



## **Background Paper**

Committee: Security Council

Topic B: Addressing the Conflict in Yemen

Chairs: José Pablo Castro and Paulina Menaut

Since 2015, Yemen, one of the Arab World's poorest countries, has been devastated by a civil war. The war started because Yemen's president, Ali Abdullah Saleh, was forced to hand over power to Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi. This caused the formation of two groups: the Houthi rebels and the supporters of Yemen's internationally recognized Government. The Security Council is devoted to finding a solution and stopping this conflict, to end the killing and destruction that has resulted as a consequence. Ever since the war started, there have been more than 50,000 deaths and around 10,700 injured, making it an urgent topic that needs to be solved before these numbers continue to grow. The origins of the war go as far back as 2011 when pro-democracy protesters took to the streets in a bid to force President Ali Abdullah Saleh to end his 33-year rule. Saleh responded with economic concessions, but refused to resign. Over time, tensions started to increase, leading to deadly clashes between government troops and tribal militias. Houthi rebels from the north started to push towards the capital city, until reaching it and forcing Hadi to resign his power. The United Nations has attempted to broker a cease-fire, but that effort stalled in July and the assault resumed.

In 2015, Saudi Arabia formed a coalition of Arab states to defeat the Houthis in Yemen. The coalition includes Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Egypt, Morocco, Jordan, Sudan and Senegal. Several of these countries have sent troops to fight on the ground in Yemen, while others have carried out air attacks. The United States regularly launches air attacks on Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIS) targets in Yemen, as well as deploying a small number of troops on the ground. The US, along with other western powers such as the UK and France, has also supplied the Saudi-led coalition with weapons and intelligence. Lastly, Iran has denied arming the Houthi rebels, but the US military has said they have intercepted arms shipments from Iran to Yemen. Iranian officials have also suggested that they may send military advisers

to support the Houthis. Additionally, Saudi Arabia, which shares a long border with Yemen, fears the possibility of what it sees as Iranian expansionism.

Some of the actions the United Nations has taken include sending a special envoy to Yemen to secure an agreement with the Houthis to withdraw from the port city, attempting to negotiate a settlement to prevent a possible humanitarian disaster, peace talks and other negotiations with both sides, disarming groups, incorporating all Houthi officials into the Yemeni government, looking to hold national elections, and many other attempts. However, as of right now, most of these actions are either still in the discussion phase or have failed completely. After all, the United Nations is fighting every day to reach peace between both groups and to finally solve this conflict once and for all.

For three years the conflict in Yemen has shown no real signs of abating. Both groups during this civil war, the Houthi rebels and Yemen's internationally recognized Government, have committed horrific atrocities. There have been human rights abuses, war crimes, and much suffering of innocent civilians with more than 50,000 deaths and an estimated 10,700 people injured. For these three years much of the world, apart from the Arab countries and the US, have ignored it this conflict and heard little about its devastating consequences. Now it is the time for countries to get involved, debate, and find a solution to end this conflict.

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