

ورشة عمل بعنوان

مستقبل الوضع الأمني والعسكري في اليمن
(التعلم من التجارب الدولية)

Yemen's Future Security and Military Situation:
Learning from International Experiences

THE FUTURE OF THE SECURITY AND MILITARY SITUATION IN YEMEN

Learning From International Experiences

May 24, 2022
Mukalla, Yemen

Workshop Report

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INTRODUCTION

Yemen's military and security future remains questionable, especially following the events after the presidential announcement on April 7, 2022, in which the President of the Republic of Yemen, Abd Rabbo Mansour Hadi, handed over his presidential powers to an eight-person Presidential Leadership Council (PLC). The PLC includes all leaders of military and security formations in the anti-Houthi (Ansar Allah) camp.

Given the current political and security situation in Yemen, the PLC mobilized as an urgent national necessity to bring together all anti-Houthi armed forces and to place them under a unified command to serve a single military objective. In 2021, clashes in Southern Yemen between the STC forces and the forces affiliated with the government of (now former) President Abdo Rabbu Mansour Hadi had taken place, wherein both groups fought to extend their control over as much territory and future institutional structures as possible in Southern Yemen.

Under the ongoing circumstances, new armed groups and formations have emerged outside the functional structure of the state without any regard for the criteria and conditions of recruitment. These formations continue to largely operate outside the law.

The emergence of non-state armed groups and formations in any country is a complex security issue, whether during times of conflict or post-conflict settlement periods. The presence of non-state armed groups contributes to political instability and to human rights abuses including gender-based violence, arbitrary detentions, forced disappearance, looting, torture, land grabbing, destruction of private property and extortion.

Rebuilding security and military institutions is both a major challenge and a crucial component of post-conflict reconstruction. To reduce the spread of chaos and security imbalances and to restore confidence in societies affected by civil wars, it is necessary to develop proposals, views, and mechanisms through which issues concerning armed groups, forces, and military formations created by civil conflicts can be addressed.

Given the ongoing situation in Yemen and the various actors involved in the conflict, it is critical to take a holistic approach to examining the situation on the ground. Such an approach is crucial, as the previous and current situation has the potential to greatly influence future security and governance structures in the country. The current political and security situation is unstable, complex and fraught with competing interests, priorities, and visions for Yemen's future. Therefore, understanding the causes of the conflict, the mechanisms at play, and drawing attention to the actions and inactions taken by various armed groups and factions is an essential step in setting the contextual stage required to develop new ideas, approaches, and programs to support Yemen as it continues to work towards peaceful solutions.

In order to gain a deeper understanding of the military and security situation in Yemen, the Forum of Federations (the Forum) convened a one-day workshop with experts and practitioners in May 2022 in Mukalla entitled "The Future of the Security and Military Situation in Yemen: Learning from International Experiences." The workshop sought to build on two previous Forum reports by Dr. Amit Gupta on the subject – "[Reintegrating Warring Yemeni Forces: Lessons from Other Cases](#)" as well as "The Integration of the UAR Armed Forces: Tentative Lessons for Yemen."

The goals of this workshop were to:

- Share international experiences about the organization and integration of armed groups into the different possible governance structures (unified, federal, confederal).
- Exchange knowledge and listen to various views – including from Yemeni stakeholders – by drawing lessons from international experiences and discussing the pros and cons of these experiences.
- Enhance knowledge on the various governance structures (unified, federal, confederal), by establishing the connection between research and practice on the ground.
- Identify areas for future work and research.



Thirty military, security, political, and academic figures (including four women), and representatives from civil society organizations and various geographical locations across Yemen participated in the workshop.

Experiences shared by participants largely represent views from the South of Yemen. It was not possible for the organizers to bring representatives from Ansar Allah (Houthis) to the workshop. The Southern Transitional Council (STC) did not participate officially in the workshop; however, STC members were present.

The workshop provided a platform for expert speakers to present research on military units, the influence of military forces on political decision making, governance, and international experiences. These presentations provided the starting point for in-depth discussions among participants. These presentations generated numerous questions and highlighted common areas of concern and areas of future work. Such areas included: the role of decentralization in providing support to local-level actors in relation to force integration, developing processes for and supporting inclusive national dialogue, and potential governance structures for post-conflict Yemen. The Report concludes with an overview of potential further work in the area of security governance in Yemen.

WORKSHOP AGENDA AND OBJECTIVES

AGENDA

12:00 Welcome and Introduction

Speaker: Mr. Salah bin Jawhar (workshop presenter and facilitator)

12:10 Hadramout Governorate Speaker

Speaker: Ameen Saeed Ba Ruzayq (Engineer, Hadhramaut Governorate Undersecretary, Technical affairs)

12:20 OSESGY

Speaker: Brigadier General Anthony Hayward (UN Envoy's Military Advisor) via Zoom

12:30 Forum of Federations

Speaker: Felix Knüpling (Vice President, Forum of Federations, Canada) via Zoom.

12:40 Prayer and Lunch

13:45 Session 1 Panel Discussion (First Paper)

Title: "The Situation of the Military Units in Southern Yemen" Speaker: Dr. Abdullah Al-Juaidi

14:00 Session 1 Panel Discussion (Second Paper)

Title: "The Dialectics between War and Peace: The Influence of the Military Forces on the Political Decision" Speaker: Dr. Salah bin Madshal

14:15 Session 1 Panel Discussion (Third Paper)

Title: "Measures Taken by the Government after Regaining Control Over the City of Aden in 2015" Speaker: Dr. Mohammed Al-Awadi (via Zoom)

14:30 Session 2 Panel Discussion (Fourth Paper)

Title: "Learning from International Experiences" Speaker: Prof. Amit Gupta (via Zoom)

15:00 Questions and comments on working papers submitted by workshop participants

15:40 Prayer and Coffee Break

16:00 Presentation on Discussion Questions

Speaker: George Stairs (Project Officer, Forum of Federations, Canada) via Zoom

16:05 Facilitated Group Work (Three Group Discussions)

16:50 Sharing from group and facilitated discussions

17:30 Final comments on the answers of the participants

Speakers: Prof. Amit Gupta, Felix Knüpling, and Brigadier General Anthony Hayward

17:45 Conclusion

PRESENTER

PROFILES:

Professor Amit Gupta

is an Associate Professor at the United States Air Force Air War College, Alabama. His writing focuses on weapons production and deployment, internal security issues in non-Western societies, South Asian and Australian security policies, diaspora politics, as well as cultural and grassroots politics. He is the author and editor of eight books.

Dr. Abdullah Saeed Suleiman Al-Juaidi

is Head of the Hadramout Center for Historical Studies, documentation and publishing, and a Professor of Modern and Contemporary History in the Department of History, Faculty of Arts at Hadramout University. He is also the former head of the Department of History, Faculty of Arts at Hadramout University. He has many published books, including: Social, Economic, Cultural and Political Conditions in Hadramout (1918-1945), The First Kathiri Sultanate in Hadramout (1411-1730), Hadramout's Modern and Contemporary History, Qu'itya Sultanate, Official and Traditional Administration and Revolution.). He has also published many research papers including: "Relations Between the Mutawakkilite Kingdom of Yemen and Britain after the first World War until 1925," and "Popular Positions Opposing British Policy in Hadramout 1936-1950."

Dr. Salah Ali Abdul Rab bin Madshal

is the Head of the Department of Political Sciences at Hadramout University, former Assistant Head of Department of Philosophy and Social Sciences in the Faculty of Arts at Hadramout University and former Vice Dean of the Faculty of Education, Students Affairs, at Aden University. He has published several research papers including: "Zaiyidism and Exegesis: Imamate Doctrine a case in point", "Women in Yemen: Unequal Rights, Our Tradition between Common and Ultimate Mind frames." He also has one book in the press, Media and Ethics: The Impact of Satellite Channels on Social Values.

Dr. Mohammed Saleh Ali Al-Awadi

is the Chairman of the Ara'a Foundation for Civil Development, Assistant Professor of Commercial and Marine law at Hadramout University; former Chief of Staff of the former Vice President's office and the Prime Minister and former Head of the Special Department, Faculty of Law at Hadramout University. He has published several research papers including: "Disciplinary Measures Against Public Sector Employees in Civil Service Law in Yemen," "Reasons for the expiry of Commercial Agency: a comparative study," "Types of Commercial Agency and Arbitration in Banking Transactions", a Ph.D. Dissertation.

WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES

1

To share international experiences about the organization and integration of armed groups into the different possible governance structures (unified, federal, confederal).

2

To exchange knowledge and listen to various views by drawing lessons from international experiences and discussing the pros and cons of these experiences.

3

To enhance knowledge on the various governance structures (unified, federal, confederal), by establishing the connection between research and practice on the ground.

4

To identify areas for future work and research.

PRESENTED PAPERS

“The Situation of the Military Units in Southern Yemen” by Dr. Abdullah Saeed Suleiman Al-Juaidi

Causes and Outcomes

To understand the current situation, particularly with regards to the military and security formations in Southern Yemen, it is necessary to look back at the deeply rooted history of Yemen’s culture and traditions. Since the independence of the Yemen Arab Republic in Northern Yemen in 1962, and the People’s Democratic Republic of Yemen in Southern Yemen in 1967, great opportunities have been seen for the establishment of organized armed forces with a national ideology – one underpinned by the momentum and spirit of the September and October revolutions and their inspiring and ambitious principles. However, the power struggle in the North following the assassination of President Ibrahim Al-Hamdi in 1978 encouraged the army to shift its loyalty towards its own leaders and influential figures, instead of remaining faithful to the homeland. Additionally, in the South, Southern in-fighting in January of 1986 destroyed the national ideology of the army.

On May 22, 1990, the establishment of the Unified Republic of Yemen was announced after a hasty agreement between the two regimes. Both were former enemies and had each espoused different ideologies. For four years, the military units remained the same except for their movement and deployment. In the summer of 1994, a war between the two sides broke out and resulted in the defeat of the South, the dismantling of its units, the demobilization of all members of its army, and the marginalization of its cadres in most areas. General Ali Moshen Al-Ahmar released a statement characterizing the aforementioned events as internal colonialism. This helped to give rise to the so-called Southern Movement, whose demands were scaled up to the point of demanding secession of the formerly independent South Yemen. In the North, conflict began to unfold between the proponents and the opponents of power inheritance. However, the split in the ranks of the army resurfaced after the so-called Arab Spring revolution in February 2011, specifically after General Ali Mohsen Al-Ahmar joined the revolution and demanded that Ali Abdullah Saleh step down.

In late 2011, Ali Abdullah Saleh was overthrown, and Abdo Rabbu Mansour Hadi was elected President. However, the members of the former government and the old regime security forces allied with the Houthis. This resulted in overtaking the capital city of Sana’a and most of Northern Yemen by the Houthis on September 21, 2014. Thus, the military formations of the Republic of Yemen disintegrated. What is remarkable is that all military and civilian sectors in the South afterwards united in a popular resistance against the Houthis and the forces loyal to President Saleh. The Southerners would not have achieved victory in such record time despite their steadfastness and sacrifices had it not been for the military operation called “Decisive Storm” led by the Arab Coalition (led by Saudi Arabia and the UAE), which rearmed and trained Southern forces, as well as formed brigades and battalions from scratch.

The announcement of the Southern Transitional Council in May 2017 was the beginning of the most recent iteration of the Southerners’ dream of secession. The STC became the representative of the Southern issue and was supported by military formations, and the UAE. The UAE have taken part in the formation, financing, and management of the STC and were recognized by the legitimate government, albeit not subject to its command. These formations are as follows:

Security Belt Forces

The general label of the anti-Houthi forces was the 'Southern Resistance'. In late 2015, a faction deviated from this formation and came to be known as the 'Security Belt.' In early 2016, these forces were deployed in Aden, Lahj, Abyan and Al-Dhale governorates, and were assigned to security deployment at the entrances of these governorates. With the expansion of its leverage, the Security Belt extended its control over the four governorates in conjunction with the decline in the performance of the government security services. Security Belt forces undertake police tasks in cities in addition to being deployed in districts and governorate entrances. In August 2019, there were clashes between these forces and government forces.

Logistics and Support Forces:

Initially, the Logistics and Support Forces were a few battalions that participated in the fight against Al-Qaeda in Abyan. In 2018, they were officially named Logistics and Support Brigades, and received military support from the UAE which included armored vehicles, military personnel transport vehicles, artillery, medium weapons and tanks. The Brigade also received military equipment and weapons from army camps in Aden. The Logistics and Support Brigade is comprised of five major brigades including Sa'ikah Brigades, Storm Brigades and the Southern Resistance. The STC has established forces called Facility Protection and Counter-Terrorism within its ranks. Logistics and Support Brigades are the STC's military arm, and its most prominent leaders include Mohsen Al-Wali, Nabil Al-Mashoushi, Awad Al-Saadi, Nasr Bin Atef, Nabil Al-Hanashi, Hadar Al-shawhti and Mukhtar Al-Nubi.

Hadrami Elite Forces:

Supported by the UAE, the Hadrami Elite Forces were established in 2015, and its troops are deployed in the Hadramout coast and hill. This group was tasked with expelling Al-Qaeda from the Hadramout coast, which they successfully accomplished on April 24, 2016. The area was annexed to the Second Military Region of the Yemeni army and is currently led by PLC member, Governor of Hadramout governorate and Commander of the Second Military Region - Major General/ Faraj Salmin Al-Bahsani. The Hadrami Elite Forces are an exceptional case among other Southern formations supported by the Arab Coalition because they have included in their ranks all the Hadrami groups of people: tribal, urban, coast and wadi. These forces also remained neutral in the adventure of some Southern units in August 2019 to Aden and Shabwa.

They deserve to be described as professional forces that can be the nucleus of the Hadrami army or federal local forces in any upcoming political settlements. It is estimated that Hadrami Elite Forces include nine thousand members (according to press reports) and the group's armament is not much different from other military formations in the liberated governorates established by the Arab Coalition.

Shabwani Elite:

The Shabwani Elite was formed in mid-2016 after the establishment of the Hadrami Elite, and consists of six brigades that each represent a major branch of the tribes in the Shabwa governorate. Deployed to fight Al-Qaeda, the group tried to take the city of Ataq in August 2019 after STC forces seized Aden and ousted the government but failed. It is estimated that Shabwani Elite forces have seven thousand members in its ranks, and its armament is not much different from other military formations in the liberated governorates established by the Arab Coalition.

Southern Giants Brigades:

The Southern Giants Brigades forces are mostly from the South, but they are part of the Joint Forces on the West Coast, which include the Guards of the Republic, led by Tariq Mohammed Abdullah Saleh, and the four-brigade Tihamah Resistance forces. The Giants Brigades were established at different intervals between 2016 to 2019 and emerged from the Southern Resistance. The group is led by PLC member Brigadier General/ Abdulrahman Al-Muharrami, also known as Abu Zara'ah Al-Muharrami. The Southern Giants Brigades participated in the Battle of the Golden Spear in 2017 to liberate the West Coast from Houthi control. The group emerged as an effective force against the Houthi forces, since it is more ideologically than politically motivated. It is made up of 12 brigades, with twenty-two thousand members, mostly from Salafist doctrine. It owns hundreds of military transportation vehicles and dozens of armored vehicles, artilleries, and missile launchers.

General Analysis of the Military Situation of the Southern Forces

Military formations in the South are united against the Houthi project. However, they follow three tracks. The first is the Southern forces and their intention is to restore the Southern state. The second is the Southern legitimacy brigades, they follow the track of the federal state. The third is the Northern brigades in the South, and they reject the first track and accept the second track with reservation. The forces on the Hadramout Coast are monitoring the fields to determine the best options.

Needless to say, states can only stabilize and prosper in the presence of military and security forces with a cohesive national agenda. This was the case of the armies of the two republics at the beginning of their formation in the 1960s. When those armies deviated from their higher goals in preserving national sovereignty and were diverted in favor of individuals, tribes or sects, they turned into militias over time (although they pretended to be modern military formations). This fact exposes the roots of the problem and points to the most important ways for solving it. One question was addressed to Dr. Abdullah Al-Juaidi by the presenter and facilitator of the workshop, Mr. Salah bin Jawhar: *to what extent do you think regional and international intervention is an obstacle to the solution or facilitates the ways to reach the solution?*

Regional and international interventions in Yemen seek a solution, but often, this is part of the problem. In an interview on Al Jazeera, former Yemeni Foreign Minister Abdul Malik Al-Mikhlaifi said: "the problem is that our allies Britain and France are supporting the Houthis." This is a statement from an official source.

Yemen is a country that attracts foreign ambitions and interventions because of its geographical location and its natural resources. This leads us to refer to what the great Egyptian writer Mohammed Hassanein Heikal said in his book, Japanese Articles on August 8, 1994: "What is happening in Yemen is the beginning of a major conflict over the future of the Arabian Peninsula, a conflict involving major powers, international interests, visible and hidden power, in addition to regional, national, sectarian and tribal factors as well" (P.107). The conflict in Yemen is not being resolved, rather it is being re-administered."

"The Dialectics Between War and Peace: The Influence of the Military Forces on the Political Decision" by Dr. Salah Ali Abdul-Rab bin Midshal and Dr. Murad Muhammad Baalawi

Between War and Peace

There is a fine line that separates war and peace. Peace is best achieved in the case of a balance of powers, which is a hypothetical situation and is difficult to achieve. It may be achieved through diplomatic means and tools, depending on the ability of the people to avoid merely reacting to the latest threat and instead patiently gathering the elements essential to cooperation.

Military Influence on Political Decision

Wars are fought by soldiers, and they come to an end at the hands of politicians. The most complex situations lie in military intervention that directly influences efforts of peacemaking and stopping war. Military interventions in politics are frequent in many parts of the world, and Yemen is one of these countries. This poses a very important question - why does the military intervene in politics? To answer this question, it might be useful to use the statement by Tom Heitner in 1968. Heitner observed that the most important reasons for military intervention are primarily political, as they feed upon the absence of professional political institutions and the existence of unstable or hybrid democracies, or even authoritarian regimes with strong features. In these situations, the actors in the intervention are the armed forces, given that armed forces and security police have a monopoly on the use of force.

The scene in Yemen is full of multiple armed factions, as Yemen is not under one political authority. Some of these forces are superior in number and equipment to the so-called official forces of the state, which are in fact infiltrated by tribal, sectarian, partisan and regional forces, and their loyalty is neither to the homeland nor to the existing political authority. This is due to low levels of national awareness, low levels of living and social standards, low salaries, and widespread favouritism in the promotion system. Additionally, the feeling of humiliation by any government measures that affect the armed forces, or by a military defeat that the military commanders believe the civil government is responsible for contributes to this lack of loyalty.

The military may interfere in politics because of the contradictions in the social environment, as it is the only source that provides the armed forces with human resources. This influences the attitudes of the military towards various social issues including class, religious, and cultural divisions. This also results in the destabilization of the legitimacy of the government and its inability to reconcile the various factions of society, allowing the military to intervene in political affairs.

Military factions that emerge during armed struggles or wars for liberation and independence widely and directly interfere in political life. This is often due to the military's possession of the coercive forces that support their movements, particularly in controlling capitals and major city centers, or because of the rebels' lack of confidence in the seizure of power by civilians.

By common military standards, losing sight of the fact that the legitimate source of power is civil will and not military force is unacceptable. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, author of *Du Contrat social* or *The Social Contract* said that “as soon as right is founded on force, the effect will alter with its cause; any force that is stronger than the first must have right on its side in its turn. As soon as anyone is able to disobey with impunity, he may do so legitimately, and since the strongest is always right the only question is how to ensure that one is the strongest.”



No system can remain legitimate without effectiveness. In other words, the force of the law is better than the law of force. Therefore, all armed factions should be neutral and not inclined to any political party at the expense of another. The membership of all military factions should belong to the homeland and the people, otherwise they will be a source of constant concern and turmoil by corrupting the entire political process and creating innumerable obstacles to the prospect of peace. If this happens, the growth and development of all the elements of life including sustainable development and an integrated economic cycle stop, and everything collapses, and the situation becomes very terrifying as it is now.

Today's war is the result of social disintegration, which means that new international conflicts are no longer driven by states, but rather by the collapse of state institutions. This happened in Yemen, Somalia, Sierra Leone and Afghanistan. The state collapses by political force with weak legitimacy, or a weak social contract, as is the case in Yemen. But what are the causes that led to this situation? There are social factors that are more decisive than any others. The social contract is often undermined by low levels of human development such as poverty, poor education, poor health and defection to primitive and religious identities. These factors can lead to unemployment, social exclusion and social insecurity, which may ultimately prompt unemployed youth and children to join militias, in order to increase their access to food and capitalize on other compelling factors.

In general, war is sought to be reproduced as a permanent social system. This is the reason why new international conflicts are particularly difficult to resolve and the interest in negotiations is weak.

Warlords are worried about losing their status and authority, and it is difficult to invite them to negotiations as their partners are not clearly defined and not easy to identify. Given that discipline in the militias is weak, it is difficult to represent them in negotiations and those who seek to represent them are repudiated and accused of betrayal. One is left to wonder how peace can be achieved under this bleak situation – as militias and rival factions can achieve no security or stability.

Factors that May Reduce Military Interference in Politics

The factors that can protect the country from blatant and reckless military interventions from which the people and the homeland gain nothing but ruin, failure, and woe include: the creation of a strong and cohesive civil society; the establishment of strong and effective unions that influence the political and the development process; and raising awareness among the factions and armed forces on the importance of civil society in building the state, and establishing it for the comprehensive and sustainable development of the country.

A question addressed to Dr. Salah bin Midshal by the presenter and facilitator of the workshop, Mr. Salah bin Jawhar was: *can the security and military track be considered the main entry point for resolving the situation, and can the legal, constitutional and political tracks be considered as additions in support of the solution of the military situation? Or should the political track be at the forefront?*

In Yemen, things are intertwined to the point of complication. Unfortunately, we have Riyadh negotiations 1 and 2, and we don't know if there is going to be Riyadh negotiations 3 and 4 in the coming days.

The negotiations sought to resolve the situation, but the parties have a crisis of confidence where everyone is maneuvering, but they do not want to be the first to implement the solution. The parties are in constant conflict over who gives up their power first. Therefore, we must first start with the military and security track because control over territory is control over political decision.

When the military is loyal to the homeland, politicians can negotiate comfortably. During the Arab Spring Revolutions, Tunisia and Egypt are the countries that have succeeded because they have national armies. The countries that have sectarian, regional and partisan armies are still in conflict. We cannot resolve the political situation unless we resolve the military situation.

“Measures Taken by the Government After Regaining Control Over the City of Aden in 2015” by Dr. Mohammed Al-Awadi

Before talking about the measures taken by the government after regaining control over the city of Aden, it is necessary to characterize the security and military landscape in the Southern governorates before 2015. The military and security institutions in the Southern governorates experienced a state of decline in the period before the Houthi invasion. There are a number of reasons behind this decline. However, this is neither the place nor the scope for these reasons to be mentioned.

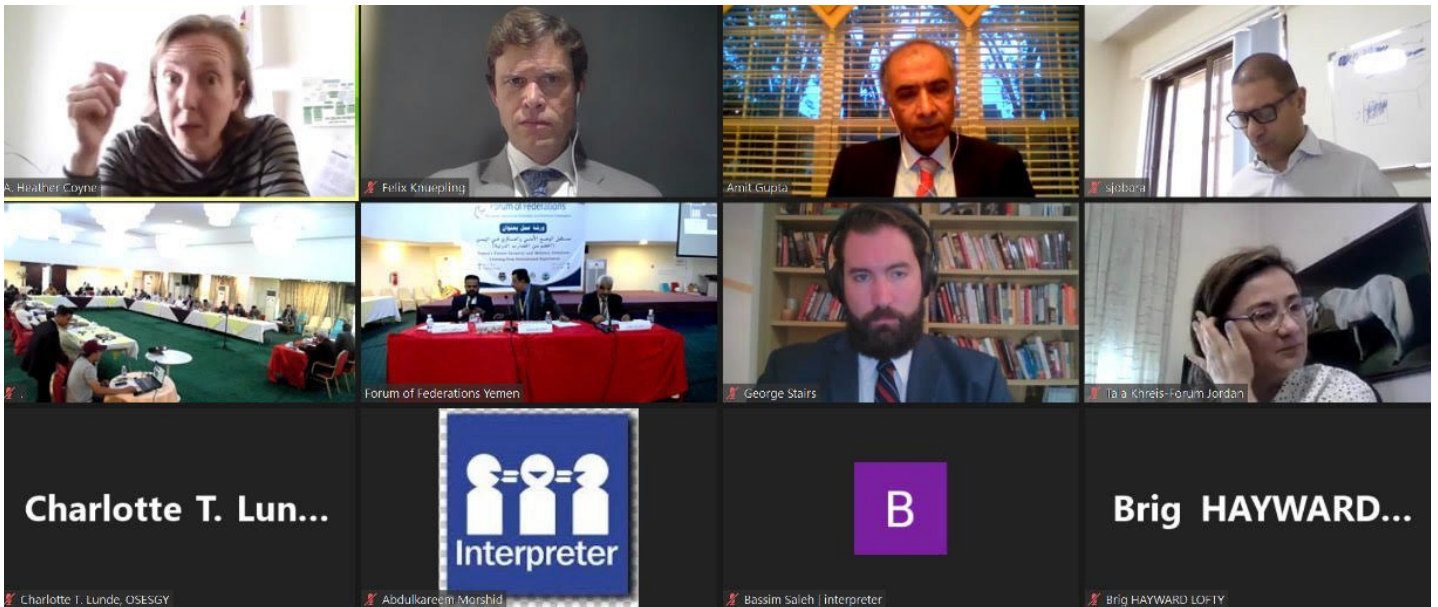
As soon as Houthi militias and forces loyal to President Saleh advanced towards the interim capital city of Aden, armed forces scattered in several neighboring governorates, some army personnel returned home, and most joined Houthi militias and forces loyal to President Saleh. Remarkably for the South however, all its civil and military sectors were united in popular resistance against the Houthi militias and forces loyal to President Saleh.

As for the military and security scene in the coast of Hadramout, it is not much different from what happened in Aden. As soon as groups of Al Qaeda attacked Mukalla, the Second Military Region and the entire security institution collapsed. Al Qaeda controlled the city of Mukalla in a matter of hours, in a manner that raised many questions. This resulted in a security and military vacuum in the Southern governorates.

The Yemeni government returned to the interim capital Aden after liberation, under the protection of the resistance. On the first day in Aden, the government held a meeting with the Commander of the Fourth Military Region, Major General Ahmed Saif Al-Yafei, and the leadership of the Arab Coalition, in order to fill the security vacuum in the liberated governorates. The establishment of three model brigades, reactivate police departments in Aden, and neighboring governorates with some integrated resistance factions in them were agreed upon in this meeting.

Attempts were made to resolve the situation in Aden and the neighboring governorates. Many military formations were ready to join the National Army and there was a keenness to integrate the forces into the state structures. However, some forces intervened and tried to destroy what was built.

The beginning of the deviation was the establishment of the Presidential Protection Brigade with a regional tint that provoked the anger of many other governorates. This deviation was followed by other deviations that disrupted the course of the reintegration and arrangement of the Armed Forces.



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As for the security and military situation in the Coast of Hadramawt, it is quite different from what happened in Aden. New regular military forces have been established and trained, with the support of the UAE, to liberate Mukalla from Al-Qaeda. These forces include the full spectrum of the Hadrami community and are led by the Hadrami leadership. The new military forces were deployed in place of the forces that withdrew after the control of Al-Qaeda, despite the calls for the return of the former forces.

If we look at the military and security experience in the Coast of Hadramout, it can only be characterized as a unique experience. Therefore, Hadramout's model must be copied because it has not been subject to any deviations, and all its formations have been incorporated into state structures.

“Learning From International Experiences” by Professor Amit Gupta

Before talking about the experiences of countries in their unification and integration of armed forces, we must bear in mind that any political settlement must take place through the Yemenis themselves and that the type of political structure (unified, federal, confederate) determines the shape of the armed forces. Additionally, it should be noted that the establishment of a new national army is quite expensive.

Previous efforts in other countries that have experienced internal conflicts, such as the USA, India and Lebanon, as well as the UAE, in which heterogeneous forces were united into a unified army, should be seen as examples of merging, and may be useful in the Yemeni context.

India

India's approach to dealing with former rebels was the most successful in Mizoram, a Northeastern state traditionally dominated by non-Mizo-Assamese elites, as the various hill tribes were all included in one vast state called Assam. The situation worsened with the famine that occurred in the early 1960's, and the inept response of the state government led to the outbreak of an insurgency. The initial response of the Indian government was heavy-handed and included the use of Air Force. In 1986, an agreement was reached, providing for a power-sharing arrangement with the Mizo National Front that granted Mizoram the status of a full state, and elections were held (that saw the Mizo National Front gain state power). The fighters of the Mizo National Front were integrated, with some receiving jobs in the public sector and others obtaining paramilitary jobs. The fighters were also compensated for the damage they suffered.

Lebanon

There are many similarities between Lebanon's 15-year civil war and the war in Yemen. Warring militias organized along religious lines defined this war, fighting religious brethren for greater power. External parties such as Israel and Syria intervened, providing arms and assistance to their proxies in the conflict. In addition, the Lebanese army, which could have been a peacekeeping force by resolving the issue or subjugating the warring factions, was largely driven away by sectarian politics, which later led to the disintegration of the army, and some fighters returned home while others joined militias.

The Taif agreement was concluded in 1989 to end the conflict and set a framework for the demobilization, disarmament and reintegration of militias into the army and various security organs. Hezbollah, however, was excluded because it was seen as a resistance against Israel. Steps toward security sector reform were also taken. The most successful part of the Lebanese experiment was the attempt to rebuild the Lebanese army from scratch and end the Christian religious character of the army. More Muslim conscripts joined the army, and more Christian officers were also found in it.

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United Arab Emirates

The case of the United Arab Emirates is not a straightforward case of the direct merging of seven separate Emirates into a unified state under a unified leadership structure.

It took time for the various Sheikdoms to unite, and especially to bring their armed forces together under a unified command. Six Emirates joined the United Arab Emirates in 1971, while the seventh emirate of Ras Al Khaimah joined the Union in 1972.

However, its various armies did not get integrated until 1976, and Air Force until in 1999. Dubai did not integrate its forces into the Joint Forces structure until 1998.

Several factors led to the integration of the UAE forces, including:

- The small population of the Union,
- External threats,
- The dominant role of Abu Dhabi in the governance, economy, and affairs of the new union,
- Senior members of the ruling family served as officers in the newly established forces.

The United States of America

The experience of the United States of America in integrating militias formed during the British colonial period is a unique one, as the various colonial militias became subordinate to the state when America gained independence.

The United States of America relied on state militias directly associated with former colonial militias to supply the majority of its forces. The National Guard, for one, is a military reserve force composed of individuals and military units under the dual control of state and federal governments. They are referred to as part-time civilian soldiers, who have the option to pursue careers other than their careers in uniform, but some work as full-time soldiers.

National Guard units may be mobilized for active federal duty to supplement the regular armed forces in times of war and national emergencies declared by Congress. They are also mobilized in their states when a state of emergency is declared by the governor of the state or territory in which they are active.

The National Guard's missions include combating any armed rebellion or internal unrest between the constituent groups of the American people, as well as providing humanitarian support to citizens during natural disasters and crises.

A question addressed to Prof. Amit Gupta by the presenter and facilitator of the workshop, Mr. Salah bin Jawhar: *under what conditions are the effects of international decisions strengthened and solutions formulated? And how does the idea of experiences or the comparison between experiences given the difference in the condition leading to the production of solutions?*

This is a tough question, but Yemenis have to come to an agreement first, then develop an executive plan to help in this regard. The international community cannot help you when you are not in agreement with each other.



PARTICIPANT QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

Following the presentation of the working papers, participants provided comments and questions on the topics discussed. These contributions highlighted the complexity of the ongoing situation and were centered on the following points:

- The role of the international community in supporting Yemen in the fight against piracy and terrorism.
- The need to support the military and security structure in the liberated provinces as a starting point for building the Yemeni state.
- The impact of international and regional interventions on the complexity of the Yemeni landscape.
- How to deal with the hundreds of thousands of surplus military forces in Yemen.
- The impact of international resolutions on the peace process.
- Corruption in the military and security systems, low national awareness among its members, the multiplicity of security and military agencies and the overlap of their powers.
- Weakness of the national ideology among the military and security components and their multiple loyalties.
- The need for the international community to play an active role in the Yemeni scene.
- The impact of military dominance on public life.
- Stressing the need to study the Rwandan and Somali experiences as they are the closest experiences to the Yemeni scene.
- Lack of proper representation of Hadramout in the political and military scene.
- Lack of confidence between the parties and the affect this has on reaching a resolution.
- The impact of international guardianship on the freedom of decision-making in Yemen.
- The need to empower women and youth to be instrumental in finding a resolution in Yemen.

RESPONSES

In response to these questions and comments, Professor Amit Gupta provided the following points to consider:

- A solution to the conflict – including with the Houthis – must come from within Yemen with the support of organizations such as the United Nations playing a mediatory role. Yemenis have to agree on a joint vision for the country in order to choose the experiences they see as successful and relevant to Yemen from which to take lessons.
- Corruption in the army and local communities leads to military coups and the dominance of the military in political decisions. The army must, therefore, be removed from interference in civilian life.
- It is important to provide education to non-state armed forces and militias and to integrate those unable to serve in the military sector into the civilian sector, or to give them paramilitary positions. Examples of such positions (taken from successful experiences in other countries) include roles in civil defense forces of the Coast Guard.
- Engaging Yemen in the international coalition to combat piracy and providing support to the Navy in Yemen is crucial based on the strategic location of Yemen's coastline and the active interest of local actors in this area.

- There is a need to increase social accountability by further integrating military formations with local structures. This is crucial as social accountability is an effective tool in maintaining control over the army.
- Empowering women and integrating them into the army and security forces is something that needs to be given greater attention. Successful experiences were cited in the cases of the UAE and the USA.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Following the presentation of discussion questions, participants were divided into three groups to discuss and present responses to the following questions:

Group 1: Regarding the different designs of governance (for example, unitary, federal, or confederal) for a post-conflict Yemen and how it's armed groups might organize under it, what might the pros and cons of one design or the others be and what might be any stumbling blocks to achieving success in one case or another?

Answers:

The best and most appropriate system for Yemen is a federal union, and armed groups can join under it:

- 1.The military and security forces of each state or territory must be integrated under a unified command.
- 2.Full powers must be granted within the territory.
- 3.A portion of the territory's wealth's income must be allocated according to its area and wealth.
- 4.Granted full powers to the territories in enacting laws that preserve their internal security and protect them from any challenges or threats.

Constraints:

- 1.Obstruction of such efforts by the international, regional, and local forces.
- 2.Military and security formations outside the law hindering efforts that conflict with their interests
- 3.The huge number of members within military and security formations.

Group 2: Based on the lessons presented in this workshop, what lessons can we draw from other case studies?

Answers:

The federal and confederate system must be combined. The North and South should be both a united confederate system and have federal / decentralized structures within the two regions. The Malaysian experience provides the precedent in establishing a federal system with its 13 provinces with full powers.

Group 3: Based on the presentations in this workshop, what further questions might be explored moving forward? What are the key areas that need to be addressed in order to move ahead?

Answers:

- The army and other military and security institutions should be restructured in accordance with laws and regulations. Such institutions should be rebuilt on the basis of national competence and should be distanced from partisan work.
- There is an immediate need for services (such as the payment of salaries) to be restored and improved.
- Consideration should be given to the potential redeployment and positioning of the armed forces.
- Military and security institutions should be neutralized and subordinate to elected civilian authorities.
- Civil society should take a more active role in participating in governance in order to discourage actors from making solely unilateral decisions.
- The media discourse of various military and security forces should be unified and refrain from engaging in security squabbles.
- There is a need to combat the corruption of financial and administrative processes within military and security institutions as well as to reform these processes and mechanisms.
- In order to reach political settlements that ensure peace and long-term stability in the country, the United Nations should be involved in the management of political differences and achieving regional and international interests.
- There is a clear need to listen to voices of grassroots actors affected by the situation, rather than just the voices of those who have benefited from the war and crises. Engaging community bases to be directly involved in resolving the crisis is an essential component of post-conflict transition.
- Programs targeted at empowering women and youth to become aware of and actively involved in the development of governance solutions should be developed.
- There is a need to explore effective and practical ways of ending tribal and regional dominance over military and security institutions within the country.



CONCLUSIONS AND AREAS FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION

Throughout the workshop, several reoccurring points emerged both on the subject of the restructuring of Yemeni armed forces as well as other possible areas to explore via potential programming that may provide support to processes of peace and building better governance.

During the question-and-answer period following the presentations, as well as during working group breakout sessions, several key issues concerning force integration were raised. These points included: what form or forms a unified force structure might take, concerns around civilian control of the armed forces, the challenges associated with integrating diverse and numerous armed groups and providing alternatives for young men involved with these forces once they demobilize. Regarding areas for further research on force structures, Dr. Gupta pointed to several examples that piqued the interests of participants, namely the role of paramilitary forces (such as the role of the National Guard in civil defense in the United States), and the Coast Guard's maritime policing role. Drawing on comparative examples such as these may highlight a potential path forward to determining what role participants and veterans of the conflict could play in a new Yemen. Discussions further touched on the processes associated with beginning force integration at the local level, and how to ensure that local militias and armed groups with a vested interest in their local territory might become more invested in territorial defence within their home regions. These discussions drew attention to the idea that beginning at the grassroots level in different regions (with considerations being given to keeping force size in line with local resources and requirements) might provide the first steps to a larger integration across Yemen.

Additionally, during discussions on civil-military relations, many participants affirmed the need to establish effective civilian control of the military while at the same time recognizing that this is a difficult proposition to achieve at the moment given the ongoing conflict. Fortunately, there are many comparative examples internationally from which to draw upon to provide guidance and support on processes related to the professionalization of the armed forces and civilian control of the military. In line with challenges concerning civil-military relations, questions concerning alternative employment for excess recruits and demobilized units is a pressing challenge. Though as was discussed, the formation of more lightly grouped civil defense units may provide a short-term stopgap until a nationwide solution to what to do with demobilized young men can be found.

Other subjects to explore through future study and programming were also considered throughout the workshop. One such example is examining the need to incorporate alternative voices (such as those from women and youth) in programming and any ongoing or future national dialogue. The incorporation of these voices is crucial as it will allow for perspectives from those outside typical sources to be heard and considered in public spaces which in turn may allow for the development of grassroots solutions at local levels. Strengthening the capacity of local actors to be involved in negotiation and implementation via processes of decentralization and inclusive governance is a crucial part of creating and maintaining sustainable peace. Implementing programming concerning the role of accountable and inclusive governance (with a specific and sustained focus on gender equality and decentralized governance) in addressing root causes of instability and conflict is an important area of future work.

Another example of a future area to be explored is future security structure for Yemen, centered on what governance form a post-conflict Yemen may take. This specifically concerns whether it may adopt a more centralized unitary structure, a federal system (such as the one aspired to in the 2014-15 National Dialogue Conference) or a more loosely bound confederation of highly decentralized provinces and regions.

It is important to note that throughout the workshop, all speakers and participants repeatedly emphasized that the conclusion of the conflict in Yemen as well as any potential post-conflict governance structures must be determined by the people in Yemen as well as local political actors.

This workshop answered many questions, but also raised many additional queries to yet to be considered and much more in-depth work is required. Based on feedback from participants and reflecting discussions held at the workshop, the Forum of Federations proposes to pursue further work along the following lines:

A Future Security Structure for Yemen – Research and Capacity Building Project

As was clearly pointed out by participants, as Yemen potentially heads towards a ceasefire and possible negotiations on state formation the question arises - what sort of security structure would work best for Yemen? To address the issue and to support local actors in finding appropriate solutions, this proposal takes the approach that a security structure should be based on the governmental structure that the Yemeni people decide on as being optimal for their future. The proposal is based on the notion that workshop participants emphasized the importance of establishing a decentralized system of governance for Yemen – though there was no agreement whether this should be a federal, a con-federal or decentralized unitary governance system. There was also no scope to discuss how either of the three governance models would look in detail. At the same time, a consensus seemed to emerge among participants that a bottom-up approach to security is considered key to sustainable peace, as one group raised the idea relating to the unification of the military command at the regional level, and another group talked about the local control of the armies.

With this in mind, the proposed project would look at three types of governmental structures—unitary, federal, and confederal—to suggest what possible security structures can be developed in the country. The advantage of this approach would be that it could be broken into three discrete parts depending on which outcome the Yemeni negotiators decide upon.

A **unitary government** would lead to a national army, air force, navy, and coast guard and that would require strategies for broad based recruitment, professional training, and, potentially, a high level of capital investment in the new armed forces.

A **federal government** would allow the various armed groups to retain their combat units in some form while contributing to a national force. It could permit the development of a hybrid force structure where certain elements like the navy and the air force would be recruited at the national level. It would also allow for the development of regional guards, as in the case of the national guard system in America, whose role could include carrying out civil defense functions making them useful in nonmilitary situations.

A **confederal system** would be the loosest and the most speculative of the three outcomes since any security structure would depend on the extent to which the various warring groups wanted to integrate with the rest of the country and contribute financially to a national security effort.

The proposed project would, therefore, first lay out what each of the governmental structures entails in the sharing of responsibilities between the different groupings and the central government. Secondly, it would provide alternatives that tailor the development of armed forces and regional force levels to each of these possible governmental outcomes. The objective would be to help Yemeni stakeholder understand lessons learned from countries that have experienced similar conflicts to that in Yemen.