

# South Yemen Update

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

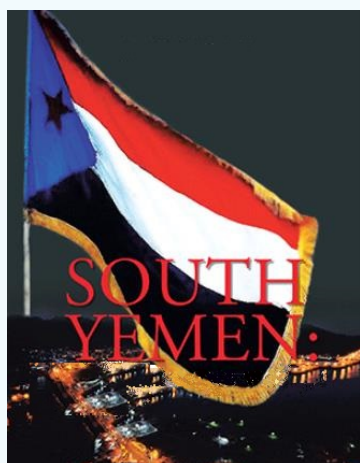
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## The proposed visit by President Aidaroos Al-Zubaidi to the US and Recognition of a Southern State

The case for the international recognition of South Yemen is deeply intertwined with the urgent need to address the escalating threat posed by the Houthis, particularly their increasing control over crucial maritime routes. The Houthis, backed by Iran, have transformed into a formidable proxy force, extending Tehran's influence deep into the Arabian Peninsula. This development poses significant dangers not just to Yemen and its immediate neighbours but also to global security, especially concerning the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait, a critical chokepoint for international maritime traffic.



The Bab-el-Mandeb Strait is one of the world's most vital searoutes, connecting the Red Sea to the Gulf of Aden and serving as a gateway for the global flow of oil, goods, and resources. Control over this strategic passage grants enormous advantage to those who wield it. The Houthis, with Iranian support, have increasingly demonstrated their

ability and willingness to threaten this vital corridor, using it as a bargaining chip in their broader conflict. This poses a dire risk to global trade and energy supplies, with the potential to disrupt international markets and provoke widespread economic instability.

In this context, the Southern Transitional Council (STC) has emerged as a crucial partner for the international community in combating not only the Houthi insurgency but also extremist groups like Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and ISIS (Daesh). The STC has shown its capability to govern and secure southern Yemen, including key coastal areas that are critical to maintaining the security of international shipping routes. Their efforts in counterterrorism, often in collaboration with international partners, have significantly curtailed the operations of AQAP and ISIS in the region, contributing to broader regional stability.

The recognition of South Yemen, therefore, would not only acknowledge the legitimate aspirations of its people but also strategically bolster efforts to secure vital maritime routes and counteract Iranian influence. An independent South Yemen under the leadership of the STC could serve as a reliable and stabilizing force in the region, ensuring the continued security of the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait and providing a counterbalance to the Houthi and Iranian threats.

The international community has continued reluctance to recognize South Yemen has exacerbated the conflict and allowed these threats to grow. The outdated notion of a unified Yemen ignores the deep and persistent divisions between the North and South and has only led to greater instability.

By refusing to acknowledge the realities on the ground, the international community inadvertently enables the very forces—like the Houthis and their Iranian backers—that it seeks to contain.

Recognizing South Yemen would not only validate the long-standing aspirations of the Southern Yemeni people but also serve broader strategic interests. It would enable the establishment of a stable, pro-Western state that could act as a bulwark against the spread of extremism and Iranian influence in the region. Additionally, it would empower the STC to continue its vital role in safeguarding the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait, ensuring the security of one of the world's most important maritime routes.

In conclusion, the case for South Yemen's recognition is compelling on multiple fronts—historical, political, and strategic. The international community must move beyond outdated assumptions and take decisive action to support the legitimate aspirations of the Southern Yemeni people. Failure to do so will only perpetuate the conflict, allowing the Houthi threat to maritime security and Iranian influence to grow unchecked. The stakes are high, not just for Yemen, but for the entire region and the global economy. The time to act is now, before the situation deteriorates further and the opportunity for a stable and secure future is lost.

*Abdul Galil Shaif*

## Russia-South Yemen relations resurface: Lavrov recalls the «16th Soviet Republic

In a joint press conference held with his Yemeni counterpart in Moscow today, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov recalled the depth of historical relations between Russia and South Yemen, which existed as an independent state from 1967 to 1990.

Lavrov indicated that resuming the work of the Intergovernmental Commission for Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technical Cooperation between Russia and Yemen would be an important step in strengthening bilateral relations. He expressed hope that a general session of this commission could be held before the end of the year.



*Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov Press Conference*

Lavrov noted the significant role the Soviet Union played in supporting the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, known as South Yemen, across various sectors, including social, economic, technical, and humanitarian fields.

Lavrov referred to the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen as the "16th Soviet Republic" within the former Soviet Union's sphere, calling this relationship vital and essential during that era. During the conference, which followed official talks with Yemeni Foreign Minister Shaye'a Al-Zindani, Lavrov welcomed mediation efforts by Saudi Arabia, Oman, and the UAE to resolve the ongoing crisis in Yemen. "We affirm that Moscow supports political and diplomatic solutions to the crisis in Yemen," Lavrov said.

Lavrov described Houthi attacks on ships in the Red Sea as a "serious threat" to international navigation security but stressed that Moscow does not support military escalation, which could further complicate the situation. He reiterated Russia's position condemning the US-UK strikes in Yemen.

Yemeni Minister Shaye'a Al-Zindani emphasized the importance of developing Yemeni-Russian relations, praising Russia's support for the Presidential Leadership Council (PLC) and the Yemeni government in international forums.

Al-Zindani called for strong international support for the Yemeni government's efforts to end the war and to deter the Houthis. According to the Yemeni Foreign Ministry, the talks in Moscow included discussions on enhancing cooperation in various fields, including science, technology, culture, energy, and agriculture, with an agreement to increase the number of scholarships for Yemeni students in Russia.

This visit comes less than two weeks after Yemeni Defense Minister Mohsen Al-Daeri visited Moscow and held military talks with Russian officials, which addressed Houthi naval attacks and the development of the Yemeni government's military forces' capabilities.



## South Yemen's leaders discuss counterterrorism with US officials News

US officials engaged in separate meetings with three prominent South Yemeni leaders in Abu Dhabi and Washington over the weekend to address crucial matters, particularly the counterterrorism efforts of the Southern forces and the rising hostilities of the Houthi militia against maritime vessels.

In Abu Dhabi, US Ambassador to Yemen Steven Fagin held talks with Aidarous Al-Zubaidi, President of the Southern Transitional Council (STC) and member of the Presidential Leadership Council (PLC) on Saturday. At the outset of the meeting, Ambassador Fagin extended his condolences for the death of Southern soldiers in an attack by the Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) terror group in Abyan on August 16.

Al-Zubaidi highlighted in a post on the X platform that his meeting with Fagin emphasized "the importance of the ongoing and increased cooperation in combating terrorist groups within our country". He also delved into the recent developments linked to the UN-led peace process in Yemen and the strategies to enhance the PLC's effectiveness.

The US Ambassador said on "X": "Productive meeting with Aidarous al-Zubaidi in Abu Dhabi to discuss his counterterrorism efforts and the critical need for Republic of Yemen Government unity in the face of increasingly aggressive Houthi actions." The Ambassador affirmed that "the United States stands firmly with the PLC in supporting the fight against terrorism for a sustainable peace."

The US Ambassador held a separate meeting with Abdulrahman Al-Muhrrami, a PLC member and the STC Vice President, at the Yemeni embassy in Abu Dhabi on Saturday. They discussed about the repercussions of the Houthi assaults on vessels and international shipping, and their ramifications on the Yemeni economy.

Al-Muhrrami conveyed on the X platform that "discussions with the US Ambassador to Yemen, Steven Fagin, centered on the latest developments and endeavours towards peace in Yemen." Al-Muhrrami also discussed the economic and services-related challenges faced by citizens due to "the persistent terrorist acts of the Houthi militia", and advocated for global backing for the Yemeni government in restoration of state institutions and implementation of economic reforms, as well as taking a resolute international stance against the Houthi actions.



meeting with PLC VP Aidarous al-Zubaidi in Abu Dhabi

The US Ambassador remarked on X: "I had the honour of meeting Abdulrahman Al-Muhrrami in Abu Dhabi to discuss our shared commitment to peace and the economic challenges facing the Yemeni people. The United States remains steadfast in supporting the Republic of Yemen Government and securing international shipping lanes against Houthi threats."

Meanwhile, in Washington, United States Special Envoy to Yemen Tim Lenderking conferred with Faraj Al-Bahsani, a PLC member and the other Vice President of STC on Sunday. Al-Bahsani is on a visit to the United States.

Al-Bahsani, posted on the X platform, that the meeting "reviewed the prevailing political and military landscapes, deliberated on international peace endeavors, and the government's embrace of peace initiatives." He highlighted "the obstinate stance of the terrorist Houthi militia towards peace", underscoring the necessity to counter the Houthi escalations and urged the global and regional community to compel these militias to desist from their escalatory actions and engage with the peace proposals.



Faraj Al-bahsani meets Timothy Lenderking

While the STC maintains favorable relations with the United States, the Southern forces advocate for enhancing these ties towards tangible collaboration and direct assistance to finish the fight against terrorist groups in South Yemen, notably the AQAP and ISIS.

The Southern forces emphasize that the need for this collaboration has grown more urgent given mounting evidence of coordination between AQAP and the Iran-backed Houthi faction.

Notably, in June the CNN news agency in a report quoted CIA officials as saying that they had learned about plans by the Houthis to sell arms to the Somali Al-Shabaab militants, the Somali branch of Al-Qaeda, a group listed on the global terrorism indexes.

Read more at: <https://south24.net/news/newse.php?nid=4158>



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