****1. Abstract**

 This background paper will examine the involvement of external forces in the conflict in Yemen and how it has contributed to the displacement of large numbers of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees within the Arab world. The ongoing civil war and political instability in Yemen have had significant impacts on multiple sectors within several Arab League member states, posing political, economic, and social threats that could destabilize relations between these states. The focus of this discussion will be on the role of the Arab League in addressing the intervention in Yemen, specifically calling for an end to western military force in the Red Sea and working towards stabilizing the region, particularly in Aden.

**2. Introduction**

 As one of the most pressing issues currently facing the Arab world, the situation in Yemen requires urgent attention and action from the international community. Since 2015, Yemen has been embroiled in a devastating civil war, which has resulted in widespread destruction, loss of life, and internal displacement. Furthermore, foreign interventions, notably from Western powers, have only served to further complicate matters and threaten regional stability.

Against this backdrop, the city of Aden serves as a microcosm of the broader challenges faced by Yemen and the wider Arab world. Once a bustling port city, Aden has become a key battleground in the struggle for control over Yemen's future. With competing factions vying for power, and outside actors seeking to assert their influence, there is a clear need for decisive action to de-escalate tensions and prevent further bloodshed.

In light of these concerns, this paper seeks to explore potential solutions to the crisis in Yemen, focusing specifically on two key objectives: stopping Western intervention and establishing effective governance structures in Aden. Through analysis of existing research and policy proposals, we aim to identify concrete steps that can be taken to achieve these goals and promote lasting peace and stability in Yemen and the surrounding region. Ultimately, our hope is that this report will contribute to a more informed and productive dialogue around this critical issue, and help pave the way toward a better future for all Yemenis and their neighbors.

**3. Glossary**

1. **Civil War** - A prolonged armed conflict between different groups within a country, often involving the government and opposition forces.
2. **Foreign Intervention** - The act of a foreign entity becoming involved in the affairs of another sovereign state, typically through military means or diplomatic pressure.
3. **Western Powers** - Term used to refer to the major industrialized democracies of Europe and North America, such as the United States, France, Germany, and the United Kingdom.
4. **Regional Stability** - A state of relative calm and predictability in a given geographical area, characterized by peaceful relationships between neighboring countries and minimal risk of conflict or disorder.
5. **Aden** - A major port city in southern Yemen, serving as the temporary capital of the internationally recognized government since Sana'a fell to Houthi rebels in 2014.
6. **Competing Factions** - Groups or organizations with opposing views or interests, engaged in conflict over territory, power, or ideology.

**4. Description of the Issue**

**● When and how did the issue originate?**

In 2011 a series of uprisings and demands of political reform paved the way for mass demonstrations all across the Arab World. In Yemen following the success of Egypt’s demonstrations, many protested in the thousands in Aden and Sana’a. Eventually a faction split from the north of Yemen. A large militant group called the “Houthis” gained power and ruled over Sana’a after a Coup d’etat. This group is funded by Iran and acted as a proxy. A large civil war and battles against Saudi Arabia and the UAE ensued, worsening the humanitarian situation. In 2015 the Houthis amassed full control. In 2023-ongoing, they are striking vessels in the Red Sea in response to the genocide in Gaza, crippling the economy of many western states, and triggering foreign intervention in the form of a naval coalition of 14 states.

* **Groups affected by the issue:**

 The ongoing conflict in Yemen has inflicted tremendous suffering upon millions of innocent civilians, causing widespread death, injury, and displacement. An estimated 80% of the population—over 24 million people—require some form of assistance or protection, while nearly half are malnourished. Displaced families face dire circumstances, struggling to find food, water, shelter, and medical care amidst the chaos and destruction of war. Children, in particular, bear the brunt of this catastrophic situation, deprived of basic needs and subjected to grave violations of their rights. Women and girls also suffer disproportionately, facing heightened risks of gender-based violence and exploitation. Amidst the turmoil, countless lives hang in the balance, underscoring the desperate urgency for a swift resolution to this protracted crisis and the restoration of peace, security, and stability for Yemen's long-suffering populace. Also the western economy and large logistics companies having ships seized and attacked in the Bab-AlMandab Strait.

* **Agreements/treaties in place:**

 1. **Stockholm Agreement:** Reached in December 2018 under the auspices of the United Nations, the Stockholm Agreement sought to bring an end to fighting in specific areas, including the ports of Hudaydah, Salif, and Ras Issa. While partial implementation has occurred, full compliance remains elusive.

2. **Joint Declaration of Ceasefire and Truce Understanding in Al-Hodeida Governorate:** Agreed upon in January 2019, this declaration established a ceasefire along front lines in Al-Hodeida governorate, but sporadic clashes continue.

3. **Riyadh Agreement: Signed in November 2019**: This deal aimed to resolve differences between the Saudi-backed Yemeni government and secessionist Southern Transitional Council (STC). Despite initial progress, the agreement's implementation has faltered, leading to renewed tensions.

4. **Kuwait Conference**: Convened in April 2016, this conference brought together representatives from the Yemeni government and Houthi rebels to negotiate a settlement to the conflict; however, the talks ultimately collapsed without producing a comprehensive agreement.

5. **Jeddah Peace Talks:** These talks took place in May 2015, prior to the initiation of Operation Decisive Storm, and focused on finding a political solution to the conflict. Although they failed to produce a tangible outcome, they represented a brief window of opportunity for negotiation before the outbreak of full-scale warfare.

* **Statistics**:

 The conflict in Yemen has resulted in a staggering humanitarian crisis, affecting millions of lives. Approximately 24 million individuals require assistance – roughly 80% of the population. Among them, 11.3 million are considered "acutely vulnerable" according to OCHA (Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs). Malnutrition afflicts nearly half of all Yemenis, with 2.3 million children and 1.7 million pregnant or lactating women experiencing acute malnutrition. Over four million people have fled their homes, adding to the already precarious situation in hosting regions. Shockingly, 10,200 children were killed or injured between March 2015 and October 2021, per data gathered by Save the Children. These figures illustrate the profound magnitude of the emergency confronting Yemen today.

**5. History / Current Situation / Timeline of Events :**

* **January 2011: Popular protests erupt in Yemen, inspired by similar movements in Tunisia and Egypt, demanding President Ali Abdullah Saleh's resignation after three decades in power.**
* **February 2012: Following months of demonstrations, Saleh signs a power transfer agreement brokered by the Gulf Cooperation Council, handing over authority to Vice President Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi.**
* **September 2014: Houthi rebels seize control of Yemen's capital, Sana'a, forcing the Hadi administration to flee to Aden.**
* **January 2015: The Houthi militias extend their offensive, capturing the central city of Taiz and besieging Aden where the Hadi government has temporarily relocated.**
* **March 2015: After exhausting patience with Iranian-aligned Houthis, Saudi Arabia leads a coalition of ten countries launching Operation Decisive Storm, a bombing campaign intended to restore Hadi's legitimate government.**
* **April 2015: The U.N. Security Council adopts Resolution 2216 imposing an arms embargo on Houthi leaders and insisting on withdrawal from captured territories.**
* **July 2015: The Houthis impose a blockade on shipping lanes in the Bab al-Mandeb strait, threatening international trade routes transiting the Red Sea.**
* **December 2018: Sweden hosts the first round of U.N.-mediated peace talks in Stockholm, culminating in the signing of a fragile ceasefire agreement covering certain parts of Yemen, including the contested Red Sea port of Hudaydah.**
* **June 2019: Heavy fighting engulfs the oil-rich province of Marib, marking the beginning of a series of intense battles for control over strategically important locations.**
* **August 2019: The UAE announces a drawdown of troops in Yemen, diminishing the scope of its participation in the Saudi-led coalition.**
* **November 2019: Representatives from the Yemeni government and the separatist Southern Transitional Council sign the Riyadh Agreement, intending to quell simmering tensions in southern Yemen. However, implementation struggles persist, and fractured relations resurface.**
* **October 2021: Deadly attacks occur in Abu Dhabi attributed to Yemen's Houthi movement, raising concerns regarding escalating regional tensions and possible retaliatory actions.**

**6. Possible Solutions**

* **Revitalization of Political Dialogue:** Encourage meaningful engagement among all influential stakeholders in pursuit of sustainable peace. Comprehensive political inclusivity must involve representation from diverse factions, including the Yemeni government, Houthi rebels, the General People's Congress, Islah Party, the Southern Transitional Council, and other regional players. Emphasis should be placed on reviving previously signed accords, fostering trust-building measures, and pursuing genuine compromise via mediation by neutral third parties.
* **Enhanced Humanitarian Assistance:** Increased funding and streamlined logistics are indispensable elements in tackling the unprecedented humanitarian crisis gripping Yemen. To ensure adequate relief distribution, donor governments and humanitarian agencies should work cooperatively with local authorities and NGOs to overcome bureaucratic hurdles, minimize corruption, and allocate resources efficiently. Simultaneously, combatants on all sides should commit to safeguarding civilian infrastructure, allowing unrestricted delivery of assistance, and respecting international law principles governing conduct during wartime.
* **Regional Diplomacy and De-escalation:** Persistent regional rivalries have fueled proxy wars and deepened sectarian divisions, thus perpetuating cycles of violence in Yemen. External powers engaging in the conflict directly or indirectly, primarily Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Iran, must exercise restraint and refrain from aggravating the conflict any further. Instead, promoting constructive dialogues, encouraging confidence-building measures, and advocating for diplomatic channels to settle disputes would prove beneficial in achieving regional stability and averting unwarranted escalations.

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