

NHSMUN

National High School Model United Nations

CRISIS: LAS **BACKGROUND GUIDE** | 53

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A Note on the NHSMUN Difference

Esteemed Faculty and Delegates,

Welcome to NHSMUN 2027! We are Armen Bagdassarian and Sabeeh Mirza, and we are elated to serve as this year's Secretaries-General. Thank you for choosing to attend NHSMUN, the world's largest and most diverse high school Model United Nations conference. As a space for collaboration, consensus, and compromise, NHSMUN strives to transform today's brightest thinkers, speakers, and collaborators into tomorrow's leaders. We believe that an emphasis on education through simulation is paramount to the Model UN experience.

Realism and Accuracy: Although a perfect simulation of the UN is never possible, we believe that one of the core educational responsibilities of MUN conferences is to educate students about how the UN System works. We strive to invite real UN, NGO, and field experts into each committee through our committee speakers program. Moreover, we arrange meetings between students and the actual UN Permanent Mission of the country they are representing. These exclusive resources are only available due to IMUNA's formal association with the United Nations Department of Global Communications and consultative status with the Economic and Social Council. No other conference goes so far to deeply immerse students into the UN System.

Educational Emphasis: At the heart of NHSMUN lies education and compromise. Part of what makes NHSMUN special is its diverse delegate base. As such, when NHSMUN distributes awards, we strongly de-emphasize their importance in comparison to the educational value of Model UN. In particular, our daises look for and promote constructive leadership and diplomacy that strive toward consensus, as real ambassadors do in the United Nations.

Research and a Dedicated Staff: Our staffers care deeply about delegates' experiences and what they take away from their time at NHSMUN. Our Directors spend over six months preparing Background Guides, in addition to Update Briefs written to reflect the rapidly changing nature of the topics to be discussed. Our staffers are trained rigorously to provide the best conference experience possible. Our daises provide thoughtful comments on submitted position papers. Our staff aims to tailor the committee experience to delegates' reflections and research, but also to facilitate an environment where all delegates' thoughts can be heard.

Empowering Participation: The UN relies on the voices of all of its member states to create resolutions. This is our philosophy at NHSMUN too. Our Rules of Procedure and our staff focus on making every voice in the committee heard, regardless of country assignment or skill level. Additionally, unlike many other conferences, we also emphasize delegate participation after the conference. Delegates spend countless hours researching topics critical to the UN and broader international sphere.

Delegates, it is our sincerest hope that your time at NHSMUN will be thought-provoking and stimulating. NHSMUN is an incredible time to learn, grow, and embrace new opportunities. We look forward to seeing you work both as students and global citizens at the conference.

Best,

Armen Bagdassarian
Secretary-General

Sabeeh Mirza
Secretary-General

Position Paper Requirements

Delegate research and preparation is a critical element of attending NHSMUN and enjoying the debate experience. We have provided this Background Guide to introduce the topics that will be discussed in your committee. We encourage and expect each of you to critically explore the selected topics and be able to identify and analyze their intricacies upon arrival to the conference.

The task of preparing for the conference can be challenging. To assist delegates, we have updated our **Beginner Delegate Guide** and **Advanced Delegate Guide**. These guides contain more detailed instructions on how to prepare a position paper and excellent sources that delegates can use for research. Use these resources to your advantage. They can help transform a sometimes overwhelming task into what it should be: an engaging, interesting, and rewarding experience.

To accurately represent a national representative, delegates must be able to articulate their policies. Accordingly, NHSMUN requires each delegation (the one or two delegates representing a country in a committee) to write a position paper for each topic on the committee's agenda. More information about how to write and format position papers can be found in the **Research Guide**. To summarize, position papers should be structured into three sections.

I: Topic Background – This section should describe the history of the topic as it would be described by the delegate's role. Delegates do not need to give an exhaustive account of the topic, but rather focus on the details that are most important to the delegation's policy and proposed solutions.

II: Country Policy – This section should discuss the delegation's policy regarding the topic. Each paper should state the policy in plain terms and include the relevant statements, statistics, and research that support the effectiveness of the policy. Comparisons with other global issues are also appropriate here.

III. Proposed Solutions – This section should detail the delegation's proposed solutions to address the topic. Descriptions of each solution should be thorough. Each idea should clearly connect to the specific problem it aims to solve and identify potential obstacles to implementation and how they can be avoided. The solution should be a natural extension of the character's policy.

Each topic's position paper should be **no more than 10 pages long** double-spaced with standard margins and 12 point font size. This is a maximum; **3–5 pages per topic is often a suitable length**. The paper must be written from the perspective of your assigned role and should articulate the policies you will espouse at the conference.

Each delegation is responsible for submitting position papers on or before **February 26, 2027**. If a delegate wishes to receive detailed feedback from the committee's dais, their position paper must be submitted on or before **February 5, 2027**. The papers received by this earlier deadline will be reviewed by the committee dais and returned before February 26. Instructions on how to submit position papers will be shared directly with faculty advisors.

Submission instructions for position papers will be sent to faculty advisers via email. If delegations are unable to submit their position papers on time, please contact us at **nhsmun@imuna.org**.

Delegations that do not submit position papers will be ineligible for awards.

Committee History

The League of Arab States, more commonly known as the Arab League, was founded on March 22, 1945, in Cairo, Egypt. Its founding member states are Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Yemen. The founding states created the LAS to model Pan-Arabism, the idea of cultural and political unity among Arab countries.

The League's founding goals were to strengthen and coordinate political, cultural, economic and social programs between its members and to mediate disputes between its members. In 1950, League Members signed a joint defense and economic cooperation agreement, which required members to coordinate military defense measures. In 1959, it held the first Arab Petroleum Congress and in 1964 established the Arab league Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization to promote educational, cultural and scientific progress.

However, political disagreements frequently limit the League's ability to act collectively. Egypt was suspended from the organization in 1979 after signing a peace treaty with Israel, although they were readmitted in 1989.[1] Divisions among member states also emerged during the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, when the League condemned the invasion, but remained decided over foreign military intervention.[2] These disputes demonstrated the difficulty of balancing collective Arab interests with the individual political and security priorities of member states.

In the twenty-first century, the League continued to serve as a forum for regional diplomacy. In 2002, its members endorsed the Arab Peace initiative, which proposed normalized relations between Arab states and Israel in exchange for an Israeli withdrawal from occupied Arab territories and the establishment of a Palestinian state.[3] During the Arab Spring, the League suspended Libya and Syria in response to their governments' actions against protesters. Syria's membership was restored in 2023, reflecting a broader regional shift toward diplomacy.[4]

Today, LAS consists of 22 Member States and continues to address political disputes, economic cooperation, regional security, and humanitarian crises.[5] Although its resolutions are generally non-binding, the League provides its members with a platform to negotiate responses to regional issues. Its involvement in Yemen has similarly required members of the Arab League to balance their national interests with the League's broader commitment to Arab cooperation and regional stability.[6]

1 Council on Foreign Relations, "The Arab League," last updated May 25, 2023, https://www.cfr.org/backgrounders/arab-league.
2 CNN, "Arab League Fast Facts," March 17, 2026, https://kesq.com/news/national-world/cnn-world/2026/03/17/arab-league-fast-facts-5/.
3 United Nations, "The Arab Peace Initiative," March 28, 2002, https://www.un.org/unispal/document/auto-insert-207494/.
4 Saudi Press Agency, "Arab Foreign Ministers Decide to Resume Participation of Syrian Delegations in Meetings of Arab League," May 7, 2023, https://www.spa.gov.sa/w1898271.
5 European External Action Service, "League of Arab States (LAS) and the EU," August 3, 2021, https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/league-arab-states-las-and- eu_en.
6 Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates of Yemen, "Arab League Affirms Support for Yemen's Unity, Sovereignty, Stability," September 5, 2025, https://www.mofa-ye.org/Pages/33775/.

TOPIC A

The Situation in Yemen



Photo Credit: fahd sadi

Introduction

On December 17, 2010, Mohamed Bouazizi, a street vendor, set himself on fire in protest of police harassment in Tunisia. The movement that followed engulfed the Arab World in a series of protests, uprisings, and revolts against corruption and economic stagnation. This was dubbed the Arab Spring.

This desire for change reached the Republic of Yemen, a state situated in the southernmost tip of the Arabian Peninsula. As of 2025, it is home to around 41 million people.[1] On February 27, 2012, Yemenis forced their President for 33 years, Ali Abdullah Saleh, out of office. They replaced him with his vice president, Abdrabuh Mansur Hadi. However, what was supposed to be a spark for progress ended up ravaging the country and its citizens. A failed transition to democracy, deep-rooted religious and tribal divisions, and an overarching regional cold war has turned the country into a battleground for competing local and foreign entities.

There are two main combatants of this conflict. The first is the internationally recognized Yemeni government. It is currently led by the Presidential Leadership Council (PLC), an eight-member executive body backed by Saudi Arabia. The second combatant is the Houthi Movement, a Zaydi Shia Islamist political and military organization led by the Supreme Political Council (SPC), which claims to be the legitimate government of Yemen. It is supported by Iran, the main rival of Saudi Arabia in the Middle East. The conflict has plunged Yemen into one of the world's worst humanitarian crises. In 2026, 21.6 million people in Yemen need aid, including 11 million children, and more than 4.5 million are displaced.[2]

Although Saudi Arabia and Iran are the two primary actors, this is not a bilateral conflict. There are numerous other factions and actors at play. Another major group is the Southern Transitional Council (STC), a separatist group supported by the United Arab Emirates (UAE) that fights for an independent South Yemen. Additionally, 70 to 80 percent of Yemenis belong to various tribal groups. Many of these tribes are politically and militarily active. They support one of the major factions who best serve their interests. Some have even shifted allegiance over time.[3]

Yemen's current circumstances are just the latest example in a long history of foreign intervention and internal strife. This violence has shaped the history of the region, and it is poised to do so again. The League of Arab States (LAS) needs to thoughtfully consider both current and historical complexities to find enduring solutions for this conflict.

History and Description of the Issue

DIVIDED YEMEN AND UNIFICATION (1918 - 1990)

During the 19th century, the Ottoman and British empires sought influence over the Arabian Peninsula. Ottoman influence spread from the north whereas the British seized important port cities in the southern end of the peninsula. However, as competing great powers, the two empires wanted to avoid a bloody and costly war. They signed a treaty to officially split the territory they called South Arabia into North and South Yemen.[4] Imperial competition over the Arabian Peninsula first created political divisions between the north and south. Many of Yemen's current problems can be traced back to these historical differences.

In 1918, the Ottoman Empire fell in the wake of World War I. The United Kingdom and France took control of several of its former territories across the Middle East. Other territories, including North Yemen, became independent. North Yemen became the Kingdom of Yemen, with Imam Yahya Muhammad as its first king. He founded a dynasty of imams – Muslim religious leaders – who followed Zaydism, a branch of Shia Islam followed by many Yemenis. As of 2022, an estimated 35 percent of Yemenis are Zaydi.[5] 65 percent follow Sunni Islam.[6]

The ruling imams were from the Zaydi tribes based in the northeastern highlands of the country.[7] They maintained their power by heavily taxing the Sunni tribes in the midlands and on the coast.[8] This, of course, created a sense of resentment among the Sunni tribes. Republican partisans who sought a more democratic form of government eventually emerged and launched a successful revolt against the imams in 1962. With the support of Gamal Abder Nasser, the President of Egypt, the partisans were able to topple the Kingdom of Yemen, establishing the Yemen Arab Republic (YAR).

Taxes were reduced, and the new peace ushered in a period of economic growth. However, in 1970, a new peace was reached with the highland Zaydi tribes. Under this agreement, the highland tribes would handle YAR's political and military affairs, while the lowland tribes would manage its economic affairs.[9] This gave the highland elites a substantial amount of power under the new republic. In 1978, their influence further increased with the election of President Ali Abdullah Saleh, who was from the highlands. He reintroduced heavy taxation on lowland communities.[10] He also empowered highland tribal leaders at the expense of the Zaydi imams.[11] These actions created resentment among both the Zaydi and lowland communities.

The United Kingdom retained control over South Yemen for several more decades. South Yemen would only achieve independence as the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY) in 1967. The new state was led by the Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP), which swiftly allied with its ideological ally, the Soviet Union. The YAR, however, was closely aligned with the United States. The PDRY's independence created a new front in the Cold War that had already been brewing since the end of WWII. Both the US and USSR financed and supplied their Yemeni ally in the hope that it would emerge triumphant. Saudi Arabia, at the time a growing regional power, also supported the YAR. Saudi Arabia viewed a socialist South Yemen as a threat to its domestic and regional interests.[12]

The PDRY and YAR fought two brief wars in September 1972 and February 1979.[13] Neither party gained any territory through these conflicts, although there was widespread bloodshed and dramatic assassinations.[14] The 1979 conflict was ended through mediation by the Arab League, marking one of its earliest political successes.[15] During the following years, the two countries sought peace. PDRY President Ali Nasser Mohammed visited YAR in 1981, and Saleh returned the favor and met Nasser Mohammed in PDRY to discuss unification the same year.

The late 1980s would usher in substantial

Although the fighting in the highlands would continue for a decade, life for the midland and coastal tribes seemed to improve under the YAR.

changes. A civil war in 1986 between two factions of the ruling socialist party greatly weakened the PDRY.[16] The Soviet Union also started to collapse, which meant the PDRY lost its main source of foreign support. Finally, extensive oil fields were discovered near the border of the YAR and PDRY, creating a financial incentive for unification. In April 1990, the two countries signed an agreement for a unified state.[17] The Republic of Yemen was formally created on 22 May 1990. Ali Abdullah Saleh (from the YAR) became the Head of State, and Ali Salem al-Beidh (from the PDRY) the Head of Government of the newly formed republic.

CONSOLIDATION OF EXECUTIVE POWER UNDER SALEH AND FIRST YEMENI CIVIL WAR (1990–2004)

On paper, the Yemeni unification created one country with one constitution and one government.[18] However, the two halves of the country continued to be different. They had very different political systems, militaries, and regional identities. Although the dual leadership by Saleh and al-Beidh was meant to show that the new state belonged to both sides, it unfortunately created a very flawed system of power-sharing.

The new government included several major political factions. Saleh led the General People's Congress (GPC), whose power base was in North Yemen (formerly the YAR). Saleh had managed an extensive patronage system that stemmed from his political power. His followers remained loyal to him personally under the new government. The Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP) from the former PDRY (South Yemen) also survived under al-Beidh and had the allegiance of institutions and groups in the southern part of the country. Another major faction was the Islamist Islah Party. The Islah Party brought together Sunni Islamist and tribal forces that often (but not always) aligned with northern interests. Additionally, both countries had agreed to merge their armed forces into one unified group. However, with so many deeply entrenched systems dividing them, rival militias loyal to one side or the other were quick to emerge. Yemen may have been drawn as one country on a map, but it was still largely divided in practice.[19]

The 1993 parliamentary elections brought these problems into plain view. Saleh's GPC were the victors at the expense of the YSP, threatening the balance of power between the north and south.[20] As its political position weakened, many southern leaders feared that the promise of equal partnership within unity was disappearing. The growing mistrust between northern and southern leaders eventually led to a constitutional and political crisis. Southern officials argued that their region was being marginalized under the new state. Especially through the centralization of government authority in Sanaa, Yemen's constitutional capital.

There were attempts to prevent the collapse of the new state. In early 1994, the Document of Pledge and Accord was signed, which proposed reforms intended to limit centralization and address southern concerns.[21] However, these efforts came too late to rebuild trust between the GPC and the YSP. Fighting broke out between northern- and southern-aligned forces in the spring of 1994. Southern leaders eventually seceded and attempted to restore an independent southern state. However, Saleh's forces defeated the secessionists within a few months. The short, but decisive, civil war and its aftermath involved major human rights concerns. This included attacks that affected civilians and the displacement of people from contested areas.[22]

The government's victory preserved formal unity, but Saleh now enjoyed uncontested authority. Much of the YSP's leadership was dead or in exile, and Saleh branded himself as the defender of Yemeni unity. He pushed southern leaders out of many key positions of power and installed loyalists. Extending his control so far over the South made Saleh increasingly dependent on northern tribal and Islamist allies.[23]

Following the civil war, Saleh consolidated his power through a series of constitutional changes. He codified a stronger presidential system of government (with Saleh as president) with reduced regional autonomy.[24] Yemen continued to hold elections and allow different political parties (subject to heavy restrictions on speech and activity). In 1999, Yemen held a presidential election that codified and formalized Saleh's control and gave him a sense of democratic legitimacy.[25] However, these elections were held to simply confirm the president's authority. If a politician wanted to win in Yemen, cooperation with Saleh was all but required.

The post-war period was especially damaging for the south.[26] Many southerners viewed the outcome of the 1994 war as the defeat of "partnership within unity." Human Right Watch reported on Yemen in its 1997 World Report. It identified political and human rights concerns in the country after the war. This showed that the end of fighting did not produce a fully stable political order.[27] Southern grievances over land ownership, employment, and political exclusion remained unresolved. There emerged a belief that national institutions served the ruling class instead of the population as a whole.

At the same time, Saleh's centralized system produced resentment outside the south as well. In the northern highlands, Zaydi communities felt that their influence had been weakened by decades of marginalization under Saleh first under the YAR and then under the unified government.[28] Additionally, poorer rural communities and lowland groups continued to feel excluded from the benefits of the state's patronage system. These grievances were not identical to southern grievances, but they came from a similar problem. The state was increasingly organized around loyalty to Saleh rather than equal national representation. By concentrating authority on the presidency and using alliances to manage opposition, Saleh maintained short-term control while allowing long-term grievances to deepen.[29] It was only a matter of time before these grievances broke out into conflict.

RISE OF THE HOUTHIS AND THE ARAB SPRING (2004 - 2011)

The Houthi movement, formally known as Ansar Allah, is one of the major players in the modern Yemeni conflict. They are an armed political and religious group that emerged from Yemen's



Southern separatists (1994)

Credit: Unknown author

Zaydi minority, growing out of the Zaydi revivalist movement of the late 20th century. Following the end of Zaydi rule in 1962, Sunni Islamists began spreading their interpretation of Islam in northern Yemen, including Sa'dah, seen as an important hub of Zaydism.[30] These Islamists were actively supported by the YAR government who sought to prevent Zaydi imams from gaining power again.[31] The spread of Sunni Islam into their homeland greatly angered the Zaydis. They felt their way of life was under attack.

At first, Zaydi revivalism was purely a religious movement. Zaydis began publicly celebrating their religious rituals in the mid-1980s to counter Sunni teachings. Zaydi scholars created new schools to teach their interpretation of Islam. After unification, Zaydi revivalism also became a political movement. Zaydis who wanted to counter the Islamist Islah Party founded the Hizb al-Haqq in 1990, however, this new party was not very successful. Hizb al-Haqq only won two seats in the 1993 parliamentary elections, one of which was won by a man named Hussein al-Houthi.[32]

Given they only had two seats in parliament, Hizb al-Haqq had little political success. al-Houthi lost his seat four years later. He instead focused on teaching young people about Zaydism through his organization, Believing Youth.[33] His religious teachings became more political after the US War on Terror and invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan.[34] al-Houthi believed the War on Terror was a form of American imperialism, which had domestic implications at home. Saleh had relied on US support since the days of the YAR. His government assisted with US attacks on al-Qaeda bases, and he allowed the US to detain alleged terrorists in Yemen.[35] al-Houthi taught his students to oppose American imperialism and the Yemeni government's support for the War on Terror.

In 2003, Believing Youth launched a series of protests against the US and Saleh's government. The Yemeni government responded aggressively. Beyond simply detaining the protestors, Saleh wanted to ensure that al-Houthi's movement would never rise again. Teachers and civil servants sympathetic to the protestors had their salaries cut or were forcibly relocated away from Sa'dah. Protesting students were expelled from their schools, but still, the protests continued.

Saleh then ordered al-Houthi to turn himself over to the authorities in Sanaa. However, al-Houthi refused. Instead, he wrote an open letter to Saleh. He affirmed his loyalty to the Yemeni government but also urged it to stop its support for the US. Saleh viewed this as an act of rebellion. In June 2004, the Yemeni government began a military operation to kill or arrest al-Houthi.[36] This began a series of six wars between Ansar Allah and the Yemeni government, known as the Sa'dah Wars. The wars lasted from September 2004 to February 2010. al-Houthi was killed in action in 2004 during the first war, but his brother, Abdul Malik al-Houthi, continued to fight, declaring his brother a martyr. It was at this point that the Ansar Allah movement began to be known as the Houthis. Each of the first four wars ended with a ceasefire and minor concessions to the government, and it looked like Ansar Allah was slowly being pushed back.[37] However, by 2008, the tide was turning. The Houthis had still not been routed, and tribal leaders were increasingly unhappy with Saleh's rule. Therefore, they saw an opportunity to strike back.[38]

The sixth and final war started in August 2009. It was the most destructive phase of the conflict since the first war began in 2004. The government forces used a tactic called scorched earth. As they advanced or withdrew from any area, they would destroy anything that could be useful to the Houthis, including civilian infrastructure. This strategy made Saleh very unpopular with the Yemeni people, who faced poverty and starvation in the face of all of the destruction. The sixth war also marked a new era of foreign involvement in Yemen. Saudi Arabia directly intervened on behalf of the Yemeni government for the first time in November 2009 by conducting air strikes against Houthi strongholds. The war ended in February 2010

after the Saudis ended their air strikes.[39]

The Sa'dah Wars were characterized by a few trends. First, various tribes in northern Yemen also fought in the wars. Although not all of them were Zaydi, pro-Houthi tribes joined the conflict because they felt marginalized by Saleh's government. Pro-government tribes were generally Sunni or benefited directly from Saleh's patronage system. As the wars went on, more tribes sided with the Houthis. Secondly, the government forces were larger and more technologically advanced than the Houthis. They used tanks and air strikes to attack Houthi strongholds. However, the Houthis fought back using guerilla warfare. They used their knowledge of Sa'dah's mountainous terrain to hide and attack safely. They also blended into the civilian population in cities and ambushed incoming government forces. Finally, the conflicts were devastating for Sa'dah's civilian population. Many were killed during air strikes by government forces, and more than 250,000 were displaced.[40]

While the Sa'dah Wars ended in 2010, Saleh's government faced another crisis. Alongside his poor handling of the Sa'dah Wars, Yemenis were angered by the economic situation of the country under Saleh. In 2011, the unemployment rate in Yemen was 40 percent.[41] 43 percent of the population lived below the poverty line. In February 2011, Yemeni youth started a new round of protests against Saleh's rule. They were inspired by similar protests in other Arab countries, like in Tunisia and Egypt. This period was known as the Arab Spring. The Yemeni youth demanded an end to Saleh's rule. They wanted to create a fairer and more transparent government. The Houthis saw an opportunity to further undermine Saleh's government and supported the protestors. Another political group, the Hirak Movement, also supported the protestors.[42] The Hirak Movement was led by Southern military leaders who were angered by Saleh's unfair treatment of Yemen's southern provinces.

Saleh responded to the new protests with aggression and violence, just as with the Believing Youth protests. While he announced new economic reforms, police forces arrested and killed many protesters. Seeing his declining popularity, many of Saleh's allies started to turn against him. If Saleh were to fall, his system of patronage would fall with him, so various factions sought other sources of power. For example, the leadership of the Islah Party and other Sunni Islamist groups began supporting protestors. Due



Houthi troops 2020

Credit: Unknown author

to increasing violence and instability, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) began to intervene in Yemen in April 2011. Led by Saudi Arabia, the GCC wanted Saleh to step down before the violence began to affect the entire region. In November 2011, Saleh finally resigned, bringing an end to his decades-long control of Yemen.[43]

HOUTHI TAKEOVER AND THE SAUDI-BACKED INTERVENTION (2011-2022)

The Houthi takeover and the Saudi-backed intervention marked a major turning point in Yemen's modern conflict. By 2014, Yemen's transitional government was already struggling to hold together. This was due to years of elite competition, and unresolved disputes over political representation.[44] Also, the Houthis' rise reflected local grievances in northern Yemen and the weakness of the post-Saleh political transition.

The transition after Saleh's resignation was meant to move Yemen toward a more inclusive government. However, it did not resolve the deeper issues that had led to the country's earlier crisis.[45] The new transitional president Abdrarabbuh Mansur Hadi inherited a divided state. The political institutions lacked legitimacy. The National Dialogue Conference was a part of a process to restore order. It was a national forum that brought political parties, youth groups, women's groups, southern leaders, and Houthi representatives into the same talks. Its goal was to discuss a new constitution, and the future of the Yemeni state. Yet, many groups were still unhappy with the result, among them the Houthis. The Houthis opposed parts of the proposed arrangement because they believed it would limit their access to resources and political influence. These tensions made the government vulnerable to collapse.[46]

In 2014, the Houthis surprised the world by expanding beyond their northern stronghold conquering Sanaa, the capital of Yemen.[47] This was considered a decisive sign that the transitional government had lost control of the country. Rather than being opposed, the Houthis were met with hope and optimism. They promised to tackle corruption, high fuel prices, and political equality. They also benefited from temporary alliances with militias once loyal to Saleh who were seeking new patrons.[48] After entering Sanaa, the Houthis placed increasing pressure on Hadi's government. They forced several political concessions from the transitional leadership and eventually forced Hadi to resign in early 2015. Hadi fled to Aden, a southern port city on the Gulf of Aden.[49]

The Houthis' continued to advance past Sanaa into southern Yemen. For Hadi and his supporters, the Houthi expansion represented a forceful takeover. For the Houthis and their supporters, their advance was liberation from decades of corruption.[50]

This advance continued until March 2015, when an international coalition led by Saudi Arabia launched a direct military intervention in support of Hadi's government. Saudi Arabia viewed the Houthi advance as a direct threat to regional security because of the Houthis' relationship with their rival, Iran. Saudi Arabia found it unacceptable that a close ally of Iran would be their neighbor.[51] This intervention was intended to restore the internationally recognized government and end the rebellion. However, it also transformed Yemen's civil conflict into a regional war. This made the conflict harder to resolve because local political disputes became tied to wider rivalries.

The United Nations Security Council responded to the crisis through Resolution 2216, which demanded that the Houthis withdraw, and stop actions that undermined the transition.[52] The resolution strengthened the international position of Hadi's government and placed pressure on the Houthis. However, it did not produce a settlement. Instead, the war continued, with the Houthis retaining control over Sanaa and much of northern Yemen, which led to the internationally recognized government almost exclusively relying

on international support.[53]

The war had severe consequences for civilians. Airstrikes, shelling, arbitrary detention, displacement, and the collapse of basic services all contributed to the humanitarian crisis.[54] The scale of harm was clear by 2018. Between March 2015 and August 2018, the United Nations documented 6,592 civilians killed and 10,470 injured. [55]As the fighting continued, civilians were caught between competing forces, and the possibility of rebuilding a unified national government became increasingly distant.[56]

By the late 2010s, the war had become the complex, multifront conflict that we see today. Southern separatist forces, local militias, tribal actors, Islamist groups, and regional powers all assembled militias to press their claims to power. Even groups that opposed the Houthis did not agree with each other. In the south, for example, some actors supported the internationally recognized government, while others sought greater independence. This complex web of relationships has made peace efforts difficult because of the number of parties involved.[57]

Even the Saudi-backed coalition began to fracture during this period. In 2017, the UAE backed the STC.[58] The STC was opposed to both the Hadi government and the Houthis, seeking to create an independent South Yemen. The UAE's support marked a serious division in the Saudi-backed coalition. The UAE and Saudi Arabia wanted to limit Houthi and Iranian influence but had competing visions of how to do that. While Saudi Arabia was focused on creating a stable, friendly government in Yemen, the UAE wanted greater control of valuable sea trade routes.[59]

After years of conflict, a truce was agreed to in 2022 that brought about an important pause in the conflict.[60] It included several measures, such as allowing fuel ships to safely enter the port of Hudaydah. Likewise, it allowed the reopening of commercial flights from Sanaa.[61] The truce did not end the war. However, it reduced violence and created space for negotiation.[62] Nonetheless, by 2022, years of fighting had failed to restore a stable national government.

Current Status

GLOBAL DISRUPTIONS

Yemen's current conflict continues to affect more than Yemen itself. Two major disruptions are the Red Sea shipping crisis and the refugee crisis. These issues show that the impact of Yemen's war is not only domestic, but also affects global trade, migration, and humanitarian systems. Since late 2023, Houthi attacks in the Red Sea have made Yemen central to one of the world's most important shipping routes.[63] At the same time, displacement inside Yemen and migration across the Gulf of Aden continue to place pressure on Yemen and nearby states. [64]

The Red Sea, with the Suez Canal on one end and the Gulf of Aden on the other, contains some of the most valuable shipping lanes in the world. Although the Houthis had long threatened maritime traffic, the War in Gaza changed the Houthis behavior. Houthi fighters began attacking commercial ships they claimed were connected to Israel as punishment for its military action in Gaza.[65] However, there were numerous accusations of other ship traffic being targeted as well. The International Maritime Organization condemned these attacks as illegal and unjustifiable because they threatened commercial ships and the marine environment.[66]

The only maritime alternative to sailing through the Red Sea is to go around the Cape of Good Hope in Southern Africa. This route is much longer and increases travel time, fuel use, insurance costs, and shipping prices. About 15 percent of global maritime trade normally passes through the Suez Canal route.[67] However, during the first two months of 2024, Suez Canal trade fell by 50 percent year-over year as a result of this violence, while trade moving around the Cape of Good Hope rose by about 74 percent.[68] These



Refugee camp in Yemen

Credit: Julien Harneis

figures show how quickly the conflict around Yemen affected global shipping patterns.

The Red Sea attacks also increased regional security tensions. The attacks led to retaliation from the United States, the United Kingdom, and other states seeking to protect their commercial shipping. [69] This widened the conflict environment around Yemen. Although fighting inside Yemen had slowed after the 2022 truce, the Red Sea attacks demonstrated how the Houthis could still affect regional security. Yemen's location gave the Houthis the ability to use maritime disruption as a source of political pressure and international attention.[70]

The other pressing crisis in Yemen is the refugee and displacement crisis. Yemen remains one of the world's largest humanitarian emergencies. In 2025, the United Nations estimated that 19.5 million people in Yemen needed humanitarian assistance and protection services.[71] The UNHCR also reported that this included 4.8 million internally displaced people, making Yemen one of the largest internal displacement crises in the world. Many Yemenis have been displaced from their homes more than once. Some have lived for years in temporary shelters, camps, or host communities with limited access to food, water, healthcare, or income. Internal displacement is especially important because many Yemenis have not been able to leave the country. Instead, they have moved within Yemen while still facing conflict and economic collapse. UNHCR identifies all of these as major drivers for Yemen's long humanitarian crisis.[72]

Yemen is also unusual because it is both a country people flee from and a country that still receives refugees and migrants. Despite the war, Yemen continues to host refugees and asylum seekers, mainly from Somalia and Ethiopia.[73] Many people from the Horn of Africa still cross the Gulf of Aden because they hope to reach Yemen or continue toward Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states for work. This Eastern Route has been described as one of the busiest and most dangerous migration routes in the world.[74]

Migrants and refugees often travel by boat from Djibouti or Somalia toward Yemen. They may face drowning, trafficking, detention, abuse, exploitation, or forced return. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) reported that

Yemen recorded 11,740 migrant arrivals between January and July 2024.[75] However, actual numbers may be difficult to track because border controls and anti-smuggling campaigns can change the routes migrants use. [76]

Overall, Yemen's current status remains unstable. The reduction in large-scale fighting after the 2022 truce did not end the wider crisis. The Red Sea crisis showed that the Houthis could influence international trade without controlling all of Yemen. The refugee crisis showed that civilians continue to face the long-term effects of war, economic collapse, and weak state institutions. Together, these disruptions show how Yemen's conflict is both local and international. It is rooted in Yemen's internal politics, but its effects continue to spread across the Red Sea, the Horn of Africa, the Gulf, and the wider global economy.

THE SAUDI-IRAN COLD WAR

Yemen's war became one of the most important fronts in the wider rivalry between Saudi Arabia and Iran. This rivalry is often described as a regional "Cold War" because Iran and Saudi Arabia have usually avoided direct war with each other. Instead, they have competed through allies, armed groups, media influence, and regional conflicts.[77] Yemen became important because of its geographical location, as it sits on Saudi Arabia's southern border and beside the Bab al-Mandab Strait, which connects the Gulf of Aden with the Red Sea and therefore the Suez Canal.

Saudi Arabia has long viewed Yemen as part of its own security environment. Instability in Yemen can affect Saudi border security, migration, and militant activity, because of Yemen's geographical position. Before the current war, Saudi Arabia often tried to influence Yemeni politics through relationships with tribal leaders and government institutions. After the Houthis took Sanaa in 2014 and pushed Hadi's government out of the capital, Saudi leaders saw the situation as a direct threat. This fear shaped Saudi Arabia's decision to intervene in Yemen in March 2015. Saudi Arabia led a coalition that said it wanted to roll back Houthi gains and restore President Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi's internationally recognized government. The intervention was also meant to show that Saudi Arabia would not accept growing Iranian influence on the Arabian Peninsula. However, the campaign did not quickly defeat the Houthis. It internationalized Yemen's civil war, by setting a precedent for regional involvement in the conflict. Moreover, it tied the future of Yemen more closely to Saudi security strategy.[78]

For Iran, Yemen offered a low-cost way to pressure Saudi Arabia. Iran did not need to send a large army or spend at the same level as Saudi Arabia to influence the conflict. By supporting the Houthis, who already had years of experience fighting with guerrilla tactics, Iran gained a partner near Saudi Arabia's southern border. This gave Iran a way to threaten Saudi territory and increase its influence in the Red Sea area.[79] Yemen's location also made the Houthis more valuable to Iran because Houthi control in western Yemen created pressure near the Bab al-Mandab Strait and Red Sea shipping routes.[80]

For the Houthis, the relationship with Iran also had benefits. Iranian support helped them

Yemen was one of the conflicts where improved relations could have mattered most, because the two powers supported opposing sides.

improve their military position and increase their regional importance. Their missile and drone attacks against Saudi Arabia and the UAE showed that they could reach beyond Yemen's borders. Later, their Red Sea attacks showed that they could also affect international shipping.[81] These actions gave the Houthis more leverage. They were no longer only a Yemeni rebel movement. They became a regional actor that could pressure Saudi Arabia, the United States, Israel, and global shipping networks.

However, the Houthi-Iran relationship should be considered with nuance. While the Houthis have received Iranian support, describing them only as an Iranian proxy can oversimplify the conflict. The movement has its own leadership, ideology, and political goals. Their decisions are shaped by Yemeni internal political decisions. Analysts often describe the relationship as a partnership or alignment instead of direct Iranian control.[82] The distinction matters because Yemen's conflict cannot be explained solely though the conflict between Iran and Saudi Arabia.

The Saudi side also became more complicated over time. Although Saudi Arabia entered the war to restore Hadi and contain Iran, the anti-Houthi side never became fully unified. The internationally recognized government remained weak and divided. The STC and other local forces developed their own agendas, and the UAE supported some southern and local actors separately from Saudi Arabia. As a result, Saudi Arabia was not only fighting the Houthis, but it was also trying to manage a divided coalition and a weak Yemeni partner.

The Iran-Saudi rivalry also affected peace efforts. The 2022 UN-backed truce reduced cross-border attacks and created the longest period of relative calm since the war began.[83] Saudi Arabia increasingly wanted to reduce the costs and risks of the war, while the Houthis used their strong position to demand greater concessions.

The 2023 China-brokered agreement between Iran and Saudi Arabia raised hopes that Yemen's war might become easier to resolve. The agreement mainly focused on restoring diplomatic relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia, reopening embassies, and reducing direct hostility between the two states after years of tension. It also raised hopes that Iran might use its relationship with the Houthis to support a calmer negotiating environment in Yemen. However, the agreement did not include a clear public commitment requiring Iran to end its support for the Houthis, nor did it force the Houthis to disarm or accept Saudi-backed political terms. As a result, the Houthis continued to act as an independent force with their own demands, while Saudi Arabia still had to negotiate around Houthi control. [84]

Yemen's current position in the Iran-Saudi rivalry is therefore unusual. It is still part of the wider regional competition, but it is not controlled only by that competition. Iran benefits from Houthi strength because it gives Tehran pressure points against Saudi Arabia and Western interests. Saudi Arabia wants to prevent Yemen from becoming a permanent base for hostile forces on its southern border. At the same time, Yemeni actors use regional backing to strengthen their own position. This makes Yemen both a victim of regional rivalry and an active part of it. The result is a conflict where Yemen's domestic crisis became tied to the balance of power across the Middle East.

DOMESTIC POLITICAL DYNAMICS

The Yemeni government has experienced major changes in recent years. In 2022, Hadi resigned as President, due to domestic and foreign pressure.[85] Many Yemenis were angry at worsening economic conditions. This included high inflation, declining wage and lack of basic services. Saudi Arabia also pressured Hadi to leave office. The country wanted to reduce its involvement in Yemen after years of conflict with the Houthis.[86] However, the Houthis did not want to negotiate with Hadi. They wanted him to step down before they could discuss a ceasefire. So,

Hadi finally yielded to the pressure.

Hadi was replaced by the Presidential Leadership Council (PLC). The PLC is made up of eight members. Their members include representatives from various anti-Houthi forces, like Hadi's former government, Saleh supporters, the STC and the al-Islah party.[87] They were charged with collectively running the Yemeni government and negotiating peace with the Houthis. However, they have been relatively ineffective. First, the various members of the PLC cannot agree on cohesive policies. For example, they disagree on how to share power. They also disagree on whether Yemen should split into two countries. Second, the Houthis do not view them as a legitimate government. Yemeni citizens also are skeptical of the PLC. This is because they did not vote for their members.[88]

In December 2025, the PLC faced an existential challenge. The STC launched a military offensive to control all of southern Yemen. It wanted to create a new, independent South Yemen. They were supported by the UAE. At their peak, the STC controlled about 90 percent of southern Yemen.[89] However, their success was short-lived. Saudi Arabia began supporting the PLC. They attacked STC forces with airstrikes. By January 2026, the PLC recaptured its lost territory.[90] The STC's leaders fled to the UAE and the organization was dissolved. Most STC representatives were kicked out of the PLC as well.

The end of the STC is consequential for a few reasons. It ended the cold war between Saudi Arabia and the UAE in Yemen. The two countries used to support opposing proxies to further their own interests. However, the UAE's proxy had definitively lost. This gives Saudi Arabia extensive influence over Yemen's government. On the other hand, this does not mean the end for internal strife. The loss of most STC members in the PLC means many Southern Yemenis lacks representation. Given Yemen's poor economic situation, Southern Yemenis will be quick to blame the unelected, unrepresentative government for their conditions.

Life under Houthi-ruled Yemen is also difficult. While the Houthis are more united than the PLC, they also have some internal divisions. The majority of Houthis are hardliners. They believe that they are rightful rulers of Yemen. They will continue to fight until they have complete control over Yemen.[91] However, there are some moderates who are more interested in creating an independent North Yemen. They are open to negotiate with Saudi Arabia and accept UN mediation.[92] However, they are far weaker than the hardliners.

Hardliners have intensified interference in daily life for Yemenis. The Houthi government is led by the Supreme Political Council (SPC). The SPC is a group that serves as the executive power of the Houthi government. It has maintained control over its territories by appointing loyalists in many government posts. They also used propaganda to turn its population against foreign intervention.[93] Houthi leadership has also cracked down on dissent within its territories. Journalists are especially endangered, with some facing death sentences. Since 2012, 40 journalists have been killed during crossfire and targeted attacks by both domestic and foreign actors.[94]

Overall, the political situations in and surrounding Yemen are always evolving. While the end of the STC signals a cooling of Saudi-UAE competition, the Saudi Iranian cold war continues, with no sight of it ending. The Red Sea crisis has further complicated the conflict. Now, conflict in Yemen not only affects surrounding countries, but the entire world. Despite these changes, the suffering of Yemeni civilians is constant. Poor conditions for civilians and continued competition between the Houthis and the PLC poses serious risk of further upheaval.

Bloc Analysis

INTERVENTIONISTS

Interventionists have influenced Yemen's politics throughout history. This continues to this day. Regional powers in the Middle East are especially interested in Yemen's internal affairs. This includes countries like Saudi Arabia and the UAE. Interventionist actors are primarily driven by their strategic interests. These interests could be security-related, economic, or political.

Saudi Arabia, for example, has been involved in Yemen since the Republican revolution against the Zaydi Imams in 1962. At that time, Saudi Arabia supported the Zaydi Imams. This is because Egypt supported YAR. Egypt, under President Nasser, was a rival of Saudi Arabia. The two countries competed for influence over the Middle East and broader Arab world. As previously explained in Current Status, Saudi Arabia is now in a similar rivalry with Iran. The Iranian government supports various proxies throughout the Middle East to bolster its influence. This includes the Houthis in Yemen. Iran provides them with weapons, training, and intelligence support.[95] A hostile or rival-aligned Yemeni government poses a security threat to Saudi Arabia. Meanwhile, a stable, allied Yemen allows Saudi Arabia to cement its influence in the region.

Economic incentives also motivate interventionist states. Yemen is a coastal state bordering the Red Sea. The shipping routes on the Red Sea are integral to global trade. An estimated 10 percent of world trade uses these routes.[96] Thus, both Saudi Arabia and the UAE are interested in controlling them. The UAE, for example, has supported Southern secessionist groups to secure control over Yemeni ports.

Foreign intervention in Yemen is most clearly seen in the Saudi-led coalition. The coalition currently includes Arab League countries like Jordan and Bahrain.[97] These countries have provided military support for the internationally recognized Yemeni government. The support came in the form of direct attacks against the Houthi forces. It also came in the form of manpower, naval and air support.[98] These countries also view Iran as a security threat to various degrees.

Overall, interventionists are motivated by strategic interests. They want to stabilize Yemen. However, they also secure more favorable security and economic landscape.

DIPLOMATIC FACILITATORS

Many domestic and foreign actors have tried to mediate between Yemen's warring factions. During the First Sa'dah War, President Saleh appointed multiple mediators to create a ceasefire between his forces and the Houthis. However, his approach was ineffective. First, he appointed too many mediators.[99] This made it difficult for them to work together. Second, most of them were not neutral. Many were members of parties involved in the conflict. This included Saleh's allies, representatives of involved tribes, and Houthi representatives.[100] Thus, they were unable to negotiate as the conflict continued to escalate.

Mediation similarly failed during the Second Sa'dah War. Saleh at that time excluded Houthi representatives from his mediation team entirely. On the other hand, the Third Sa'dah War ended with successful mediation. Saleh charged a Zaydi general and former governor of Sa'dah to lead the mediation committee.[101] The general then primarily appointed other officials from Sa'dah to help with the negotiations. The Houthis were more willing to trust respected officials from Sa'dah. Saleh was also willing to provide various concessions to the Houthis. This included reparations to help the Houthis rebuild Sa'dah.

Foreign actors have also helped facilitate dialogue in Yemen. The most notable actor in this regard is the United Nations. Following Saleh's resignation in 2012, the UN supported

the National Dialogue Conference (NDC). It provided diplomatic, political, technical, logistical and financial support.[102] The NDC also included diverse perspectives from the Houthis, Southern secessionists, women and civil society.[103] However, the NDC ultimately failed for two reasons. First, certain actors, like Saleh and the Houthis, felt they were losing too much power because of the negotiations.[104] Second, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) demanded the Yemeni government remove oil subsidies to restructure their economy. In exchange, the IMF would provide a USD 553 million loan.[105] When the government removed these subsidies, oil and food prices spiked. This made the government very unpopular among common Yemenis. The Houthis, allied with Saleh's forces, used the unrest as pretense for another war.

Despite the NDC's failure, the UN has continued to promote diplomacy in Yemen. In May 2026, Yemeni parties agreed to release over 1,600 conflict-related detainees.[106] This is the largest prisoner release deal since the start of the civil war in 2014.[107] It was mediated by the UN. Such negotiations are often a collaborative effort. The prisoner release deal, for example, was mediated in Jordan.

Oman has also hosted multiple peace talks between Saudi Arabia and the Houthis.[108] Oman is especially viewed favorably by Yemenis. It is one of the few Gulf states that did not join the Saudi-led coalition. Oman has also maintained deep ties with Saudi Arabia[109]. This makes it a suitable partner for peace talks between the two parties.

Yemen's history with mediation provides a blueprint for successful negotiations in the future. Parties involved must feel represented. They must be able to trust the mediators as well. Diplomatic facilitators will be crucial for deescalating future flare-ups in the conflict. They will also be necessary for creating a Yemen where all parties can peacefully coexist.

SPILLOVER STATES

As explained previously, the crisis in Yemen has consequences beyond its borders. So, another major group focused on Yemen are countries that want to contain its negative effects, or spillovers. Spillover effects are when a local conflict, like the Yemeni crisis, starts to impact third party states. A number of Arab League states would fall under this bloc. While they want to stabilize Yemen, their primary focus is to mitigate spillover effects that directly threaten them.

One of these effects is the Yemeni refugee crisis. The conflict has displaced 4.5 million Yemenis, or 14 percent of March 2025.[110] That is 14 percent of the country's population.[111] Many have been displaced to neighboring Arab League countries, including Somalia, Egypt and Djibouti.

Experiences of Yemeni refugees vary from country to country. However, most of them experience a lack of jobs, income and basic necessities. In Somalia, for example, Yemeni refugees get little aid from the host government and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. A small number receive up to USD 60 in financial aid.[112] Some families receive up to USD 100. Their rent is typically about USD 100.[113] This means refugees typically lack money for other necessities. For example, food, healthcare and education.

Yemeni refugees also struggle with resettlement, a process that allows refugees to relocate from their country of asylum to a new host country. Many of their applications for resettlement to Western countries are stalled or rejected.[114] They also have difficulty gaining legal status in their temporary host country.

This poses a major challenge for host countries. First, some host countries do provide certain services and aid to refugees. Egypt, for example, provides some healthcare and education.[115] Supporting refugees can be a significant burden for such countries. This is exacerbated if refugees are denied employment due to their

legal status, giving them fewer opportunities to contribute to their host country's economy.

Houthi attacks on Red Sea shipping routes also affect other major trade routes around the world. The Suez Canal is one such example. The average daily trading volume on the canal was about four million metric tons at the end of 2023.[116] After Houthi attacks in the beginning of 2024, it fell to 1.7 million metric tons. This is a nearly 57.5 percent decrease.[117] This is disastrous for countries dependent on the trade route. 31 percent of Djibouti's foreign trade goes through the Suez Canal.[118] For Sudan it's 34 percent.[119]

Spillover effects of the Yemen crisis will affect almost all members of the League of Arab States. This is even if they are not directly involved in the conflict. Refugee crises and trade disruptions can cause severe economic damages, so these countries are interested in stabilizing Yemen. But their main priority is to secure their own bottom line.

Committee Mission

The League of Arab States (LAS) is tasked with advancing a coordinated regional response to the conflict in Yemen through diplomacy, and respect for Yemeni sovereignty. LAS brings together states with different interests, alliances, and relationships to the conflict. As such, the League is positioned to encourage discussions that may be difficult to pursue through bilateral negotiations alone. Its mission is not simply to condemn continued violence, but to identify areas of agreement between the Arab states and turn them into practical steps toward de-escalation, and a lasting political settlement.[120]

LAS has a long history of mediating regional disputes and promoting cooperation among its members. This requires the committee to address both the internal and external tensions driving and prolonging the conflict.

Diplomatic engagement must remain at the center of the committee's work. Delegates should consider how the League can strengthen communication between opposing parties and support negotiations. Possible directions include humanitarian access agreement and permanent channels for dialogue. The committee must also examine how member states can use their political influence to encourage compromise rather than deepen military and political division. Because some members have supported different actors in the conflict, meaningful progress will depend on the willingness of delegates to confront these disagreements directly and search for common ground.

At the same time, the League's mandate has clear limits. It cannot impose a political settlement on Yemen, replace Yemeni institutions, or disregard the right of the Yemeni people to determine their country's future. Any initiative developed by the committee must therefore preserve Yemen's sovereignty and political independence.[121]

Ultimately, delegates are called upon to approach the crisis not only as representatives of individual states, but as members of a regional organization with a responsibility to prevent further instability. The League's long history of involvement in the region gives it both an opportunity and an obligation to support a peaceful resolution. Through careful negotiation and open discussion, the committee must determine how Arab states can help move Yemen away from conflict and toward a sovereign and stable future.

Character Biographies

ALGERIA: MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AHMED ATTAF

Ahmed Attaf is one of Algeria's most experienced diplomats. He studied political science and public administration before holding several senior positions in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Attaf previously served as Algeria's ambassador to

India, Yugoslavia, and the United Kingdom, as well as Minister of Foreign Affairs from 1996 to 1999.[122] He returned to the position in 2023 and now also oversees Algeria's African affairs.[123] Algeria has criticized foreign military operations in Yemen, arguing that escalation could undermine United Nations and regional efforts to resolve the conflict.[124]

BAHRAIN: MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS ABDULLATIF BIN RASHID AL ZAYANI

Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani has a background in military affairs, and regional diplomacy. Before becoming Bahrain's Minister of Foreign Affairs in 2020, he served as Secretary-General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) from 2011 to 2020. During this period, he helped lead GCC mediation efforts that produced the 2011 GCC Initiative for Yemen. He has also served in senior positions within the Bahrain Defence Force and Ministry of Interior.[125] Bahrain supports the internationally recognized Yemeni government, while also backing UN-led mediation.[126] Al Zayani would likely favor a political settlement intended to contain Houthi military capabilities, and protect Gulf security.

DJIBOUTI: MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS ABDOULKADER HOUSSEIN OMAR

Abdoulkader Houssein Omar became Djibouti's Minister of Foreign Affairs and government spokesperson in April 2025. He previously served as Djibouti's ambassador to Kuwait and held diplomatic assignments involving Kenya, Jordan, and other states in the region. He studied French literature and Arab civilization before entering public service.[127] Djiboutian leaders have emphasized that preserving peace and freedom of navigation in these waters is essential to regional and international security.[128] Omar would therefore likely prioritize maritime security, and a settlement that prevents the Yemeni conflict from spreading into the Horn of Africa.

EGYPT: DEPUTY MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS ABU BAKR HEFNY MAHMOUD

Abu Bakr Hefny Mahmoud became Egypt's Deputy Foreign Minister for African Affairs in 2026. He previously served as Egypt's ambassador to Libya and later managed the Libyan portfolio as Assistant Foreign Minister. His experience included participation in international efforts to reconcile Libyan factions. He also completed diplomatic assignments involving Japan, the United Nations, London, and India.[129] Egypt views Yemen's stability as closely connected to Red Sea security and the operation of the Suez Canal, whose revenues have been affected by shipping disruptions.[130] Abu Bakr would likely support secure maritime navigation, and a UN-led political process.

IRAQ: MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS FUAD HUSSEIN

Fuad Hussein has held senior positions in both the federal Iraqi government and the Kurdistan Regional Government. Before becoming Foreign Minister in 2020, he served as chief of staff the President of the Kurdistan Region, and later as Iraq's minister of Finance. His career has required him to navigate relations between competing ethnic and political interests.[131] Iraq has supported peaceful efforts to end the Yemeni conflict.[132] Hussein would likely oppose actions that transform Yemen into an area for confrontation between Iran and the Gulf states. He would likely advocate for Yemen's unity and sovereignty.

JORDAN: DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AYMAN SAFADI

Ayman Safadi has served as Jordan's Minister of Foreign Affairs since 2017 and Deputy Prime Minister since 2020. He holds a master's degree in international media and has worked as a journalist, newspaper editor, royal advisor, government spokesperson, and a spokesperson for the United Nations Assistance Mission for

Iraq.[133] Jordan supports Yemen's unity and the internationally recognized government.[134] Safadi would likely emphasize that continued instability in Yemen threatens the security of Jordan's Gulf partners and the wider Arab region and support a diplomatic compromise.

KUWAIT: DEPUTY MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS HAMAD SULEIMAN MASHAAN AL-MASHAAN

Hamad Suleiman Mashaan Al-Mashaan is a Kuwaiti diplomat with an academic background in political science. He progressed through the diplomatic ranks as counsellor, minister plenipotentiary, and ambassador before becoming Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs.[135] Kuwait has called for the protection of Yemen's unity and continued support for its legitimate government.[136] Al-Mashaan would likely support ceasefires, humanitarian relief, and renewed talks under United Nations or GCC sponsorship.

LEBANON: MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS YOUSSEF RAJJI

Youssef Rajji became Lebanon's Minister of Foreign Affairs in February 2025 after more than three decades in the diplomatic service. His previous assignments included Washington, Brussels, Geneva, Rabat, Seoul, Abidjan, and Jordan. He also served as Director of Inspection within the Lebanese Foreign Ministry.[137] Rajji has publicly supported the principle that the state should exercise exclusive authority over weapons and national security policy.[138] In discussions on Yemen, he would likely emphasize sovereignty and opposition to armed organizations operating independently of national governments.

MOROCCO: MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS NASSER BOURITA

Nasser Bourita has served as Morocco's Minister of Foreign Affairs since 2017. He has held several positions dealing with multilateral cooperation, European affairs, the United Nations, and Morocco's broader foreign policy.[139] Morocco has reaffirmed its support for Yemen's national unity, while calling for de-escalation and a comprehensive political solution.[140] Bourita would likely support the internationally recognized Yemeni government and oppose any unilateral attempt to divide the country.

OMAN: MINISTER OF THE ROYAL OFFICE SULTAN MOHAMMED AL NU'AMANI

Sultan Mohammed Al Nu'amani serves as Oman's Minister of the Royal Office and is a senior figure within the country's political and security design.[141] Unlike a conventional foreign minister, he would bring the perspective of a senior royal and security advisor. Oman has repeatedly called for restraint, and respect for Yemeni sovereignty.[142] Al Nu'amani would likely protect Oman's position as an intermediary capable of communicating with the Houthis, the recognized Yemeni government, Saudi Arabia, Iran, and international negotiators.

QATAR: MINISTER OF STATE FOR INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION MARIAM BINT ALI BIN NASSER AL-MISNAD

Dr. Mariam bint Ali bin Nasser Al-Misnad was appointed Minister of State for International Cooperation at the Qatari Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2024.[143] She is also the Vice Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the Qatar Fund for Development (QFFD). The QFFD is Qatar's international development provider, charged with delivering humanitarian aid to affected vulnerable communities worldwide.[144] She has previously held several positions in Qatari government, non-profits and academia. Given her extensive background in humanitarian work and Qatar's history as a mediator in Yemen, Al-Misnad is likely to prioritize the League's humanitarian efforts and ensuring peace through diplomacy.

SAUDI ARABIA: AMBASSADOR TO YEMEN MOHAMMED SAEED AL-JABER

Mohammed Saeed Al-Jaber has been Saudi Arabia's Ambassador to Yemen since 2014.[145] He is also the General Supervisor of the Saudi Development and Reconstruction Program for Yemen (SDRPY), and previously led its precursor, the Yemen Comprehensive Humanitarian Operations (YCHO). The SDRPY works with Yemeni and international partners to help reconstruct Yemen's struggling economy.[146] Al-Jaber has been instrumental in leading Saudi Arabia's foreign and developmental policies in Yemen since the beginning of the modern Yemeni crisis. Given his influence over Yemen's economic development and Saudi Yemeni relations, he is likely to prioritize supporting the PLC's legitimacy and Saudi Arabia's interests.

SAUDI ARABIA: COMMANDER OF THE JOINT FORCES FAHD BIN HAMAD AL-SALMAN

Fahd bin Hamad Al-Salman was appointed as the Commander of the Joint Forces, or the Saudi-led coalition, in 2024.[147] As the leader of the Joint Forces, he is charged with directing military assets of the coalition and coordinating containment of the Houthi forces with all members of the coalition. Al-Salman has jurisdiction over several powerful military resources, including the coalition's air and naval capabilities. However, the coalition needs to carefully weigh both the opinions of the Yemeni public and the international community before taking drastic action.

SOMALIA: DEPUTY MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS HASAN MOHAMED ALI

Hasan Mohamed Ali was appointed Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs at the Somali Foreign Ministry in 2022.[148] He is also the Director of Regional and International Organizations Department at the Somali Foreign Ministry. He has previously held several positions at the Somali Foreign Ministry, focusing on collaboration with Arab countries, the League and various international bodies. Ali is likely to leverage his diplomatic experiences with Arab states to further Somalia's interests, like ensuring support for Yemeni refugees in Somalia, protecting Red Sea trade routes and restoring stability in Yemen.

SUDAN: MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS MOHIELDIN SALEM

Mohieldin Salem was appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation at the Sudanese Foreign Ministry in 2025. He has also previously served with the League as the Head of the League of Arab States Mission in South Sudan.[149] In this role, he spearheaded the League's collaboration with the South Sudanese government, supporting political stability, regional cooperation and economic development. Salem has previously called on Red Sea coastal states to cooperate and protect international shipping lanes under threat of Houthi attacks.[150] He is likely to continue his advocacy for securing Red Sea shipping lanes through stronger regional cooperation.

UAE: AMBASSADOR TO YEMEN MOHAMED HAMAD AL ZAABI

Mohamed Hamad Al Zaabi was appointed the UAE Ambassador to Yemen in 2023.[151] In this role, Al Zaabi is responsible for fostering cooperation between the UAE and the PLC. This goal has become especially complicated following the UAE-backed STC's defeat in 2026. Al Zaabi could either work towards repairing ties with the PLC or continue to leverage the UAE's remaining connections in Southern Yemen. Ultimately, Al Zaabi will act in accordance with the UAE's best interests.

UAE: UNIT COMMANDER OF THE PRESIDENTIAL GUARD COMMAND ALI SAIF AL KAABI

Ali Saif Al Kaabi leads the UAE's Presidential Guard Command (PGC), an elite and independent military corps of the UAE Armed Forces. The PGC operates outside the UAE Armed Forces' traditional framework, giving them a lot more independence when conducting their operations. They typically conduct special tasks, like counterterrorism and overseas operations. Al Kaadi is likely to coordinate with the UAE Foreign Ministry as the UAE charts its new path in Yemen following the fall of the STC.

UN: SPECIAL ENVOY OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR YEMEN HANS GRUNBERG

Hans Grunberg was appointed the UN Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen in 2021.[152] Grunberg, a career diplomat who has previously served as the EU Ambassador to Yemen, brings an extensive background in diplomacy and mediation to his role. As part of his mandate, he seeks to spearhead the UN's efforts in mediating between Yemen's internal factions and facilitating a new framework for political stability in the country.[153] Grunberg will likely aim for reforms to Yemeni political institutions that ensure security and dignity for all Yemenis.

YEMEN: CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE YEMENI ARMED FORCES SAGHEER HAMOUD AZIZ

As the Chief of Staff of the Yemeni Armed Forces, Sagheer Hamoud Aziz is charged with leading Yemen's land, air and naval armed forces. He is also a member of the pro-PLC General People's Congress, making him closely aligned with Yemen's internationally recognized government. Aziz is likely to coordinate with the Saudi-led coalition to uphold the security of PLC-held Yemen and strategically eliminate the Houthi's hold over northern Yemen.

YEMEN: MEMBER OF THE PRESIDENTIAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL ABDULRAHMAN "ABU ZARA'A" AL-MAHRAMI

Abu Zara'a was appointed a member of the PLC in 2022, making him a key figure in the internationally recognized Yemeni government's decision-making.[154] In his role as a member of the PLC, he was charged with overseeing the security of Aden, the capital of PLC-controlled Yemen, by combating terrorism and civilian unrest.[155] He is also the last remaining PLC member from southern Yemen and served as the STC's Vice President until the group's dissolution in 2026. Abu Zara'a is likely to balance both his responsibilities as Aden's protector and the spokesperson for the often-agitated Southern Yemenis.

YEMEN: VICE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS MUSTAPHA AHMED MOHAMED NOMAN

Mustapha Ahmed Mohamed Noman has served as Yemen's Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs since 2003, and is primarily charged with representing Yemen in Europe, the Americas and international organizations.[156] In addition to his extensive career as a diplomat, Noman helped oversee elections when North and South Yemen first united in 1993.[157] He is also serving as an advisor to PLC Chairman Rashad al-Alimi.

Research and Preparation Questions

Your dais has prepared the following research and preparation questions as a means of providing guidance for your research process. These questions should be carefully considered, as they embody some of the main critical thought and learning objectives surrounding your topic.

TOPIC A

1. How can the League of Arab States support a lasting political settlement in Yemen while respecting Yemeni sovereignty?
2. Should the League prioritize restoring a unified central government or pursue a decentralized political framework that recognizes Yemen's regional divisions?
3. How can Member States improve the delivery of humanitarian aid to Yemeni civilians while preventing its obstruction or politicization by parties to the conflict?
4. What measures should be taken to restore access to food, clean water, healthcare, education, and other essential services in areas controlled by different parties?
5. Should the League recognize the Houthis as legitimate political participants, given their territorial control and role in the conflict?
6. What political, economic, and security guarantees would be necessary to prevent Yemen from returning to conflict after a peace agreement is signed?

Important Documents

TOPIC A

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