

SPECIALIZED: THE WAR IN YEMEN



JACKRABBITMUN I

L.B. POLY - MAY 25th

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POSITION PAPER GUIDELINES

JACKRABBIT MUN POSITION PAPER GUIDELINES

- Position Papers are due at 11:59 PM on May 15th, 2019
- Position Papers should be emailed to: **yemen.jackrabbit@gmail.com**
- Papers should be 1.5 to 3 pages in length with an additional page for citations.
- Papers should be single-spaced in Times New Roman 12 pt. font and include no pictures.
- Please include the following in your position paper:
 - Topic Background (including UN involvement)
 - Character Position, Alliances, and Involvement
 - Possible Solutions
- At the top of each paper, include your country, name, committee, and topic.



INTRODUCTION

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the inaugural Jackrabbit MUN conference! My name is Sakeena Siddiq, and I am a senior at Long Beach Poly. I have been participating in MUN for three years, and I'm so excited to be a part of Poly's first ever conference!

The crisis in Yemen has reached unimaginable heights, and up to this point attempts at fixing the situation have been relatively unsuccessful. You will be part of a select group of heads of state, international representatives, and Houthi and Yemeni leaders who have been chosen to make one unified push for peace. Your ideological differences, the interests of your group, and the intensity and complexity of this civil war-turned-humanitarian-nightmare are obstacles to a solution, but as humans, your ultimate goal should be a framework that paves the way for long-term peace and prosperity.

Each delegate is expected to have a full understanding of their character and their roles in committee. Keep in mind the context surrounding the issue in crafting your solutions for a stable Yemen. Best of luck!

Sincerely,
Sakeena Siddiq
Head Chair
sakeenaaas@gmail.com

With any questions or comments please email: [**yemen.jackrabbit@gmail.com**](mailto:yemen.jackrabbit@gmail.com)



THE WAR IN YEMEN

HISTORY OF THE WAR

The modern history of Yemen is one colored by violence and factionalism. Yemen was unified in 1990 under the leadership of Ali Abdullah Saleh, but even after a 1994 civil war in which the pro-union north prevailed, separatist voices remained strong in South Yemen. At the same time, a Shia group called Ansar Allah emerged, led by Hussein Badreddin al-Houthi, and accused President Saleh of gross corruption and condemned his alignment with Saudi Arabia and the United States. Tensions worsened throughout the early 2000's as Ansar Allah, also known as the Houthis, launched a low-level insurgency against Saleh's government.

The Arab Spring swept through Yemen in 2011 and 2012, forcing Saleh from office in favor of his vice president, Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi. President Hadi's goal was to draft a more inclusive constitution to diffuse tensions between Northern and Southern regions of Yemen, but he struggled to maintain his government. Due to his lack of control, the southern separatist and Houthi movements grew, the Yemeni military split, and al-Qaeda swept in to seize territory in the east.

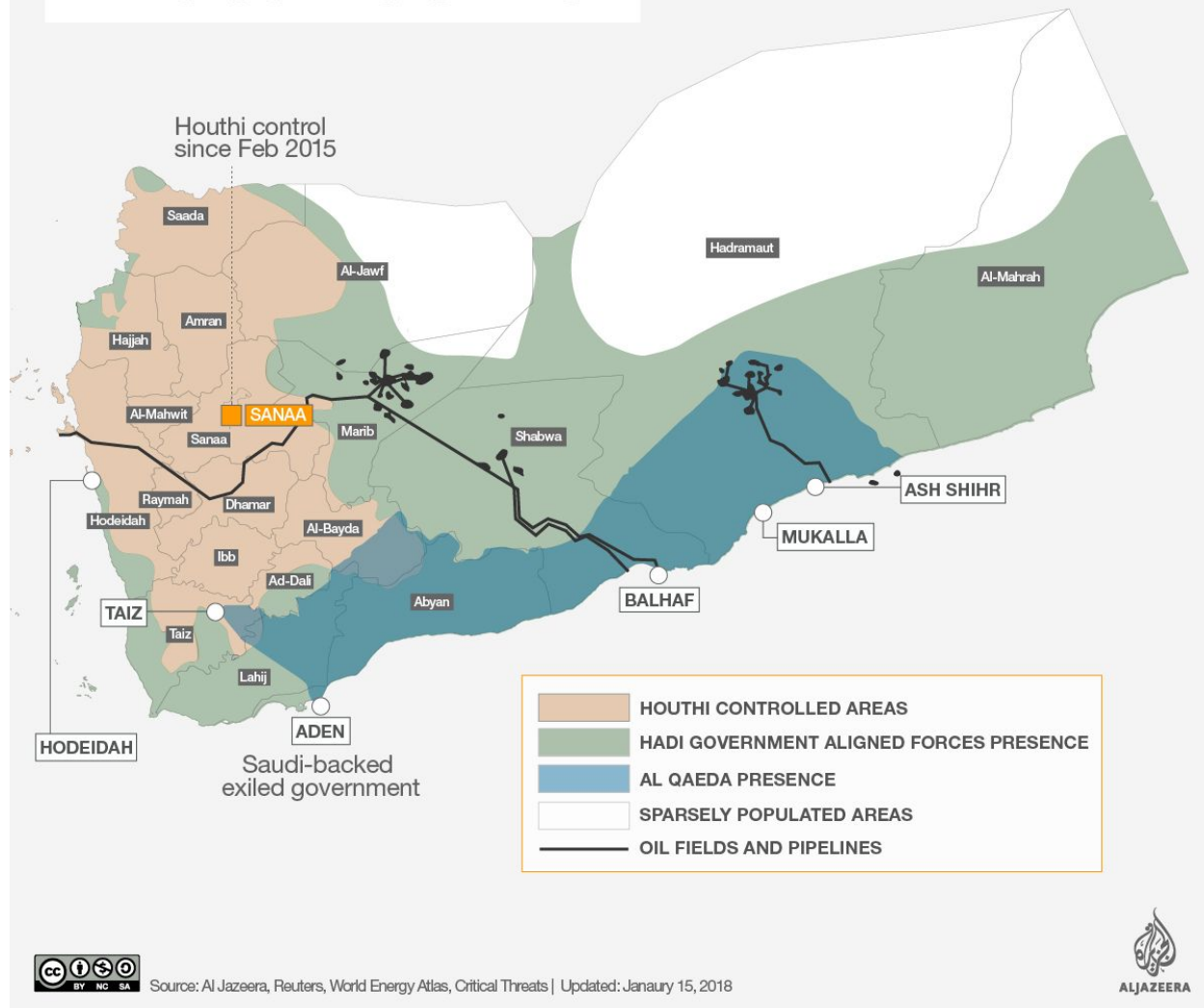
Since this time, the Houthi group has gained support from disenchanted Yemenis who feel their government does not have their interests in mind, as well as the Shia nation of Iran. The Hadi government has found allies in Saudi Arabia and Saudi allies in the West (such as France, the United States, and the United Kingdom), as well as other Sunni Muslim countries.

By September of 2014, the Houthis had taken over the capital, Sana'a, sending Hadi fleeing to Aden in the south. This triggered the official start of the Yemeni conflict in 2015, with the Saudis and an Arab military coalition officially intervening. Together, they drove the Houthis and Saleh loyalists north, but the front lines soon settled into a stalemate.



YEMEN

Who controls what



Source: Al Jazeera

In December of 2017, Saleh was assassinated. In the aftermath, the General People's Congress (the ruling political party) pledged allegiance to the Houthis, and elected Sadeq Ameen Abu Rass as their new leader. In early 2018, a battle broke out in Aden where tensions snapped when the separatists' request that Hadi dismiss his cabinet was denied. By the end of January, separatists had taken control of most of the city and utilized it as an interim capital, and continuous fighting between Houthis and the Arab Coalition waged on.



Immediate deaths from Saudi airstrikes and Iranian-Houthi missiles are not the only casualties in this war: the bombing of basic medical and transport infrastructure and the blockade and siege on the port of Hudaydah, to name a few, are just as deadly for the largely food-insecure and impoverished population of Yemen. All sides in the war are responsible for these and countless other human rights abuses, and if the situation continues this way, all sides will be responsible for creating what amounts to a chaos state.

INTERNATIONAL INVOLVEMENT

The United Nations has long been concerned with the level of violence in Yemen. Shortly after Arab Spring inspired protests in Yemen broke out in 2011, the United Nations Security Council unanimously passed Resolution 2014. It stressed the importance of a peaceful solution, as well as rebuked the Yemeni government for its violation of human rights. Resolution 2014 also called for rebel groups to suspend their use of violent means to achieve political gains, cease the use of weapons in peaceful demonstrations, and entirely halt the practice of recruiting children.

In 2015, following military involvement from international powers, the UN Security Council convened again and passed Resolution 2216. Adoption of this resolution imposed sanctions on certain individuals defined to be subverting the stability and peace of Yemen and reinforced the legitimacy and authority of the Government of Yemen.

The need for international peace talks is at the forefront of conversation as the crisis worsens. In 2016, a series of planned peace talks broke down after 108 days of UN sponsored negotiation in Kuwait. Despite this effort, no agreement was reached, and rebel delegates were left stranded outside of Yemen for three months.

Talks were again planned for September 2018 in Geneva. These were also unsuccessful, as the Houthi delegation claimed there were insufficient conditions. Martin Griffiths, the UN Special Envoy to Yemen, explained that the issue lay in the logistics of getting the delegation to Yemen, but that this did not present a significant roadblock for the future. The Houthis contended that they would be willing to attend another round of talks if the UN would allow wounded rebels to be treated in Oman and repatriate those who had already been treated there. They also cited a need for stronger security guarantees moving forward.



International pressure to resolve the conflict in Yemen has increased since the killing of Saudi Arabian journalist Jamal Khashoggi. The murder is suspected to have been carried out by the Saudi Arabian government, because Khashoggi wrote about Saudi Arabia's role in exacerbating the situation in Yemen. The United States Senate, for example, passed a resolution in December 2018 to end American military assistance for Saudi Arabia in Yemen.

50 injured rebels were evacuated to Oman on a UN chartered plane in early December 2018, marking the beginning of more confidence building measures to ensure the efficacy of peace talks. Getting the warring sides to meet in Stockholm that December was an accomplishment in and of itself, coupled with the freeing of 5,000 prisoners on both sides. However, gains of substantial improvement have been minimal, including the failure of numerous attempts to cease-fire. According to the Saudi Arabian Ambassador to the UN, Abdallah al-Mouallimi, the rebels must be willing to share power and cut back on military presence in large cities in order for peace talks to progress productively. Martin Griffiths has said that the talks will only succeed if both sides can work towards a peaceful solution and abandon their goal of a military victory.

In addition to the cease-fire, another point of contention is the status of Hudaydah. The UN hopes to negotiate a deal that places the port city under international control, that way aid can flow into the country unimpeded by opposition forces.



BLOC POSITIONS

THE ARAB COALITION: LED BY YEMENI GOVERNMENT, SAUDI ARABIA

It is in the Arab Coalition's interest to stop the insurgency because if the Houthis were to fully take over, Yemen would become a Shia-ruled country. Saudi Arabia and its allies are Sunni majority. In addition to the religious conflict, the political implications are worrisome for the Coalition. Members have called on the Houthi rebels to recognize the legitimacy of Hadi's government, as the Coalition's goal is to restore Hadi's power as president. Some members have also criticized the efficacy of previous attempts at peace discussions: Abdallah al-Mouallimi, the Saudi Ambassador to the UN, stated the possible repercussions of a prolonged ceasefire: "we would have a theocratic regime modeled on Iran in the north...in southern Yemen, a weak government would take over, giving Al Qaeda and Daesh...a chance to expand." The Coalition's focus is on a united, democratic Yemen.

THE WESTERN BLOC

The UK, France, Germany, and the US support the Arab Coalition through arms sales and technical assistance. Recently, however, the US Senate voted to stop supporting Saudi Arabia's military in Yemen. The goal of the Western Bloc is similar to that of the Coalition: ensuring Yemen's stability through democracy and unity.

ANSAR ALLAH (THE HOUTHİ INSURGENCY): HOUTHİS, IRAN

Yemen's Houthi rebels are a Shia-based resistance movement, born in in the 1990s in opposition to Saudi Arabia's religious influence. Former President Saleh's death destabilized the chaotic Houthi command structure, and there is widespread infighting. Throughout the war the Houthis have been accused of torturing and killing journalists and critics, cutting off aid supplies, using civilian infrastructure as a shield for military activity and persecuting the country's Jewish and Baha'i minorities. Both Hezbollah and Iran have increased their providing of guns, missiles, military training and funds for the Houthi war effort since 2014, happy to see their Saudi enemies expend money and resources on the Yemeni stalemate. However, the extent of Iran's influence over the Houthis' decision-making is unclear. The Houthis have overtly



opposed Iran's advice on several occasions, including a demand not to take over Sana'a in 2015.

SOUTH YEMEN

Fighters in the south are largely backed by the UAE. The Southern separatists' current goal is to reinstate the former South Yemen republic, which was united with the north in 1990. Their concern is with the abundance of oil and resources in the South, which they feel has been exploited by larger countries. Aidarus al-Zoubaidi claims the majority of South Yemenis want a separate country, with Aden, the southern port city, as their capital.



CHARACTER BIOGRAPHIES

NAME: **Michael Pompeo**

COUNTRY: **United States of America**

POSITION: **United States Secretary of State**

Michael Pompeo currently serves as the Secretary of State for the Trump administration. Historically, Pompeo has supported continued U.S. military support for Saudi Arabia's war in Yemen, but more recently has condemned both Houthi drone strikes against Saudi Arabia and Coalition air strikes in populated areas of Yemen. He is in support of the UN efforts undertaken by special envoy Martin Griffiths, and has talked on multiple occasions with the Saudi royal family about the need for continued de-escalation in the region.

NAME: **Jonathan Cohen**

COUNTRY: **United States of America**

POSITION: **Acting United States Ambassador to the United Nations**

Ambassador Jonathan Cohen became Acting Permanent Representative of the United States to the United Nations on January 1, 2019. United States involvement in Yemen has mainly taken the form of selling bombs and weapons to the Saudis, intelligence assistance, and even sending in special forces.

NAME: **Mohammad bin Salman**

COUNTRY: **Saudi Arabia**

POSITION: **Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia**

The Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia has shaped himself a reformer, and has made many changes, including removing the ban on female drivers and announcing plans to list the shares of Aramco, the state oil company. However, he has garnered criticism because of the rising number of detentions and tortures of human rights activists, and his intervention in Yemen. Bin Salman leads the Arab Coalition in Yemen, and is considered the architect of the war. The Coalition airstrikes and blockade have directly aggravated the humanitarian crisis there, and to offset this, Saudi Arabia has donated US\$390 million to the UN to alleviate the suffering.

NAME: **Abdallah al-Mouallimi**

COUNTRY: **Saudi Arabia**

POSITION: **Saudi Arabian Ambassador to the United Nations**



UN Ambassador Abdallah al-Mouallimi has held many critical positions in the Saudi Arabian government, the private sector, and at the United Nations. al-Mouallimi has made it clear that he believes it is up to the Houthi rebels to stop the war in Yemen, but has also voiced concern over the lack of UN action in this conflict. He considers the continued presence of the Houthis in Yemen a threat to Saudi borders and Middle Eastern stability.

NAME: **Karen Pierce**

COUNTRY: **United Kingdom**

POSITION: **United Kingdom Ambassador to the United Nations**

Karen Pierce has served as the United Kingdom Ambassador to the United Nations since 23 March 2018, the first woman to take this position, with a notably direct and informal approach to diplomacy. She has defended the UK's choice not to suspend weapons sales to Riyadh following the killing of journalist Jamal Khashoggi, but she believes in the power and responsibility of the UN to broker peace in Yemen, calling the security council "best equipped to deal with the Iran angle."

NAME: **Martin Griffiths**

COUNTRY: **United Kingdom**

POSITION: **United Nations Special Envoy to Yemen**

Griffiths was appointed by UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres in February of 2018 as the UN Special Envoy to Yemen. He has extensive experience in conflict resolution, negotiation, mediation and humanitarian affairs across Africa, Asia, and Europe. His conflict resolution style has included bringing women and civilians to the negotiation table, as well as butting heads with the Coalition over the fact that humanitarian operations and political mediation should not be handled at the same time.

NAME: **Francois Delattre**

COUNTRY: **French Republic**

POSITION: **Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations**

Delattre is the Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations. France's position remains stalwart: they demand a ceasefire and unfettered humanitarian access. Delattre has supported the Arab coalition humanitarian plan, and supports financial assistance for the Yemeni Central Bank, the lifting of the blockade, and thorough inspection efforts of cargo entering Yemen by the United Nations. France "emphatically condemn[s]" attacks against civilians and condemns attempts to divert humanitarian aid.



NAME: Hassan Rouhani

COUNTRY: Islamic Republic of Iran

POSITION: President of Iran

Since August 3, 2013, Hassan Rouhani has served as the seventh elected president of Iran. Rouhani has been an extremely active member in the Yemen crisis. Rouhani is fully in support of Houthi rebels and stresses that military action will not help promote an end to the ongoing crisis in Yemen. Rouhani advocates for monitored peace talks between Yemen and surrounding territories to help resolve humanitarian, ecological, economic and all other issues in Yemen.

NAME: Gholamali Khoshroo

COUNTRY: Islamic Republic of Iran

POSITION: Iranian Ambassador to the United Nations

Gholamali Khoshroo is the current UN ambassador for the country of Iran. Khoshroo has continuously criticized Saudi Arabia for its maritime blockade making it nearly impossible to provide aid and military assistance to the residents of Yemen. Khoshroo argues that Saudi Arabia is the ‘root of the cause’ of the Yemeni Crisis. Being the UN ambassador, Khoshroo has had the capability to directly confront the UN ambassador from Iran about the country’s ‘overly violent actions’ in Yemen.

NAME: Abdul-Malik Badreddin al-Houthi

COUNTRY: Yemen

POSITION: Spiritual, military, and political leader of Houthi movement

Abdul-Malik Badreddin al-Houthi is the current leader of the Zaidi Revolution Movement alongside his brothers. al-Houthi has continuously criticized the Yemeni government for throwing their citizens into an endless whirl of poverty. In response, al-Houthi, in cooperation with his brothers, led the rebellion to overthrow the Yemeni government further sparking conflict within the crisis. He has denied any action of peace talks outside of Yemen on multiple accounts and continues to show his distaste with the government through violent, terrorist-like attacks and protests.

NAME: Mohammed Ali al-Houthi

COUNTRY: Yemen

POSITION: Houthi Leader

Mohammed Ali al-Houthi is a current political leader in Yemen and former President of the Revolutionary Committee. al-Houthi was one of the main military leaders who led and seizure of Yemen’s government in Sana’a. al-Houthi has



denounced Mansur Hadi, the current president of Yemen, and illegitimate because of his lack of productivity and overstretched term. al-Houthi has sent repeated letters to the UN claiming that the Saudi led coalition has terrorized the citizens of Yemen with “genocides” and “war crimes.”

NAME: Yahia Badreddin al-Houthi

COUNTRY: Yemen

POSITION: Houthi Leader

Yahia Badreddin al-Houthi is the political leader of the Houthi movement. He is a brother of current Houthi leader Abdul-Malik al-Houthi, late Houthi leader Hussein Badreddin al-Houthi and Abdul-Karim al-Houthi. In May 2005, al-Houthi cosigned a letter to the Yemeni government with Abdullah al-Ruzami, the rebels' military leader, offering an end to the uprising if the government would the military campaign against the rebels, but this was not fruitful. Prior to the civil war, al-Houthi was a Yemeni lawmaker, but he was forced to go into hiding after the Yemeni government lifted his parliamentary immunity to try him for his involvement in the insurgency. He was tried and sentenced in absentia, but has not gone to jail because the Yemeni government has not captured him.

NAME: Lana Zaki Nusseibeh

COUNTRY: United Arab Emirates

POSITION: United Arab Emirates Ambassador to the United Nations

Lana Zaki Nusseibeh has been the United Arab Emirates Permanent Representative to the United Nations since September 2013 and President of UN Women since January 2017. The United Arab Emirates is allied with Saudi Arabia in its coalition against the Houthi rebels.

NAME: Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi

COUNTRY: Yemen

POSITION: President (in exile)

Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi spent 17 years as Vice President of Yemen, under Ali Abdullah Saleh, before being elected President in 2012. He was the sole candidate in the 2012 elections, after his predecessor, Saleh, was forced out of office by mass protests. Hadi's election brought hope to many Yemenis, and he was even endorsed by Tawakkol Karman, a human rights activist. However, this election was boycotted by two opposition groups: the separatist Southern movement, and the Houthi rebels. This marked what would be a recurring issue throughout his presidency: the conflict



between different Yemeni interest groups. Hadi is interested in remaining President and operating his government as the legitimate Yemeni government.

NAME: Khaled Bahah

COUNTRY: Yemen

POSITION: UN Diplomat

Khaled Bahah is a Yemeni politician and diplomat who served as prime minister of Yemen from 2014 to 2016, as well as vice president from 2015 until he was forced to resign on April 13, 2016 by President Hadi. Bahah is rivals with the Houthi rebel forces and remains a prominent figure in Yemeni politics.

NAME: Khaled al Yamani

COUNTRY: Yemen

POSITION: Foreign Affairs Minister

As of 2018 Khaled al Yamani was elected foreign minister of Yemen. Al Yamani has been extremely persistent with trying to force all rebel forces out of Yemen. After the Houthis overtook the capital so Sana'a, al Yamani has taking strict actions in attempt to prevent all rebel forces from assuming more Yemeni territory.

NAME: Heiko Maas

COUNTRY: Germany

POSITION: Minister of Foreign Affairs

Heiko Maas is the German Minister of Foreign Affairs in President Angela Merkel's cabinet, and began his term on March 14, 2018. Maas released a statement on January 15, 2019, urging for the coming together in peace talks between the Houthis and the Yemeni government.

NAME: Maleeha Lodhi

COUNTRY: Pakistan

POSITION: Pakistani Ambassador to the United Nations

Maleeha Lodhi is a Pakistani diplomat, military strategist, and political scientist who is the current acting representative of Pakistan to the United Nations, and is the first woman to hold the position. The Pakistani approach to the Yemen crisis has been as a mediator. Pakistan has complicated relationships with both Saudi Arabia and Iran.

NAME: Aidarus al-Zoubaidi

COUNTRY: Yemen (South)

POSITION: Southern Resistance Commander



Major General al-Zoubaidi is a Yemeni politician and Southern Resistance supreme commander. He was the governor of the Aden province from December 2015 to April 2017, when he was fired by President Hadi. Major rallies were formed, protesting Hadi's actions, and this led to the formation of the Southern Transitional Council, whose goal is to expel the Yemeni government from the South.

NAME: Khalifa bin Ali bin Issa al-Harthy

COUNTRY: Oman

POSITION: Omani Ambassador to the United Nations

Khalifa bin Ali bin Issa al-Harthy is the UN Representative for Oman. Oman has supported efforts for peace in the past, such as a ceasefire proposed by the Western Bloc. Oman is not a member of the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen. Oman believes in the importance of dialogue and communication.

NAME: Amal Mudallali

COUNTRY: Lebanon

POSITION: Lebanese Ambassador to the United Nations

Amal Mudallali was appointed to be the Lebanese permanent representative to the UN in January of 2018. The Shia group Hezbollah in Yemen and the Houthis have been open to conversations. Yemeni officials have called on the Lebanese administration to take action against Hezbollah.

NAME: Tawakkol Karman

COUNTRY: Yemen

POSITION: Journalist, Activist, Nobel Peace Laureate

Tawakkol Karman is a Yemeni journalist, politician and human rights' activist. She became the international public face of the 2011 Yemeni uprising. She was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2011 for her work in nonviolent struggle for the safety of women and for women's rights to full participation in peacebuilding in Yemen.

NAME: Ali Khamenei

COUNTRY: Iran

POSITION: Supreme Leader, Ayatollah

Ali Khamenei has been the Supreme Leader of Iran since 1989, his primary role being as the Head of State and the Commander in Chief of Iran. He holds a great amount of political power within the nation. The Iranian government has been accused on multiple occasions of funding the Houthi rebels.



QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. How will the currently violent conflict reach a peaceful conclusion?
2. What diplomatic actions can be taken to minimize or eliminate the humanitarian crisis? Think about port cities and humanitarian aid.
3. How will UN Delegates encourage peace talks between the rival groups?
4. How can the UN discourage further outside countries from interfering and causing further violence in Yemen, possibly creating a much larger global conflict?
5. How can a compromise government be achieved? How will delegates be able to acknowledge the interests of the rebels and the Hadi government?



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2018/12/17/strange-scene-inside-yemen-peace-talks-sweden/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.cf94f4640d91
- <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-29319423>
- <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/09/yemen-geneva-talks-fall-government-delegation-leaves-180908082941894.html>
- <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/12/yemen-warring-sides-meet-face-face-sweden-peace-talks-181209123459715.html>
- <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/yemen-peace-talks-181202101535422.htm>
- <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-yemen-security-timeline/timeline-yemens-slide-into-political-crisis-and-war-idUSKBN1JDoBX>
- https://news.cgtn.com/news/3455544d30637a6333566d54/share_p.html
- <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/02/yemen-government-houthi-rebels-meet-ship-discuss-truce-190203140748595.html>
- <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2012/02/2012219133034774204.html>
- <https://news.un.org/en/story/2018/03/1005961>
- <https://www.un.org/press/en/2011/sc10418.doc.htm>
- <https://www.un.org/press/en/2015/sc11859.doc.htm>
- <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/13/world/middleeast/yemen-al-hudaydah-assault-saudi-coalition.html>
- <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/10/03/opinion/yemen-war-houthis.html>
- <https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/peace/2011/karman/facts/>
- <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-yemen-security-separatists/yemen-separatists-call-for-uprising-as-un-pursues-peace-idUSKCN1MD1UI>
- <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/yemen-south-north-war-conflict-violence-land-split-houthi-coalition-aden-stc-a8695931.html>

