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CHAPTER 3

The Civil War in Yemen: Understanding the Actors

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INTRODUCTION

Yemen is in an on-going full-scale conflict since March 2015. The country is in a swamp of political violence that overshadows nearly all economic, social, and political determinations of the society. In a context where 14 million people (representing more than half of the population) are on the brink of famine, ¹ the United Nations was prompted to define Yemen as the 'world's worst humanitarian crisis'. ² Illustrating the exact

1 "Half the Population of Yemen at Risk of Famine: UN Emergency Relief Chief," UN News, October 23, 2018, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2018/10/1023962>.

2 "About OCHA Yemen," OCHA, February 7, 2018, <https://www.unocha.org/yemen/about-ocha-yemen>, including 14.3 million who are in acute need. Severity of needs is deepening, with the number of people in acute need a staggering 27 per cent higher than last year. Two-thirds of all districts in the country are already pre-famine, and one-third face a convergence of multiple acute vulnerabilities. The OCHA Yemen Country Office was established in the capital, Sana'a, in 2010 in response to the humanitarian crisis brought about by widespread

number of fatalities is challenging as a result of the relatively scant information emanating from the country; however, some observers suggest a death toll that exceeds 70,000 people. ³ Despite the several initiatives that have been taken to come up with solutions to the conflict, uncertainty remains looming around the country's future prospects. The warring parties appear to be in a stalemate with each side claiming advancements with no end in sight. Mutual belligerence continues between the Houthis and the Saudi-led coalition, thus limiting the opportunities of a peaceful way out.

flooding in Yemen. In July 2015, following the escalation of the conflict and the rapidly deteriorating situation on the ground, Yemen was declared a System Wide IASC Level 3 Emergency (L3)

3 Patrick Cockburn, "The Yemen War Death Toll Is Five Times Higher than We Think – We Can't Shrug off Our Responsibilities Any Longer," The Independent, October 26, 2018, <https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/yemen-war-death-toll-saudi-arabia-allies-how-many-killed-responsibility-a8603326.html>.

Notably, the previously mentioned entities might resemble the main actors in the Yemeni Conflict. However, this shouldn't cause a distraction from other prominent actors operating in the same conflict with direct influence on the local population.

As such, attempting to rationalize contemporary Yemen while excluding other prominent actors would be insufficient. This piece attempts to provide a thorough demonstration of the main local actors operating in Yemen. The actors are: Abd Rabo Mansour Hadi's Government, Houthis, the Southern Movement (Hirak), and al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP).⁴ For grasping a visualized general overview on the actors in Yemen, refer to this piece's appendices.⁵

HADI'S GOVERNMENT

Hadi's Government is the internationally recognized government of Yemen since the previous president Ali Abdullah Saleh was ousted in February 2012. The government is led by Abd Rabo Mansour Hadi who previously served as Saleh's deputy president. Hadi's government came into power after the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), led by Saudi Arabia, brokered a peace deal in Yemen. The agreement, also known as the GCC Framework, stipulated a transfer of power from Saleh to Hadi and in return Saleh and his subordinates were granted amnesty from legal prosecutions.⁶ Furthermore, Hadi's government was to govern the country for a two-year transitional period to prepare the country for constitutional amendments as well as presidential and parliamentary elections.⁷

⁴ The reader should note that this piece is an extension for a previous article published at the Brussels International Center. See Sami Mohammed, "Yemen's Civil War: Defining the Actors | Bic-Rhr," Brussels International Center for Research and Human Rights, March 2019, <http://bic-rhr.com/projects/yemens-civil-war-defining-actors>.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Marwa Rashad, "Yemen's Saleh Signs Deal to Give up Power," Reuters, 2011, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-yemen/yemens-saleh-signs-deal-to-give-up-power-idUSTRE7AMOD020111123>.

⁷ Ibrahim Fraihat, "Still Hope for a Deal in Yemen, De-

Notably, the transitional government had a long to-do list despite the limited time and fluctuating context. Assuaging the aspirations of the Yemenis while simultaneously reassuring the concerned regional and international actors accumulated a heavy burden on Hadi's government. In an attempt to maintain a cohesive future transition, Hadi called for the National Dialogue Conference NDC.⁸ The NDC aimed to include all political parties and movements in the country to delineate Yemen's political roadmap. The NDC comprised delegates with a 50-50 representation from north and south Yemen that included a 20 and 30 percent participation from youth and women respectively.⁹

The NDC was perceived as the heart of the country's transitional process.¹⁰ Tasks were delegated to subcommittees that held the responsibility of managing the files with controversy such as the question of South Yemen and the conflict in Sa'da.¹¹ Although most subcommittees submitted their reports within the timeframe, the final document was not published on the agreed upon deadline.¹² The final document was accepted on the 21st of January 2014, and included a list of around 1,800 recommendations.¹³ The United Nations praised the outcomes of the NDC and described

..... spite Saleh's GCC Snub," *Brookings* (blog), November 30, 2011, <https://www.brookings.edu/opinions/still-hope-for-a-deal-in-yemen-despite-salehs-gcc-snob/>.

⁸ Ali Saif Hassan, "Yemen - National Dialogue Conference: Managing Peaceful Change?," Conciliation Resources, April 3, 2014, <https://www.c-r.org/accord/legitimacy-and-peace-processes/yemen-national-dialogue-conference-managing-peaceful-change>.

⁹ "Yemen's National Dialogue," Middle East Institute, accessed June 1, 2019, <https://www.mei.edu/publications/yemens-national-dialogue>.

¹⁰ Charles Schmitz, "Yemen's National Dialogue," Middle East Institute, 2014, <https://www.mei.edu/publications/yemens-national-dialogue>.

¹¹ See no. 9 above

¹² (Schmitz 2014) see no. 10 above

¹³ Erica Gaston, "Process Lessons Learned in Yemen's National Dialogue," *United States Institute of Peace*, 2014, 16.

it as “historic moment” for Yemen. 14 However, the local developments created uncertainty over its applicability.

The country’s political atmosphere and the NDC’s structure impeded the subcommittees’ tasks and raised concerns over the NDC’s prospects. First, hosting the NDC at a 5-star hotel in Sana’a along with its long-time schedule were not reassuring. Second, the dialogue was held in a context where the country’s security conditions were fragile. The Houthis and Sunni tribes were engaged in armed confrontations in Yemen’s northern periphery. 15 Furthermore, AQAP saw the security vacuum in South of Yemen as an opening to entrench its position. 16 Third, prominent political entities such as Hirak had scant confidence in the NDC and regularly called for its boycott. 17 Fourth, the NDC was built over the GCC Framework, which granted Saleh and his subordinates amnesty from any legal prosecutions, and that inherently was seen as a method of trading justice for peace. 18

Although Saleh agreed to relinquish the country’s presidency, the GCC Framework allowed him space to remain in Yemen’s political structure. Saleh was still the president of the General People’s Congress GPC 19 that participated in the forming Yemen’s transition. Saleh made

it clear that he had no intention to abandon Yemen’s political future by stating “Our people will remain present in every institution. Two months have passed since this creation of this weak government, which doesn’t know the ABCs of politics. It won’t be able to build a thing or put one brick on top of another”. 20 Loyalists to Saleh continued to defy Hadi’s decisions, undermining the prospects of the NDC and therefore limiting the trust of the local population in Hadi. 21

Saleh, who described ruling Yemen as “dancing on the heads of snakes”, 22 operated to entrench a future transition that poured into his favor. He concluded an alliance with his longtime enemies, the Houthis, in his attempt to expand his spheres of influence. The Saleh-Houthis alliance conducted an insurgency in Sana’a, causing Hadi’s departure from the country at the end of 2014. 23 This prompted Hadi to request military assistance from Saudi Arabia through which the latter initiated an operation in March 2015 to counter the insurgency. 24 Until today, both parties appear to be in a stalemate with very limited solutions for solving the conflict.

14 “Bin Omar Praises Yemen Dialogue Consensus,” Gulf News, 2014, <https://gulfnews.com/world/gulf/yemen/bin-omar-praises-yemen-dialogue-consensus-1.1280519>.

15 Nasser Arrabyee, “National Dimensions of the Saada Conflict,” Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2013, <https://carnegieendowment.org/sada/53721>.

16 Aaron Ng, “In Focus: Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and the Yemen Uprisings,” *International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research* 3, no. 6 (2011): 10.

17 Stephen W. Day, “The ‘Non-Conclusion’ of Yemen’s National Dialogue – Foreign Policy,” 2014, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2014/01/27/the-non-conclusion-of-yemens-national-dialogue/>.

18 (Fraihat 2011) see no.7 above

19 Eyad Ahmed and Osamah al-Rawhani, “The Need to Build State Legitimacy in Yemen,” *Sana’a Center For Strategic Studies* (blog), September 29, 2018, <http://sanaacenter.org/publications/main-publications/6496>.

20 Barany Zoltan, “The Challenges of Building a National Army in Yemen,” 2016 accessed May 21, 2019, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/challenges-building-national-army-yemen>.

21 Ibid.

22 Daniel Martin Varisco, “Dancing on the Heads of Snakes in Yemen,” *Society* 48, no. 4 (July 1, 2011): 301–3, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12115-011-9440-9>.

23 Yara Bayoumy and Mohammed Ghobari, “Yemen President Quits, Throwing Country Deeper into Chaos,” *Reuters*, 2015, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-yemen-security-houthis-idUSKBNOKV0HT20150123>.

24 Khaled Abdullah and Sami Aboudi, “Yemeni Leader Hadi Leaves Country as Saudi Arabia Keeps up Air Strikes – Reuters,” 2015, <https://www.reuters.com/article/uk-yemen-security/yemeni-leader-hadi-leaves-country-as-saudi-arabia-keeps-up-air-strikes-idUKKBNOMLOYM20150326>.

THE HOUTHIS

The Houthis initially resembled a theological movement advocating for peace.²⁵ The title 'Houthis' is given to the followers of the movement's late leader Hussein Badreddin al-Houthi.²⁶ The movement follows the Zaidi sect of Shia Islam and are mainly based in Yemen's northern district, close to the Yemeni-Saudi border. The Houthi movement was not a supporter of Saleh's policies, particularly that the latter tolerated the establishment of Sunni shrines in northern Yemen. As a result, the Houthis started adopting some belligerent stances, galvanizing Saleh to launch six wars against their areas since 2004.²⁷

Yemen's uprisings in early 2011 were perceived as an opportunity for the movement to eliminate Saleh and his allies.²⁸ The Houthis supported Saleh's ouster; however, they were intolerant towards Saleh's amnesty, contending that he should face legal prosecutions. Following Saleh's ouster, the Houthis were keen to participate in Hadi's NDC. The NDC was perceived by the Houthis as a gateway to enhance their participation in Yemen's political process and to consolidate their determinations in Yemen's future transition.²⁹

25 Abdullah M. Al-Ansi, "Houthis: The Second Arm of Iran in the Region to Subjugate the Arabian Peninsula," 2018, https://www.academia.edu/37970592/Houthis_The_Second_Arm_of_Iran_in_the_Region_to_subjugate_the_Arabian_Peninsula.

26 Bethan McKernan, "Who Are the Houthis and Why Are They Fighting the Saudi Coalition in Yemen? | World News | The Guardian," The Guardian, 2018, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/nov/21/who-are-the-houthis-fighting-the-saudi-led-coalition-in-yemen>.

27 April Longley Alley, "Collapse of the Houthi-Saleh Alliance and the Future of Yemen's War," Crisis Group, 2018, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/middle-east-north-africa/gulf-and-arabian-peninsula/yemen/collapse-houthi-saleh-alliance-and-future-yemens-war>.

28 Bruce Riedel, "Who Are the Houthis, and Why Are We at War with Them?," *Brookings* (blog), 2017, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/markaz/2017/12/18/who-are-the-houthis-and-why-are-we-at-war-with-them/>.

29 Mareike Transfeld, "Houthis on the Rise in Yemen," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2014,

The NDC, however, was not held during a favorable time for the Houthis. From the one hand, the Houthi movement was pre-occupied with local clashes with Sunni Groups in the country's north to what is referred to as Sa'da Conflict. The Houthis sought to expand their sphere of influence in the areas dominated by Zaidi Shias in their attempt to consolidate their autonomy. Their ambitions were challenged by the presence of armed Sunni tribes, whom the Houthis desired to clip their wings and limit their influence. On the other hand, two of the Houthi representatives in the NDC were assassinated on two different occasions.³⁰ This created skepticism amongst the Houthi ranks and limited the Houthis' confidence in the NDC.

Notably, not all of the NDC's final decisions were pleasant for the Houthis. The final document stipulated dividing Yemen into six different governates.³¹ According to this new division, the Houthis' access to natural resources was significantly limited, therefore contending that this would divide Yemen into "poor and wealthy regions".³² It wasn't apparent that the Houthis are willing to comply with such decisions, particularly that their presence in the country's north is entrenched and can in fact defy Yemen's security forces. As a result, the Houthis mobilized its followers and denounced the decisions dividing Yemen into that structure.

The Houthis demonstrations soon escalated into clashes with Yemen's security forces. The country's fragile security structure served as a fertile soil for the Houthis to consolidate their position. As mentioned in the previous section, the Houthis concluded an alliance with Yemen's previous president and longtime enemy Saleh.

<https://carnegieendowment.org/sada/57087>.

30 "Yemen's National Dialogue Conference Concludes with Agreement - BBC News," BBC, 2014, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-25835721>.

31 (Riedel 2017) see no. 28 above

32 "Yemen Al Houthi Rebels Slam Federation Plan as Unfair," Gulf News, 2014, <https://gulfnews.com/world/gulf/yemen/yemen-al-houthi-rebels-slam-federation-plan-as-unfair-1.1289512>.

Through their alliance, they were successful in leading an insurgency that granted them control over Sana'a and vast pockets of land in Yemen. ³³ However, their territorial expansion was deterred following the start of Saudi Arabia's military campaign in Yemen.

The Houthi insurgency was met by heavy criticism by the international community. Despite the several initiatives that were made to come up with political solutions for the conflict, the Houthis remain defiant with entrenched control over most of the country's north. The areas that fall under the Houthis' control are governed by the Supreme Political Council SPC. ³⁴ The SPC is a political executive body commissioned by the Houthi movement to manage the political affairs of the Houthis' areas. Furthermore, some observers contend that the Houthis allegedly receive Iranian support; however, Tehran repudiates these claims. ³⁵

THE SOUTHERN MOVEMENT (HIRAK)

Catalyzed by Ali Abdullah Saleh's economic failures and the corruption that weighed down the state and the marginalized population of southern Yemen, Hiraq- a political movement that originated in the south- was established in 2007. With the political and economic situation in retrograde, Hiraq appealed for the forced resignation of the Saleh regime's southern security forces, the redistribution of resources and a readjustment to the balance of power between the north and the south as the former enjoyed greater political and economic entitlements. ³⁶

³³ Ahmed Nagi, "Yemen's Houthis Used Multiple Identities to Advance - Carnegie Middle East Center - Carnegie Endowment for International Peace," Carnegie Middle East Center, 2019, <https://carnegie-mec.org/2019/03/19/yemen-s-houthis-used-multiple-identities-to-advance-pub-78623>.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ "Iran Denies Providing Missiles to Yemen's Houthi Rebels," Middle East Eye, 2017, <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/iran-denies-providing-missiles-yemens-houthi-rebels>.

³⁶ Jon Unruh, "Mass Claims in Land and Property Fol-



Milve Siegar/Reuters

Notwithstanding the movement's initial objectives, the 2008 protests, which erupted in the South to demand the independence of Southern Yemen, galvanized Hiraq to reformulate its agenda in 2012 to center around achieving autonomy and secession of the southern region from the Republic of Yemen. ³⁷ Hence, given the newly adopted vision for political development, eminent personages within Hiraq led on a vigorous struggle to reclaim the South. Under the Southern Transitional Council which Hiraq contemporarily operates, the movement upholds the stable relationship it has established with

lowing the Arab Spring: Lessons from Yemen," *Stability: International Journal of Security and Development* 5, no. 1 (July 8, 2016): 6, <https://doi.org/10.5334/sta.444>.

³⁷ "Al-Hiraq Al-Janoubi (the Southern Movement) / South Yemen Unrest (2007-)," accessed June 13, 2019, <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/yemen2.htm>.

Abd Rabbu Mansour Hadi's government while endeavoring to revamp its strained relations with the local establishment, the region's stakeholders as well as dominant international players such as Russia. 38

Situated in the port city of Aden– Yemen's post-revolutionary interim government and the ex-capital of the south– Hirak altered its ideological character from a confederacy that served as a hub for discontented labor workers from the former People's Democratic Republic of Yemen to a fierce political opponent to the north. 39 Although the restructured political bloc of the south, which comprises various political parties that a considerable segment of the southern population affiliates with, Hirak remains an influential actor in the political scene. The movement obtains its credibility as its most distinguished figures, such as Abd Al-Rahman Ali Al-Jifi and Ali Salem Al-Beidh who hold the authority to represent Southerners, stood as prominent actors prior to unification. 40

The Southern Transitional Council (STC), established in May 2017, arose as a sub-state to challenge the authority of Mansour Hadi's government through promoting the interests of the Southerners by promoting stability in the Gulf of Aden and Bab Al-Mandab. The goal of the STC is to advocate for the southern cause through peaceful means to retrieve the independence of the South with reference to the pre-1990 territorial borders. 41

AL-QAEDA IN THE ARABIAN PENINSULA

Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula AQAP is the unified banner under which al-Qaeda's militants from Saudi Arabia and Yemen are operating. The

union between the militants of both countries came to existence in early 2009. 42 Prior to their unification, militants in each country were motivated for different purposes. While al-Qaeda in Saudi Arabia was more concerned about the presence of Western troops in the Arabian Peninsula, al-Qaeda in Yemen focused more on domestic issues facing the Yemeni population. 43 These issues would vary from corruption, poverty and the government's fragile structure.

In generic terms, Yemen has fertile soil for the expansion of organizations such as AQAP. Yemen is the poorest country in the Arab world and is infamous for its poor education, weak governance, and low living standards. 44 Such factors resemble an instrument for AQAP to exploit in its narrative to touch upon the emotions of the Yemeni population. Furthermore, Yemen's landscape is mountainous and therefore provides a natural safe haven both for AQAP's personnel inside Yemen and foreign fighters. 45

AQAP saw the events that led to the fall of Saleh's regime in Yemen as an opening to catalyze its presence. On the first hand, counterterrorism operations in Yemen were put on hold as a result of the civil uprisings in the country. 46 On the other hand, Saleh's regime was mobilizing its troops from different areas in Yemen to the capital Sana'a to maintain control over the situation. Members of the powerful Republican Guards (comprise counter-terrorism forces) were forced to relinquish their posts in the south of Yemen to defend the capital Sana'a. 47 A security vacuum was thus established in the southern governorate of Abyan that AQAP exploited to establish its territorial control during the early stages of 2011. 48

38 Samuel Ramani, "Russia's Mediating Role in Southern Yemen," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2018, <https://carnegieendowment.org/sada/77482>.

39 (AL-Hirak) see no 43 above

40 Ibid.

41 Robert Forster, "The Southern Transitional Council: Implications for Yemen's Peace Process," Middle East Policy Council, 2017, <http://mepc.org/journal/southern-transitional-council-implications-yemens-peace-process>.

42 Samuel Lindo, "Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula," *Center For Strategic and International Studies CSIS*, 2011, 14.

43 Ibid.

44 Laub, Zachary. "Yemen in crisis." *Council on Foreign Relations*, 2016, 19

45 Alistair Harris, "Exploiting Grievances: Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula," *Carnegie Endowment*, 2010, 26.

46 (Aaron 2011) see no. 16 above

47 Ibid.

48 Ibid.

Notably, AQAP introduced itself as the entity that attempts to improve the living standards of the Yemenis. Not only did AQAP marketed itself as the promoter of religious purity, it regularly shared footage of its members developing more cohesive services for the locals than that of Saleh's government. This included electricity to forgotten areas, security services for the civilians as well as distributing charitable goods for those that are in need. Moreover, AQAP declared war on the Houthis in an attempt to consolidate its popular support.⁴⁹ By waging war on the Houthis, AQAP depicted itself as the guardian of the Sunnis. This played well into AQAP's hands as a result of the vicious confrontations between the Houthis and the Sunni groups in the events of Sa'da Conflict.⁵⁰

However, AQAP's control over Abyan didn't last for long. Yemeni forces trained by the United States dislodged AQAP from the governate. AQAP was still present, however, it failed to maintain its territorial control. Nonetheless, the rapid developments occurring in Yemen created another opening for AQAP to control territory. AQAP exploited the outbreak of the conflict and the Saudi-led campaign in Yemen to establish a new territorial control in the Southern city of al-Mukalla which hosts 500,000 people.⁵¹ Similar to what it previously did in Abyan, AQAP provided the locals in al-Mukalla with descent municipal services. Its rule in al-Mukalla lasted for a year between April 2015 and April 2016 when it was expelled by United Arab Emirates forces.⁵²

AQAP established the Yemen based Ansar Al Sharia AAS, meaning partisans of Sharia, to monitor AQAP's affairs in Yemen. AAS was established in 2011 to separate AQAP's territorial rule in Yemen from al-Qaeda's international

banner. AAS was adopting different tactics than al-Qaeda's previous experiences. An AAS cadre held an interview in which he explained how his organization is striving to learn from the mistakes it did previously made in Iraq and that they are investing greatly in winning the hearts and minds of the local population.⁵³ AAS was mainly responsible for developing new strategies in an attempt to mend ties with the localists and strengthening connections with tribe elders. However, this didn't prevent the United States from labeling AAS as a terrorist organization because it resembles an extension to al-Qaeda.⁵⁴

CONCLUSION

To conclude, this piece provided a thorough description on the main local actors operating in Yemen. As mentioned earlier, despite the weight that the Saudi-led coalition and the Houthis hold, other prominent actors that resemble an instrumental fraction of the society exist in Yemen. As such, attempting to rationalize contemporary Yemen with excluding other prominent actors would be insufficient. Although these actors vary in power and in tendency, their roles in the conflict can have far reaching influence. These actors also vary in their history as well as their political backgrounds, for example, Hadi's government came to existence following Saleh's ousting while AQAP was established prior to that. For that purpose, I provided a brief background explanation for each of the different actors despite the political intersections that exist between them. The reader should note that this piece serves as an extension to a previous article published at the BIC. For grasping a general overview over the actors in the country, refer to the appendix below. ■

49 David Knoll, "Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP): An Al-Qaeda Affiliate Case Study," *Center for Strategic Studies CNA*, 2017, 54.

50 "Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) | Council on Foreign Relations," 2015, <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/al-qaeda-arabian-peninsula-aqap>. "plainCitation": "Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP

51 (Knol 2017) see no. 55 above

52 Ibid.

53 Robin Simcox, "Ansar Al-Sharia and Governance in Southern Yemen," *Hudson* 14 (2012): 58–72.

54 Ibid.

Appendix

Table 4. Overview of Actors

Parties	Issues	Interests/Needs	Fears	Means	Potential Strategies
Hadi Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fractured authority - Failure of National Dialogue Conference - Houthi Insurgency - Ouster from power 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National dialogue - Implementing Security Council Resolutions 2201&2204 - Yemen's territorial integrity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Perpetuating the Status quo 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Request military assistance - Support local tribes and militias 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engage in peace talks - Military Solution
Houthi Rebels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Political marginalization - 2011 Gulf Cooperation Council Framework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Perpetuating the status quo - Stronger position in negotiations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - International position - Lack of legitimacy - Loss of territory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish the Supreme Political Council - Establish tactical alliances - Expand recruitment networks - Conflate Sunni groups - Crackdown on all adversaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engage in peace talks - Military solution
Southern Movement (Hirak)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Southern marginalization - Land seizure - Corruption and economic mismanagement - Divided leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Power sharing between North and South Yemen - Request equality under the law 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continued marginalization - Refused demands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish the Southern Transitional Council - Empower elites' troops in the South - Mend ties with regional power(s) - Maintain communication channels with regional and international actors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Call for secession
AQAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - US Counterterrorism campaign - Houthi's belligerence against Northern Sunni tribes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ideological - Jihad 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expansion of counterterrorism campaign - Loss of territory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Call for Sunni unity - Exploit Houthi's belligerence against Sunni tribes - Exploit power vacuum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Control fragmented territory - Provide services for locals

Graph 10. Relationship Mapping of Actors in Yemen

