

# South Yemen Update

*Dream no small dreams for they do not have the power to move the hearts of men*

Newsletter of the Friends of South Yemen

Issue 16 — 16th August - 15th September 2021

## Is a unilateral declaration of independence the only option for South Yemen?

Yemen is witnessing one of the bleakest periods in its long and troubled history. By the end of 2021 it is estimated that some 233,000 people will have died as a result of the war, including 140,000 children under the age of five.

The United Nations has described the country as experiencing the world's worst humanitarian crisis. In August 2021 Henrietta Ford, Executive Director of UNICEF, reported that 21 million people – including 11.3 million children – need humanitarian assistance to survive. One quarter of the population rely on civil service salaries which are paid erratically if at all. Gross domestic product has dropped 40 per cent since 2015.

In his report to the UN Security Council on August 23, 2021 Khaled Khiari, Assistant Secretary-General for the Middle East, Asia and the Pacific said that no progress has been made to reach a political agreement to settle the civil war which is now in its seventh year.

“It is imperative to resume an inclusive, Yemeni led political process to reach a negotiated solution to the conflict,” Khiari said, referring to a 2015 peace plan, which called for a nationwide ceasefire, the reopening of Sanaa airport, the easing of restrictions on fuel and goods flowing through Hodeidah port and the resumption of face-to-face political negotiations.

But the Houthis have rebuffed calls to stop their deadly military offensive on Marib. They submitted an initiative which calls for the formation of a joint command for Marib, joint security forces and joint technical committees, and demanded shares of oil, the reoperation of the export pipeline that extends from Marib to the Houthi-held Ras Issa port on the Red Sea, the release of their supporters from detention centres and freedom of movement for their members to and from Marib.

These are conditions to which the Internationally Recognized Government (IRG) will never agree. The Houthis are demanding they be given control of Marib which they

have been trying to occupy militarily for over a year.

America's recently appointed envoy to Yemen, Timothy Lenderking, returned from a trip to Saudi Arabia at the beginning of August stating that he had met a “dead end” on the Yemen crisis.

The Houthis are continuing their occupation of over 80 per cent of the North and are consolidating their *de facto* administration. The IRG can no longer be described as a government: the Southern Transitional Council (STC) controls Aden and the surrounding areas and has not allowed the IRG to function from Aden. The IRG ministers are either in Saudi Arabia or in Mukalla. No progress has been made in the implementation of the Riyadh Agreement intended to resolve the conflict between the STC and the IRG, and the people in the South continue to be deprived of essential services such as electricity and water supply, while salaries are paid erratically if at all.

Al-Qaeda's Yemeni branch congratulated the Taliban on their takeover of Afghanistan, and vowed to continue their own military campaigns. Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) fighters in Bayda and Shabwa celebrated the Taliban's return to power with fireworks. That hardline Sunni Muslim group has taken advantage of Yemen's war since 2014,

bolstering its presence in southern Yemen.

The Houthis have been emboldened by the Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan and may well be thinking that they can take over the south of Yemen in the same way. It is also possible that the Houthis may make a deal with Saudi Arabia and the South will be abandoned by its erstwhile allies.

So has the time come for the Southerners to issue a unilateral declaration of independence? A power sharing government made up of the IRG and STC was formed at the beginning of this year but the past nine months have shown that it is not fit for purpose. The international community's



South Yemen flag

insistence on a united Yemen can be compared to rearranging chairs on the *Titanic*.

The Houthis have been driven out of South Yemen by the Southerners with the assistance of the coalition, and there is tremendous potential for the development of the South if the Gulf states channel their investments in ways that benefit the people. Wealthy expatriate Yemenis may also return once they are sure the dust of war has settled.

The IMF said Yemen will receive about \$665 million worth of reserves to help ease the acute economic crisis, and Qatar has made a \$165 million cash donation. Through prudent use of these funds the South could capitalize on its strategic location and revitalize its economy – the port, the Aden Free Zone, the fishing and tourist industries. A GCC Marshall Plan could provide the impetus for the south to revitalize its beleaguered economy.

The STC's ambition for self-determination requires them to have a sound plan for achieving a Southern state. Their current foreign policy plan is unclear and the eastern governorates, including Shabwa and Hadhramaut, seem to some extent to align themselves with the IRG, drifting away from their supportive position towards the pro-independence Southern Hirak movement in 2015.

Regional pressure on the STC has seen its immediate goal shift towards a federal arrangement as part of a transitional phase, but this step is not necessarily supported by its rank and file members.

The STC has shown some flexibility by engaging in negotiations with the IRG through diplomatic means by signing the Riyadh Agreement, which it hoped would give it a formal seat at the governance table. But this table has collapsed and a functional IRG is no more than a mirage.



STC fighters

It is time for the STC to act to consolidate the Southern movement by bringing together Southerners through a conciliation initiative, and court international support. This is a strategy that it has so far failed to pursue intelligently or achieve, despite the overwhelming Southern support for a separate state in the South.

The STC has recently initiated a reconciliation process in an attempt to bring Southerners together under its umbrella but so far those who oppose it have initially refused to participate, leaving an uncertain future for the STC and South Yemen.

The STC has military control over Aden and those governorates close to the city but lacks a hegemonic position within South Yemen overall. It has so far has been unable to achieve a similar position to that of the National Liberation Front's hegemony over south Yemen in the successful anti-colonial struggle in the late 60s.

The STC position on a separate Southern state is opposed by Southerners in the IRG and Islah who want to preserve their own power base and who do not share the STC vision for independence but

support a federal state.

This opposition to the STC seems to be orchestrated by opposition groups particularly in the eastern part of the South, in order to politically and militarily prevent overall STC hegemony in South Yemen; this leaves a major obstacle for the STC to overcome.

But when and if the South Yemenis declare independence unilaterally an all-embracing Southern movement which includes the many diverse and powerful elements in the South is essential. The creation of such a movement focused on the development of the country is vital for self-determination. But will the Southerners seize this historic opportunity to put their independent state on the world map?

## Yemen - into the abyss

Of course, regional and international powers have let Yemen down badly and the suffering of our people has become an international diplomatic failure. In reality our Yemeni politicians are obsessed with their own survival rather than that of their own people. These warlords-turned-politicians are getting richer and richer and even more detached from the suffering of the nation. Although the path to recovery and reform can be achieved quickly with a number of political solutions on the table, the struggle for survival and interest preservation by these select few politicians and their regional backers has overshadowed the possibility for peace. They continue to do business as usual staffing their mafia style political organisations with loyalist and their supporters with complete disregard for building any form of state institutions. Drained by months of uncertainty and poverty, people's defences are gradually caving. Anger is transforming into despair and acceptance of this awful tragedy as a way of life. The idea of a state in Yemen or even a two states solution is consequently losing its *raison d'être* in the absence of functioning institutions, legitimacy, or any positive prospects for a better future, opening the door for an escalation to the war, further entrenchment, chaos and further foreign intervention.

As Yemeni history makes clear, such episodes never end well.

Abdul Galil Shaif

FOSY has a Facebook page which is updated daily with the latest news of relevance to South Yemen.

Please visit: [fb.me/fosy2020](https://fb.me/fosy2020)



## HOUTHJI ATTACK ON AL ANAD AIR BASE CLAIMS OVER 40 LIVES

### Southerners call on coalition to provide effective missile defence for Aden

A missile and drone attack on Al Anad Air Base in South Yemen has claimed the lives of over 40 soldiers and injured 92. Around 1,250 soldiers were participating in the training course at the camp before the explosions. The survivors were transferred to hospitals in Aden and Lahej.

The base was attacked by the Houthis at the end of August. Al-Anad, some 60 kilometres north of Aden, was the headquarters for US troops overseeing a long-running drone war against Al-Qaeda until March 2014 when it was overrun by Houthis. It was recaptured by government forces in August 2015 as they recovered territory from the rebels across the South with support from the Saudi-led coalition.

Commenting on the attack the Chairman of FOSY, Abdul Galil Shaif, said that the missiles were fired by the Houthis using drones that hovered over the base minutes before the attack, according to eye witnesses.

"This is the third time that Southern military bases have been targeted by the Houthi rebels killing over a hundred Southern soldiers and causing extensive damage. Other attacks include the targeting of the airport when the power sharing government arrived in Aden at the beginning of January and before that they targeted a high level STC leader called Abu Al-Yamama. Al Anad base was the target of a Houthi drone attack in January 2019, where another high-ranking Southern officer was killed celebrating a parade of newly graduated cadets. These targeted attacks have demonstrated the weakness of the Arab coalition to provide Southern air defences. The Houthis will continue to attack southern army forces in order to demonstrate their military strength and increase their influence in the negotiating process. Their missile attacks with Iranian support are proving to be sophisticated and effective in exposing the military weaknesses of the coalition and government forces in the South. Southerners are calling on the Saudis to provide them with effective missile defence for the capital city of Aden."

Ali Mahmood, a journalist for *The National*, interviewed survivors of the attack, describing how Nadhmi Abdu Yehya and his comrade Hasan from the third battalion of the Yemeni pro-government Al Amaliqa brigades had just finished breakfast and were heading to training when they heard a roar followed by an explosion that ripped through the dormitory they had left moments ago.

"I thought it's doomsday," Abdu Yehya, 38, said as he recalled the scene. As the explosion dumped them several metres away, a barely conscious and bleeding Abdu Yehya crawled to where his friend Hasan was lying in a pool of blood. He tried to resuscitate him but too late.

"My friend was hardly breathing but still alive, I tried to do CPR for him but after a few minutes he drew his last breath and died," Mr Abdu Yehya said. The dormitory in the training camp was directly hit by two of four ballistic missiles.

Photos from the scene showed charred and ripped apart bodies of tens of soldiers who were still inside the hangar when it was targeted.

Alawi Al Nouba, Aden's deputy for the martyrs and the injured, condemned the loss of lives of "brave young men" while confirming that dozens of soldiers are still unaccounted for. He urged the international community to exert whatever efforts are possible to prevent arms from reaching the hands of the Houthi militias.

"The latest toll is 40 killed and 92 injured," Lt Capt Mohammed Al Naqib said in his interview with *The National*.

"As long as we are fighting against such criminal militias who get such advanced drones and other arms from Iran we will always have people sacrificing their lives in such coward attacks," Lt Capt Al Naqib said.

"We learnt our lessons. They [Houthis] are targeting the southern forces because we are resilient in our battle against them and we will not give up.



Smoke rises from the explosion  
(Pic: The National)



The aftermath of the attack  
(Pic: The National)

#### CHRONOLOGY

**Aug 16:** Yemen's Internationally Recognized Government renews its call for added international pressure on the Houthis to comply with UN Security Council resolutions.

**Aug 17:** The Houthis say they are waiting for a positive response from the United Nations to a peace initiative they hope will bring an end to more than six years of conflict.

-Hundreds of Yemeni medical staff, academics and other professionals in Saudi Arabia's southern region bordering Yemen have in recent weeks been told they are being let go.

-The Houthis arrange graduation ceremonies for thousands of children who joined their summer camps this year in the densely populated areas of Yemen under their control.

**Aug 18:** The Houthis seize 2 per cent of the financial income of hospitals, clinics, and medical laboratories working in Sanaa.

-As the Yemeni rial's exchange rate drops again, President Hadi stresses that the Central Bank of Yemen (CBY) and the official government must take firmer measures to salvage the nation's deteriorating economy.

-A Yemeni human rights organization reports the Houthis have committed over 700 violations in Ibb as the group continues to tighten its security grip around the lives of those living in areas under its control.

**Aug 19:** Yemen's health officials warn that a third wave of Covid-19 may sweep the country after a significant surge in cases detected in areas under the government's control.

-The UAE refuses to grant the Yemeni team participating in the second Asian Boxing Championship visas to enter the country.

**Aug 20:** The Internationally Recognized Government renews its call for transferring the headquarters of the UN Mission to support the Hodeidah Agreement (UNMHA) to a neutral zone away from the control of the Houthis who continue to violate the truce and refuse to engage in peace-making efforts.

-The Houthis have been holding Younis Abdul Sallam, a young journalist abducted in Sanaa, for more than a week, as the clampdown on outspoken academics, journalists and social media activists intensifies.

**Aug 21:** Yemen's Minister of Information claims that an air strike in Marib has killed an Iranian expert and other high-ranking officials.

-The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) says that three million Yemeni children are unable to enrol in education this year owing to the war.

**Aug 22:** The UNICEF Executive Director Henrietta Fore announces at the 8840th meeting of the UN Security Council that one child dies every 10 minutes in Yemen.

-The Arab coalition says that Saudi air defences intercepted an explosive-laden

drone launched by the Houthis towards Khamis Mushait.

**Aug 23:** Yemen will receive about \$665 million worth of reserves from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) which will help ease the acute economic and humanitarian crisis in the country, the fund's regional representative for Yemen announces.

-No progress has been made by parties in Yemen to reach a political agreement to settle the civil war, which is now in its seventh year, Khaled Khiari, the UN's Assistant Secretary-General for Middle East, Asia and the Pacific, tells the Security Council.

**Aug 24:** The UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Martin Griffiths tells a Security Council session that five million Yemenis are on the brink of famine.

-As fighting in Marib governorate forces more people to flee, the UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, warns of alarming levels of humanitarian needs among displaced communities.

**Aug 25:** The UN Special Envoy for Yemen, Hans Grundberg, is to assume his duties from September 5 and will brief the Security Council for the first time next month.

**Aug 26:** The former deputy governor of Yemen's eastern province of Al-Mahra says British forces have been recruiting some local people for monitoring and spying on institutions, tribal leaders and resistance groups in the region.

-Thirteen international and Yemeni human rights organizations, in a petition addressed to the United Nations Committee on Migrant Workers, express their concern over Saudi Arabia's termination of the work contracts of thousands of Yemeni workers in the south of the kingdom.

**Aug 27:** Yemen's government announces that 20 Houthis were killed in air strikes launched by the coalition in Jawf.

-Protestors in Abyan demand the departure of the Arab coalition and expulsion of its forces from Yemeni islands and ports.

**Aug 28:** The United Nations warns that water supplies in Yemen will be reduced during September, if urgent funding is not available.

-Yemen receives its first shipment of COVID-19 vaccines made by Johnson & Johnson (JNJ.N) – roughly 151,000 doses, the Health Ministry says.

**Aug 29:** The death toll from a Houthi missile and drone attack on Al-Anad Base in Lahj climbs to 30 with 65 injured.

**Aug 30:** Human rights lawyers representing hundreds of victims of Yemen's civil war are calling on the International Criminal Court to open an investigation into war crimes and crimes against humanity allegedly committed by the Arab coalition during the devastating conflict.

-Yemen sees a surge in the number of coronavirus infections across government-held areas this month.

**Aug 31:** Yemen's Prime Minister

## FOSY CONTRIBUTES TO STATEMENT TO 48TH SESSION OF UN HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL



### A referendum on autonomy in southern Yemen to stabilise the region

FOSY's Chairman Dr Abdul Galil Shaif and Director of Communications, Karen Dabrowska, made a significant contribution to a statement prepared by the Next Century Foundation (NCF) to the 48th Session of the UN Human Rights Council. The Next Century Foundation is a UK-based think tank which specialises in open and inclusive dialogue for peace.



Dr Abdul Galil Shaif  
(Chairman)



Karen Dabrowska  
(Director of  
Communications)

The text of the statement follows:

By the end of this year, some 233,000 people will have died in the Yemen Arab Republic as a result of the war, including 140,000 children under the age of five. That projection is in a U.N. commissioned study by the University of Denver. The report underscores the disintegration of a country that was already among the world's poorest before the war began in 2015.

If the war continues through 2022, 482,000 people are estimated to die. If it lasts until 2030, the death toll will rise to an estimated 1.8 million, including 1.5 million children.

A key fault line that acts as a stumbling block when peace negotiations are attempted is the question of whether the outcome of any referendum for independence for South Yemen should be determined by a vote by all Yemenis or just by South Yemenis.

Calls for secession from Southern independence activists and fighters date back to the unification of North and South Yemen in 1990 and have been exacerbated by the current conflict. A peaceful transition to stable governance can only be secured through a dialogue between all sides of the conflict on the future of Southern Yemen. The Next Century Foundation suggests that such a dialogue may look towards a referendum on establishing an autonomous zone in Southern Yemen as part of a federal Yemen.

Yemen remains divided between factions that include the internationally recognised government-in-exile and the Ansar Allah (Houthi) movement, which operates as a *de facto* government from Sana'a and controls most northern governorates. Southern independence fighters, represented by the Southern Transitional Council (STC), which is supported by the United Arab Emirates, currently control the key city of Aden and have been in a tentative military alliance with the internationally recognised Hadi government in order to confront Ansar Allah. However, this alliance, though currently functioning, has turned sour at several points in the war, for example the STC declared self-governance in 2020 without giving recognition to the Hadi government.

Peace in Yemen is impossible without acknowledgement of the STC's calls for independence from the North. The STC has far greater control of the South's eight governorates, including the port city of Aden, than the UN-recognised Yemen government. "To ignore the will of the people is a recipe for only more instability," the head of the presidential council of the STC, Major General Aidarus Al-Zubaidi said.

Humanitarian efforts and attempts to lift the country out of its deepening economic crisis are unlikely to succeed without stable government, which is currently dependent as a minimum on political autonomy in the South. The alternative to constitutional autonomy, that of a referendum on partition, is liable to worsen the conflict. It is the responsibility of the international community to mediate a dialogue between all those party to the conflict and promote an amicable arrangement for autonomy in the South as part of a federal Yemen. The Next Century Foundation believes that endorsing autonomy in South Yemen would be a vital step forward on the path to peace in Yemen as a whole and would help bring a decisive end to conflict.

Peace agreements are unlikely to succeed if all major parties to the conflict, namely Ansar Allah, and Al Islah (the Reform Party) and the Southern Transitional Council, do not participate. The Internationally recognised Hadi government, though not of itself a major party to the conflict in its own right, should also be included. Therefore, we urge the international community, especially the member states of Gulf Cooperation Council, to facilitate dialogue between such parties to the conflict in order to secure a long-term arrangement for peace, autonomy and stable government.

### Confederate system

The international community must look to new solutions that go further in empowering local government. A confederate system of governance may be a viable solution that strikes a balance between the demand for independence in South Yemen and the wishes of both Ansar Allah and the internationally recognised government to keep Yemen a united country. The Next Century Foundation has looked at international examples of politically autonomous zones from which the peace effort in Yemen can learn.

#### Greenland:

Greenland is an example of an autonomous zone with very few areas of governance controlled by the Kingdom of Denmark. For this reason, it can be likened to a confederate system of governance due to the relatively weak powers of central government in Greenland. Greenland's executive, Parliament and judiciary control their own finances and natural resources, with only partial funding from Denmark. The international community may want to implement a similar model of autonomy in South Yemen, in which most areas of governance will be controlled locally, and only a few, broader issues are relegated to central government, in which there should continue to be fair representation of South Yemenis.

#### Kurdistan Region of the Republic of Iraq:

Iraqi Kurdistan is a rare example of a recognised autonomous zone with separate armed forces, the Kurdish Peshmerga. The Kurdistan region of Iraq is known to enjoy a more stable parliamentary democracy and a stronger economy compared to the rest of Iraq, with their own elections, control over finances, natural resources and foreign relations. After an referendum in 2017 in which voters overwhelmingly voted in favour independence This referendum resulted in military conflict, so lessons may be learnt from this example about the potentially perilous results of an independence referendum in South Yemen. The international community can learn from the successes and failures of this example in order to build a successful arrangement for political and military autonomy in South Yemen.

#### Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria (AANES):

The Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria remains unrecognised officially by the central government of the Syrian Arab Republic yet acts as a *de facto* political structure akin to an autonomous region. This zone was established on a *de facto* basis during the Syrian Civil War as government forces withdrew from Kurdish-majority zones. The political system in the AANES is an example of democratic confederalism, organised through local councils and communes with high levels of participation from women and young people. Parties to the conflict in Yemen may look to this system of religious pluralism in order to overcome their own sectarian divisions. The representation of women in governance is also a strong model for Yemen, especially as the new power-sharing government in Yemen has failed to incorporate women.

### Future governance

The Next Century Foundation recommends that parties to the conflict work towards an arrangement for maximum autonomy for South Yemen within a federal Yemen, without resulting in partition, which could lead to further conflict. We further suggest that the autonomous zone has control over most areas of governance, including control over its own armed forces, as the presence of central government forces in South Yemen is likely to exacerbate the conflict. The central government may provide financial support and manage foreign relations, but most governance would occur locally.

Such an arrangement may be formed through a referendum in Yemen, or through national dialogue between all conflicting parties. The Next Century Foundation strongly believes that this is the optimal solution for all groups, but the establishment of stable governance and peace in Yemen must be supported by all international and national stakeholders to be successful. The international community must come together to support the peace process in Yemen and provide robust solutions towards an amicable system of autonomy in South Yemen in order to prevent the continuation of sectarian and nationalist division in the country, spiralling the state into a decade of war and humanitarian crisis.

Maeen Abdulmalik discusses investing Yemen's share of Special Drawing Rights from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) reserves to stabilize the country's economy and services.

**Sept 1:** The Yemen-based Mwatana Organization for Human Rights and Global Rights Compliance accuse both sides in Yemen's conflict of using starvation as a tactic of war.

Sixty-five members of the Houthi militia and pro-government forces have been killed in renewed fighting for Marib.

**Sept 2:** Academic sources in Sanaa reveal that Houthi violations include the marginalization of educators who have refused to show loyalty to them, as well as forcing private and public schools to use sectarian programmes in their morning radio shows.

-The Internationally Recognized Government renews its condemnation of the Houthis for recruiting African migrants to fight their battles.

**Sept 3:** The leader of Yemen's Houthi movement, Abdul Malik Al-Houthi, vows to control all areas of Yemen currently held by the Internationally Recognised Government, as fighting in the Marib Governorate continues to escalate.

- Saudi forces have handed over the camps they have evacuated in Yemen to tribal leaders who are loyal to the kingdom but have close ties with the STC.

**Sept 4:** Security authorities in Al Mahrah say they have arrested a top Houthi cleric who had returned to the country from Iran.

-The prosthetics centre in Taiz continues to provide medical services and prosthetic limbs for Yemenis, with support from the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center (KSrelief).

**Sept 5:** The new United Nations envoy for Yemen, Hans Grundberg, officially starts his assignment.

- The Houthis attack oil facilities belonging to Saudi Aramco in Ras Tanura, in the east of the kingdom, and other locations including Jeddah, on the Red Sea coast.

**Sept 6:** The Arab coalition intercepts and destroys ballistic missiles launched by Houthis against Saudi Arabia.

-Armed tribesmen from the Al-Sada tribe stop a military convoy and prevent it from reaching the Al-Alam camp, which is controlled by the United Arab Emirates (UAE), east of Shabwa, and detain all soldiers in the convoy.

**Sept 7:** Some 300 migrants departed for Addis Ababa in the first week of September on two IOM-run Voluntary Humanitarian Return (VHR) flights leaving Aden, where the Internationally Recognized Government is headquartered.

-The Houthis accuse Britain of spying on the country's telecommunications networks, with the complicity of the Internationally Recognized Government.

**Sept 8:** Nearly 80 Houthis and pro-government troops have been killed as

fighting intensifies for Marib.  
 -About 150 Emirati armoured vehicles arrive at the port of Mocha.  
 -Reporters Without Borders (RSF) calls on the authorities in Hadhramaut governorate to guarantee the safety of three Yemeni freelance journalists who fled the country in 2015 to avoid abduction by Al-Qaeda and are now the targets of a death threat by a governorate official because they have been denouncing corruption in the province.

**Sept 9:** The permanent Saudi representative to the UN, Abdallah Al-Mouallimi, holds talks with the UN Special Envoy for Yemen.  
 -A report published by the UN Human Rights Council says 18,000 Yemeni civilians have been killed or wounded in air strikes since 2015.

**Sept 10:** The military, political, and humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan is pushing the largely forgotten war in Yemen further into international obscurity, the Archdeacon in the Gulf, the Ven. Dr Bill Schwartz, says.  
 -“Enabling a resumption of a peaceful, inclusive, orderly and Yemeni-led political transition process that meets the legitimate demands and aspirations of the Yemeni people, as mandated by this Council, will not be easy. There are no quick wins”, Special Envoy Hans Grundberg says in his inaugural briefing.

**Sept 11:** The U.S. removes its most advanced missile defense system and Patriot batteries from Saudi Arabia in recent weeks, even as the kingdom faces continued air attacks from Yemen's Houthi rebels, satellite photos analyzed by The Associated Press show.

-The Houthis attack the port of Mokha causing damage to infrastructure.  
**Sept 12:** The Houthis say they have captured two districts in Marib.

-Oman's role in the ongoing Yemeni crisis is to help bring about stability and diverging views on the conflict closer, Oman's foreign minister says.

**Sept 13:** Violent protests erupt in Aden and other cities in the south of Yemen over widespread poverty and electricity outages as a Saudi-backed alliance struggles with a complete collapse of public services in areas they control.

**Sept 14:** After a number of setbacks, the Houthis recapture Rahabah district and are now threatening to gain control over Marib, the last government stronghold.

-The Saudi coalition carries out air strikes on Marib, Taiz and Saada.  
 -US Special Envoy for Yemen Tim Lenderking is visiting Saudi Arabia and Oman to hold meetings with government officials.

-Kamel Jendoubi, the Chair of the Group of Eminent International and Regional Experts on Yemen tells the UN Human Rights Council that the Group is concerned that impunity continues largely unabated for those who perpetrate serious violations in Yemen and that it had seen little progress in terms of investigations conducted by the parties.

# INDUS INTERNATIONAL ORGANISES ZOOM LECTURE:

## Biodiversity of Socotra Archipelago

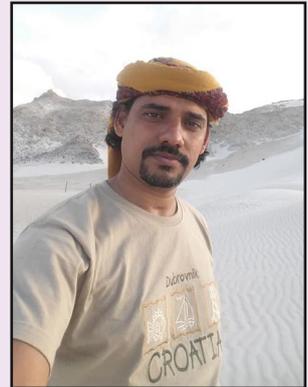
The amazing biodiversity of the Socotra Archipelago was explored during a lecture on zoom organised by Indus International an organisation providing opportunities for women of various nationalities living in Mumbai to meet, exchange ideas and work towards acquiring a greater understanding of different cultures and people.

“I was keen to present Yemen on a positive note,” Shabana Abdulkarim who organised the meeting told *South Yemen Update*. Originally from Aden Abdulkarim is an advocate of sustainable peace and development, a commercial artist and founder cum owner of Sheen for Trade & Marketing. She is currently living in Mumbai. Abdulkarim described Socotra as the most alien-looking place on earth and the most beautiful island in the world.

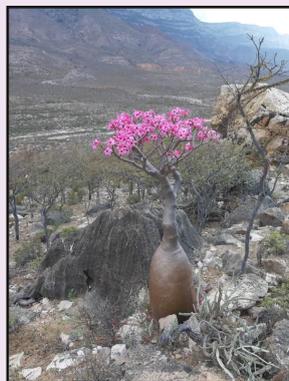
In the Indian Ocean off the coast of Yemen it is an isolated place of odd beautiful plant and animal life. The island was designated a UNESCO Man and Biosphere Reserve in 2003 and World Heritage Site in 2008. There are hundreds of unique flora and fauna and a third of the plant life, like the Dragon's Blood Tree are endemic. It hosts a variety of birds, insects, reptiles, crustaceans and corals.

The lecture was delivered by Salem Hamdiah, Ing (Engineer), Manager of Biodiversity Management in the Socotra Archipelago who was born on the island. A postgraduate of Mendel University in Brno, Czech Republic he is currently pursuing doctoral studies at the University of Ljubljana in the Republic of Slovenia. He is a member of the World Network of Island and Coastal Biosphere Reserves

Click here for a power point presentation of the lecture which can be viewed on the FOSY website.



Salem Hamdiah



Sample images from the presentation showing the biodiversity of Socotra and research work



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## FOSY CHAIRMAN PUBLISHES BOOK

### South Yemen: Gateway to the World?

*South Yemen: Gateway to the World?* tells the story of South Yemen and answers the question could it be a gateway to the world? The book traces the history of the country from the struggle for independence from the British which was gained in 1967.

The first part provides an insight into the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, the first and only socialist state in the Arab world its achievements – the emancipation of women, redistribution of land to the people, an impressive mass literacy programme - and its demise due to internecine power struggles in the Yemeni Socialist Party.

In 1990 South and North Yemen united into one state but the southerners were marginalised by the northern regime and fought a war for independence. The southerners were militarily defeated in an attempt to return to independence in 1994 which meant an end to the voluntary partnership agreed in 1990 and for two decades were treated as second class citizens in a state which exploited their resources and marginalised their people in the name of unification. The Houthi invasion of the south in 2015 was resisted by southerners supported by coalition. The southerners now want to establish their own state in the south and refuse to share power with the fundamentalist Houthi regime which controls more than 80 percent of the north and believes it has a God given right to rule Yemen.



Dr Abdul Galil Shaif was born in South Yemen in 1960. He immigrated to Britain at the age of ten with his mother to join his father who was working in the steel industry. He completed his education in Sheffield. Despite the difficulties which face working class Yemenis in the British education system, he graduated from Sheffield Hallam University and obtained his degree and then a Master of Arts in third world economic studies followed by a PhD from Sheffield University.

He is a leading member of the Yemeni community in the UK and has worked tirelessly to promote the interests of working class people in Sheffield through a variety of community led initiatives. He established the Yemeni Community Association and the Yemeni economic and training center in 1986 in Sheffield and is currently chief executive of the Hadfield Institute and Aspiring

Communities Together. He worked as a head of service for Sheffield Local Authority from 1988 to 1999.

He was appointed as chief executive of MOWJ Media based in London 1999-2005 and was subsequently appointed as head of the Aden Free Zone Public Authority in Yemen 2007-2014. In 2020 he set up Friends of South Yemen with Karen Dabrowska to campaign for southern statehood and draw the attention of British and Western politicians to the plight of Yemen which is facing the world's worst humanitarian disaster.

### Contents of the book

#### INTRODUCTION

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