



CalsMUN 2020
Historical Influences



Research Report

Forum: Security Council

Issue: The continued humanitarian crisis and civil conflict in
Yemen

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Personal Introduction

Timo Temming

Hello delegates! I'm so proud of you opening this research report and preparing yourself for the conference. My name is Timo Temming and I will be your co-chair during this year's CalsMUN. I am an 17 year old student at Cals college itself and will finally be able to help our own MUN in the form of chairing for you. Although my own brother and sister have brought me into the world of MUN's, I have loved participating in them ever since then. It has even led to my interest in geopolitics, which is why I love the security council in particular. As for my hobbies, I have no idea. MUN's can only take a small part of my life's schedule so in my free time I mostly play videogames, hang out with friends and cook food. That's as many bland things I can tell about myself I think.

The reason why I am the one that will be sitting in front of you is because of my own burning hatred towards the CalsMUN organization. I never wanted to join the staff of this MUN until it was too late. I had to show them what they were missing out on. In some way this has worked out for me, as I now get to join as a chair (okay just co-chair) which is way more fun. My love for chairing has brought me all over the world (okay just Armenia) and I want to continue this path in future MUN's around the globe.





Introduction

The ongoing dispute between the Yemeni government and the Houthi rebel group has caused tens of thousands of casualties, including an approximate 17,700 civilian casualties. Furthermore, this conflict has also resulted in millions of Yemenis suffering from famine, disease and/or being displaced.¹ Yemen has therefore become the host of arguably the biggest humanitarian crisis in the last couple of years.

The committee

The United Nations Security Council is one of the most important councils within the UN. It is also known as the most controversial council. The SC is the only body within the UN that can actually make binding resolutions. The council can put obligations on all members, which it can enforce with sanctions and military actions. What also makes the council unique is the veto. There are five permanent nations that hold the power of veto which are:

1. Russia
2. China
3. The United States of America
4. Great Britain
5. France

These 5 countries are able to block any submitted amendments if they desire to. The committee will also be working in AD-HOC, so there is no need to prepare any resolutions beforehand.

Definition of key terms

Humanitarian crisis

The term humanitarian crisis is a term used to describe an event or events that trigger the threatening of health, safety and/or well-being of a large group of people. This is a very broad term, so humanitarian crises can differ greatly in their causes, results and scale.²

Civil conflict

¹ <https://news.un.org/en/story/2019/02/1032811>

² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Humanitarian_crisis



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A civil conflict is a conflict between different groups within a state or nation. Often, the government of said state or nation is involved. The causes for a civil conflict include a wish for independence and the will to control the state or nation among many others.³

³ <http://folk.uio.no/hahegre/Papers/PovertyPeaceOxford.pdf>



General overview

The political unrest in Yemen started in 2011, when street protests against Yemeni president Saleh took place. As a result, Saleh resigned as president, transferring the power to his vice-president, Hadi, who was officially elected president during a one-candidate election in 2012. However, during this time there was little to no central governing in Yemen, which gave several extremist groups the chance to take up their arms. One of these groups, the Houthi rebels, found former president Saleh on their side, and in 2014 they took control over Sana'a, Yemen's capital, and declared themselves the official Yemeni government. This ended when Saleh was assassinated in 2017, resulting in a new civil war, in which the Saudi government decided to intervene, helping Hadi to restore his power.⁴⁵⁶

These years of political unrest and violence have led to extremely unstable living conditions for Yemen's inhabitants. First of all, the naval blockades by the Saudi and US navies and the Saudi airstrikes have diminished the food supply for a great deal of poor Yemenis.

Furthermore, rebel groups including the Houthis have been accused of confiscating food from citizens in an attempt to hold up their forces. These are just two examples of how the political unrest has caused a widespread famine throughout the country.⁷

Second, the conflict has caused an alarming drop in public health standards. Due to damage caused by violence, only 45% of healthcare facilities in Yemen are functional and open to public and those that are open have a shortage in medical equipment and medicine. This is especially worrying since a lack of clean water sources has resulted in the worst cholera outbreak in history.⁸

⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yemeni_Revolution

⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Houthi_takeover_in_Yemen

⁶ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yemeni_Civil_War_\(2015%E2%80%93present\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yemeni_Civil_War_(2015%E2%80%93present))

⁷ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Famine_in_Yemen_\(2016%E2%80%93present\)#Causes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Famine_in_Yemen_(2016%E2%80%93present)#Causes)

⁸ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yemen#During_the_crisis



Major parties involved

Yemen

Since its people are suffering from the results of the political unrest in Yemen, it is the responsibility of the Yemeni government to settle their differences with the different rebel groups and create a living environment for its citizens that is safe and sustainable.

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia's military interventions in Yemen have contributed to the political unrest and therefore Saudi Arabia's government is at partially responsible for the humanitarian crisis in Yemen. Furthermore, several organizations have accused the Saudi Arabian military of deliberately using starvation and disease as war tactic.

USA

The USA (and several other western and non-western countries) have (in)directly supported the Saudi intervention in Yemen by selling weapons to the Saudi government. Furthermore, the US Navy has helped set up a naval blockade that has contributed to the current state of famine throughout Yemen.

Timeline of key events

2011

Widespread street protests against president Saleh occur as a result of his plans to amend the constitution, making his presidency lifelong. As a result of continued protests, Saleh resigns from his position. The power falls into the hands of his vice-president, Hadi.

2012

Hadi is elected president in a one-candidate election.

2014

The Houthi rebel group conquers capital Sana'a and restore former president Saleh's power.

2016

Nationwide cholera outbreak begins as a result of a shortage in clean drinking water sources and public health facilities and resources.

2017

Saleh is assassinated, creating a power vacuum. The Saudi intervention begins.



Previous attempts to resolve the issue

The UN Security Council has debated on this issue before, resulting in several resolutions that can be found under 'further reading'. However, these resolutions have not provided any long-term solutions to the humanitarian crisis as a whole.

Possible solutions

Obviously, in order to create a sustainable stability in the quality of life for the Yemeni people, the civil conflict must come to an end. The most ethical way to do this would be for the different parties to settle their differences and reach a compromise. Most notably, the Yemeni government led by Hadi must reach an agreement with the Houthi rebel group. The main demands of the Houthi's are to fight corruption and reach more autonomy for regions with a Houthi-majority. In order to achieve this, it could be suggested that members of the Houthi movement get the chance to fulfill positions in the central government of Yemen, under the condition that they put down their arms.

This could prove to be tricky, and therefore it might be better to focus on quickly increasing the living conditions for Yemeni people. This could be achieved by for example sending medicine and medical equipment, cancelling the naval blockade and if possible, reaching a ceasefire in order to restore the quality of life for Yemen's inhabitants.

Bibliography and further reading

- [1] <https://news.un.org/en/story/2019/02/1032811>
- [2] <https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/>
- [3] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Humanitarian_crisis
- [4] <http://folk.uio.no/hahegre/Papers/PovertyPeaceOxford.pdf>
- [5] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yemeni_Revolution
- [6] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Houthi_takeover_in_Yemen
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- [8] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Famine_in_Yemen_\(2016%E2%80%93present\)#Causes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Famine_in_Yemen_(2016%E2%80%93present)#Causes)
- [9] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yemen#During_the_crisis

SC Resolutions:

- [1] https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/S_RES_2456.pdf - passed on February 26th, 2019
- [2] https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_res_2452.pdf - passed on January 16th, 2019
- [3] https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/S_RES_2481.pdf - passed on July 15th, 2019