unfortunately, they keep accusing other people of infidelity - unjustly and randomly." Asked what action the sheikhs will take if militants try to take over Rada' again, he added, "This time they entered the city easily but the next time we will stop them." He said that the city now under control and that security forces have returned to protect the city.

Locals panic after quakes hit Mahwit

By: Ali Saeed

MAHWIT, Jan. 25 - The population of Melhan in Mahwit governorate are in a state of panic after three light quakes shook the area this week. On Sunday, citizens slept outside their homes fearing more quakes, Sheik Mohamed Yahya Abdo, general secretary of the local council of Melhan, told the Yemen Times. Until now there have been no human victims, but rockslides and landslides caused by the quakes have swept away some farms. In late 2005, a similar rockslide

in Dhafeer - in the same governorate - killed around 30 people, making locals even more fearful. Locals told the Yemen Times that three quakes hit the area between Friday and Wednesday, with many people scared that their homes may collapse while they are inside. "A suddenly a quake shook us while we were praying on Friday - it was as if we were being bombed," said Khaled Sharif, a teacher in Melhan. Abdo added that many villages of Melhan are located under and near mountains, putting many lives at risk as the quakes cause rockslides. "It is as if we live in an island," he said. "There is no advice from the media on how to deal with this and no attention has been paid to this potential problem yet." State-run Saba news reported on Monday that a light earthquake, measuring 4.4 on the Richter scale, had hit the area with no human victims. The agency quoted Saleh Al-Muflihi, deputy director of the Center for Seismological Study and Observation, saying that Mahwit is seismically active and light earthquakes occasionally take place in the area.

Arhab's unfinished war

By: Ali Saeed

Lacking safe access for media coverage, the war which erupted last May between opposition tribesmen and the Republican Guard in Arhab continues to be waged.

Arhab, which sits 30km north of Sana'a and has a population of about 200,000 people, is full of armed tribesmen who strictly adhere to tribal customs and have a very limited tolerance for state soldiers unwilling to listen to their demands.

The eight-month-long war commenced after local tribesmen sided with the youth revolution calling for the fall of Ali Abdullah Saleh's 33-year-old regime.

The Republican Guard, Yemen's elite army division, is commanded by outgoing President Saleh's son and has five military bases in Arhab.

"Arhab represents the gate to Sana'a – if tribesmen took control of the area, it would mean that Sana'a was in their hands," Saleh Al-Zubair, an Arhabi tribal leader loyal to Saleh's regime, told the Yemen Times.

Dr. Mohamed Saeed, a community leader in Arhab, said in a conver-

sation with the Yemen Times that when the youth revolution broke out in Sana'a, tribesmen sent a tribal mediation committee to leaders from the area's Republican Guard military bases asking them to take a neutral stance and not to side with any particular political party.

According to Saeed, tribesmen in effect told the military leaders: "You are the army for all Yemenis; to remain in our land, you should be neutral."

However, the area's military commanders responded that citizens have no right to impose opinions on the state and declined to engage with the mediation committee.

Following this failed attempt at communication, the Republican Guard began setting up new checkpoints in Arhab. Clashes ensued almost immediately.

The spark of war

The killing of four tribesmen by at these new checkpoints by Republican Guard soldiers sparked the war on May 25, 2011. Local tribesmen vowed that they wouldn't see their fellow men slaughtered by soldiers in their area.

Since that point, fierce battles have continued, with large numbers of human casualties and high amounts of property loss, leaving

thousands of local citizens displaced.

Despite the formation of a military committee in accordance with the GCC power transition deal, the committee has yet to achieve many of its stated tasks, those focused on Sana'a included.

"Up until now, we have not heard of any interventions by the military committee to halt the fighting in Arhab," Dr. Saeed said.

The same understanding can be applied to the national consensus government, which vowed to Parliament that it would prevent all armed confrontation in the country.

Though Republican Guard brigades in Arhab are more militarily advanced, tribesmen have managed to occupy military bases and even succeeded in shooting down a warplane in September.

Local tribesmen also killed eleven soldiers and officers in late September. Among the slain was the brigade's commander, General Abdullah Al-Kulaibi. The tribesmen also took control of the brigade's base and confiscated available weapons.

The base has since been retaken following the use of warplanes against the tribesmen.

Government warplanes were also used to retake the Al-Sama'



Many families of Arhab have fled the war and been forced to live in caves.

military base, which tribesmen had earlier stormed, capturing dozens of soldiers in the process.

"When the tribesmen stormed Al-Sama' and some soldiers joined the tribesmen, warplanes came and shelled the tribesmen with the soldiers," said Saeed.

However, Deputy Minister of Information Abdo Al-Janadi denied the use of warplanes against any opposition groups or factions in Yemen.

Damage done

In December 2011, a Yemeni team of human rights activists and lawyers working with the Yemeni National Organization for Defending Rights and Freedoms (known as HOOD) visited Arhab to assess the human losses and property damage.

Around 151 people from Arhab's population – including armed tribesmen, women and children – were killed from May 25 until early January, Ahmed Al-Rehabi, a lawyer at HOOD told the Yemen Times.

499 homes were damaged during the same time period. Some were partially collapsed, while others were left completely destroyed.

All school activity had been suspended, and 14 schools had been directly targeted using shells. Operations at health centers were also

suspended amid constant shelling by both sides, according to HOOD.

The people of Arhab depend on agriculture for their income. Varieties of corn, grapes, oranges and qat are the district's main crops. Citizens rely on rainwater and use pumps to extract groundwater to irrigate crops.

The bombing and shelling of past months has, however, brought agricultural production to a complete halt.

"People who fled the war can't return at the moment since battles are still being waged and farms have been completely destroyed – particularly those farms located around military camps," said Mohamed Saeed.

"Murders have been reported on farms, and other farms have been targeted, leaving equipment damaged," said Al-Rehabi.

"What is happening in Arhab is really a tragedy. Thousands of displaced families have not returned home," he said. "The lack of safe access has also made it difficult for aid organizations to go and help."



Thousands of Arhab's displaced people are unable to return home as their houses have been damaged or completely destroyed.

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Vacancy: Assistant Governance Advisor (AGA)

There is an immediate vacancy for an Assistant Governance Advisor (AGA) for the UK Department for International Development (DFID) in Sana'a. The AGA is a permanent post based at the DFID offices in the British Embassy, Sana'a. A six-month probationary period will apply.

The AGA will strengthen the governance advisory capacity of the DFID programme, with particular reference to the area of citizen empowerment and accountability. The AGA will report to the Governance Advisor, working closely with other DFID Advisors, and maintain relationships with a wide range of government and civil society stakeholders in Yemen.

The main duties will include:

- Contribute to Yemen governance and political economy analysis;
- Support effective programme design, implementation and monitoring, including leading on one or more new programme business cases per year (2012 – likely to be Citizen Empowerment and Accountability Programme);
- Cross cutting governance advice across the DFID Yemen Programme, and representing DFID in meetings with external stakeholders;
- Maintain a current understanding of key actors and power relationships within government and in civil society. Facilitate relationships for London based advisors. A willingness to provide some ad hoc translation to meetings.
- Fulfil DFID Yemen's programme and corporate requirements (reporting, communications, risk management), demonstrating DFID's values and behaviours.

Specific requirements at a minimum are the following:

- Degree in law, public administration, politics, economics, or social science. Masters degree in a governance-related field an advantage but demonstrated experience and performance equally considered.
- A good understanding of governance issues and politics in Yemen, DFID's approach to governance and of broader development issues, including youth, gender and social exclusion.
- At least 3 years experience of developing and managing governance programmes or development programmes more broadly.
- Native Arabic speaker with excellent writing skills and ability to communicate effectively across a broad audience in English.
- Ability to interpret and present complicated information and identify trends, evaluate the level of risk in decisions and possible outcomes, and adjust targets to meet changing circumstances.

The successful candidate should have a traceable background that can be verified by the PSO prior to the appointment. All applicants must have the right to work in Yemen and will be expected to abide by the principles of the UK civil service code, including respecting the code on Political Impartiality.

The full job description, application form, and details of required competencies are available here:

<http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Work-with-us/Working-for-DFID/Jobs/DFID-Yemen---Assistant-Governance-Advisor/>

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Closing date for all applications is: **12:00 on Thursday 16 February 2012**

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UNDP Office is seeking qualified Yemeni Nationals for the following vacant positions with the **Gender and Economic and Social Empowerment Project**:

1. National Expert on Gender Sensitive Monitoring and Policy Support (Programme Specialist) – Sana'a : Level-SB4, monthly salary approximately US\$ 1900
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The deadline for receiving applications is **08 Feb 2012**.

India-Yemen

Address by the President of India, Smt. Pratibha Devisingh Patil

On the eve of our 63rd Republic Day, I convey my warmest greetings to all of you across the country, from every walk of life and in different parts of the world. I convey my special greetings to the Armed Forces and the Para-Military Forces who guard our frontiers with great vigil and valor, in high mountainous terrains, deserts and the plains, on the coasts and the seas. I also convey my best wishes to our internal security forces and to our civil services. I compliment all citizens for their contribution to the process of nation-building.

We are living in a world that is complex and challenging. Forces of globalization have created an interlinked and interdependent world. No country exists in isolation; it is continuously being influenced by external developments. All nations, developed and developing, are facing the impact of global economic instability, as well as problems of unemployment and inflation, in varying degrees. Indeed, the 21st Century has brought in its trail a host of issues at a breath-taking pace.

There are growing aspirations of the people, coupled with their expectations of immediate solutions. We are observing, an information explosion and ever-newer technological inventions. These have altered lifestyles and there is also a growing quest for materialism.

For us in India, the discourse is about how an ancient civilization and a young nation, will move ahead to take India to its destiny. Our vision and our goals are clear. We look at building our country, as one whose economy demonstrates a robustness to grow, so that we can become a developed nation. For us, however, economic prosperity alone is not enough. We look towards an India, where there is equity and justice. We look at democracy, rule of law and human values, as being essential for making our country strong. We want a scientific and technological outlook in our people. We also look towards India as a country which will continue to bring moral force on to the global stage. I believe that there is a unity behind this vision of India. But, yet, sometimes one gets distracted by discordant pulls and pressures.

India can take pride in its democratic record, but as in any functional democracy, it faces pressures and challenges. An important feature of a democracy is the constant expression of opinions. This process of incessant dialogue should flow in such a manner, that we are willing to listen to each other. Those who believe in democracy must try to see whether there is rationale in the others' point of view. Gandhiji once said, and I quote, "Evolution of democracy is not possible if we are not prepared to hear the other side. We shut the doors of reason when we refuse to listen." Unquote. The purpose of



discussions and deliberations is to find solutions. Often, we are quick to find blame with others; but, yet are unable to give constructive responses. There seems to be a tendency to doubt almost everything. Do we not have faith in our own people's strengths and in our institutions?

Our work, our values and our approach, must be based on the vast capability and capacity that India and its people have.

In conclusion, I would like to say that we must build a strong, prosperous nation, based upon a firm system of values. As we remove poverty, let us also enrich our thoughts. As we remove disease, let us all remove ill-will towards others. As our youth study more and acquire more knowledge, let them also learn to be more involved in activities for the progress of the nation, other than only self advancement. As we legislate, let us also understand that the most effective law is the conscience of citizens. As we advance in science and technology, let us realize and understand that it is more for human welfare. As we use the Earth's resources, let us not forget to replenish and renew its vitality. On the eve of our Republic Day, let me once again convey my greetings, to all fellow citizens.

JAI HIND!!

Ambassador's Message

January 26, 2012

On the auspicious occasion of the 63rd Republic Day of India, I extend my warm greetings and best wishes to all the Indian expatriates, Persons of Indian origin and friends of India residing in Yemen.

On this day in the year 1950, the Constitution of India came into force, which declares India to be a sovereign, socialist, secular, democratic republic, assuring its citizens of justice, equality, and liberty, and endeavouring to promote fraternity among them.

Over the years, India has emerged as a protagonist for a multi-polar world in global geopolitics. India has remained committed to combating international terrorism and promoting global peace and greater understanding among nations.

India's bilateral relations with Yemen are based on a solid foundation of historic civilizational and people-to-people contacts between the two countries. There is a strong Diaspora of over 300,000 persons of Yemeni origin settled in India. Likewise, there are more than 100,000 Yemenis of Indian origin settled in Yemen.

India and Yemen enjoy very close and friendly relations in the bilateral and multilateral domains. India is in favour of a stable, strong and united Yemen.

India offers a vibrant programme for training and capacity building in various fields to Yemen. Every year 65 training slots are earmarked for Yemeni officials to undergo training under the ITEC programme. Besides, 32 full-fledged scholarships



are offered to the Yemeni students for pursuing higher studies in some of the prestigious universities of India.

The bilateral trade between the two countries exceeds US\$2.25 billion. Indian companies are involved in exploration of oil and gas and execution of power projects in Yemen. The two countries are currently engaged in expanding and diversifying their economic relationship.

The Embassy of India, Sana'a remains committed to playing a responsible role in safeguarding the interests of the Indian community in Yemen. The Embassy's helping hand would always be available to every Indian in need.

Jai Hind!
Dr Ausaf Sayeed
Ambassador of India, Sana'a

India-Yemen Bilateral Relations: Rich History & Bright Prospects

Historic Perspective

India and Yemen have a long history of people-to-people contacts dating back to historical times. Yemeni traders served as intermediaries for Indian trade with the Roman Empire. Subsequently, the contacts were intensified with the Hajj route from India running through Aden and Mocha. The Kamaran Islands used to serve as a transit point of quarantine for pilgrims during the late 1800s and early 1900s.

In 1839, Aden became part of the British Empire and was administered by the Bombay Presidency. A garrison of 2000 Indian soldiers was established in Aden and the Indian Rupee was made the official currency. The position of Aden as a gateway to the Red Sea facilitated the visit of several prominent Indian leaders associated with the Freedom Movement to Aden. Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose made two historic visits to Aden, first in 1919 and later in 1935. Mahatma Gandhi visited Aden on September 2, 1931, on his way to London to participate in the Second Round Table Conference, accompanied by Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Sarojini Naidu and others, during which he was given a warm reception by the people of Aden.

The Aden administration was separated from India in April 1937 with the appointment of a Governor directly reporting to London. An Indian diplomatic mission at the level of Commissioner was set up in Aden in June 1950. The Bank of India opened its branch in Aden in 1954 and remained as the only Indian bank in the country until its incorporation by the National Bank of Southern Yemen in 1970, which is now the National Bank of Yemen.

A large number of Indian nationals, including Hindus, Muslims and Parsis, had lived in



Ambassador Dr Sayeed With Acting President Abdu Rabbu Hadi

Aden during mid-1880s until mid-1950s.

There is a rich heritage of Hindu, Jain and Parsi temples in Aden and out of ten original temples four survived and one – Mataji Maharaj Temple – is in active use.

These intense people-to-people contacts have resulted in the settlement of over 300,000 people of Yemeni origin, mainly from Hadramout, in the Deccan, particularly in Hyderabad and the adjoining areas of Andhra Pradesh, as well as in Maharashtra, Gujarat, Karnataka and Kerala.

There is also a presence of 100,000 strong vibrant Indian-origin Diaspora in Yemen, mainly settled in Aden, Hadramout, Hodeida, Taiz and Sana'a.

Relations in the Modern Times

After India became independent in August 1947, it actively supported the Yemeni struggle for independence from the British Empire. India was one of the first countries to recognise both the Yemen Arab Republic

(YAR) after the 26th September, 1962 revolution and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY) after its formation on 29th November 1967. The Indian mission in Sana'a was established in 1970 and the relationship started blossoming soon after.

The foreign policies of India and Yemen have much in common. Both are committed to non-alignment, international peace, combating international terrorism and creation of a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean. Both countries are important members of the Indian Ocean Rim - Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC), with India assuming the chair from Yemen during a conference held in Bengaluru in November 2011.

There has been a steady exchange of visits by political leadership between the two countries. President Ali Abdullah Saleh visited India twice, in March 1983 and in March 1999, while President Zail Singh visited Yemen in October 1984 and Vice President Krishan Kant in October 1999. The momentum of high-level visits continued throughout with the exchange of several ministerial visits.

Bilateral Agreements

Both the countries have instituted official bilateral mechanisms like the Joint Committee for Economic & Technical Cooperation (1993), Foreign Office Consultations (1993), Bilateral Air Services Agreement (1995, 1999), MoU on Cooperation in the field of Agriculture and Allied Sector (1996), Cultural Agreement (1999), Bilateral Investment Promotion Agreement (2002), Agreement on Cooperation in the field of Health and Medicine (2002) and Protocol of Bilateral Cooperation in the field of Oil and Gas Industry (2007). The Agreement on Exemption of Visa requirement to holders of Diplomatic and Official Passports and MoU on Cooperation between the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) of India and the Diplomatic Institute of Yemen are ready for signature.

The two sides are also discussing a Cultural Exchange Programme (CEP) for the period

India-Yemen Bilateral Trade

Financial Year (April-March)	India's Exports to Yemen (\$ m)	India's Imports from Yemen (\$ m)	Total Trade (\$ m)
2006-2007	1185.03	2009.28	3194.31
2007-2008	1017.54	1468.97	2486.51
2008-2009	787.29	754.61	1542.00
2009-2010	727.39	1,575.55	2302.94
2010-2011	514.37	1743.90	2258.27

(Source: Department of Commerce, Govt. of India)



Pilgrim Quarantine Points in Kamran Island on the Red Sea which witnessed the first entry point of Indian-Yemen businesses

In Focus



President Zail Singh interacting with President Ali Abdullah Saleh during his visit to Sana'a in November 1984

2012-2014. India participated in the 26th Annual Meeting of the Arab Gulf Archives and Documents Centres held in Sana'a in September 2010, during which the two sides agreed to conclude a MoU in order to utilize the rich wealth of documents available in the National Archives of the two countries.

Two leading think-tanks, the Indian Council for World Affairs (ICWA) and the Sheba Centre for Strategic Studies have agreed to sign a MoU to forge a partnership for encouraging exchange of experts and analysts and participation in seminars and symposia on subjects of mutual interest.

The 7th India-Yemen Joint Commission Meeting (JCM) held in Sana'a in March 2010 outlined an elaborate programme for further strengthening and deepening the bilateral relationship in different fields.

Trade and Economic Cooperation

India is the second largest destination for Yemen's exports and the eighth principal source for its imports. The bilateral trade during FY 2010-2011 was put at US\$ 2.25 billion, which included Yemen's exports to

India valued at US\$ 1.74 billion and Yemen's imports from India totalling US\$ 514.37 million. In addition, there is a large volume of trade through third countries such as Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

The principal items of India's exports to Yemen include tea, rice, wheat, cereals, spices, tobacco, meat and meat preparations, pharmaceuticals, hand tools, chemicals, etc., while its major items of imports from Yemen include crude oil, mineral fuels and oils, metal scrap, hides and skins and limestone.

The Government of India has unilaterally offered a Duty Free Tariff Preference (DFTP) Scheme to Yemen, opening up as many as 95% of tariff lines for duty-free access to Yemeni exports.

Active encouragement is being given to focussed cooperation between the chambers of commerce of both countries. During the visit of the CII business delegation to Yemen in May, 2010, a MoU was signed with the Federation of Yemen Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FYCCI). Efforts are on to re-activate the Joint Business Council (JBC) signed between the two countries in 1996. The Indo-Arab Chamber of Commerce and Industries (IACCI) have also expressed interest in concluding MoUs with chambers

of commerce in Sana'a and Aden.

Indian oil companies have significant interest in Yemen. Since 2009, seven oil blocks are being operated by three Indian companies – Reliance Industries Limited (Block Nos. 34 & 37); Gujarat State Petroleum Corporation in partnership with Jubiliant Enpro & Alkor Petro (Block Nos. 19, 28 & 57) and IOC-OIL in partnership with Medco Energy & Kuwait Energy Co. (Block Nos. 82 & 83). Nagarjuna Fertilizers and Chemicals Limited are negotiating with Yemen's Ministry of Oil & Minerals for setting up of a gas-based fertilizer plant and a power station in Balhaf with a possible investment of US\$ 1.25 billion. The Aden Refinery has invited Indian companies to participate in its expansion and modernisation.

Indian companies are also actively engaged in Yemen's Power sector. BHEL has been awarded the contract for the 400 MW Marib Gas Turbine Power Station (Phase-II) costing US\$ 437 million in February 2011. Angelique International Limited is executing a contract for the US\$ 38 million transmission and transfer of power on Safer-Marib Project, besides another contract for a transmission line in the Sana'a-Dharmar segment.

The Geological Survey of Yemen has expressed keen interest to enter into a MoU with the Geological Survey of India to forge meaningful cooperation in the field of geology, geophysics and exploration and exploitation of Yemen's mineral resources.

There is considerable potential for enhancing bilateral trade in the fields of power, fertilizers, oil & gas, mining, civil engineering, infrastructure development, telecommunications, fisheries, water harvesting, small and medium enterprises, micro-financing and general trading.

Grants and Technical Assistance

During the last JCM, the Indian side agreed to a Yemeni proposal for setting up a 200-bed hospital in Yemen as a joint venture with India at an estimated cost of

US\$ 30 million. India has provided a grant of US\$ 2.3 million towards technical equipment and exhibits for the proposed National Science Museum in Sana'a. India is also committed to extend humanitarian assistance to the tune of Rs.100 million to Yemen.

India offers 65 slots to Yemen annually for training and capacity building in different fields under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme. Two Indian trainers are assigned to the recently inaugurated Centre for cutting and polishing of semi-precious stones in Sana'a.

Cooperation in the Education & Cultural Fields

During 2011, India offered 39 full-fledged scholarships for Yemeni students under the General Cultural Scholarship Scheme (GCSS) of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) for pursuing undergraduate, postgraduate and Ph.D. degrees in more than hundred prestigious Indian universities. Several Yemeni students also go to India to pursue higher studies on self-financing basis.

Several cultural troupes sponsored by ICCR have been regularly performing in different cities in Yemen. The last such performance was by a Rajasthani Folk cultural troupe in Sana'a, Taiz and Aden on the occasion of India's Republic Day in January 2011.

To mark the 150th Birth Anniversary of Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore, two special exhibitions were organised in Sana'a in cooperation with the Ministry of Culture. The first exhibition, 'Tagore in Kantha' was organised in November 2011 while the second exhibition, 'Tagore in Advertisement' was organised in January 2012.

Yemen and India: Unprecedented heights

Yemen and India's diplomatic relations go way back to even before the revolutions in 1962 and 1967. It could be said that the Indian presence in Yemen is one of the earliest and strongest historically, culturally and in many other aspects of today's world.

The Republic of Yemen holds great appreciation for the Indian government's position, standing by the unity and territorial integrity of Yemen and recognizes the fact that the Indian mission in Yemen never closed even during most difficult times last year.

For me personally, India was always one of the countries I felt immensely welcomed and at home. My most recent visit was in November 2011 when I participated in the Ninth Meeting of Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC) in Bengaluru, during which Yemen handed over the chairmanship of IOR-ARC to India.

During this meeting, Yemen was approved by the member countries to host a regional center for exchanging information on piracy in Yemen. This will provide an opportunity to further enhance trade and investment between all 19 countries overlooking the Indian Ocean and we look forward to taking our relations with India further.

After meeting with my Indian counterpart H.E. S.M. Krishna on the sidelines of IOR-ARC, I again felt the deep interest India had in Yemen's prosperity and welfare and how eager the Indian government is to take our relations to higher levels.

Personally, my relationship with India goes way back to my childhood in Yemen when we had neighbors and friends of Indian origins. In fact, I remember when I first came to study in Edinburgh in UK as a medical student and people were asking me where I came from, I would say Yemen, and they would say, 'Where is that, in India?' Maybe I had an Indian look at that time before I got bald.

I had the pleasure to visit India many times at the invitation of the Indian government and each time I was greatly impressed by its stupendous development and growth. Our interest in India and our desire to strengthen our bilateral relations at all levels remains steadfast.

The Republic of India and its people have a special place in our hearts.



By: Abu Bakr Al-Qirbi
Minister of Foreign Affairs

Learning from the Indian economic model

Yemen has gone through a lot of challenges during 2011. Despite the political cause of the crisis, the main impact on Yemenis was economic which was heavily influenced by the decrease in the oil and gas production that used to contribute over 70 percent to the national income.

This is why, as the Minister of Oil and earlier as the Minister of Trade and Industry I believe that the best resource any country has is its people. In this regard, I draw on the experience of the Republic of India which has the second largest population in the world and yet, has a booming economy.

First of all, I must say that I greatly appreciate the position the Republic of India has adopted towards Yemen and how in more than one meeting I had with Ambassador Dr. Ausaf Sayeed, he expressed his government's desire to help Yemen in every possible way to help it in overcoming challenges of these difficult times.

Yemen and India have a Joint Ministerial Committee which oversees various agreements and cooperation projects. As it is, India and Yemen have several cooperation agreements in many fields including education, technology, health care, trade and investment. We are also exploring cooperation in new sectors such as petroleum and security.

In my previous capacity as a Deputy Minister of Planning, I co-chaired the Joint Committee and was personally involved in inking several agreements for training and capacity building with India and in nominating trainees for various courses offered by India's excellent ITEC programme.

Now we want the world to regain its trust in Yemen and to invest in the country, as we believe that Yemen can offer many opportunities, particularly in the hydrocarbons sector. I believe several competent Indian companies have shown interest in investing in Yemen's oil industry, and we welcome them to explore various projects in the upstream and downstream sectors.

I am personally amazed by the success achieved by India in education, scientific research, industrialisation and economic growth. My professional relations with India over several years have allowed me to observe the Indian model of economic growth closely, and I am confident that we can emulate the success of the Indian experience in Yemen.

I would like to express my warm greetings to the government and the people of India on the occasion of their Republic Day.



By: Hisham Sharaf
Minister of Oil and Mineral Resources



H.E. Eng. Hisham Sharaf, former Deputy Minister of Planning, inaugurating the ITEC Day celebrations in the Embassy in December 2010



Rajasthani folk dance organized in Sana'a by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations in 2011

Yemen's Stalemate

By: Marc Lynch
Foreign Policy

Yemen seems trapped in an endless political stalemate. More than a year after massive protests erupted challenging the 33-year-old regime of President Ali Abdullah Saleh, Yemen seems no closer to achieving a meaningful political transition.

The deadlock has persisted despite the outrage over regime violence against civilians, splits at the top of the military, a UN Security Council resolution condemning the violence and calling for a transfer of power, a Nobel Peace Prize for leading Yemeni protest figure Tawakul Karman, and the near assassination of Saleh himself. In the absence of a political solution, the humanitarian situation has dramatically worsened and regional conflicts across the country have intensified. Is there any hope for Yemen?

On Wednesday, January 25, from 12:30-2:00 p.m., I will be hosting a POMEPS panel discussion at the Elliott School of International Affairs on Yemen's political stalemate, featuring three political scientists

with deep experience in Yemen and very different specializations: Stacey Yadav, Sheila Carapico, and Laurent Bonnefoy.

When I chose the title "Yemen's Stalemate" for the panel a few months ago, several people commented that this seemed gloomy. I would have loved to have been proven wrong, but here we are. I hope many of you can attend; a video of the event will be posted later. The post that follows is the introductory essay to POMEPS Briefing #8: Yemen's Stalemate.

There is no doubting the astonishing resilience, creativity and courage of the Yemeni protest movement. The protestors gathered in Sana'a's Change Square, including Nobel Laureate Tawakul Karman, represent some of the best and most inspirational of the activists of this past year's Arab uprisings. It is astounding that they have maintained their energy and kept up their numbers despite massive regime brutality and dim hopes of political success. But they have also struggled to put forth a clear political alternative, and as Stacey Yadav has argued, have been badly served both by the "opportunistic opposi-

tion" of tribal leaders and regime defectors and by the traditional opposition parties of the Joint Meetings Party (JMP). They have proven that they cannot be silenced, but seem as stymied as anyone about how to break the deadlock.

The poorly conceived transition plan pushed by the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and backed by the United States and the United Nations has proven to be an impediment to meaningful change. It offered immunity to Saleh as an inducement for his departure, but the Gulf states showed little interest in promoting any real democratic change. The GCC plan left the role of the armed forces and other state institutions untouched, and made no provisions for a genuine role for the protest movement. Even so, Saleh failed to sign the agreement for months, instead stalling for time and taking every opportunity to divide and weaken his opponents. In September he returned to Yemen unexpectedly and retook the reins of power.

Many hoped that Yemen would finally move forward when Saleh unexpectedly signed the GCC deal in late November. But instead, as

most Yemenis and analysts expected, he has continued to exercise power from behind the scenes. He shows no sign of actually living up to the promise to depart the scene and allow Yemen to move on. The immunity from prosecution guaranteed to Saleh by the GCC deal -- and recently extended to all government officials who have served him -- outrages many Yemenis. It has provided neither justice nor a political transition. Instead it has rewarded a culture of impunity and given Saleh a blank check to kill.

The presidential elections slated to be held in February are widely seen as a sham, even if they are not postponed, wired to simply ratify the elevation of Vice President Abd Rabbo Mansour Hadi and maintain Saleh's power behind the scenes. Such elections do not seem likely to either satisfy the protestors or remove Saleh and his regime from real power. Saleh's family members remain entrenched in key positions in the security apparatus. Meanwhile, as Abdul Ghani Al-Iryani noted in December, Saleh and his regime continue to stall, divide the opposition, and play on Western fears of Al-Qaeda.

The costs of this political stalemate are enormous. The mounting humanitarian crisis is reaching staggering proportions. Secessionist sentiment in the south is rising rapidly, while the Houthi rebellion in the north remains potent. Reports of Al-Qaeda seizing strategic towns are likely exaggerated, but the jihadist organization is clearly taking advantage of the chaos to build its presence. Real power is devolving to the local level as the political center remains frozen. The absence of legitimate political institutions raises the risks of a complete collapse into civil war.

The international community, including the United States, has only intermittently paid attention to Yemen -- an oversight that will haunt it for years to come. The US too often has been focused on counterterrorism and the struggle against Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula to the exclusion of other issues. This has led too many officials to view Saleh as a necessary partner, rather than the key part of the problem, which his regime is, and to trade off the right to carry out drone strikes for real pressure for political change. Even where

those tradeoffs are not consciously chosen, the sheer complexity of the problem and the crush of other regional crises has made it difficult for the US or the international community to act.

In September, Tom Finn asked whether there was "any way out for Yemen." More than four months later, it is difficult to argue that we are any closer to achieving the meaningful political transition Yemen so desperately needs. At this point, Saleh should be given a deadline to leave Yemen or lose the amnesty promised by the GCC deal (the blanket immunity recently approved by the Yemeni cabinet for all government officials should be rejected completely). The assets of Saleh and regime officials should be frozen and a travel ban imposed until real change is achieved. But even such steps will not be enough without fashioning new Yemeni political institutions, which can respond in a meaningful way to the demands and the needs of the protest movement and the diverse regional groups which have so powerfully challenged decades of Saleh's autocratic rule. Too much time has been lost already.

The Arab Spring's balance sheet

By: Wadah Khanfar
Project Syndicate

Last year's events in Egypt and Tunisia drew the curtain on a tottering old order and delivered much of the Arab world into a long-awaited new era. But what that new era will look like remains very much an open question, given the many challenges that the region's countries still face.

The old order that has begun to vanish extends beyond the former regimes. The region's entire value system -- a political culture forged by autocracy -- is being transformed. Arab men and women have shed the sense of humiliation and inferiority that despotism imposed on them -- and that fostered desperation, anger, violence, and insularity.

This transformation, though far

from complete -- indeed, it may well last years -- has nonetheless started to bear fruit. If the 2011 uprisings had not occurred, we would now be witnessing another year of autocracy, with more talk of dynastic successions. That would mean further humiliation for ordinary people, who bear the brunt of corruption, as government officials and their crony capitalists continued to siphon off public funds.

The Arab media would still be heaping uncritical praise on the region's presidents and their families, while development programs would be looted by them. Education would continue to stagnate, and Arab societies, which are divided across sectarian, tribal, and regional lines, would experience rising levels of retribution and violence. The infamous "death boats," on which hundreds of young North African men risked their lives every

year in search of employment and a better life abroad, would continue to deliver those who survived the journey onto Europe's unwelcoming shores. And Arabs' rage would reach unprecedented levels, causing utter mayhem and destruction.

Arab youth have rescued the Arab world from this fate. Their conscientiousness and integrity have restored people's self-confidence. The old regimes' opponents have demonstrated bravery without recklessness, and differences of opinion without bigotry.

Indeed, we have seen Islamists, liberals, and leftists standing together in defiance. We have seen Muslims and Copts protect each other in Cairo. In Yemen, we have seen local tribesmen follow a woman, Nobel Peace Prize winner Tawakul Karman, in the fight for freedom. And we have seen the Arab media foster a mature debate

about democracy, constitutionalism, and the role of Islam in the modern state, rather than dispensing disinformation and crass propaganda.

But the transformation must not stop here. The new and old political forces should initiate a dialogue to create a consensus on the rules of political engagement. As the people become their own masters, those who fail to engage in this process will eventually find themselves without political power.

Other countries in the region, and beyond, should embrace the Arab Spring. In particular, the members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) should abandon their hesitance to support the post-revolution governments. Ultimately, the changes occurring in the Arab world will contribute to the entire region's economic prosperity and political stability.

Today, Tunisia and Egypt are experiencing severe economic crises. Before Tunisia's revolution, for example, 500,000 of its labor force of 3.6 million were unemployed, and that number has since risen to 700,000. Egypt has lost roughly \$9 billion in capital flight in recent

months. But, according to Egypt's prime minister, Kamal Al-Ganzouri, the country's Arab "brethren" have delivered only \$1 billion of the \$10.5 billion in aid and loans that they promised.

Moreover, Tunisia and Egypt have so far received none of the \$35 billion promised by the G-8 countries. And, given the current global economic crisis, the funds are not likely to be forthcoming in the near future.

The region's emerging democracies urgently need an Arab initiative that resembles the Marshall Plan -- a program to attract large-scale investment in infrastructure, industry, and agriculture (and in the region's wealth of untapped technical skills), thereby boosting employment. The initiative should also encourage free movement of goods and people within the region, by lifting the customs restrictions and complicated procedures that hinder bilateral and multilateral trade. Creating regional development banks and building a Mediterranean express railway from Alexandria to Rabat would serve this goal.

But long-term investments will

not solve the immediate crisis. Egypt and Tunisia need immediate cash deposits and grants, and their newly elected leaderships should not be forced to resort to begging. In the past, the Gulf countries have supported Egypt and Tunisia. It is now in the GCC's best interests to support them again as they make the transition to freedom.

Meanwhile, the United States and the European Union should recognize the nature and depth of the unfolding changes. The Arab public is fully aware of the close alliances that existed between the West and the now-defunct despotic regimes, yet they have exhibited no desire for vengeance or retribution towards the West.

It is past time for the West to accept the Arab people's will and to stop exaggerating the repercussions of change. The West must support genuine democracy in the Arab world. If the Arab Spring is aborted, the result will be not dictatorships that are loyal to the West, but rather, a tsunami of rage that will spare no one. There is nothing more dangerous than aborted dreams, especially when those dreams may be the last chance for change.

SKETCHED OPINION

By Hajjaj



EMBASSY OF INDIA,
SANA'A

Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), Government of India, has offered 32 scholarships under various schemes for Yemeni nationals. Candidates with good academic record who wish to pursue their studies (Bachelors/Masters/Research) in India may apply for the scholarship. Candidates must be proficient in English language.

Applications forms together with guidelines can be downloaded from the Embassy website: www.eoisanaa.org/iccrform2012.pdf. Filled-in applications form should reach the Embassy latest by **Thursday, 2nd February, 2012**.

A written English Language Proficiency Test (ELPT) will be conducted on **Friday, 10th February, 2012 at 9.30 AM** at the following venues:-

1. Indian Embassy School, Al-Safia, Sana'a.
2. Mahatma Gandhi International School, Crater, Aden

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Microfinance to flourish in 2012



Many successful businesses started using microfinance, which is designed to help people on low-incomes. However, the sector suffered in 2011 as conflict forced many people to default.

By: Sadeq Al-Wesabi

Yemen's microfinance sector saw massive deterioration in 2011 with some institutions and banks plundered by armed men in war-torn areas, while many clients were unable to pay off loans after fleeing fighting in their home towns and villages.

Many of the institutions that faced difficulties collecting loans – often from thousands of clients – were in Abyan governorate where fierce clashes broke out between Al-Qaeda militants and Yemen's security in May last year, forcing thousands out of their homes and into neighboring governorates.

However, microfinance advocates are optimistic that the sector will bounce back this year, especially after the return of security and calm to the majority of Yemen's cities.

Rana Al-Salami, executive manager of the Aden Microfinance Foundation (AMF) told the Yemen Times that the sector is a vital lifeline for those unable to find jobs or who have been made redundant.

The idea of microfinance, where small loans are offered to the poor to fund businesses, with low repayments and very little interest, was started in Bangladesh in 1974. Mohammed Yunus, an economics lecturer, lent a group of poverty-stricken villagers \$27. Later, Yunus won the Nobel Peace Prize and

microfinance became a global phenomenon.

It took off in Yemen in 1997 with the Social Fund for Development (SFD) and there are presently 11 active microfinance institutions, offering finance to thousands.

She called for unemployed Yemenis to think about serious projects and start their own businesses. "Loans are on hand for anyone as soon as the idea of a project is available," she said.

She added that the AMF aims to strengthen the role of women in society both economically and socially, reach customers in both rural and urban areas and contribute to the development of the microfinance industry in Yemen.

"We are going to increase the maximum limit for loans from YR 500,000 (\$2,250) to one million," she said.

Al-Salami said that most of the AMF's clients are women, saying, "They are more honest and committed clients."

Petrol shortage and last year's political unrest negatively affected the AMF and other microfinance institutions, she explained.

In Aden governorate, several banks and microfinance institutions shut down in 2011 but the Aden Microfinance Institution struggled to continue.

"We insisted on continuing despite difficulties and we decided to challenge our problems," she said.

The Yemen Microfinance Network honored AMF members this month for their hard-working and effective contribution to the sector – even in the face of a complicated security situation.

The AMF now plans to make more Yemenis aware of the service, "It's a new sector and many people know nothing about it."

Sharar Al-Mulaiki, a managing director of the Yemen Microfinance Network (YMN) said that it is considered one of the most innovative and effective ways to reduce poverty and unemployment, increase income and contribute to the state's economy.

With the aim of improving the sector in Yemen and raising awareness of microfinance among Yemenis, the YMN ran a Microfinance Promotional Campaign for ten days in December.

They used a number of promotional tools including newspapers, local TV and radio stations, billboards, flyers, promotional items and a workshop to highlight the benefits of microfinance.

"The campaign was very successful, reaching all the targeted audience as planned and showing the huge demand for microfinance services in Yemen," said Khalil Al-Mikhlaifi, research and development executive at the YMN. The YMN also produced a short documentary on microfinance in Yemen, shown on the Yemen TV channel.

Al-Mikhlaifi told the Yemen Times that the microfinance sector witnessed notable growth during 2010 with the number of active borrowers reaching more than 65,000 and over 55,000 active savers.

He indicated that in 2011 the microfinance sector, like many other industries, was affected by the ongoing

uprisings and demonstrations.

Al-Mikhlaifi said that sector's reach in Yemen is still limited, reaching 5 percent of the estimated demand of a potential one million people.

However, Al-Mikhlaifi expected the industry to grow notably during the coming year. "We expect the beneficiaries to increase from

65,000 active clients by the end of 2011 to 100,000 active clients and more than 100,000 savers by the end of 2012," he said.

"It's a promising sector because it helps both the reduction of poverty and unemployment. It gives the poor a chance to improve their lives and income."



Nasser Al-Aswadi at the Spanish Embassy

By Yemen Times staff

Artist Nasser Al-Aswadi, who exhibited his work at the Spanish Embassy last Wednesday evening, works 15 hours a day over three weeks to complete a single piece. Each picture tells a different story.

"I want to tell people that we have a very rich history and culture and to transmit what we have here in Yemen," said Al-Aswadi. "Many of the artists here copy from abroad, or are inspired by what comes from outside, but for me art has to be made of roots, of history."

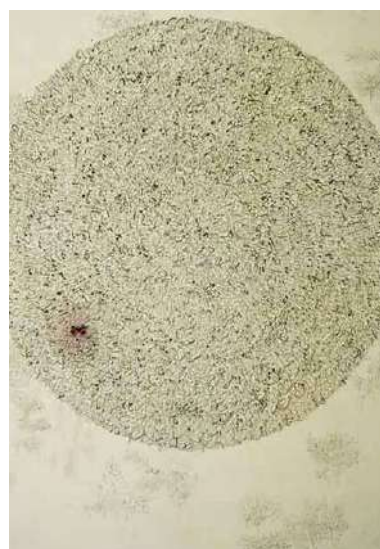
Born in Al-Hujr village, 20km from Taiz, but inspired by the Old City of Sana'a, Yemeni folklore and culture, calligraphy and women's stories, Al-Aswadi first trained as an architect. Art courses simply

weren't available in Yemen, he says.

However, he turned to painting in 1998 and exhibited his contemporary work for the first time in Sana'a in 2001. Ten years after he first began painting, Al-Aswadi moved to France, which he now considers a second home, and divides his time between Sana'a and Marseille.

Although he has traveled to many countries for his work, Al-Aswadi chose to settle in France because it is "a country of beauty and art." He learned French and continued to study and develop his work through internships. Al-Aswadi also took up engraving, which he now incorporates into his work.

Talking about his current pieces, which feature calligraphy, he said, "In my work, scrolls are not supposed to reveal their secrets. They



are just alive again.

"I myself am fascinated by the obvious, the daily life. I wish to be able to use the energy of both words



and light. Writing is at the heart of my work, and my purpose is to transcend mere terminology and proceed into the realm of signs, of



a visual language.

"I would like others to perceive my own pictorial universe as a combination of history and magic,"

he concluded.

Al-Aswadi's latest work can be viewed at the Spanish Embassy until the end of the month.