

## Committee – Security Council

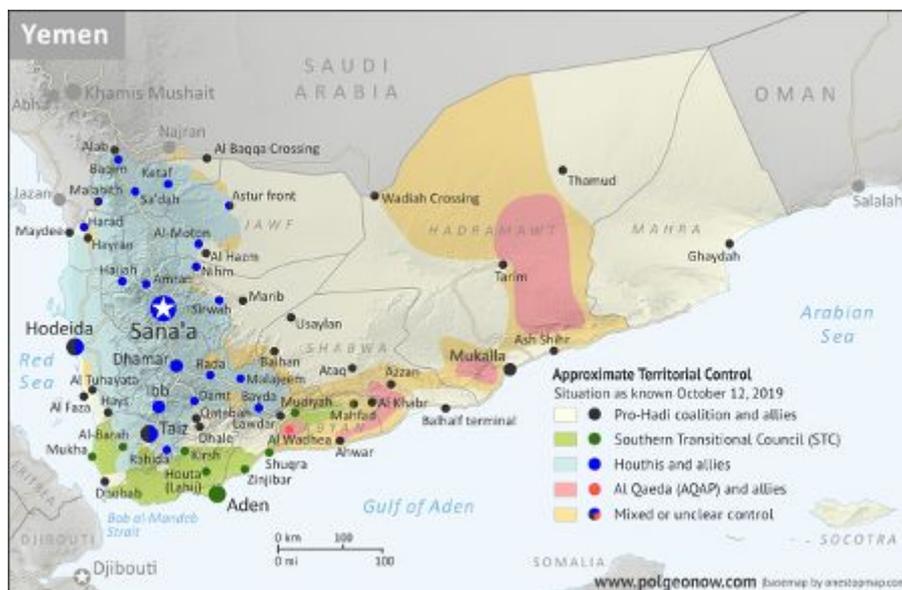
### Chair – Rishabh Raval

#### Topic – The Houthi insurgency in Yemen

### Background Information

In 1990, North and South Yemen were officially united to form the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen. This unitary state marked the end of the civil war between North Yemen and communist South Yemen. But this fragile equilibrium was shattered during the Arab Spring in 2011 when the state was once again torn apart. Since then Yemen has been in an increasingly unstable and frail condition. The political crisis has propelled the country into a civil war between the forces loyal to the former President Ali Abdullah Saleh and those supporting the current official leader Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi. Rebel forces and neighboring countries are also interfering. The Shia rebels known as the Houthis have sworn loyalty to Saleh and are allegedly supported by Iran, while Saudi Arabia is openly sponsoring current President Hadi. With a disorganized government and a divided army, the Yemeni people are struggling to survive in the war-stricken country. 27% of the country's population is living in poverty and the Head of the International Committee of the Red Cross described humanitarian conditions in Yemen as 'nothing short of catastrophic'.

Apart from the threat of a humanitarian catastrophe, Yemen is of international relevance due to its strategic location in the Gulf of Aden and its role in the power struggle between Islamic State (IS) and opposing forces led by the United States of America and Saudi Arabia. The situation is too dangerous for the inhabitants and the UN Security Council must do all to resolve the situation.



*Yemen war detailed map as of October 2019*

## Important Definitions

### **International Humanitarian Law (IHL)**

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) defines International Humanitarian Law (IHL) as “a set of rules which seek, for humanitarian reasons, to limit the effects of armed conflict” (ICRC, 2004). The IHL amount to a major part of the Four Geneva Convention of 1949; the idea is rooted in ancient civilization where warfare has always been restricted by certain customs

### **Humanitarian Assistance**

Humanitarian assistance is the material or logistical support organized to alleviate human suffering, protecting human rights in response to man-made crises or natural disasters. Humanitarian assistance can be provided in various ways ranging from the introduction of military forces to providing basic supplies. While humanitarian assistance can be beneficial during the conflict through provision of basic humanitarian supplies such as clean water, shelter, or food, when military force is introduced by power-seeking nations intending to extend power or insert hegemony, the conflict may turn into a proxy war.

### **Proxy War**

A proxy war is an indirect conflict between two states or non-state actors, which is fought on third party soil that is disguised as internal conflict or civil war. In the Yemeni Civil War, Saudi Arabia is fighting a proxy war with Iran to expand regional dominance in the Middle East. As the governments, participate in the Yemenis civil war, they send supplies, funding, or direct military support to the parties they support.

### **Internal Armed Conflict**

An internal armed conflict is a non-international armed conflict describing a situation where violence involving weaponry occurs between either government forces and organized armed groups, or between such groups themselves, on the territory of the state. In contrast to international armed conflict, an internal armed conflict involves at least one non-state armed group.

### **Internally Displaced Persons (IDP's)**

The Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement refers an IDP as any “persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized border.” In contrast to a refugee, who crossed borders and gained legal status, an IDP is a descriptive term that does not grant any special status to a person, in fact, they do not have special or any guaranteed rights.

## War Crimes

War crimes are serious violations of international laws or customs during international armed conflicts. The concept of war crimes emerged in the late 19th century and around the beginning of the 20th century when the IHL was codified in the Geneva Conventions and the Hague Conventions.

## Countries and Organizations involved

### United States of America

The US holds a unique stance in the conflict, as they are backing their ally, Saudi Arabia, by preventing decisive actions to be executed by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) that would threaten Saudi Arabia's stance in the situation. They are accused of funding terrorism in Yemen and committing numerous war crimes. Saudi Arabia has been continuously using US-made cluster munitions that are banned by the IHL in Yemeni cities and civilian populated areas. However, the Pentagon has been denying that Washington seeks a role in the conflict. The US has sent military and financial aid to the Yemeni government during the civil war. Yemen is of importance to the US because it serves as a key site for U.S. intelligence gathering and drone attacks on Al-Qaeda.

### Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia has been continuously supporting the Hadi government over the course of the conflict; launching international coalitions and airstrikes against the Houthis. They have bombed civilians and been allegedly accused of committing war crimes in the region; using its power in the UNHRC to keep it from committing investigations. Saudi Arabia is leading the coalition of the Arab States to intervene in the civil war. Since 2015, they have launched airstrikes against the Houthis and forces loyal to former President Ali Abdullah Saleh. Saudi-Arabia is an ally of the US.

### Iran

Iran has been supporting the Houthis since the beginning of the conflict. According to the Heritage Foundation, Iran seeks to undermine Saudi influence in the Middle East through the support of Houthis, symbolizing a much larger conflict between Saudi Arabia and Iran struggling to obtain hegemony and dominance within the region. However, a panel of UN experts affirm that there is no definite evidence of Iran providing material support to the Houthis.

### Houthi

Founded in the 1990s by Hussein Badreddin al-Houthi, the Houthi movement after Saleh resigned attempted to establish a new and stable government in Yemen. Nonetheless, in 2015, they allied with the former President Saleh, to overthrow the new president, Abd Rabbu Mansour Hadi. With the slogan "God is great, death to America, death to Israel, a curse on the Jews, victory to Islam," the Houthis stated no governance goals for Yemen. After Saleh's assassination, the structure of the leadership collapse causing infighting among Houthi leaders. The Houthis are backed by Iran and

Hezbollah, which have increased their provision of military training, supplies, and funds to the Houthis.

## **Al-Qaeda**

Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) has been responsible for numerous terrorist attacks in the region in question. The AQAP are opponents of the Houthi rebels.

## **Past International Action**

Although there were a number of attempts to settle peace talks, negotiations, treaties, and several resolutions created, many of them were unsuccessful, particularly the UN-sponsored talks. The Atlantic Council states that the two previous draft resolutions established as UN independent international investigation commissions into the possible Yemen war crimes are unsuccessful. These talks are failing since both Saudi Arabia and Iran refuse to withdraw from the region. As mentioned, they are fighting a proxy war in the region, so neither Saudi Arabia nor Iran wants to give up their power in the region. Saudi Arabia had been preventing the UN from taking decisive actions to resolve the issue. Even though Saudi Arabia is not a member of the UNSC, they are able to use their allies, UK and US to prevent decisive actions from being taken as to threatening to pull out hundreds of millions of dollars in assistance to the UN. Moreover, Saudi Arabia holds a position in the UNHRC, which is supposed to provide them with an opportunity to promote and protect human rights. However, the country has repeatedly used its position in the UNHRC to prevent UNHRC special procedures and arrest citizens who have spoken in the committee.

## **Suggestions for Future Action**

There are several approaches to the situation of Yemen with the ultimate goal of ending the violent armed conflict and abolishing both human rights cases of abuse and war crimes within the region. One way to approach this issue is to settle for a peace negotiation treaty involving all parties with neutral third-party mediators to prevent the conflict from escalating. Peace negotiations could be beneficial if they include an agenda addressing topics such as the sale of arms to Yemen, ending blockades, preventing war crimes, and human rights abuses. Another approach would be to call for a humanitarian intervention against the civil war to rescue those citizens who are stuck within the country and to solve the humanitarian crisis. As the conditions within Yemen worsens, it would be reasonable to call for the intervention under the Responsible to Protect (R2P) protocol to ease the situation. Also, humanitarian assistance can also further alleviate the situation for the citizens, allowing them to access the resources they need and medical supplies needed to solve the cholera crisis within the country.

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## **Committee: Security Council**

**Chair: Thavisha Jaywardhana**

**Topic: Measures to alleviate the growth of organized crime and transatlantic terrorist groups**

### **Background Information**

Organized crime can be defined as “criminal activities that are planned and controlled by powerful groups and carried out on an extensive scale”. As a result, it is a threat to international peace and security. The organized crime involves the illegal activity of groups of people or organizations with the common purposes of obtaining money and influence. This illegal activity can consist of the illegal transportation of humans, money, and objects, commonly connected to violence and corruption. Transnational organized crime can be conducted between individuals and groups over national borders. Because of this, it directly or indirectly affects every member state of the United Nations. The problem has existed throughout human history, traced back to such activities as piracy and smuggling. Organized crime grew in the 20th Century, with aspects of the topic being discussed since the first session of the UN General Assembly in 1946. With enormous amounts of monetary support, extralegal activities, and substantial influence, organized crime is unlikely to disappear from the international economy without major action on behalf of the United Nations and its consistent member states. Additionally, here are a multitude of examples which are classified as organized crimes such as the following:

- Human trafficking
- Illegal distribution of firearms
- Drug trafficking
- Extortion
- Kidnapping
- Illegal gambling
- Money laundering
- Fraud
- Political corruption

Transnational organized crime is not only a threat to the people directly involved but to international security as a whole. Regulation of—for example—money laundering is already being reintroduced. However, terrorism benefits differently from liberalized financial sectors. Whilst money laundering

concerns proceedings of crime that are transformed to appear as if they were from a legal source, terrorist organizations do not need to take that extra step as their main concern is the funding of their activities by any means necessary.

## Important Definitions

**Illicit:** This term typically refers to the **illegal** production, manufacturing and transporting items that are consumed by individuals. An example of this would be **illicit** drugs which are typically produced in LEDCs (Less Economically Developed Countries) to be transported and used in MEDCs (More Economically Developed Countries). These drugs can range from cocaine to heroin.

**Money Laundering:** This term is classified as the method by which criminals disguise the illegal origins of their wealth and protect their assets' bases so as to "avoid the suspicion of law enforcement agencies and prevent leaving a trail of incriminating evidence" according to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

**Transnational Organized Crime (TOC):** Transnational organized crime (TOC) is organized crime coordinated across national borders, involving groups or networks of individuals working in more than one country to plan and execute illegal business ventures. In order to achieve their goals, these criminal groups use systematic violence and corruption.

## Countries and Organizations Involved

**Colombia:** In the realm of illicit drug production, selling, and transportation, cocaine has been a serious problem in regard to the aforementioned within Colombia. This is because the production of cocaine has increased immensely, with approximately 442 acres of land used for cultivation in 2018. However, the Colombian authorities have been working in tandem with the United States of America within counter-narcotics and one strategy that was implemented (decision taken by both parties) was sending aerial vehicles that released chemicals (in the form of a spray) to eradicate the coca crops. Nonetheless, their attempts to counter-narcotics failed due to the intervention of the fight against the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). Therefore, the effects of this are detrimental to all countries, however, especially for nations such as the United States of America and Australia who are one of the highest aggregate users and purchasers of cocaine.

**United States of America:** The United States is a strong example of a nation affected by organized crime within its borders. With this in mind, the United States has created several agencies such as the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) to prevent imports of drugs such as cocaine, crystal methamphetamine, and other major drugs from countries including Mexico, Colombia, and other major hubs of drug activity. Today the DEA employs over 5,000 agents dedicated to stopping the drug trade.

**Russia:** Another example of organized crime can be seen in Russia, with one of the worst human trafficking rings in the world. Human trafficking can be defined as the movement of people for labor sexual exploitation; this can also include immigrants who are smuggled into the country illegally, which has been seen increasingly in recent years. Russia has had varying degrees of success through government coordination with groups such as the Red Cross to take preventative measures to combat human trafficking, but progress has been stunted. Even recently, reports have shown that the Russian mafia has been responsible for thousands of criminals becoming involved in sexual exploitation.

**World Health Organization (WHO):** The purpose of the WHO is to both direct and coordinate health for its member nations, providing leadership and helping define paths for research. Therefore, the WHO is able to tackle counterfeit medical drugs and medicines which if consumed can affect the health of an individual. Moreover, this organization uncovered that in 2014 approximately 69,000 individuals die each year due to an opioid overdose.

**United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes (UNODC):** This organization is a subdivision of the United Nations (UN) primarily fighting against illicit drugs and international crime. The UNODC primarily aids member states in regards to illicit drugs, corruption, prevention of crime and terrorism.

## Past International Action

A prime example of appropriate action is when the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) developed a treaty signed by other member nations to be created into a formal gathering, which later was announced in the General Assembly. This assembly of all member states included four main classifications of what international organized crime is, which includes:

- Counterfeit goods
- Migrant smuggling
- Human trafficking
- Illicit firearm and drug trafficking

Hence, this assembly was able to shed more light upon the threat of organized crime to international peace and security and an assembly of relevant member states to create and implement solutions for specified issues.

## Previous UN Resolutions

Resolution 9/1: Establishment of the mechanism for the review of the implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols thereto

Resolution 9/2: Enhancing and ensuring effective implementation of the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components, and Ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime

Resolution 8/1: Enhancing the effectiveness of central authorities in international cooperation in criminal matters to counter transnational organized crime

Resolution 8/2: Mechanism for the review of the implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols thereto

Resolution 7/1: Strengthening the implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols thereto

Resolution 7/2: Importance of the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime

### **Suggestions for Future Solutions**

Organized crimes typically occur in regions that are classified as LEDCs, this is due to the fact that people in said regions require funds to survive yet they do not have access to education thus, no access to jobs for their livelihood. Therefore, they turn to the aforementioned in order to garner funds for a living. Hence, implementing or increasing the level of education in those regions will benefit the population's GDP per capita, therefore, they will not need to undertake such crimes for monetary gain.

Some member states have called for increased proliferation of extradition treaties, to make it clear that there is no easy place for crime in this world. Member states have also proposed more obvious solutions such as a redirection of funds, expertise, and intelligence capabilities to try to take down these organized groups, however, organized crime rarely gets the attention it needs because of its—by definition—underground nature, compared to international terrorist groups that thrive and seek media attention. All of these components are potential avenues to address this issue.

### **Additional Links/Resources**

1. [https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/commissions/CND/Resolutions\\_Decisions/Resolutions-Decisions\\_2010-2019.html](https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/commissions/CND/Resolutions_Decisions/Resolutions-Decisions_2010-2019.html)

2. <https://www.unodc.org/e4j/en/organized-crime/module-3/key-issues/firearms-trafficking.html>
3. <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/un-documents/drug-trafficking-and-security/>
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