United Nations Security Council

Navigating the Complexities of the Yemeni Civil War and its competing Factions.

BEYMUN 2025

Message from the Dais:

Dear UNSC Delegates,

Welcome to BEYMUN! Anyone who knows anything about this conference knows it's one of a kind. We are the only MUN conference in Lebanon that seamlessly blends fun and proper educational, diplomatic experience. This year promises the same and more. For some of you reading this, it might be your first MUN experience, and what a conference to kick your diplomatic journey off! Our advice for you would be, do not be afraid to roleplay as a veteran, after all, MUN is roleplaying. The most talented delegate has to start somewhere, and making mistakes is nothing to be embarrassed about. Do not be shy to debate, do not back down from a fight, and be prepared to have some high intensity arguments. To all of the delegates in BEYMUN UNSC, we are excited to welcome you onto the beautiful AUB campus, and we will warn you, you will have the most chaotic and bizarre experience you've had so far, but we guarantee that you will leave this conference having learned something. Good luck, and prepared to possibly be kidnapped during the crisis. (PS: We are that crazy)

See you soon!

Ghadi Mahmoud, Chair

Rym Harb, co-chair

Aya Hallak, Director.

Introduction to The Committee

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is the principal organ of the United Nations, charged with maintaining international peace and security. Established in 1945, the Council operates under the UN Charter, granting it the authority to take binding decisions on all member states. The Council is composed of 15 members: five permanent members (China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, and the United States) holding veto power, and ten non-permanent members elected for two-year terms by the General Assembly.

Mechanisms of Intervention

The security council is the one organ of the United Nations whose resolutions are binding on all UN member states. The UNSC has many tools and methods at its disposal in order to implement and create its resolutions. One of these methods would be to encourage a peaceful settlement of disputes through diplomatic mediation. This form of conflict resolution tends to be the first method used, if diplomatic mediation does not work, the United Nations will implement other means of intervention. Diplomatic mediation is used to encourage negotiation and peace talks between conflicting parties through envoys or international facilitators. The two conflicting parties can also choose to enter negotiations without involving third parties as mediators. All non-judicial tactics of peaceful settlements of disputes are outlined in Article 33 of the United Nations Charter. If the Security Council wishes to implement further pressure on a country in order to end conflicts, they may vote to introduce sanctions on various sectors of the countries economy, trade, or on specific individuals involved in the conflict. Sanctions are used to exert pressure on parties in conflicts to abide by international law, and to signal disapproval of their actions in the conflict. Many of the sanctions that have been introduced in the context of the Yemeni civil war have been arms embargoes, which mean prohibiting the supply, export, or delivery in relation to military equipment. Arms embargoes are used to limit the ability of the aggressor to inflict further violence and limit their capabilities to

continue fighting. The UNSC has the right to introduce a peacekeeping force to a battlefield, similar to the UNIFIL forces that are deployed along the Lebanon-Israel border. These peacekeeping forces are military forces supplied by member states in inhospitable areas in order to monitor ceasefires, protect civilians, and to monitor and support the political processes. The UNSC can authorize the use of force, which ties into the introduction of sanctions as "force" can mean sanctions, arms embargoes, no fly zones, etc… Military force is often used as the last resort, and is implemented when war crimes and crimes against humanity have taken place. This has been outlined in Chapter VII of the United Nation Charter. The military forces are either UN military forces, or by member states coalitions that act on behalf of the UNSC, such was the case in the 1990 NATO bombing of former Yugoslav territories in order to prevent the ethnic cleansing of Kosovo Albanians. The UNSC also has the power to mandate and coordinate international aid delivery to conflict zones and populations in need. They also monitor the delivery in order to make sure that the aid is being delivered to the right people, and does not fall into the hands of militias or dictatorial regimes. This falls under Humanitarian Aid Facilitation.

Most of the aforementioned mechanisms of intervention have been used in the context of the Yemeni civil war. The UNSC has passed multiple resolutions calling for ceasefire, arms embargoes to non-state actors, and implementing and supporting UN led peace initiatives.

Sustainable Development Goals

SDG 1: No Poverty

The war has plunged millions into poverty, reversing decades of economic development and worsening living conditions.

SDG 2: Zero Hunger

Yemen faces one of the world's worst food security crises, with famine-like conditions affecting large segments of the population.

SDG 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions

The civil war highlights the breakdown of governance, the absence of rule of law, and the fragmentation of national institutions.

Rules of Procedure

This committee will operate on the basis of the regular BEYMUN rules of procedure. Delegates are required to use the following motions:

1. Setting the Agenda

"The delegate of [Country X] motions to set the agenda in favor of Topic A/B." Yet, this motion will not be used in the conference since there is only 1 topic.

2. Speaker's List

"The delegate of [Country X] motions to open the Speaker's List with a speaker's time of [Y] seconds."

3. Moderated Caucus

"The delegate of [Country X] motions to suspend the debate and move into a moderated caucus to discuss '[Subtopic Y]' for a total time of [Z] minutes, with a speaker's time of [W] seconds."

4. Unmoderated Caucus

"The delegate of [Country X] motions to suspend the debate and move into an unmoderated caucus to [form blocs and alliances / discuss resolutions / work on the working paper or draft resolution / discuss the crisis] for a total time of [Y] minutes."

5. Consultation of the Whole

"The delegate of [Country X] motions to suspend the debate and move into a consultation of the whole to discuss [the recommendations elaborated in the previous unmoderated caucus / the crisis] for a total time of [Y] minutes."

6. Adjourn the Meeting

The delegate of [Country X] motions to adjourn the meeting for [Y] minutes for the purpose of [a lunch break / a coffee break]."

7. Solicit a Third Party

"The delegate of [Country X] motions to solicit [Third Party Y], as they possess relevant information or expertise regarding [Subtopic Z / the crisis]."

8. Press Conference

"The delegate of [Country X] motions to suspend the debate and move into a press conference to discuss [a resolution related to Y / the crisis] for a total time of [Z] minutes."

9. Extend the Time of the Unmoderated Caucus

"The delegate of [Country X] motions to extend the duration of the current unmoderated caucus by [Y] minutes."

10. Introduce the Draft Resolution

"The delegate of [Country X] motions to introduce the draft resolutions with a speaker's time of [Y] seconds per author or co-sponsor."

11. Close Debate and Move into Voting Procedure

"The delegate of [Country X] motions to close the debate and move directly into voting procedure."

(Note: This motion requires a two-thirds majority to pass.)

Written Motions:

1. **Right of Reply:** Delegates can request the right of reply to another delegate who has offended their country. There is no right of reply to a right of reply.

2. **Appeal to the Chair's Decision:** If the delegates feel that the chair has made an unfair decision, the delegates can send it as a note to the Chair.

Points:

1. **Point of Order:** Used to correct a procedural or factual mistake. Interruptive, but don't overuse it.

2. **Point of Personal Privilege:** Request to leave or adjust comfort (e.g., temperature). Interruptive.

3. **Point of Inquiry:** Ask about the rules or current stage. Interruptive.

4. **Point of Information:** Ask a question when the floor is open. Not interruptive.

5. **Point to Instigate a Debate:** Challenge another delegate's resolution stance. Interruptive and subject to chair's approval.
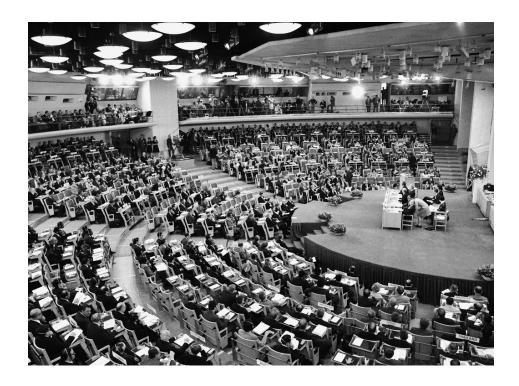
Veto Power: The five permanent members—China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, and the United States— hold the authority to veto, and thereby halt, any Security Council draft resolution.

Observer Status: Yemen serves as the Council's 16th observer state and, accordingly, does not possess voting rights on draft resolutions.

Introduction to The Topic

Historical Context

Yemen's modern political instability has deep roots in its complex history of colonial rule, tribal rivalries, and Cold War divisions. Formerly split into North Yemen and South Yemen until their unification in 1990, the country experienced political fragility even before the civil war began. The 2011 Arab Spring uprisings sparked mass protests against President Ali Abdullah Saleh, leading to his resignation and the appointment of Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi. However, Yemen's transition to democracy faltered, and the Houthis, a Zaidi Shi'a rebel group from the north, capitalized on the power vacuum, launching a military campaign that would soon engulf the country in full-scale conflict. It is important to note the historical conflicts between the different sectarian communities and tribal factions. While most of the population, around 99%, is Muslim, they are split between Sunni Islam, around 65%, and Zaydi Shia Islam, around 33%. Religious minorities also exist in Yemen, with Twelver Shias, Ismaili Shias, Hindus, Bahais, Christians and Jews making up around 1% of the population. These groups often hide their religious identity in fear of religious persecution, and most of them have left Yemen, notably Yemenite Jews, who have escaped to Israel. Yemeni society is historically a tribal society, and this extends to how modern Yemen functions societally. Tribalism has factored into historical and modern conflicts within Yemen, and recently, Houthis and the Hajour tribes have been in active conflict. There has been a long history of tribal differences and conflict between various factions throughout the history of Yemen. All of these different factors have contributed ot historical and modern conflicts in Yemen. Delegates are encouraged to research this factors to gain a deeper understanding of the sectarian and tribal strife that has been prevalent in Yemeni society for decades.

Introduction to the Current Conflict

In 2014, the Houthi movement seized Sana'a, forcing the internationally recognized government into exile. The power shift prompted a Saudi-led military intervention in 2015, aimed at restoring Hadi's government. The conflict soon evolved into a proxy war, drawing in regional powers such as Iran (accused of backing the Houthis) and Gulf Cooperation Council states. Beyond the Houthi-government clash, the war's complexity deepened due to the involvement of separatist factions in the south, tribal militias, jihadist groups like Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), and the Islamic State (ISIS).

Prominent Aspects of the Conflict

The Yemeni Civil War is not a typical two-sided conflict. Instead, it is a multi-layered crisis that blends local grievances, regional rivalries, and international power struggles. Understanding these aspects is essential to crafting effective diplomatic solutions.

1. **Humanitarian Crisis:** The war has triggered one of the world's worst humanitarian emergencies. According to UN OCHA, over **21.6 million people** — more than two-thirds of Yemen's population — require

humanitarian assistance as of 2024.

The blockade of major ports like Hudaydah and airstrikes on infrastructure have severely restricted access to food, fuel, and medicine. The economy has collapsed, the local currency has devalued, and over **17 million people** face acute food insecurity. Cholera outbreaks, water shortages, and the destruction of health facilities have worsened the civilian plight.

2. **Regional Rivalries:** The Yemen conflict is often described as a proxy war between Saudi Arabia and Iran. The two countries are in a constant battle for supremacy in the Muslim world, with Iran being the leader of the Shia political movement, and Saudi Arabia being the leader of the Sunni world. The two powers have been active in the wars in Yemen and Syria, and have meddled in disputes in Lebanon, Qatar, Bahrain, and Iraq.

   - **Saudi Arabia** leads a military coalition backing the internationally recognized Yemeni government, aiming to prevent Iranian influence on its southern border.
   - **Iran** is accused of providing military and financial support to the Houthis, offering political legitimacy and advanced weaponry such as drones and missiles.

- *These dynamics turn Yemen into a battleground for Middle Eastern regional power projection.*

3. **Fragmentation of Political Authority:** The Yemeni state has effectively fractured into competing spheres of control.

   - The Houthis govern northern Yemen, including the capital Sana'a.
   - The Internationally Recognized Government (IRG), backed by the Saudi-led coalition, controls parts of the south.
   - The Southern Transitional Council (STC), a UAE-backed secessionist group, controls Aden and seeks to restore an

independent South Yemen.

- ○ Tribal militias and extremist groups like AQAP (Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula) and ISIS maintain localized control in other regions.

- *This fragmented map creates overlapping conflicts and makes a comprehensive peace agreement extremely challenging.*

4. **Maritime Security Threats:** Yemen's strategic position along the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait — one of the world's busiest maritime chokepoints — has drawn global attention.
Attacks on vessels, sea mines, and drone strikes on shipping have raised fears about global energy and goods transport, particularly affecting Europe and Asia's supply lines. The Houthis' use of advanced Iranian-supplied weapons in this domain represents a direct threat to international maritime security.

5. **Spread of Extremist Ideologies:** The power vacuum created by the war has allowed jihadist groups like AQAP and ISIS to expand their presence. These groups exploit local grievances and weak governance to recruit fighters, establish control over territories, and launch attacks both within Yemen and abroad, destabilizing the broader region.

International Actions

Given the war's global humanitarian, security, and political implications, international organizations and states have responded on multiple fronts:

1. **UN Security Council Resolutions**

- ○ The UNSC has passed key resolutions including:

- Resolution 2216 (2015): Demanded Houthi withdrawal and imposed a targeted arms embargo.
- Resolution 2451 (2018): Supported the Stockholm Agreement, which introduced a ceasefire in Hudaydah.
- Resolution 2624 (2022): Expanded the arms embargo to cover all Houthi forces.
- Resolution 2722 (2024): Addressed Red Sea shipping attacks and emphasized maritime security.

2. **Mediation Efforts by the UN**

   - The UN Special Envoy for Yemen has played a central role in negotiations. Mediated dialogues — such as the Stockholm Agreement (2018) and Riyadh Agreement (2019) — sought to de-escalate specific hostilities, promote prisoner exchanges, and stabilize Hudaydah, a lifeline for humanitarian imports.

3. **Humanitarian Relief Operations**

   - Agencies like UN OCHA, WFP, UNICEF, ICRC, and UNHCR lead efforts to provide emergency food, shelter, medical care, and water access. In 2023 alone, WFP reported delivering aid to over 13 million people per month, although funding shortfalls and security threats repeatedly hindered access.

4. **Arms Control and Embargo Monitoring**

   - The UN's Panel of Experts on Yemen monitors violations of the arms embargo, tracking the smuggling of drones, missiles, and small arms — primarily to the Houthis. The panel's findings inform sanctions designations and enforcement strategies.

5. **Regional Diplomacy and Peace Talks**

- The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and Oman have hosted informal and formal dialogues between Yemeni factions.
- The Saudi-Iran normalization agreement (2023) brokered by China also raised hopes for de-escalation in Yemen, although full peace remains elusive.
  - International diplomacy increasingly focuses on confidence-building measures like prisoner swaps, port access, and localized ceasefires, as global actors accept that a military solution is unlikely.

Topic in depth

The Yemeni Civil War, which erupted in 2014, is one of the most catastrophic humanitarian catastrophes in modern history. This war has also played a part in the larger Saudi-Iran proxy war, which has funded opposing sides in numerous conflicts around the Middle East and North Africa. The war has left around 24 million people in need of humanitarian assistance, and a majority of the Yemeni civilians now have little to no access to clean water, healthcare, food, and shelter. The political scene in Yemen has been unstable for many years as a result of tribal and sectarian differences. The former Yemeni president, Ali Abdullah Saleh, served as Yemen's president from 1990 until 2012, and had previously served as the president of North Yemen from 1978 until the unification of Yemen in 2012. His rule was seen as brutal and dictatorial, and Yemenis were worried that his son would later take this place as Yemen's president. After the eruption of the Yemeni revolution, President Saleh announced that he would not be seeking reelection, with hopes to calm the protests down. This did not work, as on March 18, locally known as the "Friday of Dignity", protestors gathered in the Yemeni capital, Sanaa, and they were met with fire from the security forces, killing over 50 people. This led to protests growing in numbers and frequency. This incident led to multiple resignations in the military, security forces, police, and government. President Saleh saw this as the moment in which he could not remain in power, and arranged a deal with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), in which he would hand power over to the Vice President, Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi. President

Hadi's term was met with resistance from the Shia population in Yemen, with the Ansar Allah movement, known as the Houthi movement, leading this Shia resistance. In 2014, the Houthis seized the Yemeni capital, and put pressure on the Yemeni president in order to sign an agreement to end the fighting. This was seen as the beginning of the brutal civil war which is still ongoing today. Protestors were not happy with the Houthi rise to power, and went to the streets again. They were met with the same brutal crackdown they saw in 2011, with security forces and Houthi militants opening fire on protestors.

The war which began in 2014 has been used as a battleground for foreign powers, notably Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, which supported reinstating the ousted President Hadi, and Iran which supported the Houthi movement. This was another battle in the larger Saudi-Iran proxy war which had been ongoing for years prior. The Saudis formed an alliance of nine Middle Eastern and African nations to lead a military and diplomatic intervention in Yemen, with goals to counter Iranian influence in the region and to avoid seeing an Islamic revolution similar to the one seen in Iran in 1979. The civil war only grew more violent as a result of the foreign involvement, and this exacerbated the humanitarian crisis.

The humanitarian crisis in Yemen has developed into one of, if not the most severe humanitarian disasters in modern history. More than 17 million people are facing food insecurity, with around ⅓ of the 17 million facing food insecurity at an extreme level. Women, children, and the elderly have little to no access to healthcare and other essential services. Healthcare in Yemen has been severely impacted, with half of hospitals being non-functional as a result of the war. This has resulted in the outbreak of many diseases in Yemen, notably cholera, which took the lives of more than four thousand people and infected nearly three million people. Around 20 million people do not have access to clean drinkable water, and many players in the Yemeni civil war have restricted aid from entering Yemen.

Questions

1. What are the primary historical, political, and socio-economic factors that contributed to the outbreak and continuation of the Yemeni Civil War?

2. What role does the UNSC currently play in resolving the conflict, and how effective have previous resolutions been?
3. What are the root causes of the Yemeni Civil War, and how do they align with current regional tensions?
4. How has the war affected regional and global security, particularly in relation to terrorism, arms trafficking, or maritime threats in the Red Sea?
5. Considering the strategic importance of the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait, what role can the UNSC play in ensuring maritime security and freedom of navigation in the context of the Yemen conflict?
6. Who are the key domestic and regional actors involved in the Yemen conflict, what are their core objectives and alliances, and how have these evolved over time?
7. How has foreign intervention (state and non-state actors) influenced the progression or escalation of the conflict?
8. What are the key legal and ethical considerations surrounding the actions of the various actors involved in the Yemen conflict?
9. What is your country's stance on the Yemeni Civil War, and has it supported any of the involved factions (e.g. Houthi rebels, Hadi government, STC)?
10. How has the conflict in Yemen impacted critical infrastructure (e.g., ports, airports, oil facilities) and what are the implications for the country's future recovery and regional trade?
11. What are the principal challenges in achieving a comprehensive and sustainable ceasefire in Yemen? What are the main reasons why it has been difficult to achieve peace?
12. What are potential pathways for building trust and fostering reconciliation among the diverse segments of Yemeni society?

Recommendations

- Delegates are recommended to research the key arms flows into Yemen, including the primary sources, transit routes, and types of weapons involved.
- Delegates are recommended to research the technical capabilities and limitations of the UN Verification and Inspection Mechanism (UNVIM) for Yemen.
- Delegates are encouraged to research the tribal alliances and their shifting loyalties in key governorates (e.g., Marib, Shabwa, Abyan) and how these dynamics impact the broader conflict and potential for local ceasefires.
- Delegates should analyze case studies of successful and failed local ceasefires in Yemen, focusing on the actors involved, the terms of the agreements, and the reasons for their outcomes.
- Delegates are recommended to research "UN Security Council Resolution 2216," "Arms Embargo Yemen," and "Houthi Maritime Attacks."
- Delegates are recommended to research the role of proxy dynamics in the Yemeni conflict, especially how the Saudi-Iranian rivalry plays out on the ground and within UNSC negotiations

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