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Home The Future Structure of the Yemeni State
The Future Structure of the Yemeni State
۲۰۱۹، ۱۴ August
Stephen W. Day

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Summary

After more than four years of fighting, the war in Yemen continues to drag on. Although the in Stockholm, they have failed to fully abide by ۲۰۱۸ rival parties came to a deal at the end of future of the Yemeni state. Currently, there are multiple, its terms, due to ambiguity about the rival authorities in different regions, and the individuals in power disagree whether there should be one state, two states, or multiple states. They also disagree whether the future es should be independent or linked through a federal or confederal system. state or stat
Profound questions remain unanswered, and before negotiations can move forward, the parties will likely need to address the elephant in the room: the future structure of Yemen as .state a

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Introduction

sided civil war appeared -After more than two years of fighting, rival forces in Yemen's multi Throughout that year and much of the preceding one, the main led Gulf -e Saudi government forces allied with the Cooperation Council (GCC) coalition advanced up the Red Sea coast under the direction of southern military commanders from Lahej Province who are tied to the old southern ruling h along the coastal region party, the Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP). Moving south to north known as Tihama, these southern commanders were eventually aided by Tareq Mohammed and Saleh, a nephew of Ali Abdullah Saleh, the late president. Saleh switched sides in in Sanaa by means of a military began opposing Houthi rebel leaders who came to power fierce clashes erupted that Saleh originally supported. In early December coup in on the streets of Yemen's capital, and Saleh was killed at the hands of Houthi fighters. ped Sanaa, they linked up with government Months after Tareq and his supporters esca .forces advancing toward Hodeida, a strategic Red Sea port held by Houthi leaders

government forces began attacking the Houthis at Hodeida with In the summer of tion. They managed to seize the airport and naval and air support provided by the GCC coal neighborhoods adjacent to the seaport, while attempting to cut off access roads to a city of The UN special envoy to Yemen, British diplomat Martin million people. more than fire during the summer, preventing a battle that -a cease Griffiths, intervened to negotiate million people in areas controlled by jeopardized food and medical supplies for some Houthi leaders along the Tihama coast and Yemen's inland mountains. During the fall of f the warring sides at Hodeida met for negotiations in Sweden. They representatives agreed by the middle of December to withdraw armed forces from the city in order to give It was hoped that the the UN a chance to establish international authority over the port. m Agreement would guarantee delivery of humanitarian supplies, while creating Stockhol step process. Unfortunately, -by-momentum for diplomatic efforts to end the war via a step both sides failed to abide by the terms of a mutual withdrawal from Hodeida, and the war continued.

-by-One of the main barriers to negotiating a peaceful end to the war in Yemen via a step step process is that the parties have enormous incentives to hold their ground and continue ke port security at Hodeida. This is fighting during negotiations over relatively small matters li true because the warring sides want leverage when negotiations turn to more significant up of Yemen's government and the future structure of the -matters, such as the political make capital Sanaa under the banner of a religious party state. Houthi leaders, who control the called Ansar Allah ("Partisans of God"), are desperate to hold Hodeida because they know if they lose control of the port, then they will be forced to make greater concessions later. Their ing the GCC coalition, want to force the Houthis from Hodeida for the opposite rivals, includ reason. Their goal is to deny the leaders of Ansar Allah a prominent role in defining the ar future structure and composition of Yemen's government. Thus, they seek to pressure Ans .Allah in the capital by cutting the main supply route between Hodeida and Sanaa

Most international negotiations involve consideration of matters both large and small. There lihood of is a tendency to address the small matters first because there is greater like agreement. Negotiators hope to use the agreements on smaller matters to build momentum toward larger, more difficult ones. But if the parties to a conflict are unsure about the likely to prolong conflict direction negotiations will take on the large matters, they are more by continuing to contest the small ones. This is the primary problem in Yemen, where rival

factions at Hodeida failed to abide fully by the terms of the Stockholm Agreement due to tly, there are multiple, rival authorities in ambiguity about the future state of Yemen. Curren different regions of the country, and the individuals in power disagree whether there should be one state, two states, or multiple states in a future Yemen. They also disagree whether should be independent or linked through a federal or confederal the future states of Yemen forces of the Southern Transitional Council (STC) system of government. In early August (STC) seized power in Aden, thus adding a further layer of complexity because the STC)
aspires to govern all southern lands as an independent state.

Because such profound questions about Yemen's future remain unanswered, it is hardly surprising that UN Special Envoy Griffiths could not persuade rival parties at Hodeida to on mutually agreed terms. Griffiths certainly managed to implement the Stockholm Agreement he accepted Ansar Allah's unilateral withdrawal of security forces from the port. On May 2018, to forestall the battle looming over Hodeida in Two months later in July, the Ansar Allah's unilateral withdrawal of security forces from the port. it would withdraw its military forces from the Red Sea coast. But UAE announced that Yemeni and Sudanese forces participating in the GCC coalition remain in firing range of Ansar Allah's positions. Moreover, the GCC coalition and Ansar Allah continue fighting on Dali north of Houthi forces launched an assault on al-Houthi forces. In the spring of other front Aden in a clear attempt to lessen pressure at Hodeida by attacking the home region of southern soldiers who form the largest contingent of government troops in Tihama. It ns possible that the battle of Hodeida might occur after temperatures drop along the remaini sweltering Red Sea coast in late September. But even if it does not occur, there are no signs step peace -by-that Griffiths has managed to convert the Stockholm Agreement into a step process with enough momentum to end the war. For all of the reasons above, it is likely to prove necessary to move negotiations forward by addressing the elephant in the room: the future structure of Yemen as a state

Because such profound que" stions about Yemen's future remain unanswered, it is hardly surprising that UN Special Envoy Martin Griffiths could not persuade rival parties to ".implement the Stockholm Agreement on mutually agreed terms

The NDC Federal Constitution of 2010 n's political system collapsed two months before international warfare When Yeme there was a plan to restructure the state along federal lines. 2010, 26 commenced on March sponsored National Dialogue Conference -The plan was based on the outcomes of a UN The NDC sought to devolve power over 2014 and early 2013 in Sanaa during (NDC) held) decision making to elected authorities in multiple regions around the country. Delegates at the NDC could not agree on the number of federal regions, so the decision was left to a ecial executive committee appointed by transitional President Abed Rabbo Mansour sp region -After the NDC ended, Hadi's committee decided to restructure Yemen as a six 6 Hadi. s calling with plan 2010 federal state. A new constitution was prepared at the start of January for a popular referendum prior to national elections and formation of a new government later in the year. But Houthi rebel forces operating in league with former President Saleh blocked wer struggle leading to major the federal constitution, and this precipitated a violent po Ywarfare.

The question of Yemen's future structure as a state, whether unitary or federal/confederal, clearly rests at the heart of the country's problems. The growing power of the STC in southern territory, makes this abundantly clear. There is no both at Aden and elsewhere in escaping the fact that the question must be addressed to end the country's war and bring peace to a suffering population. For a variety of reasons, it is difficult to imagine that the on federal plan can be implemented in the near future. The longer the war regi-NDC six continues, the more vested interests are created among powerful actors on the ground in These actors, especially in ^different regions of the country who seek to keep fighting. are unlikely to sacrifice ٢٠١٦ns south and east of Sanaa where fighting declined after regio control over their own local affairs by agreeing to resubmit to government authority in Sanaa. ound Aden, and This is particularly true as long as the STC continues to gain ground ar leaders of Ansar Allah, specifically influential members of the Houthi family from Saada .Province on the northern border with Saudi Arabia, retain power in Sanaa

region federal plan might conceivably -based upon the NDC six ٢٠١٥The draft constitution of help restart talks on the future political structure of Yemen. Both the constitution and NDC including Houthi ٢٠١٥outcomes contained good ideas that appeal to all antagonists in the war Contrary to ٢٠١٥leaders who so adamantly opposed the draft constitution in January common perceptions in Yemen, especially among Houthi leaders and their supporters, the trong central government in draft constitution envisioned a federal state with a relatively s Sanaa balanced against six institutionally weak regional governments. Although Houthi region federal plan as a scheme to destroy Yemeni-leaders and Saleh denounced the six tier -re harm. Through its multicoup did far mo ٢٠١٤unity, their own actions during the financing scheme, the draft constitution ironically allowed the federal government to retain regions of the -control of revenues collected from valuable resources like oil and gas at sub ds, the central government in Sanaa would have been In other wor ٩country, called wilayat. able to bypass the authority of new regional parliaments, which merely served as symbolic representatives of people living in different regions. Today, this is a lost option because the ups in the south insist upon fully independent power, refusing to STC and allied gro .recognize any authority in Sanaa

After more than four years of death and destruction, it is difficult to imagine Yemen can be time of relative peace five years stitched back together with a draft constitution prepared at a word. It is only -for-region plan word-ago. But it is not necessary to advance the original six necessary to use the plan to restart political discussions about the future structure of the n inevitably requires amendment due to dramatic changes on draft constitutio ٢٠١٥state. The the ground which now leave the country more fragmented than at any time in the past half s, when an earlier civil ١٩٦٠century. Yemen's current divisions approach those seen in the ravated by foreign military intervention. Given Yemen's current war was badly agg fragmentation, it may require amending the draft constitution by granting greater powers to the six regions, perhaps along the lines of a confederation. Supporters of the STC might uture confederation with two capitals, Sanaa and Aden, allowing executive propose a f authorities in each city to govern territories that do not necessarily correspond to the old .south border-north

ce of foreign powers in the A major sticking point in negotiations to end the war is the influen country: namely, Saudi Arabia and the UAE, each of which maintains armed forces on the ground under the umbrella of the GCC coalition. Saudi Arabia is most influential in Yemen's

-exploit widespread public perceptions of foreign interference when they sought to kill the six region federal plan at the time of their coup

In order to grasp Yemen's underlying political problems, it is essential to consider whether or not it is a nation suitable for common rule under a single authority. Commentators unfamiliar with Yemeni history tend to explain the ongoing tragedy in Yemen as a foreign assault on a premise for making state that previously served the interests of one national group. As a sense of recent events and finding a constructive path forward, this is a profoundly mistaken starting point. Across history the population of Yemen was rarely governed by a single Islamic and -side the country. During preauthority due to multiple strong regional identities in Islamic times, it was more common to find separate ruling authorities competing as rivals on south border of Yemen was originally drawn by the -the same territory. The old north south -th century. In other words, the north¹⁹ of the Ottoman and British empires at the end known Cold War divisions in Germany, Korea, -division occurred decades prior to other well .and Vietnam

-It is mistaken to think that Yemen's divisions resulted from the Cold War. Once a Soviet s, it maintained a rather 1960 government came to power in Aden at the end of the allied go south division which masked older, more significant regional divisions in the -artificial north dozen there were nearly two 1967 country. Until British colonial rule ended in November local rulers on southern lands, and those in Britain's eastern protectorate adamantly refused to unite with those in the western protectorate. Following Britain's withdrawal, the new -s. Likewise, the postgovernment in Aden had difficulty overcoming its internal division revolutionary government in the north had difficulty managing multiple divisions on its side of The new governments in Aden and Sanaa signaled early intentions to 11 the old border. g ministers of unity affairs. But it took launch a project of national unification by appointin During the interim years, there were two 1990 three decades for the project to succeed in s, numerous coups and political assassinations, and an 1970 south wars in the -north 1986 south during January outbreak of major regional strife in the

civil strife and assassinations returned to 1990 22 Shortly after Yemen's unification on May the country. Practically from the start, the new unified state experienced major problems, to 1992uled parliamentary elections from the fall of forcing a postponement of the first sched When voting did not result in majority party rule in parliament, it forced 1993 the spring of This led to political 1993 negotiations over a coalition government during the summer of timents of "buyer's remorse" spread among southern citizens, who were stalemate, as sen one by northerners. Southern leaders of the YSP, which -to-outnumbered more than four placed third behind Saleh's ruling party and a conservative Islamist party called Islah evived discussions of federalism at this time demanding decentralization of r ("mrofeR") government powers. Northern politicians suspected talk of federalism was part of a plot to secede, thus they responded by accusing YSP leaders and their southern supporters of .asontr

an earlier set of Yemeni national dialogue conferences 94-1993 During the winter of The majority of participants from all regions 14-2013 prefigured the work of the NDC in cial, favored decentralizing power to locally elected governors and mayors at the provin district, and municipal levels. This became the key element of an agreement signed by northern and southern political leaders, including President Saleh and leaders of the YSP

g Hussein in meeting held under the auspices of Kin ١٩٩٤ and Islah Party, at a February Amman, Jordan. Ink on the agreement, known as the Document of Pledge and Accord (DPA,) was barely dry when Saleh ordered his military commanders to launch an attack on a civil war between southern army camp. Soon afterward, the country descended into a major civil war in late April and early July. Northern troops gradually overran southern lands, and YSP leaders fled into exile. Thereafter, most southern citizens felt they lived under northern military occupation.

gives a speech addressing his supporters during a presidential inauguration ceremony in Sanaa, Yemen's capital, on August 20, 2012. Photo by MOHAMMED AL-SAYED/Square in the capital Sanaa on August 20, 2012. (HUWAIIS/AFP/Getty Images)

The DPA did not amount to a full federal plan. It merely suggested government decentralization as a way to avoid military conflict. But if Yemeni politicians had unified the country and much of the war on the basis of federalism, it is possible that the preceding political troubles could have been avoided. This is true because the incentive to compete for control over the central government would have been dramatically reduced. Saleh clearly sought to use the civil war in order to consolidate and preserve his powers over the central government in Sanaa. Before the war ended, however, he made a political commitment to decentralize government by allowing elections of local governors and mayors. Saleh recommitted himself to the DPA's principles following intervention by Egypt's president, Hosni Mubarak, and UN diplomats who negotiated a cessation of hostilities once Saleh's victory was assured in early July 1994.

Officials in Egypt and Jordan recognized that the DPA offered a potential way to reconcile post-war differences in Yemen and avoid alienating the southern population. The problem was that President Saleh did not take seriously the need to decentralize government. He postponed implementation of the DPA's call for local elections. During the long delay, President Saleh and members of his ruling party continued to treat public calls for decentralization as a sign of treason against the nation. Proponents of federalism were regularly intimidated and harassed by agents of the state, especially in southern and eastern regions. This destroyed what little remained of national unionist sentiment.

President Saleh finally advanced legislation to define the role of Yemen's "local authorities" in February 2000. The law allowed for elected "advisory councils" at the provincial and district levels, but the councils were poorly funded and tasked merely with providing advice to governors, who remained appointed by the president. In short, it signaled Saleh's intention to keep tight control of all government decision making in Sanaa. Two years earlier, the president forced tens of thousands of southern civil servants and soldiers into early retirement. By cutting employment and then offering no effective means of local democratic representation, Saleh created deep disillusionment among southerners. This included close allies of the president who helped maintain a pretense of north-south unity after the war.

In essence, when Houthi leaders allied with former President Saleh to obstruct discussions " sponsored NDC, and then staged a military coup against the draft -of federalism at the UN appened when leaders of a southern region federal plan, it paralleled what h-constitution's six ". ۱۹۶۳ liberation movement launched armed resistance against Britain in October

Conclusion

Yemen had a mere two ۲۰۱۱ When President Saleh resigned after mass protests in g this time, Saleh failed to advance decades of experience as a national union. Durin government policies that could establish state legitimacy across the entire territory. Prior to this was a perennial problem in each half of the country due to multiple ۱۹۹۰ unification in on did not alleviate the problem. Instead, it made matters worse by internal divisions. Unificati increasing not only the size of territory the government claimed to rule, but also the number the ۲۰۱۱ of rival groups vying for a share of public goods. Once Saleh resigned in late ry's political, economic, and social troubles necessitated holding broad dialogue about count sponsored NDC reached consensus -the UN ۲۰۱۱ how best to reform the state. By January -on a sixon federalism, and a committee appointed by transitional President Hadi decided up region plan. One year later, the coup by Saleh and Houthi leaders ended the federal plan as .the country slid toward major warfare and intervention by the GCC coalition

y of powerful The internal dynamics of the coup by Saleh and Houthi derive from the tendenc actors on the highland mountain plateau between the capital Sanaa and Saada Province to seek hegemony over the country. Historically, Zaidi imams ruled Yemen in alliance with top ople living along the Tihama sheikhs of the Hashid and Bakil tribes. This was resented by pe coup by Saleh and Houthi ۱۰-۲۰۱۱ coast and in southern and eastern provinces. Thus, the old pattern of conflict in Yemen. In the wake of the coup, once Saleh -leaders revived an age e south around Aden, while being prevented and Houthi forces were pushed from lands to th from moving eastward into Marib, Shabwa, and Hadramawt, government authority became region federal plan obsolete. The reach of Yemen's -deeply fractured. This made the six iffereent regions of the country, including the central government was always limited in d Hashid and Bakil tribal areas around Sanaa. But due to stalemate on the main battlefields after GCC forces intervemed on the side of Yemenis loosely associated with the "legitimate" multiple rival authorities surfaced on the ground, including some authority of President Hadi .(Qaeda on the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP-linked to al

to dislodge Houthi forces from ۲۰۱۰ The GCC coalition has been unable since the spring of ll of this mountainous territory, including the Sanaa and the surrounding highland plateau. A Bayda, remains under the -plateau stretching southward to the lowlands of Ibb and al authority of Ansar Allah, the Houthi political organization. Ansar Allah also retains control of and province of Taiz and the northern Tihama, except a small area a large section of the midl around Harad and Midi near the Saudi border. The "legitimate" government has a weak presence inside the country because Hadi continues living in exile in Saudi Arabia. It is ib Province, home to one of Yemen's main oil fields and an important strongest in Mar Ahmar, who is -electricity plant. Forces loyal to Hadi's vice president, General Ali Mohsen al awt Saleh's old Sanhan tribal rival, exert control in Marib and over a larger oil field in Hadram sharing agreement with -Province. Unlike Marib's oil field, which operates under a revenue local tribes, General Ahmar and his allies monopolize oil revenues from Hadramawt, much to .the displeasure of the local population

members of his “legitimate” government established a formal Hadi and m ٢٠١٦ Beginning in presence in Aden. During the same year, they succeeded in relocating the headquarters of the Yemeni Central Bank to Aden after Houthi leaders drained most of its foreign reserves in e main rival to the “legitimate” government in Aden is the STC, an organization the capital. Th formed by leaders of Hirak who support full national independence within the old borders of South Yemen. STC leaders are closely allied with GCC commanders from the UAE, unlike President Hadi and Vice President Ahmar, who are closer to commanders from Saudi Arabia. The STC seeks recognition of a state called South Arabia, and following their seizure .heir goalthey are now closer to achieving t ٢٠١٩ of full control in Aden in early August

Today the array of governing authorities and fighting forces in Yemen is highly complex. As a result, it is difficult to know what the end game is, and how the state or states will ong established regime eventually be reconstituted. Yemen is not like Syria, where a l operated effective state institutions that could reassert territorial control after the chaos of ground fighting ended. The chances of continued warfare remain very high in Yemen, but ountry’s conflicts and divisions because of there is ultimately no military solution to the c shifting alliances on rugged mountain terrain. For all of these reasons, it is necessary to region -reopen discussions about the future structure of the Yemeni state based on the six Due to political realities ٢٠١٤ lted from outcomes of the NDC in federal constitution that resu on the ground after more than four years of warfare, however, it is necessary to consider the possibility that a loose confederation of two or more states may be the best and most likely .comeout

Yemen's President Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi (C) speaks during the closing ceremony of a National Dialogue Conference aimed at drafting a new constitution and establishing a federal (sin Sanaa. (Photo by MOHAMMED HUWAIS/AFP/Getty Image ٢٠١٤, ٢٠ state on January

sponsored NDC, -Houthi leaders were granted a prominent role at the UN ٢٠١٣ During working groups dealt specifically with their grievances under the title the ١١ where one of up called the org gnikrow etarapes a ni desserdda erew secnaveirg s'kariH ".rettam adaaS“ erew yeht esuaceb CDN eht ta euqinu erew spuorg gnikrow owt esehT ".rettam nrehtuoS“ the only forums dealing with regionally based opposition. Another working group, entitled the proposal for federal hguorht noitisoppo lanoiger fo secruos desserdda ”,erutcurts etats“ government. Despite similarities between how the NDC dealt with Houthi and Hirak grievances, leaders of the two groups held significantly different interests and motives. Hirak from Sanaa, so they preferred to see leaders sought autonomy if not outright independence a weakened central government. Houthi leaders held hegemonic interests to exercise power through the central government in Sanaa. Thus, Houthi interests aligned closely with those main reason why Saleh and Houthi leaders staged a of former President Saleh. This is the region -joint coup against the transitional government for the sake of destroying the six .federal plan

During the NDC, there was some indication that Houthi leaders collaborated with a faction of t refused to participate in the national dialogue. The faction was linked to exiled Hirak tha

after failing to achieve southern independence amid the earlier civil war. Once Hirak arose in its most active factions favored full southern independence. By level leaders refused to participate in the dialogue conference in Sanaa because they refused any and all associations with the north. President Hadi and his inner circle were forced to recruit southern delegates who acted in the group's name. Some of these delegates preferred a two region federal state. But President Hadi and many northern delegates feared division of the country. This was the main reason the NDC ended in disagreement about the number of federal regions, requiring President Hadi to appoint a special executive committee, which then adopted the

region federal -As a politician from the southern half of Yemen, President Hadi feared a two Beidh, to return to power. -state would allow his main southern rivals, especially Ali Salem al iz and part of Ibb, as well as provinces But northern delegates from the midland region of Ta region federalism because -Bayda and Marib, were unwilling to accept two-further east like al they refused to continue living under the influence of northern tribes. Tribes from the Sanaa and Saada Province would inevitably dominate highland mountain plateau between -region federal state, thus northerners in Taiz, Ibb, Hodeida, al-any northern region of a two way division of northern lands. The -or four -Bayda, and Marib provinces preferred a three region federal proposal, including four regions in -t introduced the sixNDC delegate who first the north and two regions in the south, was the head of the northern Nasserite party. There is great irony in this fact because northern Nasserites were among the leading s. That the leader of the main Nasserite party of Yemeni unity since the proponents .region federalism speaks to the depth of the country's multiple internal divisions-favored six

sented a it repre region federal plan was formally announced in February -When the six compromise between the secessionist position of some southern Hirak factions and the position of northerners who opposed any devolution of central government power from gion plan. re-Sanaa. Leaders of the Houthi movement were the strongest critics of the six They complained that it left their home province of Saada landlocked without access to a NDC executive -port on the Red Sea. For the sake of convenience, technocrats on the post ng provinces, and Saada committee defined the six regions along the boundary lines of existi region map was published, -previously lacked access to the Red Sea. Once the proposed six citizens in many areas complained about the artificial nature of provincial boundary lines. ter ways to draw borders between The government received numerous suggestions of bet the six regions. But President Hadi and his staff preferred to negotiate the matter after the six regional governments were established. In other words, Hadi never denied Houthi wanted to postpone redrawing regional leaders port access on the Red Sea. He simply .boundary lines

Barring a Houthi defeat by the GCC coalition in the coming year, once negotiations begin on the future structure of the Yemeni state, it is inevitable that Ansar Allah will exercise control on the Red Sea as they do today at Hodeida. The best way to gain bargaining of a port leverage with Ansar Allah is through discussion of Sanaa's status in Yemen's future state structure. Ansar Allah does not want to be excluded permanently from access to valuable ergy sources in Marib, Shabwa, and Hadramawt provinces, which are now under the en region federal plan -control of President Hadi's "legitimate" government. By rejecting the six

entral through which Sanaa retained importance as the national capital and home of the ce government, Houthi leaders created de facto decentralization by splintering political interests around the country. It is not in Ansar Allah's interests that future negotiations move toward a Aden and the south, as STC confederal solution or complete political independence of leaders seek. Thus, Ansar Allah is more likely to seek reconciliation with the "legitimate" .government if these options are placed on the negotiation table

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Cover photo: A Yemeni waves a national flag during a rally celebrating the death of Yemeni president Ali Abdullah Saleh a day after he was killed, in the capital Sanaa on December 20, 2017. (Photo by MOHAMMED HUWAIS/AFP/Getty Images)

Contents photo: Displaced Yemeni children from Hodeida are pictured on September 20, 2018, in a damaged house where they have been living with other displaced through a hole in a wall. (Photo by AHMAD AL BASHA/AFP/Getty Images)

Yamani (L) and the head rebel -First pull quote photo: Yemen's foreign minister Khaled al Ahmed Abdelsalam (R) shake hands under the eyes of UN Secretary negotiator Moham General Antonio Guterres (C), during peace consultations in Rimbo, Sweden, on December 20, 2018. (Photo by JONATHAN NACKSTRAND/AFP/Getty Images)

ard as a Saudi air force cargo plane, Second pull quote photo: Saudi soldiers stand guard as a Saudi air force cargo plane, carrying aid, lands at an airfield in Yemen's central province of Marib, on February 20, 2018. (QADRY/AFP/Getty Images-Photo by ABDULLAH AL)

rted air strike Third pull quote photo: Houthi rebel fighters inspect the damage after a reported coalition targeted the presidential palace in Sanaa on December 20, 2017. (Photo by MOHAMMED HUWAIS/AFP/Getty Images)

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Stephen W. Day, Ph.D. is a professor of international affairs at Rollins College in Winter Park, FL, specializing in the Middle East with a focus on Yemen and the Arab peninsula. Over the past two decades, Dr. Day also taught at Indiana University, St. Lawrence University of New York, and Stetson University of Florida. He was designated a specialist in Middle East and North African studies by the Fulbright scholarship program between 2004 and 2006. He is author of the book *Regionalism and Rebellion in Yemen* Cambridge University Press book, 2012. He is also author of the Palgrave MacMillan book *Yemen: A Troubled National Union*, and in early 2010 he edited work on Yemen, entitled *Global, Regional, and Local Dynamics in the Yemen Crisis*.

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