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Yemeni Civil War: Hadi Government

Topic Bulletin

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Greetings Delegates!

Welcome to AMUN XIX!!! My name is Nicole Gerzon, I'm currently a junior in the Academy of Engineering and Design Technology, and I'll be your head chair for the Yemeni Hukuma. I first got introduced to MUN at the end of my freshman year and then fell in love with crisis and specialized committees in my sophomore year. Since then I've chaired for a couple committees, including last year's JCC at AMUN and I'm thrilled to see how you guys will handle this year's crisis (I think you'll have some fun with this one). In my free time I like to watch Netflix and GoT, hang out with my comrades, and playing with my doge. I hope you have a great experience here and I can't wait to see you all in February! Happy researching!!

Best regards,
Nicole Gerzon, Hukuma Yemeni Revolutionary Crisis Head Chair
nicger19@bergen.org

Hello Delegates,

My name is Michelle Surets, and I am pleased to welcome all of you to AMUN XIX! I am currently a junior in the Academy for the Advancement of Science and Technology, and I will be your vice chair for the Yemeni Hukuma. I got involved with Model UN in my freshman year, and instantly fell in love with the fast-paced, often changing environment of crisis committees. This will be my second time working in a JCC for AMUN, which I am pretty excited about. In my free time, I can be found arguing with someone about Harry Potter, fencing, or doing research. I hope that you all will have an amazing time debating in February and I look forward to seeing all of the innovative solutions that you come up with. Have fun researching!

Sincerely,
Michelle Surets, Hukuma Yemeni Revolution Crisis Vice Chair
micsur19@bergen.org



Introduction

Our committee will have its focus on the conflict in Yemen between the Hadi government and the Houthi rebels. The conflict began in 2011 with the Yemeni Revolution, where people protested against their government and succeeded in forcing their president, Ali Abdullah Saleh, to resign. The man who took his place was his vice president Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi. One of the main groups involved in organizing and escalating these protests was the Houthi rebel group. The National Dialogue Conference has just ended, an effort made by the Yemeni government to implement new reforms and to make strides towards a new and improved Yemen. So far, the rebels are satisfied with the leadership and their role in the government, but certain policies may have them swinging back to protests and insurrections.

This JCC will consist of two rooms, one that will simulate the new government under Hadi and the other that will consist of the Houthi leadership and others that are in charge of the rebellion which has been brought to a ceasefire. The goal of the government is to crush the rebels and to pacify the citizens enough to quell any further rebellion. The goal of the Houthis is to gain support of the citizens and to overtake the government. Both committees must do this without causing an international human rights crisis or escalating into a full blown civil war and must maintain control of their areas. Each member of the government committee has their own goals to achieve but, unless they are the mole whose job is to help the rebels, their personal goals shouldn't interfere with the goals of the committee.

Topic History

The Yemeni Revolution in 2011 was the result of a stream of pro-democratic movements occurring in the Middle East. This wave began with the Jasmine Revolution occurring in Tunisia in early 2011, which eventually removed President Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali from power [1]. It is during the early stages of that revolution that both the Yemeni and the Egyptian revolutions began, each hoping to fight against poverty and corruption in their respective governments. However, the main distinction between the three revolutions is the presence of a strong central opposition faction that was found in the Yemeni Revolution, where protests were organized by a coalition of resistance groups rather than by individual citizens [1].

In ancient times, Yemen was considered a trading mecca and the site of many large kingdoms that would dominate the Arab Peninsula. In recent times, however, Yemen is 10th on the failed state index, and coping with a government that is too weak, apathetic, or simply unable to fix its long term issues. The root of Yemen's problems is its dwindling economy, caused in part by the unification of North and South Yemen, Yemen's support for Iraq during the Persian Gulf War, and the 1994 civil war, all of which worked steadily to drain Yemen's economy and force the state to rely heavily on aid from multilateral agencies and its own neighbors. The decline in natural resources did not improve the economy either

[7]. Despite many attempts from the government and other outside sources to implement monetary reforms in Yemen, such as the IMF, World Bank funding, and IDA credits, Yemen's economy continues to fluctuate between stagnation and decline. These uncertain economic conditions have caused waves of unemployment and inflation, which in turn have resulted in large scale famine all over the country, with one third of the population suffering from chronic hunger.

The government, while partially trying to address these issues, is facing large scale corruption which renders it untrustworthy and useless in the eyes of many Yemenis. The current administration, under president Ali Abdullah Saleh, is marked by multitudinous military, governmental, and corporate interests (as well as plain self enrichment) which often interfere with, and sometimes overshadow, what's best for the people. The central government throughout Yemen's history has had very little control over the majority of it's territory. This is something that Saleh has tried to change through brutal tactics, which backfired in many regions [4]. Saleh has been known to give contracts, high ranking positions, and international financial aid to close friends or members of his family. In 2004, the Houthis clan began to attack Saleh under accusations for his US and Saudi ties, corruption, and other shortcomings for his, nearly three decade, reign. The argument escalated to Saudi troop deployment in 2009 and was gradually subdued to a cease fire in 2010 due to growing international pressure. Since 2010 CEIP has stated that Yemen is more likely to be toppled by corruption than by Al-Qaeda.

Religion plays a big role in the country of Yemen, consisting mainly of the two Islamic groups, the Zaydi order of Shi'a Islam and the Shafa'i order of Sunni Islam [6]. The Shia population makes up approximately 35% of the country, and the other 65% of the country consists of the Sunni population [5]. The Zaydi Shi'a religion is particularly close in religious practices to Sunni Islam, therefore, there isn't such a drastic distinction between the two. There is a very small number of people residing in Yemen that are of any other religion, consisting of an estimated 3,000 Christians and 400 Jews [6]. While religion was not the prime initiator of the conflict, the uprisings have weakened the state of an already broken Yemen, making it more susceptible to radical foreign influences and minority groups.

Yemen's entire military force (army, air force, navy) is small, poorly equipped, and has been suffering from a decline in effectiveness since the 1990's. The military is made up of volunteers, and does have some reserve forces that can be called upon in a dire emergency. Military officers have often been voluntarily involved in political affairs, and have a great deal of clout over governmental affairs. In the case of a serious insurrection or crisis, the Yemeni government has been known to ask Saudi Arabia, along with other neighboring nations, for military assistance. However, in recent times the Saudi government has withdrawn troops and much funding from Yemen due to growing pressure from the international community which is trying to limit interference with Yemen's national sovereignty.

Current Situation

The young generation has grown tired of the government's empty promises and their abysmal condition. Protests had been occurring since mid-January, with

thousands marching in the streets of Sana'a, the capital of Yemen. In the southern part of the country, protesters had already begun using violence to demonstrate their wish for a change in government [2], to which plainclothes police officers responded by attacking the protesters. The most violent protests occurred in the cities of Aden and Ta'izz. In Aden, tires were burned, roads were blocked, and at least seven people were killed, including three soldiers. During this event, security forces used tear gas and gunfire to attempt to cut the protest short before arresting over a dozen members of the Southern movement [3]. However, this is not enough to stop the protests, as thousands more take to the streets to make their voices heard.

The rebels are made up of three main groups- the (Shi'a) Houthi rebels in the North, the Southern Movement in the South, and Parliamentary opposition. The Houthi opposition originated from Yemen in the 1990's, and were a group dedicated to fighting against the reign of President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The group's founder, Hussein Badreddin al-Houthi, was reportedly killed in the first rebellion against the government, which occurred in 2004. His half-brother Abdul-Malik al-Houthi now heads the Houthi organization. The movement mostly attracts followers by taking advantage of the instability of the region and portraying it in the media as something that must be taken care of. They claim to strive for an economically stable and democratic Yemen. To do this, they collaborated with the other opposition groups to arrange for and participate in street riots.

At first, the opposing factions protested against corruption, unemployment, and Yemen's flailing economy. However, the protests continued to get more violent and became less about change, and more about the exchange of power. This is inadvertently caused a power struggle between the tribes who believed that the government would fall, and that if they backed the right party, they will end up in control.

After months of demonstrations and protests, most of which ended violently, President Saleh agreed to a Gulf Cooperation Council-brokered deal in late April. However, when Saleh backed out of the agreement put forth by the GCC, not one, but three times, they declared that they would no longer try to mediate in Yemen on May 22nd. Barely did the dust settle on this declaration when the very next day, Sheikh Sadiq al-Ahmar, head of one of the most powerful tribes in Yemen, expressed his displeasure with the President's actions by declaring his support for the rebels. This resulted in the Sheikh's armed supporters clashing with the security forces in the capital.

However, it was only once the bombing of the presidential compound occurred on June 3rd, injuring Saleh and killing at least five people that Saleh finally agreed to step down in favor of his Vice President, Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi, who would act as the President while Saleh flew out for treatment. This was made official on February 21st, when Hadi was elected in the presidential election, in which he was the only candidate. However, this situation is far from over. For almost two years, a series of minor rebellions and general protests occur as the National Dialogue Council deliberates on a new constitution [8]. Finally, on January 24th of 2014, the Council came to an agreement for peaceful change in Yemen, establishing a new social contract and a new document upon which it could base its constitution.

List of People

1. Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi (President)
 - a. This is the president of Yemen, so he has the powers of a Head of State but cannot publicly or openly encroach on the powers on the other ministers.
2. Khaled Bahah (Prime Minister)
 - a. Head of Government- presides over the executive branch
3. Ahmed Obeid bin Daghr (Deputy Prime Minister)
 - a. Acts on behalf of the Prime Minister when they are away, as well as gives them more authority when making decisions as a Cabinet
4. Mahmoud al-Sobehy (Defense Minister)
 - a. Able to control small military of Yemen and has connections to the generals of opposing nations and arms dealers
5. Mohammed bin Nabhan (Minister of Oil)
 - a. Maintains Yemen's oil reserves (90% of exports) and maintains contacts from large funders in Saudi Arabia
6. Abu Bakr Abdullah al-Qirbi (Minister of Foreign Affairs)
 - a. Responsible for state's diplomacy and maintaining positive relations with other countries. Is the only member besides the President and Prime Minister with the ability to request aid from other nations
7. Yasin Said Numan (General Secretary of the Yemeni Socialist Party)
 - a. Master of propaganda spreading and has a great deal of influence on the civilian population
8. Arwa Othman (Minister of Culture)
 - a. General overseer of human rights issues and civilian life
9. Mohammed Zemam (Minister of Finance)
 - a. Controls small treasury and overseas accounts
10. Yahia al-Marrani (Director of Intelligence)
 - a. Manages the intelligence community and advises the President on matters of National Security
11. Sheikh Saghbir bin Aziz (Tribal Chief)
 - a. Representative of tribal chiefs that are not a part of the rebellion as yet. Controls the land and manpower of said tribes and acts as the President's advisor when it comes to tribe relations.
12. Ahmed Saleh (Yemen's Ambassador to the UAE)
 - a. Previously a general in the army. However, with the change in leadership came a change in the military, which made the previous position unnecessary. Instead, appointed as the Ambassador to the UAE, a position that allows private contact with the UAE.
13. Ahmed Muhammad Ahmed el-Tayeb (Grand Imam of al-Ahzar)
 - a. The highest authority for Sunni Islam, and is the "Leader of leaders" of the establishment. el-Tayeb is one of the most moderate Sunni clerics, but his position gives his great influence over those of the Sunni religion.
14. Sayyid Ali Hosseini Khamenei (Supreme Leader Ayatollah)

- a. Highest level of Shia authority, with the power to make legal decisions within the confines of Islamic law
15. Jalal Ali bin al-Rowaishan (Minister of Interior)
 - a. The Minister of the Interior has duties in public administration, controlling elections and national security.
16. Mahmoud al-Subaihi (Major General)
 - a. Major General in the Army, with full control over a division in the army

Questions to Consider

1. How should the government respond to Yemen's tanking economy and lack of resources?
2. What role should foreign aid and influence play in Yemen?
3. How should the new government rule over the Yemeni tribes?
4. What will happen to Saleh?
5. Are terrorist organizations, such as ISIS, legitimate threats in Yemen?
6. Is revolution/civil war still imminent? If yes, does the government have enough troops to contain it?
7. Is it possible for the new government to regain steady control over Yemen in its entirety?

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