



THE YEMEN TREND

**AUGUST
2018**



RESEARCH . ANALYSIS . ADVISORY

The Yemen Trend is a monthly digest that highlights Yemen's key economic and humanitarian trends and political and military developments, providing context and analysis where necessary in order to facilitate informed discussion deeply rooted in the facts.

Executive Overview

The Hadi government and the Houthis have agreed to convene in Geneva for consultations beginning September 6, although both sides are expressing low expectations a political settlement to the conflict will be reached. In Hodeidah, little has changed on the perimeter of the port city, but fighting rages in several districts to the south, especially Al-Durayhimi. Nearly all major commodities are sparsely available in Hodeidah, while in all other governorates there is availability of food commodities but not diesel or petrol, according to the WFP. Despite the availability of foodstuff, however, locals find themselves increasingly unable to meet their needs as the exchange rate reached as high as 600 YER/USD by the end of August.

Around 345,000 people in Hodeidah governorate have been displaced between June and early August due to the fighting, two-thirds of whom have been displaced either within the governorate or to Sana'a city. These two locations collectively accounted for about 25 percent of the 1.12 million suspected cholera cases to date, further increasing the chance of another outbreak. 400,000 people in three districts of Hodeidah and Ibb were given a cholera vaccination in August, and optimism was expressed that a joint effort by NASA and DFID has enabled UNICEF to effectively target the populations most at-risk to spread the disease. The 120,000 suspected cholera cases recorded so far this year is fewer than for the same period in 2017, but UN agencies remain concerned about a possible third wave of the epidemic.

Several hundred civilians were killed by the warring parties in August, and in what UNICEF called "the single worst attack [on children] since 2015," an airstrike hit a bus carrying schoolchildren in Sa'ada, killing 46 people and wounding 75. The Group of Regional and International Eminent Experts on Yemen, established by the UN Human Rights Council in September 2017, released its findings, saying "there is little evidence of any attempt by parties to the conflict to minimize civilian casualties."

Timeline

Aug 02 Mortars from undetermined source kill 55, wound 170 in attacks on Hodeidah market, hospital area

Aug 04 Saudi energy minister announces resumption of Saudi oil vessels through Bab Al-Mandeb

Aug 08 Debris from intercepted ballistic missile kills 1, injures 11 in southern Saudi Arabia

Aug 09 Airstrike on school bus in Sa'ada kills 46, injures 75 in "single worst attack" on children

Aug 23 Airstrike on fleeing civilians kills 22 children, five adults in Hodeidah

Humanitarian and Economic Trends

Nearly all major commodities are sparsely available in Hodeidah, while in all other governorates there is availability of food commodities but not diesel or petrol. "As a result of the overall good supply of food commodities, most of the essential food items are abundantly available [as of early August] in all governorates except in Hodeidah where basic commodities are scarcely available due to the ongoing intensified fighting," the World Food Programme said in its [Yemen Market Watch](#). In contrast, "because of the severe shortage of fuel commodities, availability in local markets is overwhelmingly scarce across most of the governorates." The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) [reported](#) similarly at the beginning of August: "90 percent of the food required has come through the port in July, while only 30 percent of fuel has come through, sustaining inflation on the cost of transport and basic commodities across the country."

Figure 1: Availability of commodities as of August 1, according to WFP's Market Watch.

Commodity / Governorate	Current Month							
	Wheat Flour	Oil (Vegetable)	Onion	Red Beans	Sugar	Cooking Gas	Diesel	Petrol
Abyan	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	WAD	WAD
Addaleh	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	SAV	SAV
Aden	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	SAV	SAV
Al Baidha	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	SAV	SAV
Al Hodieda	SAV	SAV	WAD	SAV	SAV	SAV	SAV	SAV
Al Jawf	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV
Al Mahra	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV
Al Mahweet	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	SAV	SAV	SAV
Amran	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	SAV	SAV	SAV
Dhamar	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	SAV	SAV	SAV
Hadramout	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	SAV	SAV
Hajja	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	SAV	SAV	SAV
Ibb	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	SAV	SAV	SAV
Laheg	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	WAD	WAD
Mareb	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV
Rayma	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	SAV	SAV	SAV
Sa'ada	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	SAV	SAV	SAV
Sana'a	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	SAV	SAV	SAV
Sana'a city	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	SAV	SAV	SAV
Shabwa	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	SAV	SAV	SAV
Soqatra	AV	AV	AV	NA	AV	SAV	SAV	SAV
Taiz	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	SAV	SAV	SAV

AV	Available
WAD	Widely Available
SAV	Sparsely Available
MNA	Mostly Not Available
NA	Not Available

"Monitoring of weekly import totals suggest imports increased again in August, but the volatility of imports, particularly in July, raises concerns about future supply levels and food prices at markets that rely on Red Sea ports," the Famine Early Warning (FEWS) Network [said](#). Commercial food imports spiked in May "to their highest level since November 2016 and fully met requirements, [according](#) to UN OCHA, but dropped in June and July. Imports of food via UNVIM were 18 percent less in July than the month prior, and 20 percent less for fuel, [according](#) to OCHA. Only one containerized cargo shipment has reached Hodeidah in all of 2018, and since November 2017 there has been an average 43 percent drop in the number of vessels berthing at Hodeidah and Saleef ports compared to before the port closures.

The Yemeni riyal continued to lose value in August.

"During the reporting period, money exchange shops in Sana'a City bought US dollars at a rate of YER 560/USD, which marks the lowest value that the YER has reached in history," UN OCHA [reported](#) in mid-August. By the end of the month the rate had [reportedly](#) reached 600 YER/USD. FEWS Net [reported](#) that on August 13 the Central Bank of Yemen (CBY) based in Aden announced its decision "to regulate the exchange of foreign currency... further restricting operations for money traders under the Aden government." The Aden-based authorities also imposed higher taxes on traders in governorates in northern Yemen, the food monitor said.

Yemen may be on the verge of another cholera epidemic,

the WHO warned in August, as it asked for "three full days of tranquility and to lay down arms to

allow us to vaccinate the civilian population for cholera." Speaking in Geneva, WHO's emergency response chief [said](#) "we've had two major waves of cholera epidemics in recent years and unfortunately the trend data that we've seen in the last days to weeks suggests that we may be on the cusp of the third major wave of cholera epidemics in Yemen." The [120,000](#) suspected cases reported between the beginning of 2018 and mid-August is fewer than the same period in 2017, but the spokesman of the UN Secretary-General said the number of reports have been increasing over the last two months.

What we're likely to see is that interplay with cholera and malnutrition occurring more and more...and not only more cases because of that but even higher death rates among the cholera cases that do occur, because people just don't have the physical resources to fight the disease any longer.

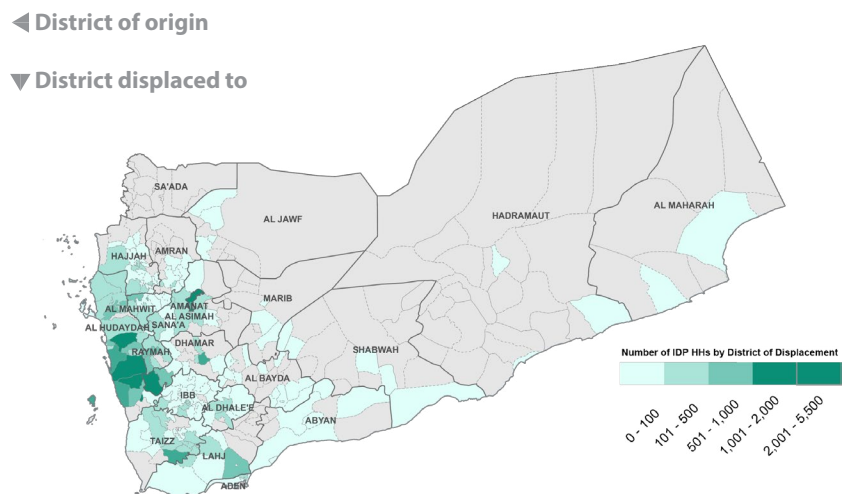
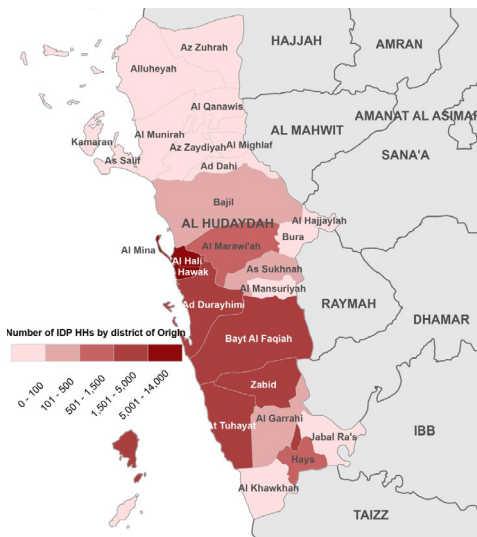
Peter Salama, WHO emergency response chief

Around 400,000 people in Hodeidah and Ibb received a cholera vaccination. The WHO's call for a ceasefire fell on deaf ears, but in the first half of August a cholera oral vaccination campaign was launched which, [according](#) to the UN, aimed to reach around half-a-million people in and around Hodeidah city (the campaign actually targeted three districts in Hodeidah and Ibb governorates). Initial reporting indicated a [shortfall](#), but the spokesman for the UN Secretary General [said](#) at the end of August that "this [month], our partners vaccinated nearly 400,000 people against cholera in highrisk [districts] of Hodeidah and Ibb." This was the second of three planned cholera vaccination campaigns conducted by the WHO and UNICEF, in partnership with the Ministry of Health. The first campaign took place in Aden in May, when 275,000 people were vaccinated. Meanwhile, in light of recent airstrikes in Hodeidah that hit a warehouse for relief items, a sanitation center, and a water center, UNICEF [warned](#) that "attacks on water infrastructure jeopardize efforts to prevent another outbreak of cholera and acute watery diarrhea in Yemen."

In a first of its kind effort, American researchers for a NASA program, working in partnership with the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) and Met Office, helped UNICEF locate the most at-risk locations to target with cholera vaccinations. "The NASA forecast tool divides the entire country

of Yemen into regions about the size of a typical US county, and predicts the risk of cholera outbreaks in each region," [according](#) to the space agency. "To calculate the likelihood of an outbreak, the science team runs a computer model that combines satellite observations of environmental conditions that affect the cholera bacteria with information on sanitation and clean water infrastructure." In 2017, NASA had predicted the cholera outbreak in Yemen with great accuracy, prompting the British aid agency to partner with it to improve targeting selection in the latest cholera vaccination campaign. The BBC further [explained](#) that supercomputer mapping of precipitation is crucial because heavy rains overwhelm sewage systems, causing the spread of infection. Those measurements are combined with data on population density, access to clean water, and seasonal temperature, resulting in a prediction of the most at-risk locations up to four weeks in advance, which the Yemen-based health authorities can then use.

Mass displacement continues in Hodeidah, driven by ground clashes and airstrikes. "Since June 1, violence has forced more than 340,000 people from their homes across the governorate," UN OCHA's director of operations and advocacy, John Ging, [told](#) the Security Council on August 2. "Most are sheltering with host communities near their areas of origin, while smaller numbers have arrived in Sana'a, Aden and surrounding areas." Similarly, UN migration agency IOM [estimates](#) that between June 1 and August 7, a total 57,534 households in Hodeidah, amounting to around 345,204 individuals (average 6 per household), were displaced. The maps below by IOM show proportionally which districts most of the displaced households are from in Hodeidah (*left*), and which district nationwide they have been displaced to (*right*).



Around a third of those displaced since June by the violence in Hodeidah have fled to other areas of the governorate, while another third relocated to Sana'a city. As the NRC [explained](#), "together, these governorates account for 25 percent of Yemen's 1.12 million suspected cholera cases, indicating an extremely high risk of another outbreak."

An average 5,500 children under five die every month from preventable causes, the UN Children's Fund said. "Every year in Yemen 66,000 children under 5 years of age are dying of preventable diseases," Meritxell Relano, UNICEF's top representative in Yemen, [said](#) in mid-August. "Half of them during birth or in the first month of life and the others of diseases that are preventable such as diarrhea, pneumonia and malnutrition related causes." In 2017, Relano pegged the equivalent statistic for [2016](#) at 63,000, which she said was already at least 10,000 more than the year the war started in 2014. This means that on average, each month in 2018 over 1,000 more children under five are dying of preventable causes compared to 2014.

Several hundred civilians were killed, including a large number of children. Over 450 civilians lost their lives in the first nine days of August alone, [according](#) to the Civilian Impact Monitoring Report, which falls under the UNHCR-led Protection Cluster. Some of the most notable incidents that occurred in August are detailed below:

- **August 2, Hodeidah:** At least 55 people were killed and 170 wounded after multiple bombings hit a fish market in Hodeidah city and an area around the nearby Al-Thawra hospital, the ICRC [said](#), without assigning blame. By the end of August it remained unclear who perpetrated the attacks. An investigation by the UN Human Rights Office found that mortars landed on Hodeidah fishing port, Al-Thawra Hospital and its surroundings.

Coalition spokesman Turki Al-Maliki [said](#) the Houthis were behind the bombings. Initial reports by the [AFP](#) and [New York Times](#) quoted medical personnel and residents that day as saying a large number of airstrikes had hit several areas of the city, and an initial [statement](#) by UN OCHA's Yemen head, Lise Grande, heavily implied the coalition perpetrated the attack. "Every day this week we have seen new cholera cases in Hodeidah, and now this. The impact of the strikes is appalling," the statement reads. The New York Times later [reported](#) the evidence

pointed toward the weapons used having been mortars, rather than missiles, "indicating the attacks were launched from the ground" by an unidentified party.

- **August 9, Sa'ada:** 46 people were killed and 75 were injured when an airstrike "hit a bus carrying children in a market in Dhahyan, Majz district of Sa'ada governorate," [according](#) to OCHA. The majority of the victims were between 10 and 13 years old. "We believe, UNICEF, that this is the single worst attack [on children] since 2015," spokesman Christophe Boulierac [said](#). "No such number of children have been involved in an incident before."

The coalition, after initially claiming the strike was a legitimate military action against the Houthis, said it would launch an internal investigation. The incident received heavy worldwide media coverage, including with [footage](#) taken by one of the children that day. The UN Secretary-General [called](#) for an independent investigation into the August 9 attack, something the Security Council stopped short of doing (instead it called for a "credible" investigation). On September 1, in a rare admission of wrongdoing the coalition's Joint Incidents Assessment Team (JIAT) [said](#) the attack lacked military justification, did not comply with the coalition's rules of engagement, and that those responsible would be held accountable.

- **August 23, Hodeidah:** An airstrike on a vehicle carrying fleeing civilians killed 22 children, four women and a driver in Al-Durayhimi district of Hodeidah, [according](#) to OCHA. The day before, another airstrike in the same district hit a house, killing four civilians, [according](#) to the UN agency's head, Mark Lowcock. "Four people were killed in the strike before, that's why they fled," one of the survivors [told](#) CNN. The [UAE](#) and Yemeni [foreign ministry](#) both claimed a missile fired by the Houthis had caused dozens of casualties that day, but the UN explicitly stated the deaths were the result of airstrikes.
- More broadly, by the beginning of August there had already been 55 airstrikes on civilian vehicles in 2018, [according](#) to the Yemen Data Project. The area of Sana'a airport, officially closed to commercial flights by the coalition on August 9, 2016, has been hit by 56 airstrikes in the two years since its closure, [according](#) to the NRC – averaging one airstrike every two weeks.

The Group of Regional and International Eminent Experts on Yemen released its report on patterns of international law and human rights abuses. “There is little evidence of any attempt by parties to the conflict to minimize civilian casualties,” said the chairperson of the Group, which was established by the UN Human Rights Council in September 2017. The [findings](#) were released in August ahead of the Council’s September 2018 session, and the research covers the period between September 2014 to June 2018. Among the main findings of the 41-page document:

- Coalition aerial attacks have caused the bulk of documented civilian casualties. The Experts did not receive a response from the coalition about its targeting process, and said there is “little evidence of any attempt by parties to the conflict to minimize civilian casualties.”
- The restrictions on shipping are considered arbitrary and “unlikely to be effective in achieving their stated military objectives,” not least because no searches carried out by the UN Verification and Inspection Mechanism (UNVIM) or coalition forces have found weapons. “There are reasonable grounds to believe that these naval and air restrictions are imposed in violation of international human rights law and international humanitarian law,” it reads.
- All parties to the conflict, including the Houthi and GPC-Sana’a authorities, are likely to have committed international human rights violations against detainees, including torture and cruel treatment. The report emphasizes abuses by the UAE and the Yemeni paramilitary forces it formed in southern Yemen. The report says that Emirati personnel have raped and tortured detainees on many occasions, violations which may amount to war crimes, and that the Security Belt Forces are likely to have targeted vulnerable groups, including migrants and displaced people, with rape, abductions, and threats, in order to extort money.
- Houthi-Saleh forces have forcibly recruited children from schools and hospitals, and beyond simply manning checkpoints, the children have been used in combat roles and to plant explosive devices. All parties to the conflict have enlisted child soldiers, but out of 842 verified cases, “nearly two thirds of these cases were attributed to the Houthi-Saleh forces.”

The coalition and Hadi government denounced the UN report as biased. In a 10-point [response](#) to the findings, the coalition said the report “had several methodological fallacies and misconstrued the facts of the conflict.” The coalition said the UN team had visited the coalition’s headquarters and operations center, where its targeting procedures were explained, and argued that it has provided the most support for humanitarian efforts while the Houthis’ attacks against civilians, as well as their connection to Iran, was not sufficiently discussed in the report. Yemeni Minister of Information Muammar Al-Eryani, meanwhile, [criticized](#) the report, pointing out for example that it names Houthi leader Abdulmalik Al-Houthi as “Leader of the Revolution,” a term normally used only by Yemenis who support the Houthis. The report “reflects the existing imbalance of the UN and its bodies in characterizing and dealing with the Yemeni crisis as a crisis between a legitimate government and a coup,” he said.

Stating that “all sides to the conflict have failed to conduct credible investigations into abuses,” a joint [letter](#) by 55 NGOs called for the mandate of the Group of Eminent Experts on Yemen to be renewed and strengthened. Furthermore, a lengthy Human Rights Watch (HRW) report, [Hiding Behind the Coalition](#), says the coalition’s investigatory body, the JIAT, has provided “deeply flawed” findings. The report counters the notion put forth by US and UK officials that the coalition has improved its targeting, instead saying these weapons dealers “risk complicity in future unlawful attacks, particularly given that coalition assurances to take action have proven hollow.” Sarah Leah Whitson, HRW’s director for the Middle East, said that “For more than two years, the coalition has claimed that JIAT was credibly investigating allegedly unlawful airstrikes, but the investigators were doing little more than covering up war crimes.”

OCHA’s Yemen head was explicitly criticized as impartial by the Hadi government, as several other UN bodies and findings were more broadly condemned by the internationally recognized government. In mid-August, Information Minister Muammar Al-Eryani criticized the UN humanitarian coordinator for Yemen, Lise Grande, for allegedly siding with the Houthis. As [reported](#) by Saudi’s Al-Arabiya news, the minister “criticized the UN mission’s dependence on misleading information which is provided by the coup militias,” and said she insists on being based in Sana’a despite the Hadi government’s repeated calls for the UN to relocate its base to Aden. Al-Eryani’s comments came after

Grande met with Supreme Political Council head Mehdi Al-Mashat, and are similar to accusations made by the Hadi government and coalition against her predecessor, Jamie McGoldrick. Government officials also criticized UNICEF-Yemen head Meritxell Relano and the UN Eminent Experts on Yemen of bias toward the Houthis.

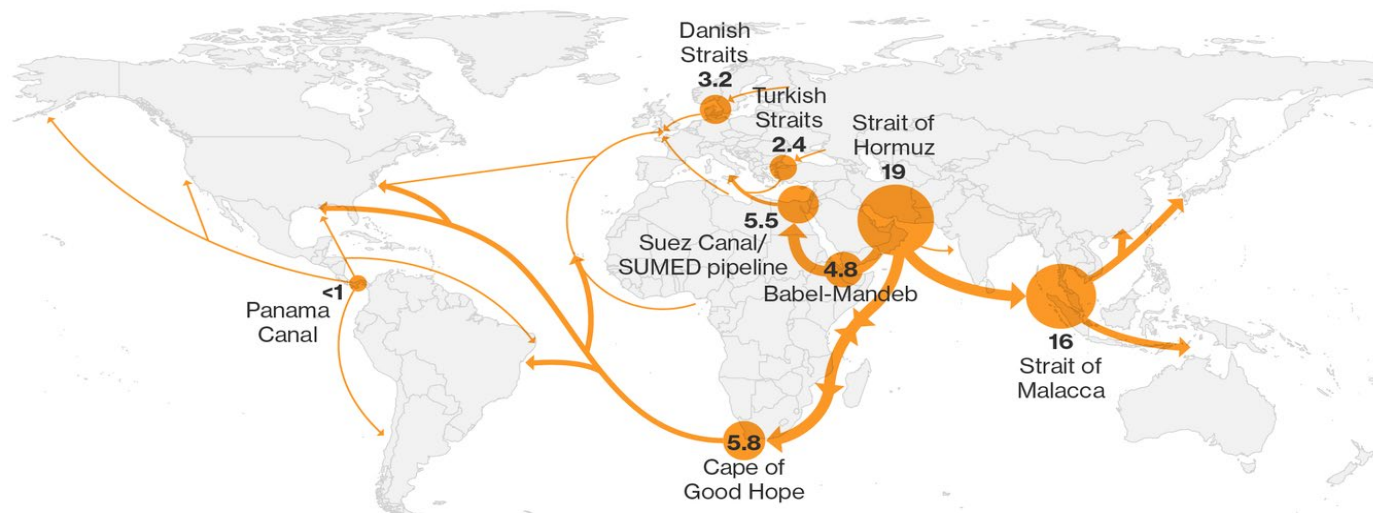
Optimism was expressed over the resumption of oil exports from Shabwa. The first newly-pumped crude oil was exported from the governorate on [July 29](#) by OMV, an Austrian company that returned to Shabwa earlier in 2018. It is the first company to return after international oil companies declared force majeure and left when the conflict escalated in 2015. The oil is being pumped through a 204km pipe from interior Shabwa to the Bir Ali export terminal on its coast, and [according](#) to OMV current output is at around 5,000 barrels a day, a fourth of what it was previously. The local authority of Shabwa is to receive [20 percent](#) of the revenues, based on the policy previously introduced by President Hadi for governorates to take a share of the energy revenues they produce.

Saudi Arabia announced the resumption of oil shipments through Bab Al-Mandeb. Saudi Energy Minister Khaled Al-Falih [reportedly](#) announced on August 4 that “the decision to resume shipping of oil through Bab Al-Mandeb comes after all necessary procedures were taken by the coalition leadership to protect ships of the coalition countries.” After the Houthis attacked a Saudi oil vessel in late July, the minister and Saudi Aramco [announced](#) on July 25 that Saudi oil vessels had temporarily halted shipments through the straight. After the incident but prior to the public announcement of resuming shipments, it was [reported](#) that several Saudi state-owned tankers in the area had shut off their transponders, keeping their locations hidden, and were headed toward the Red Sea. The Bloomberg

[map](#) below based on US Energy Information Administration (EIA) statistics shows that on average around 4.8 million barrels of crude oil and petroleum liquids pass through Bab Al-Mandeb every day.

Speculation increased that Saudi Arabia intends to build oil infrastructure in Al-Mahrah, potentially as part of a larger plan to construct a pipeline bypassing the Strait of Hormuz. In August, Al-Jazeera [published](#) a letter to the Saudi ambassador to Yemen from Saudi-based marine construction company Huta Marine, the contents of which discuss a request to present a technical and financial proposal to design and implement a port in Al-Mahrah. At the beginning of August, President Hadi and Saudi Ambassador Mohammed Al-Jaber visited the governorate and [inaugurated](#) eight infrastructure and development projects. The Saudi ambassador also visited Al-Mahrah in [June](#), which likewise prompted speculation by opponents that Saudi Arabia was pushing through plans to build a pipeline to the coast of Al-Mahrah.

The idea that Saudi Arabia is seeking to build a pipeline to Yemen’s southern coast has long been speculated. In a 2008 [WikiLeaks cable](#), a US official recorded a British diplomat as saying Saudi Arabia intends to “build a pipeline, wholly owned, operated and protected by Saudi Arabia, through Hadhramawt to a port on the Gulf of Aden,” and that it “was positioning itself to ensure it would, for the right price, obtain the rights for this pipeline from Saleh’s successor.” The UAE has strong influence in on coastal Hadhramawt via its support for the Hadhrami Elite Forces and Second Military Region, while Saudi Arabia holds influence in northern Hadhramawt. Influence in Al-Mahra has been more contested, as there has long been [competition](#) between bordering Oman, the UAE, and Saudi Arabia.



Political Developments

The warring parties agreed to convene in Geneva but expressed low expectations. On August 2, Martin Griffiths requested support of the Security Council for talks beginning September 6, and [told](#) the Council the situation in Hodeidah, while critical, is second to the pursuit of a national political solution. "These consultations will provide the opportunity for the parties, among other things, to discuss the framework for negotiations, relevant confidence-building measures and specific plans for moving the process forward," he [said](#). In an [interview](#) with Asharq Al-Awsat, he added that the primary effort to reach an agreement on a national unity government "will require a signed agreement that includes setting up a transitional political operation under a national unity government... and putting in place security arrangements for the withdrawal of all armed groups in Yemen and disarming them."

The UN envoy formally invited the two parties in mid-August. In early August, Houthi politician Saleem Mughallis [said](#) the Houthis are "not opposed to such consultations," but that the Houthis have low expectations of political progress being made. Similarly, a Hadi government official [said](#) the internationally recognized government will attend, but that "we are not optimistic" as there remain "huge differences" between the two parties. In preparation for Geneva, the envoy met in [London](#) with Yemeni public figures and women activists for a consultative meeting, and in [Amman](#) met with the president and senior members of the Southern Transitional Council (STC).

The GPC party is being excluded from the Geneva consultations, according to Dr. Abu Bakr Al-Qirbi, who represented the Sana'a-based GPC party in previous rounds of UN-sponsored negotiations. "The exclusion of the GPC from the Geneva consultations contradicts what the envoy has expressed in a press conference about the importance of its participation," Al-Qirbi, who previously served as foreign minister, [said](#) on August 17.

During President Hadi's two-day visit to Egypt in August he met several high-ranking figures in the GPC, including Assistant Secretary-General Sheikh Sultan Al-Barakani. While there, on August 13 the president [called](#) for greater unity within the party to counter the Houthis. Meanwhile, on August 15 the Supreme Political Council leadership, technically shared between the Houthis and GPC-Sana'a, approved the term [extension](#) of its incumbent president, Mehdi Al-Meshat, beginning August 24.

Military and Security Developments

Fighting raged in Al-Durayhimi district as the frontlines around Hodeidah city stayed relatively still. Clashes continued in several southern districts in Hodeidah governorate, but the battle for control of Al-Durayhimi, located about 20 km (12 miles) south of Hodeidah airport, was particularly heavy. The Associated Press [reported](#) on August 5 that at least 80 were killed and 100 injured on either side in two-day period alone, as anti-Houthi forces slowly continue their expansion in the governorate. Video [footage](#) by VICE shows how south of Hodeidah city, loosely organized Yemeni fighters struggle to maintain hold of a supply route to the city, as the Houthis continue conducting counter-attacks. Aerial support from the coalition, as well as Houthi mortars, are resulting in heavy civilian casualties.

Apart from periodic airstrikes and mortars, the situation in Hodeidah city was relatively calm compared to the previous two months. "Sober-minded politicians, both Yemeni and foreign, do not believe in a massive assault on Hodeidah," Russian Ambassador to Yemen Vladimir Dedushkin [told](#) state news TASS mid-month. "Military experts tend to believe that the Houthis can only be fully driven out the city at the cost of its complete destruction."

There is no "contingency plan" that can effectively protect civilians from dire humanitarian consequences if conflict in Hodeidah escalates, as the capacity of international organizations and their response would quickly be overwhelmed.

John Ging, director of operations and advocacy for UN OCHA, in his [statement](#) to the UN Security Council on August 2.

One million mines have been planted by the Houthis, causing 1,194 civilian deaths in the last three years, the coalition said. Quoting the director of the Saudi Project for Landmine Clearance (MASAM), launched in June 2018, Emirati state media WAM [said](#) that in a two-week period the project has removed 919 mines and explosive charges. "Most of these are internationally banned anti-vehicle and anti-personnel mines that originate from different sources in addition to 288 locally devised or Iranian made mines," he said.

In Hadramawt, the situation is especially difficult because AQAP previously controlled vast areas, planted large amounts of explosives in seemingly random order, and took with them de-mining equipment when they retreated. More recently, [according](#) to Emirati newspaper The National, the UAE and Sudanese teams dealing with Houthi mines have been finding landmines "with increasing regularity" on the west coast as the Houthis have retreated.

As the Independent [reported](#) from Mukalla and Aden, UN Development Programme (UNDP) officials said it could take "decades" to entirely remove the threat of landmines in Yemen. UNDP said that the Yemen Executive Mine Action Center has removed almost 140,000 explosive remnants of war (ERW) in the first half of 2018 alone, and over 510,000 ERWs between 2016 and 2017. "You have people who, two years on from the end of fighting in their area, cannot return home, because they've been told it's mined. Their livelihoods are therefore destroyed," a Human Rights Watch researcher was quoted as saying. "It's a thousand times worse now than it ever has been because in this part of Yemen we are dealing with militants who lay them randomly," a Yemeni de-mining trainer with decades of experience said.

An intercepted missile killed one and injured 11 others in Saudi Arabia, as the Houthis fired several other ballistic missiles over the border. On August 8, a ballistic missile fired from Amran governorate toward Jizan city, southern Saudi Arabia, was intercepted and the falling debris caused the casualties, [according](#) to Saudi Arabia. Several other missiles were fired throughout the month with no apparent casualties, while Saudi and Emirati officials denied Houthi claims that they [launched](#) a drone attack on King Khalid airbase in Khamis Mushayt, Saudi Arabia, and, for the [second](#)

[time](#), Dubai International Airport. As of August 30, Saudi authorities [said](#) "more than 180 missiles" have been fired into southern Saudi Arabia.

The airstrike on a school bus in Sa'ada renewed American attention to the war, particularly after it came to light that, as CNN [reported](#), the bus was hit by a 500-pound laser-guided precision bomb manufactured by American company Lockheed Martin and sold to Saudi Arabia in a deal sanctioned by the US State Department. "There's a level of frustration we need to acknowledge," Lt. Gen. Jeffrey Harrigian, the top American air commander in the region, [told](#) the New York Times in response to the attack. "They need to come out and say what occurred there." Larry Lewis, a former State Department advisor who worked with Saudi officials in 2015 and 2016 to improve coalition targeting procedures, [said](#) "they're making the same mistakes they've been making all along. And we are not pressing the issue. We are letting them get away with it."

"We may never know if the munition was one that the US sold them," a pentagon spokesman [said](#) immediately after the incident, adding that US did not know if its military had refueled the warplane. Senator Chris Murphy proposed an amendment to the defense appropriations bill, [saying](#) "either the Pentagon should be 100 percent certain that US weapons and funding aren't being used to commit war crimes in Yemen, or we should cut off US support right now." However, the amendment was rejected by Republican leadership in the Senate.

Recommended reading and viewing:

Feature articles and visual media

- Former State Department advisor on civilian harm Larry Lewis, who worked with Saudi Arabia to limit civilian casualties and establish the JIAT in 2016, speaks to the Atlantic in this piece about [One American's Failed Quest to Protect Civilians in Yemen](#).
- A National Geographic photo essay by Alex Potter depicts how [Yemen's fathers and sons face an uncertain future](#), as "conflict and a devastated economy have upended the country's typical journey to manhood."
- Writing for the Washington Post, Kareem Fahim notes that for nearly two years the 'official,' oft-quoted death toll for the war in Yemen has stayed the same, at about 10,000 or fewer civilians killed by fighting, while other monitors place the figure higher. ACLED, for example, estimates nearly 50,000 people have been killed between January 2016 and July 2018. [So why does the death toll stand still?](#)
- Writing in the Guardian, Yemen's human rights minister, Mohamed Askar, argues that [Drone strikes in Yemen don't make my country safer – or yours](#).
- Based on a US intelligence report and interviews with international law experts, a [US-backed Saudi airstrike on family with nine children shows "clear violations" of the laws of war](#), an article by the Intercept reads.

Reports and policymaking

- A report by the LSE-Oxford Commission on State Fragility argues for [A multidimensional approach to restoring state legitimacy in Yemen](#). After examining the concept of legitimacy and how it relates to President Hadi and the ongoing conflict, author Peter Salisbury writes in favor of embracing a more complex concept of legitimacy that "would prioritize Yemeni voices in restoring peace, stability and state structure in a manner that is grown organically from the bottom up, rather than being imposed top-down."
- The Rethinking Yemen's Initiative released a report on [Private Sector Engagement in Post-Conflict Yemen](#), examining the impact of the crises from 2011 to present on the economy and

private sector, and offering recommendations to the Yemeni government and international stakeholders for how to revive and develop the private sector. The Initiative is being implemented by DeepRoot Consulting in partnership with the Sana'a Center for Strategic Studies and the Center for Applied Research in Partnership with the Orient (CARPO).

- In an updated version of the Congressional Research Service (CRS) report [Yemen: Civil War and Regional Intervention](#), recent developments in the conflict are examined.
- In a European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR) piece, [Hudayda on the brink: A turning point in Yemen's war?](#) James Firebrace discusses the role European states can play in bolstering the UN envoy's efforts to avoid further conflict over the port city.
- Writing for the Washington Institute, Michael Knights argues that US policy makers should work on [Setting Limits on the Saudi Air Campaign in Yemen](#). He proposes that in exchange for US guarantees for ballistic missile defense, preventing anti-ship attacks, and supporting the defense of the Saudi border, Saudi Arabia should suspend all airstrikes in civilian locations and against high-ranking Houthi figures, which are the types of strikes the author views as most damaging to civilian and public relations interests
- Ghaidaa Motahar writes in the Cairo Review of Global Affairs about [Empowering Yemen's Displaced Women](#), arguing that "rather than narrowly focus on life-saving assistance, humanitarian organizations must develop policies with women's strategic and long-term needs in mind."

Compiled by: Brett Scott - DeepRoot Consulting
Cover Photo Credit: Khaled Abdullah/Reuters
All rights reserved **DeepRoot Consulting** 2018



www.deeproot.consulting

