

# **The truce in Yemen**

## **between the Urgency of New Developments and the Risks of reality**

**Situation Assessment**  
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## Introduction

On April 2, 2022, the United Nations announced a truce between the parties to the conflict in Yemen - the internationally recognized government and the Houthi group - for a renewable period of two months. The truce was renewed twice. The third renewal was the most difficult. Only two days before it ended, the truce was renewed until October 2, 2022. This is the longest period of ceasefire in the country since 2015. International observers were more optimistic than ever that the war would end soon.

Some parts of the brief truce agreement are ambiguous. The agreement refers to a comprehensive cease-fire, consultations to open the roads in Taiz, and opening the port of Hodeidah, and operating flights from Sana'a International Airport to specific destinations. The two parties engaged in consultations in the Jordanian capital, Amman, but talks stopped after the Houthi attack on Taiz in August, and the government delegation suspended consultations. The attack led to local and international condemnation that angered the Houthis.

This paper discusses the future of the truce in the country, the violations perpetrated during the truce and the parties involved in those violations. It focuses on developments affecting the truce and the breaches by each party. It also highlights Houthis conditions and the regional and international positions.

## What positive impacts did the truce have?

For the Yemeni government, the truce was an obligatory track due to Saudi and Emirati pressure. It led to a new transitional phase in the coalition/government camp with the declaration of the Presidential Leadership Council on April 7. For the Houthis, it was an opportunity to enhance their position and a break from international pressure on them in relation to the Iranian negotiations over the United States return to the nuclear deal.

The United Nations and the international community failed to make the truce permanent, or to extend the duration to more than two months in each extension. The third extension of the truce, which ends on October 2, 2022, was very difficult as the Houthis refused it. Several developments during the same period are dealt with in this paper.

## 1. The cease-fire

The parties to the truce exchanged accusations of violating the military armistice, either by exchanging fire on some sites on the frontlines, military mobilization, firing shells and missiles at cities, or launching attacks. The truce agreement stipulates the "cessation of offensive operations" and the freezing of military positions on the ground in their situation on the morning of April 2.

Houthi and government media alike reported violations of the truce on a daily basis. Yet, it was noted that since the first days of the truce, the Houthis were involved in moving training camps and in recruitment in villages and districts in their areas of control. The cessation of coalition sorties was a convenient opportunity for the Houthis to reposition their fighters and camps.

Independent statistics<sup>1</sup> on violating the truce between April 2 and September 9, 2022 show that the Houthis were responsible for more than 94% of the violations and 96% of casualties. The Houthis were involved in 2,382 out of 2,527 violations, causing 431 deaths out of 450 cases.

The armed Houthi group is responsible for all 333 clashes between the two parties. They were involved in 1,796 out of 1846 missile and artillery bombardments. They were also responsible for 228 out of 323 drone attacks, and caused 25 mine accidents (100%).

Cease-fire violations usually reveal an assessment of the reaction and the size of attentiveness of the opponents. The Houthis seem more focused on returning to the battles in Marib. However, the incursion, it seems, is being sought towards the city of Taiz - as characterized by armed clashes. Taiz is a resilient city besieged by the Houthis from all directions except for a single entrance from the southern side, yet this only passage is under the threat of the group.

This is demonstrated by the Houthi violations in three governorates. In Marib governorate, 459 violations caused 185 deaths.

Violations included 355 missile and artillery attacks, 73 armed clashes, 22 drone attacks, and nine mine incidents.

In the city of Taiz, 406 violations resulted in 121 deaths. Violations included 252 missile and artillery attacks, 102 armed clashes, 47 drone attacks, and five mine explosions. The Houthis committed 357 violations in Hodeidah governorate, causing 26 deaths. Violations included 208 missile and artillery attacks, 94 armed clashes, 53 drone attacks and two mine incidents.

## 2. Hodeidah Port and Sana'a Airport

With regard to the entry of oil tankers to the port of Hodeidah, the truce agreement provided for allowing oil tankers to anchor at the port during the truce. The Houthis stated that they understood the statements as revoking government and coalition permits for any oil tanker before entering the port, and that the tankers would directly head towards to the port of Hodeidah after obtaining the approval of the United Nations Inspection Mechanism. During the truce, the Houthis continued to denounce detention of vessels and forcing them to wait for government permits, even though this provision is unambiguously clear, as it allows entry of oil tankers to the port, and has nothing to do with canceling permits.

In September 2022, after the Houthis forged a fuel crisis in their areas of control and accused the coalition of seizing oil tankers, the government announced that oil tankers would be allowed to enter the port of Hodeidah without obtaining permits, and apparently without inspection by the United Nations Inspection Mechanism. When the Houthis forged a fuel crisis, the fuel tankers that had been repaired in the port of Hodeidah were fully filled, and the vessels that were on their way would remain in the draft until the tankers were unloaded. This new concession from the Yemeni government confirmed its weakness rather than demonstrated an urgent need for oil in Houthi-controlled areas. This was one of the Houthi preconditions to renegotiate with the United Nations on the extension of the truce.

As for Sana'a International Airport, the agreement allowed flights to two destinations: Amman and Cairo. The Yemeni government agreed to allow holders of passports issued by the Houthi authorities to travel to the two destinations. Under UN pressure, the Jordanian government accepted passports issued by Houthi authorities. Similarly, under pressure from the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Cairo agreed to allow flights from Sana'a Airport, but after one flight the Egyptian government backed down on the permit. The Egyptian government stipulated that they should have their own inspection mechanism through an Egyptian committee at Sana'a Airport.<sup>2</sup> In September, the Houthis stated that they had reached an understanding with the Egyptian authorities on resuming flights to Cairo.

The Yemeni government and the Saudi-led coalition implemented this part of the truce agreement. On the other hand, the Houthis did not implement the government's single request, i.e. to open the roads in Taiz city.

### **3. Opening of roads in Taiz**

The other aspect of the agreement focused on opening the main roads in the city of Taiz. The UN envoy for Yemen proposed an initiative, which was rejected by the Houthis, despite the intervention of the Sultanate of Oman and pressure by other international actors. The UN envoy for Yemen modified the initiative, but it was rejected again. Consultations between the Houthis and the Yemeni government in Amman reached a dead end.

The city of Taiz has been under a systematic Houthi siege since 2016. The city is strangled and subjected to almost daily shelling and sniping. Food and aid supplies, including United Nations aid, are not allowed into the city. The city has only one rugged passage to the south. This is a very bad road, exposing trucks and travelers to great risks. Throughout the war, the Houthis have monopolized their siege of the city as a tool to force the government and the United Nations to make concessions.

The United Nations failed to put an end for the Houthi siege of Taiz. This failure was evident from the very beginning as the UN ambiguously stated the provisions for opening the roads,

“a meeting shall be convened and the parties shall agree on opening the roads in Taiz and other governorates to enhance freedom of movement of people inside Yemen.” It is inconceivable that no progress has been made in relation to this single demand of the Yemeni government in return for the Houthi conditions to commence flights from Sana'a Airport, and the entry of oil tankers to the port of Hodeidah.

The persistent Houthi refusal to open the roads in Taiz threatened to undermine the truce and its objective "to build confidence and create an environment conducive to the resumption of negotiations in order to reach a peaceful settlement of the conflict." However, the state of disintegration in the government/coalition camp after the truce contributed greatly to preserving the truce as a government need rather than a Houthi demand.

This is not the first time that lifting of the siege on Taiz is discussed. This is the second time that the Houthis refuse to lift the siege imposed on the city since the Stockholm Agreement in 2018, which put an end to the government forces' attack on the Houthis in the coastal city of Hodeidah. In the last analysis, failure of the United Nations to write the articles of the agreement in unambiguous terms allowed the Houthis to interpret those articles in a way that serves their goals. This eventually led to failure to implement any of the terms of the agreement.

During the meetings in Amman, the Houthis justified their refusal to open the main roads in Taiz by stating that government forces could launch an attack from inside the city to seize Sana'a! This scenario is not possible. Indeed, it is almost impossible for several reasons: key heights overlooking the main road to al-Hawban are controlled by the Houthis and have been used over the past years to bombard the city, and were used by snipers in their targeting of civilians. The force in Taiz is a very simple one, and most of it is tasked with securing and protecting the city. An attack outside the city requires huge manpower and military equipment that the government and the resistance need months to mobilize. Moreover, all other roads that exit the city are controlled by the Houthis. Besides, in the current situation, the government and the Arab Coalition will be subject to international pressure, as usual, to prevent any military deployment from any Yemeni city, not only from Taiz.

The Yemeni government and the Arab Coalition agreed to all Houthi conditions and conditions under the truce. The truce provides the Houthis with an easy and inexpensive opportunity to demonstrate their dedication to peace by opening the main direct roads where people can pass safely and easily. Instead, the Houthis proposed an alternative initiative to open new secondary roads instead of the main road linking Al-Hawban and the city center. This initiative was rejected by the local population and by the government alike. The Houthis claimed that they opened the roads unilaterally. The roads they opened are difficult and unpassable since they are too long to be directly monitored by the residents and observers. Moreover, there is no need to open new sub-roads as long as there are main roads that are quite usable.

The claim of the Houthis that they will unilaterally open the roads is quite strange. All roads will be opened unilaterally since the Houthis are the ones who close the roads and crossings. There are no closed roads except those closed by the Houthis. One of the roads that the Houthis built was used by them to launch attacks on the city and to reach the city center.

As most Yemenis view the Houthi siege of Taiz as a deliberate and systematic policy to humiliate and starve the group's opponents, the popular reaction to the government and the United Nations has been furious. Lifting the siege imposed on the city of Taiz could have increased the popularity of the Presidential Leadership Council and the negotiating mission for which it was created. The United Nations could also have adopted a more resilient and assertive attitude towards the Houthis. The negative view of the government and the United Nations causes government supporters to question any further steps taken by the UN and government alike, especially as the city residents think that the coalition has abandoned them and ignored their aspirations several times by refusing to liberate the city from the Houthis.

## Variables during the truce

The truce, which has lasted for six months, provides a summary view of the position of each of the warring parties after eight years of fighting, and reveals their future intentions. During this period, several factors and variables that might determine the future of the truce emerged. These new developments might determine the future of the crisis in Yemen as well.



## a. Internal Variables

- **Extension of the truce:** New incentives were supposed to emerge at each phase of the truce extension. In the first phase, opening Sana'a Airport, Hodeidah port and the roads in Taiz should be implemented. Then, payment of the salaries of government employees in accordance with the 2018 Stockholm Agreement, adding new destinations of flights from Sana'a Airport, and unification of the Central Bank of Yemen to stabilize the exchange rate should be discussed.

In all subsequent discussions, the Houthis demanded the implementation of their conditions, particularly the government obligation to pay the salaries while they themselves reap revenues of up to \$3 billion annually, the unconditional operation of flights from and to Sana'a Airport and lifting all forms of control over the port of Hodeidah. However, they refused to open the roads in Taiz!

The UN envoy for Yemen presents the following proposal of the extension of the truce to the parties:<sup>3</sup> 1) agreement on a transparent and effective mechanism for the regular disbursement of civil servants and civilian pensions, 2) opening additional roads in Taiz and other governorates, 3) more destinations to and from Sana'a International Airport, and 4) regular flow of fuel to all Hodeidah ports. These are the demands of the Houthis. The Yemeni government has suspended negotiations on other files, except the ceasefire, until the main roads in Taiz are opened.

Apparently, the Yemeni government and the Saudi-led coalition are moving toward agreeing to the Houthi demands, including opening of the Hodeidah port and the disbursement of civil servants. As for Sana'a International Airport, the problem is related to other airports and not to the government intentions. A committee from the UN envoy office is tasked with managing this issue.<sup>4</sup>

- **Amman negotiations delegation:** The Houthis formed a single delegation to negotiate the ceasefire, opening the roads in Taiz, and agreements to enhance the truce. On the other hand, the government delegation formed its own consultation team for each component of the truce. This demonstrates the government seriousness in negotiations and ending the war, as opposed to the Houthis who are not serious about either issue.

In August 2022, the head of the Military Coordination Committee and Grundberg's military advisor paid a two-week visit to Aden, Sana'a, and Taiz, during which he had constructive discussions with representatives of the Military Coordination Committee and other bodies. The visit to Taiz was vital, as was the UN envoy's visit to the city, especially as former UN envoy for Yemen, Martin Griffiths, has been reluctant to visit the city for fear of angering the Houthis.

- **Military parades:** While the United Nations pressed for extending the truce, the Houthis used the truce to regroup and consolidate their grip on power, both militarily and politically.

Politically, the Houthis have detained hundreds of officials and tribal sheikhs loyal to them, in the context of the existing disputes within the group regarding public employment, rampant corruption, and internal liquidations to consolidate the group's grip on power. This was not possible in the context of ongoing battles during the past two years. In addition, the Houthis have sought to control the judiciary and replace judges who are not loyal to the group with others from within its ranks in order to use the judiciary largely in confronting opponents at home. The Houthis also sold their opponents' property in an attempt to blackmail and silence them or force them to return to Sana'a.

Militarily, in addition to conscription in most of their areas of control and the deployment of conscripted forces from one site to another, including the front lines of fighting in Marib, Taiz, and Al-Jawf, the Houthis organized more than seven large-scale military parades of the land, marine and air forces. The most impressive was the military parade near the Bab al-Mandab Strait in Hodeidah governorate. The Houthis paraded weapons, ballistic and naval missiles, and drones. This comes at a time when Houthi rhetoric on controlling Bab al-Mandab Strait increased. The parade in Hodeidah city was condemned by the United Nations, which viewed it as an escalation.

The Houthis present their new state as being close to the Islamic Republic of Iran. They confirmed the integration of the popular forces into the army and security forces. Moreover, the group leader, Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi, oversees all authorities as the head of the state in a system similar to the guardianship of the jurist in Iran.

Most of the weapons paraded by the Houthis are apparently Iranian or reflect Iranian weapons technology in terms of specifications and capabilities.

- **The government camp crisis:** As already mentioned, the formation of the Presidential Leadership Council came a few days after the declaration of the truce, which came as a result of the Riyadh consultations that lasted for days and engaged most of the political leaders loyal to the government and the Saudi-led coalition. The council is composed of a chairman and seven members. Later on, differences erupted between the council members for various reasons. Until the beginning of September 2022, President Rashad Al-Alimi was in Riyadh and sought to meet with Saudi officials to no avail, as prospects of the Saudi-Emirati three billion dollar grant vanished. Most members of the Presidential Council left the city of Aden to their governorates or left the country due to the behavior of the UAE-backed Southern Transitional Council (STC). The defeat of the army and security forces in Shabwa and handing the governorate over to paramilitary forces loyal to the UAE; namely, the Shabwa Defense Forces and the Giants Forces was a turning point in predicting the future behavior of the Council. The committees of the Presidential Council failed to bridge the gap between the new allies and to unify the forces. This factor contributed to the consolidation of the power of the Houthis, which appears to be unified and capable of mobilizing against a specific opponent of disjointed parties.

## b. External Variables

- **Saudi negotiations:** During the truce, Saudi Arabia continued negotiations. Firstly, it continued to negotiate with the Houthis under the auspices of Omani intelligence. Secondly, it proceeded with negotiations with Iran in Baghdad on several files, paramount among which is the Yemen crisis. Regarding the former, consultations went on slowly and with great caution, under the supervision of American and European officials. Despite the slow pace of the talks, consensus is apparently reached, as Houthi violations of the truce have been limited to Yemen, while no cross-border strikes towards Saudi Arabia and the UAE were launched, which is important for the two countries and for the world that seeks to maintain the flow of oil and stability of oil prices.

Despite this progress in negotiations, the Saudi-led coalition still sends reassuring messages that it will not tolerate any advance of Houthi forces towards areas under the control of the government, particularly towards the city of Marib, while the Houthis believe that understanding with Saudi Arabia will neutralize the coalition air force in their upcoming battles.

As for the negotiations with Iran, it seems that Saudi Arabia and the Iranian regime are trying to go further, especially with the ongoing stumbling of negotiations to return to the joint action plan or the Iranian nuclear agreement.

- **The Iranian threat:** What irritates Iran in the region is Task Force-59 of the US Fifth Fleet, which commenced its tasks in late 2021 and is based in Jordan. Task Force-59 roams international waters from the Arabian Gulf to the Gulf of Aqaba. In addition, the Combined Task Force (CTF 153) focuses on the Red Sea, Bab al-Mandab Strait and the Gulf of Aden. It launched its activities in April 2022. On September 1, 2022, two important events took place: first, Iranian state television broadcast footage that it said came from aboard the Iranian Navy destroyer, Chamran. Iran claimed that it detained two American drone boats. The United States confirmed the incident, and said that the two boats were released later. This incident represented the first Iranian action against Task Force-59 in the southern end of the Red Sea.

Secondly, the Houthis organized a large-scale military parade in the Ad-Durairimi district, south of the city of Hodeidah, near Bab al-Mandab Strait, during which the Houthis paraded new naval weapons: Mandab 2, Mandab 1, smart marine missiles, Falaq-1 marine ballistic missile, and Rubig 21 and 22 missiles. These are Iranian missiles that reached the Houthis, according to experts. The Falaq-1 missile is an Iranian Fajr CL-4 missile. The Mandeb missiles are developed from the Iranian Noor missiles. The Houthis threatened to end the truce due to CTF 153 patrols in the Red Sea. <sup>5</sup>

During the truce in Yemen, Iran sent two clear messages from Yemen in the context of an international situation which focuses on securing international waters to facilitate the passage of oil and gas to Europe as winter approaches. Iran usually targets navigation in the Red Sea when negotiations of the Iranian nuclear agreement reach a stalemate. When Donald Trump withdrew from the nuclear agreement in 2018, the Houthis launched a series of attacks in the Red Sea. Houthi unmanned boats loaded with bombs and mines damaged ships. The Houthis also launched violent attacks on Aramco, the Saudi oil company, in September 2019.

When the return of the Biden administration to the nuclear agreement became questionable and Abu Dhabi began negotiating over Israeli air defenses and the formation of a new NATO in the region in early 2022, the Houthis bombed Emirati oil facilities in Abu Dhabi. An Emirati vessel was also detained in the port of Hodeidah. Other Saudi oil ports and installations were also targeted. Moreover, the Houthis fired a naval missile,<sup>6</sup> and threatened to target navigation in the Red Sea<sup>9</sup> in March 2022, a few days before signing the truce.

- **International concerns:** International concerns about the Ukrainian crisis and the need for Arab Gulf energy seem to affect the crisis in Yemen. The international community fears the Houthis as a rebel group capable of targeting oil facilities in Saudi Arabia and the UAE, and targeting or seizing vessels in international waters, as such actions will raise inflation in the West to record levels. The Houthis and the Iranians exploit these fears to serve their own ends. Therefore, in light of the keenness of western countries to preserve the truce in Yemen, they pressure the Yemeni government to make concessions and implement the Houthi demands in order to ward off risks. They justify this position by the claim that they do not have any points through which they can pressure the Houthis. At the same time, western countries grant other concessions through their failure to criticize the behavior of the Emiratis in the southern governorates, which witnessed the events of August 2022 in Shabwa governorate and the events in the eastern governorates, despite the impact this policy has on the revitalization of Al-Qaeda, which seeks to rearrange its ranks in light of the disintegration of the Yemeni government.

- **Negative role of the United Nations:** The United Nations continued to play a negative role. During the war, the Houthis agreed to concessions through international mediation, but they did not implement any of these concessions. In fact, during this truce, the Houthis rejected any concerns that UN officials reported. The Houthis refused to meet the UN envoy for Yemen after he criticized the group's attack on Taiz,<sup>8</sup> and his criticism of a bloody attack on Al-Mushki neighborhood in which children were killed.<sup>9</sup> They also rejected initiatives proposed by the UN envoy for Yemen regarding the opening of the roads in Taiz, despite the resentment of the internationally recognized government towards these initiatives and its reluctance to accept them.<sup>10</sup> This is mainly due to the fact that none of those initiatives imposed penalties in case of non-implementation, including violations against civilians. There were no deterrent measures to push the Houthis to change their behavior towards initiatives.

Time and again, the Houthis had the upper hand over the UN in negotiations, a fact which made Houthi involvement in a constructive nationwide peace process difficult.<sup>11</sup> The United Nations seeks to extend and broaden the scope of the ceasefire agreement for the benefit of the Yemeni people, but it seems that the Yemenis in government-controlled areas are not much concerned about these measures. Although the UN envoy for Yemen, Hans Grundberg, has vociferously expressed the need to push the Houthis to fulfill their obligations,<sup>12</sup> he does not know how to do so. Grundberg visited Tehran and met with Iranian officials in an attempt to push the Houthis to renegotiate with the United Nations and the Yemeni government, but it does not seem that his efforts paid.

- **The United States:** The White House recognized the need for a lasting resolution to the conflict in Yemen. Biden's pressure on Saudi Arabia empowered the Houthis and their Iranian allies in the region. Biden<sup>13</sup> and the Houthis<sup>14</sup> agreed that peace was necessary in Yemen in conjunction with the meetings of the United Nations General Assembly. However, the US Special Envoy for Yemen, Timothy Lenderking, is aware of the many obstacles facing the peace process and the lack of Houthi cooperation. She points out that there is contact with the Houthis on the peace agreement.<sup>15</sup>

In light of the failure to reach a nuclear agreement with Iran, Washington seems eager to freeze the war in Yemen for a longer period if not ending it, especially in view of the Ukrainian crisis, the need for Arab Gulf oil, and fears that Iran might use the Houthis to disrupt navigation. However, the main factor that led to suspension of Houthi targeting of navigation and oil facilities of Gulf states is the Saudi negotiations with Iran.

The Houthi-Iran convergence indicates that a breach of the truce is highly likely if the internationally recognized government and the Saudi-led coalition fail to implement its conditions, "unconditional opening of Sana'a airport and the port of Hodeidah without supervision, disbursement of civil servants, and stopping Arab coalition operations in Yemen." <sup>16</sup> The Houthis had announced their intention not to renew the truce after US President Joe Biden's visit to Saudi Arabia in July 2022. <sup>17</sup>

## Strengthening the truce and perpetuation of harmony

The ceasefire in Yemen remains the only obligatory path for both parties to the conflict at present. However, success in reaching a political settlement that ends the war is tied to several factors.

### - Continuous renewal:

The longer the duration of negotiations and renewal, the more polarized the positions of the two parties. Therefore, the truce shall not be renewed if its articles are not implemented. The Houthis must implement their commitments promptly. Failing that, the truce will reach a dead end and the internationally recognized government will not be able to control the people's resentment of the Houthis, the Saudi-led coalition and the government itself.

### - The United Nations:

Apparently, the United Nations has not benefited from its experiences, as the Houthis have repeatedly managed to outsmart it. Two points are indicative in this regard: a) the language of any agreement must be accurate and clear.

Grundberg does not seem to have benefited from the experience of the Stockholm Agreement, where the Houthis took advantage of the loose language of the agreement and utilized it to their advantage regarding the withdrawal from the city of Hodeidah and depositing the Hodeidah port revenues to a special Central Bank account. This issue recurs regarding the opening of the roads in Taiz in the recent truce agreement. The UN envoy for Yemen fails to refer categorically to opening the main roads known to the population. Therefore, any talks about the extension or broadening of the scope of the truce shall be expressed in clear and precise language, detailed and precisely defined so that the Houthis - or any other party - cannot evade the agreement. b) Imposing penalties for breaching the truce to ensure its full implementation and avoid civilian casualties or force violators of the truce to pay exorbitant compensation to the families of the victims. The Houthis were responsible for committing more than 94% of the violations, which include the greater number of civilian casualties. The lack of penalties encouraged the Houthis to commit more abuses.

### **- The internationally recognized government:**

There is no alternative to the harmony of the Presidential Leadership Council and its constituent parties. This can only be done by restoring the confidence of the army and security forces in the leadership, uniting the forces, and above all, approving the mechanism regulating the functions of the Presidential Council. A force ready to deter the Houthis and protect government-affiliated areas is necessary to compel the Houthis to implement their obligations. In the absence of such force, there is nothing to compel the Houthis to implement their obligations. This force will also save the government and the coalition from making concessions because they need a truce due to the disintegration of forces and efforts.

This disintegration also encourages terrorist organizations such as Al-Qaeda to act and target the government, its forces, and officials. Government-controlled areas become vulnerable and lack security and stability. The Houthis emerge as the alternative to confronting such terrorist organizations.

The failure of Saudi Arabia to support the forces in the governorates of contact with the Houthis by providing them with qualitative weapons to create a kind of balance to halt Houthi invasion of those governorates,



failure to exercise pressure on the components of the Presidential Council as a consensual and participatory authority, and unwillingness to unify the forces raise questions about Saudi confidence in the outcomes of negotiations with the Houthis and the Iranians, and the future of Saudi policy towards Yemen, especially in light of the pursuit of its ally, the UAE, of establishing a permanent presence in the country and seeking to replace the army and security institutions with the militias trained and financed by the Emiratis. This poses a threat to the national security of Yemen and Saudi Arabia in the first place and the rest of the GCC countries. The failure to deliver the financial grant to the Central Bank of Yemen in Aden and the strengthening of the government's position, which Riyadh and Abu Dhabi are supposed to support, raise questions about whether the grant would ever be deposited to the CBY after the government submits to the Houthi preconditions regarding the unification of the bank and the payment of employee salaries since the implantation of such conditions will be viewed as an achievement for the Houthis rather than for the government and its allies!

**- The international community:**

The Yemeni crisis should be dealt with outside the framework of hostility with Iran and the satisfaction of the Arab Gulf states. Militias and sub-national entities should not be encouraged because of their own ambitions or interests. Therefore, the following measures shall be taken:

a. Oil and gas companies operating in the southern governorates under the protection of the militias of the Southern Transitional Council shall be suspended. All exploration activities or contracts shall be postponed to the post-war phase when a stage of political consensus, stability and security is reached. These contracts give way to the outbreak of small-scale wars among militias with multiple loyalties to foreign states while lacking loyalty to the nation.

b. Granting concessions and diplomatic recognition to the Houthis due to concerns about their attacks on oil installations in the Arab Gulf and navigation shall be stopped. Such concessions reinforce their violent, systematic behavior and their obstinate refusal to make any concessions. It shall always be taken into account that current developments lead to establishing a permanent state of instability in Yemen and to a lasting threat to navigation, oil installations and regional security. The long-term consequences of the current situation are not limited to temporary behavior imposed exclusively by the situation in Europe and regional conflicts.

## Conclusion

It seems that the continuation of the truce is a mandatory option for local and international parties. Although the Houthis do not see appropriate incentives for its continuation, the return to war threatens their negotiations with Saudi Arabia, and negatively affects the Saudi-Iranian negotiations as well, at a time when Tehran needs Riyadh's understanding to succeed in the nuclear agreement with the international community.

In contrast, the Yemeni government and the Saudi-led coalition seem unprepared to accept any new Houthi conditions, especially as the Houthis have not implemented any of UN articles of the first and second truce agreements and the Stockholm Agreement.

It is, therefore, difficult to accept a truce on the terms of the Houthis. Any military action to impose what they view as the conditions of the victor will make the whole truce a dismal failure, at a time when the war in Yemen faces international and regional rejection for several reasons, paramount among which is the American, European and regional need for extending the truce.

In addition to the Iranian need for the continuity of dialogue with Saudi Arabia, Qatar will host the World Cup in November. The GCC wants the championship to be held in a quiet regional environment. Moreover, The United States approaches the midterm elections. The Biden administration seeks to make progress in one of the files of the elections campaign and to promote ending the war in Yemen, especially after it failed in isolating Saudi Arabia. European countries also need to ensure the uninterrupted flow of oil and gas as the repercussions of the Ukrainian-Russian war threaten sources of energy at a sensitive time; i.e. the approach of winter.

If the truce fails and hostilities are resumed, a return to ceasefire and reaching a peaceful settlement will be more difficult. The implications of such a scenario will not be limited to Yemen, but will be regional and international as well.

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