



On the Brink of Ending the Yemeni War: Who Imposes the Peace Items?

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During the last few months, regional and international powers have intensified their diplomatic efforts pushing for negotiations to pave the way for an all-out peace solution that brings an end to the Yemeni War which has been going on for more than 6 years. It appears that all parties of the conflict concluded that achieving a decisive military victory is not possible with such big losses in equipment and fighters incurred by the fronts on both sides during the last year. The National Army forces, affiliated with Hadi Government have been exhausted and lost their bastions and political existence in North except the city of Marib and some of its districts as well as some areas of the Western Coast controlled by the Joint Forces. On the other hand, despite their political and financial depletion, they look more prepared to be involved in wider battles towards Marib and beyond.

Parallel to that, the STC's Forces, represented in the Armed Forces, the Security Belts and the Elite Forces in Shabwa and Hadhramaut in South face multiple challenges as well as the threats emitted from some National Army's formations controlled by Al Islah Party in both Abyan and Shabwa. There is an increase in systematic operations by Al Qaeda which has recently escalated its activities against the STC's security points in Abyan, Shabwa and Hadhramaut. Currently, the STC's Forces are still engaging in military multifront operations against the Houthis in North Dhalea, Mukayris in Abyan and Tur Al Bahah in Lahij in addition to the renewable threats from forces controlled by Al Islah from the northern governorate of Taiz.

The remarkable synchronization of events on the southern fronts and more than one location is, according to observers, a result of understandings among the dominant powers in Hadi Government through intensifying the pressure on the fronts controlled by the STC's Forces in an attempt to drain its capabilities and control wider areas before reaching a political settlement with an aim to lower the STC's negotiation ceiling, and achieving the maximum possible interests of the dominant parties in the Hadi Government, especially in case of securing solutions in agreement with the Houthis.

This may be an option for the National Army, managed by the M.B ideologically-affiliated Al Islah as it just controls a few northern areas in Marib and some southern parts of Taiz. The overwhelming desire of the National Army to control more southern areas gives its manager a better negotiating advantage, even if at the expense of implementing the Riyadh Agreement. In turn, this desire is behind the Houthis' tireless attempts to complete the control of the rest of Marib.

The political ambition of the Republican Guards, who are known as “the National Resistance”, which are part of the Joint Forces in the Western Coast, is being manifested by declaring the Political Office through which they want to make a political presence as a party who imposes items based upon its location in the power balance, especially in line with the diplomatic efforts aiming at resuming the peace negotiations relevant to end the Yemeni War.

It should be said that the U.N Security Council Resolution 2216 has curbed the United Nations activities as it has confined the negotiations within a bilateral framework between Hady Government and the Houthis. For many, this represents an obstacle in the path of peace negotiations in line with changing the power balance map on the ground. The current situation requires opening the space towards a more comprehensive operation which reflects the interests of all Yemeni conflict parties based upon many starting points through which peace items could be imposed.

Points of Strength and Weakness

It can be deemed that power in Yemen is relative as we cannot describe any party as strong or weak unless it is compared with another one. Such a comparison would determine its position in the power structure on the local, regional and international levels. It could also give it an advantage in the coming peace negotiations which pave the way for a political solution in Yemen.

The strength or weakness standards of the conflict parties are highlighted through many factors, the most important of which are: their control on the ground, the military power they have, the impact on the local level, the extent of the international support, and the popularity base for each. Thus, the way the local, regional and international communities have dealt with the Yemeni conflict parties can be discussed, and how it has affected the path of negotiations for an all-out solution that gets Yemen out of the war crisis without incurring more loss.

1. On the individual level:

President Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi

The ruling era of the seventy-five-year-old president is characterized by weak performance and mismanagement in the midst of an unprecedented corruption,

This President took office 8 years ago for nothing, but the constitutional continuity based upon the 2011- Khaleeji Initiative. The UN Security Council’s Resolution 2216 in 2015 after the beginning of the Yemeni Civil War has enhanced his legitimacy¹.

¹ [S/RES/2216\(2015\) - E - S/RES/2216\(2015\) -Desktop \(undocs.org\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/2216(2015) - E - S/RES/2216(2015) -Desktop)

The exacerbation of the current conflict and the worst humanitarian crisis in Yemen are not a surprise because of a President seen by many as one of the reasons behind the crisis as he does not want solutions to end the war because he is one of the biggest beneficiaries of the status quo according to observers. Additionally, the interests of those around Hadi have been connected with war continuity so that their wealths have been inflated and they have formed what looks like a “kleptocratic Power” which makes money its main concern.

Moreover, President Hadi does not have popularity in many areas in Yemen, especially in South due to his participation in the 1994 War. As for North, he was always seen as a weak man during his era as Vice President for the former President Ali Abdullah Salih. He has not used his temporary popularity within Saleh’s opponents as it has been dissipated after the transfer of power to him in the wake of 2011 Uprising. He has been quickly portrayed within an intensified picture of weakness and corruption.

However, President Hadi, who lacks the charisma and who has not done more than replacing officials with others, is indispensable for the Arab Coalition as its position forms a legal umbrella for it to engage in the war against the Iran-backed Houthis who threaten the region, especially Saudi Arabia, the Coalition leader unless a political settlement has been reached with the agreement of all parties involved.

Vice President, Ali Mohsen Al Ahmar

The character of General Ali Mohsen Al Ahmar has always made a widespread controversy among the community and political elites in Yemen. The Vice president was appointed in 2016 to undermine the peace talks in Kuwait after overthrowing the then Vice President and the Prime Minister Khaled Bahah, through a decision that included a political preamble which justified it by the governmental failure in economic, services and security fields.

Many local and international parties have reservations about Al Ahmar’s character, considering him an unacceptable figure as a result of his dubious relationship with extremist groups since the 1980s. He managed to strengthen his ties with religious men and fighters involved in “terrorist” activities inside Yemen for many years, as well as his engagement with big corruption network involved in smuggling petroleum products, in addition to blaming him for the weakness of the National Army since its establishment due to his corruption system he has managed and sharing interests among his senior leaders.

Moreover, the Southerners have big hostility towards Al Ahmar due to his military role in the 1994 War against South during the era of the former regime. They dubbed him as “Ali Katyusha” because he used Katyusha rockets against innocent people targeting their houses in Aden. Additionally, Al Ahmar has engaged in a relationship with Al Islah Party, the STC and the Southerners' most prominent rival. Therefore, it is more likely that Al Ahmar will have no

prominent role in the next stage in spite of his close ties with Riyadh as his existence is unwanted by the USA, UAE, the Houthis and the Southerners.

The Houthis Leader Abdulmalik Al Houthi

The Houthis, whose name is derived from their leader, have surrounded Abdulmalik Al Houthi with an aura of sanctity as his character as a religious leader has inspired many Yemen's Zaidis. However, some of his Zaidi opponents consider what the Houthis have attempted to ideologically impose on their community imported concepts coming from Iran's Twelvers which violate Zaidism the Houthis claim to represent them.

Although the inclination of the Houthis Leader to deliver long and resonant speeches to his audience, and sometimes he uses them to convey messages abroad, he does not appear in public gatherings as he finds himself confined inside his stronghold in Sa'dah in northwest Yemen. His speeches are broadcasted from closed places and he does not make any interviews with media outlets. He communicates with others through an envoy which is considered a point of weakness for not establishing direct communication lines with others. This may be due to his very cautious approach towards his personal security.

The other matter is that Abdulmalik Al Houthi, as a leader, enjoys a popular base only within the framework of his group. He is hated by a large segment in North and South, for the grave violations committed by his group. Additionally, he lacks the acceptance at the regional and international levels. For the United States, he is classified, along with two others as "international terrorists", according to its State Department.²

In the Resolution 2216, The UN Security Council has imposed penalties against Abdulmalik Al Houthi for his involvement in acts that threaten peace, security and stability in Yemen.³

Aidarous Al-Zubaidi, President of STC

The role of the President of the Southern Transitional Council, Aidarous Al-Zubaidi, emerged strongly during the Civil War in Yemen in 2015. Al-Zubaidi led the process of liberating Al Dhalea and the majority of South. Al-Zubaidi, the quiet military figure, was able to gather a wide political spectrum under the umbrella of the STC which has created a presence and acceptance at the popular level in the southern governorates due to the broad popularity base of its president. This is one of his most prominent strengths enabling him to play a major political role through which he has created a reliable organizational and administrative work environment, at least by his supporters.

Moreover, he enjoys regional support from UAE, its strong ally in the Arab Coalition, as well as the Saudi welcoming attitude which considers him as a power on top of a political and

² islamist-movements.com (بوابة الحركات الاسلامية: عبد الملك الحوثي.. المرشد الأعلى في اليمن)

³ un.org (مجلس الأمن يعتمد قراراً بشأن اليمن يفرض من خلاله عقوبات على الحوثي ونجل علي عبد الله الصالح | أخبار الأمم المتحدة)

military council that should not be underestimated through its merging with Hadi Government within the Riyadh Agreement which formed the Parity government between North and South on December 18, 2020.

It should be said that despite his charisma as a leader and widespread popularity, he is blamed for his dependence on certain figures in multiple files and appointing figures belonging to his close circle in sensitive positions. Perhaps this is due to his keenness to give important files to people whose reliability is pre-tested. Moreover, his opponents have repeated that he lacks administrative experience while they admit his military one that had accompanied him since the 1990s during the establishment of the southern armed movement (Hatm) that calls for disengagement from North.

Tareq Saleh, the Leader of the Republican Guards “the National Resistance”

The announcement of the establishment of the Political office in late March 2021, headed by Tariq Saleh, the Leader of the Republican Guards, or what is known as the “National Resistance” in the Western Coast, and the nephew of former Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh, revealed a great political ambition for the man.

By establishing a Political Office, Tariq Saleh, who hails from a family that ruled Yemen for three decades, has revealed his intentions for the expected political role that he aspires to assume. He is considered the most acceptable candidate to play this role, at least among the supporters of the former President Saleh; and the General People's Congress Party whose leaders have been divided among the circles of conflict, especially in the absence of Ahmed Ali, the son of the former President, from the scene. Moreover, Tariq's recent visit to Moscow was not random as many see it, as it seems that he has the ambition to create political arrangements to ensure that he has a role in light of the changes taking place on the ground, especially since Russia is one of the five influential member states of the Security Council.

In spite of his military and political presence, though the latter's lack of experience, his influence on the Joint Forces on the Western Coast does not give him a consensus as a leader that brings together the military parties in the coast, as well as his very small base of popularity in the Tihama Coast where claims of political and economic grievances have been increasing since the era of President Saleh.

It is probably one of his points of weakness on the Western Coast. Although the military weight he has gained since his fight against the Houthis after the killing of his uncle at the end of 2017, and the role he has secured within the anti-Houthi camp, his fight alongside the Houthis since 2015 is still a weakness point used by his opponents against him if they have a chance. However, he enjoys, in return, regional support from Abu Dhabi and satisfaction from Riyadh on several levels, militarily, politically and on the media field.

2. On the local level (State)

Hadi Government and its National Army

The Hadi government and its National Army, which is controlled by Vice President Ali Mohsen Al Ahmar and Al Islah Party, just controls few remaining areas in Marib, its last bastion in North, in addition to some parts South of Taiz. Probably this is not an advantage that gives it a proper negotiation ceiling, so it has attempted to expand its presence in larger areas in South. It has actually seized control of several areas in Shabwa, Abyan and Wadi Hadhramaut from the hands of the Security Belts and the Shabwa and Hadrami Elites affiliated with the STC. The latter Forces have been popularly accepted and formed an impenetrable barrier against terrorist organizations which have recently resumed their activities within the areas controlled by the "National Army".

Despite the military power enjoyed by the National Army, and the regional support of the Arab coalition, specifically from Saudi Arabia, on several levels, militarily, financially and on media field, the military laxity it shown last year and the withdrawals from many of the fronts close to Marib, have encouraged the Houthis to advance and achieve the greatest military gains on the ground. Perhaps, this has weakened the position of the Hadi government because the army has not been outside the political scene. Every military development on the ground is directly related to the political process and its negotiating umbrella.

Apparently, it seems that the first weakness point of the "National Army" is the dominance of Al Islah party over the decision-making process within it according to frequent comments. The army, which is supposed to be independent and the ultimate guarantor of national interests, is controlled by a religious group, which has exacerbated the sectarian narrative of the war and has fueled other extremist groups to enter the front line.

This has created a dilemma for the STC related to the security and military items of the Riyadh Agreement, as how to integrate the southern forces including the Security Belts and the Shabwani and Hadrami Elites, into an army whose formation and leadership controlled by a religious group that ideologically belongs to a group classified by Gulf states as a "terrorist" organization, and has some members of extremist groups within its ranks?

However, the current Saudi pressure regarding the completion of the implementation of the Riyadh Agreement has pushed the STC to make some adjustments in the structure of the southern forces and their inclusion in accordance with the regulations and laws of the Ministry of Defense.

Nevertheless, the ruling elites in the Hadi regime are not welcomed at the local level. For the people at home, it is a government whose corrupt leaders use their political power to seize the country's wealth, while most of its members have stayed abroad, without achieving the minimum solutions for economic and humanitarian services which further deteriorate with the length of the war. This has been the weakest link in the Hadi government and its army in terms of popular base, even within the areas under its authority, including some southern areas.

Moreover, the long absence of President Hadi from the country has weakened the government's position and made it under constant criticism, allowing the authority that runs the army to exploit this.

To summarize, it can be said that the most prominent point of strength in the Hadi government is based upon international support through Resolution 2216, which does not seem acceptable to most local parties. There is a recession in the international enthusiasm in adopting the Resolution as a major reference for the solution.

The Houthis (the de-facto authority in Sanaa)

The Houthis, led by AbdulMalik Al-Houthi, control most areas in North, that is about 70%, with the exception of some districts in the Marib Governorate, parts of southern Taiz as well as parts of the coastal western strip. The group's large military capabilities, including ballistic missiles and bombed drones have targeted Yemeni military locations as well as airports, and vital facilities inside Saudi Arabia giving it more power.

The identity of their military power's maker has been proven to be Iranian. They used to receive this through smuggling ports across the Red Sea, as well as through the ports of Al Mahra Governorate, east of South Yemen, before the Coalition consolidated its grip over them.

Simultaneously, the negative impact on society in Houthi-controlled areas has created a point of weakness, as the ideas of the Houthi group have been just accepted by those who belong to it, as a Hashemite class detached from the community. It sees itself superior to others. Over time, this has formed a deep gap between the components of Yemeni society, as it redistributed the social structure on the class basis, Similar to the "Master and slaves" approach.

On the other hand, the Houthis have a popular base only in the Zaidi areas. the cases of popular and political rejection of the group due to the massive corruption by its leaders have been reacted with repression, arrest, and murder and flagrant violations committed by the group against the people of Yemen in North and South, which have deepened the gap by increasing their hatred and lack of acceptance at the popular level.

As for the size of support, Iranian support for the Houthis at the regional level, in addition to opening channels of communication with their opponents through Oman and dealing with them at the international level through international and American talks and negotiations have formed a type of indirect support that has served as point of strength for the Houthis enabling their bullying and adaptation tactics throughout the conflict.

The statement of the US Special Envoy to Yemen, Tim Lenderking, portraying the Houthis as a "legitimate actor inside Yemen" has sparked widespread controversy recently. It looks like an American test balloon through which the Biden administration wants to engage with Iran in the nuclear file, and perhaps an attempt to encourage the Houthis to enter into a peace process. On the other hand, although the Houthis are not waiting for recognizing their legitimacy by which they can see themselves through international bodies, they do not want to lose the gains they obtained from the US administration when it removed them from the lists of "terrorism" especially after reducing the military escalation and progress on some fronts.

Southern Transitional Council (STC)

The existence of the political entity of the STC, which seeks independence for South, headed by Aidarous Al Zubaidi, has been an important factor in the balance of power on the ground. It is difficult to underestimate its political and military presence as a main party in the Yemeni war equation. Its main strength is based upon the wide popular base it enjoys in the southern governorates, a feature that has enabled it to be one of the best political components at the organizational and administrative level at home and abroad. Moreover, it controls a wide area in South, including the capital, Aden, Hadhramaut, the coast, Socotra, parts of Shabwa, Abyan, and the entire governorates of Al-Dhalea and Lahj.

Otherwise, the southern military and security formations of the STC, which were established with the UAE support, represented by the Security Belts in Aden and Lahj, and the two Elite Forces in Hadhramaut and Shabwa, have proven their success in maintaining security and stability. They have also enjoyed tribal and popular support, especially in the Hadhramaut and Shabwa governorates, before the latter being controlled by the "National Army" forces run by Al Islah Party spreading chaos and extremist groups according to local sources. These areas represented starting points for "terrorist" operations targeting the Belts and Elite force as happened recently.

The 2019- International Experts praised the role of the Security Belt and the Shabwani and Hadrami Elites in combating terrorism, describing them as "the most active forces in the fight against Al-Qaeda and ISIS in the Arabian Peninsula. ⁴ " This is another feature that strengthens

⁴ skynewsarabia.com النخبة الشبوانية .. أدوار وأهداف | أخبار سكاي نيوز عربية

the STC's position with his attempts to impose a solid security authority to neutralize South away from chaos and conflict as it has repeatedly announced.

Furthermore, the local community in South interacts with the STC, based on its inception, as it represents the demands of a large segment of the southern masses whose movement began in 2007, represented by the Southern Movement.

Although the Southern Movement has a number of other southern components under its umbrella, the STC has a broader popular base that are more interactive with the political affairs of society, despite some failures in achieving the economic interests for which the STC leaders have accused parties involved in the decision making in the Hadi government of pursuing their own political interests and obstructing of public services.

However, the STC is accused of repeatedly reversing its decisions, like what it did in withdrawing the decision of the Autonomous Administration announced in April 2020, after the military escalation by the Hadi government and its National Army in Shaqra, Abyan, which some considered political weakness.

On the other hand, others have seen such a reversal as a negotiating advantage, since the main motif behind the decision was to assume responsibility for managing services after the government fled Aden, as well as forming a kind of pressure on the parties obstructing the Riyadh Agreement, which eventually responded to the regional calls that demanded their signature and commitment to it.

In spite of the diversity of the political spectrum under the STC's umbrella including the leaders of Yemeni parties such as the Socialist Party, Yemeni League and the General People's Congress, and other social and tribal figures in South, it has been criticized for its reliance in the structure of the southern military forces on specific areas South.

In terms of regional support, the STC enjoys support from the Arab coalition, and in particular the UAE, which has supported it politically, militarily and in the media field. Researchers said that the STC has proven to be the trusted and reliable ally of the Arab coalition in the Yemen war. Simultaneously, unreliable alliances have emerged in the scene, they have been established by other Yemeni parties with countries such as Iran and Turkey, or they feed extremist groups within their areas of control threatening the security of the regional states in general and Yemen in particular.

Joint Forces on the Western Coast

Three main powers are involved in the Joint forces based in the western coast front in Yemen: The Giants Forces; Tihama Resistance Forces and the Republican Guards. These forces operate under a collective joint supreme command, and an operations room linked to the Arab coalition, as it is considered independent of the National Army in Marib.

The Joint Forces have controlled a large area on the western coast, starting from the Bab Al Mandab strait in the far south of the Western Coast, towards North, to the city of Hudaydah, in an attempt to advance towards the ports of Hudaydah, Saleef and Ras Issa, on the Red Sea. However, the UN-sponsored "Stockholm Agreement" signed between the Hadi government and the Houthis in late 2018, has halted the Forces' progress.

The strengths of the joint forces are manifested in their control of a large coastal area in western Yemen, in addition to their military capacity consisting of light and medium weapons, armored vehicles, military transport vehicles, and some heavy weapons, as well as Arab Coalition's aerial cover for its ground forces, received before the "Stockholm Agreement".

In light of this, it should be said that, despite the military and financial support that the Joint Forces have received from the UAE in the Western Coast, led by the Giants and the Republican Guards, they have a limited popular base.

The Republican Guards, headed by Tareq Saleh, and the Giants Forces, headed by Abu Zaraa Al Mahrami don't enjoy a wide popular support there in contrast to the Tihama Resistance Forces who belong to Tihama itself and extend along the western coast. This creates a weakness point for the other two Forces, because the popular base eventually produces a social cover and affects the social life, but this did not happen on the Western Coast.

Parties and political components, independents (women, youth)

The role of political parties in Yemen has decreased after the Arab Spring in 2011, and its role has declined further after the outbreak of the Civil War in 2014. The absence of a national project aimed to assemble parties has been a result of the Houthis' military rise at the expense of the political action of the parties. In addition, some parties were directly involved in the conflict as Al Islah Party and General People's Congress party (Al-Mo'tamar), before the latter broke up during the murder of its former leader, Ali Abdullah Saleh.

Likewise, the roles of political parties and other components linked to the interests of some states of the region or ideologically belonging to, have varied, reflecting negatively on the political and civic work of the parties, even within the framework of Hadi Government. In the conflict, al Islah Party tried to direct its actions and behavior towards its interest, without being noticed by the rest of the other parties whose role has shrunk, that they are making valuable concessions at the expense of their political presence.

At a deeper level, it could be argued that the Al Islah Party- the Muslim Brotherhood branch in Yemen - desperately needed President Hadi; To gain a political and military cover allowing the party to move and play through a role-sharing strategy, to maintain influence at home and his alliances abroad. This in itself is as much weaker than the role of the rest of the

political parties on the ground as President Hadi himself when they turned for just a political decoration on demand.

Otherwise, if we go to the grassroots, Yemeni parties are not very popular in certain areas, concerning South; The Yemeni Al Islah Party, for example, is a historic opponent and is viewed with contempt and hatred by Southerners, as a result of its policies against South, starting with its participation in the 1994 war with the former regime, and ending with military incidents in 2019 and beyond.

As for independents, saying that women are advocates of peace and security, and they are the ones who pay the price of the conflict in Yemen, yet they are not involved in a real role, is, for some, just for political consumption.

Exclusion of women from participation in the North-South Government; A total of 24 ministerial portfolios, none of which has a single portfolio for women, constitutes an unprecedented setback in the civil rights of women in Yemen.

This has necessitated questions, especially as Yemen is nearing the end of the war. Will regional and international parties take into account the participation of women in future peace negotiations? Including the local parties to the conflict that join some women under their umbrella? Or will their role be limited to consultative participation within the United Nations framework, as usual?

In practice, women have at least to press for from within their entities and political parties if they cannot participate independently. Pressure is placed on women in political decision-making positions, who are responsible for pushing for the participation of women to be a priority in the peace negotiations process.

It should be stated that women's focus on their issues is undoubtedly important, but that limits their role and restricts their opportunities for participation in other diverse political, economic, and other areas. It was a new added weakness point which allowed political parties to establish women's constituencies, which reflected negatively and indirectly marginalized women's roles over time.

As for young people, former United Nations Envoy Martin Griffith, in late December 2020, assured a wide cross-section of young men and women at the opening of the Yemeni Youth Peace-building Conference, of a map to involve young people in the decision-making process, since their involvement is important and central to the overall peace process.⁵

⁵ almushahid.net) توصيات أممية بإشراك شباب اليمن في صنع السلام | المشاهد نت

Youth are eager to become part of the decision-making process and before it to participate in the forthcoming peace negotiations, reflecting the need for new faces to take over in any political settlement in Yemen.

So far, it is not clear how other Yemeni parties, from social or tribal figures or businessmen, who have not been directly involved in the armed conflict, will participate in negotiations on a comprehensive solution to end the war. However, it appears that there are intentions to include them in peace-oriented programs and policies, although they have not participated in the first phase of the negotiations.

The following table shows the strengths (v) and weaknesses (x) of each Party at the local level.

Strength and weaknesses points	Control on the ground	Military power	Influence on society	Volume of international support	Grassroots
Hadi government and its army	✓	✓	x	✓	x
Houthis	✓	✓	x	✓	x
Southern Transitional	✓	✓	✓	x	✓
Joint Forces	✓	✓	x	x	x

From the above, it is clear that the Transitional Council, compared to the rest of the parties, has high points of strength, through which it can play a significant role in the course of peace negotiations and the subsequent phase, and considered as the most influential actor accordingly.

3. Regional and international level

Since its outbreak, regional and international parties have played a prominent role in the Yemen war, especially since the beginning of Arab Coalition operations in 2015. The Saudi-led Arab coalition to restore the legitimacy of the internationally recognized Hadi government, following resolution 2216, no longer aspires to progress in Yemen, as the military solution has declined on the battlefields against the Houthis, as well as the changing power dynamics of other powers that have emerged on the military and political wards, such as STC in South Yemen, and Tarek Saleh's forces on the west coast.

The "Saudi Initiative ", in cooperation with the United States and United nation envoys to Yemen, announced in late March of this year, a serious intention to stop the war. In a move welcomed by all regional and international parties, while the Houthis considered this step; circumventing their calls for lifting some restrictions on the port of Hudaydah and restart commercial flights to Sana'a airport.

Furthermore, Oman has shown its full diplomatic weight, as a regional actor, for facilitating the negotiations among the parties involved through its known neutral approach in spite of the grey outcome of its delegation's latest visit to Sanaa, in addition to other Khaleeji efforts expected to play a pivotal role in the next stage, whether through Kuwait which declared its readiness to host the signing ceremony of an agreement that ends the war in Yemen if the parties reach a political settlement, or through the UAE, which obtained non-permanent membership in the Security Council, and through which it seems that it will include the Yemeni crisis file within a package of many issues in the region On its agenda, especially due to a deep experience in Yemen, through its participation in the operations of the Arab Coalition militarily, or through the Red Crescent in humanitarian terms.

At the same time, Iran's regional support for the Houthis represents a strong point in the balance of war, as many believe that the reason behind the failure of the ongoing peace talks with the Houthis it is the incompatibility of the proposed settlements with Iran's interests.

At the international level, it seems that the United States, through the administration of President Joe Biden, is seeking to score a foreign policy victory by reducing tension between Saudi Arabia and Iran, as well as its efforts to end the war in Yemen by ending military support for the Arab Coalition and appointing a special envoy to Yemen to bridge differences between the parties of dispute.

In parallel with that, the UN failure of the three special envoys to Yemen have added more negative points to the balance of the United Nations. The failure included several political,

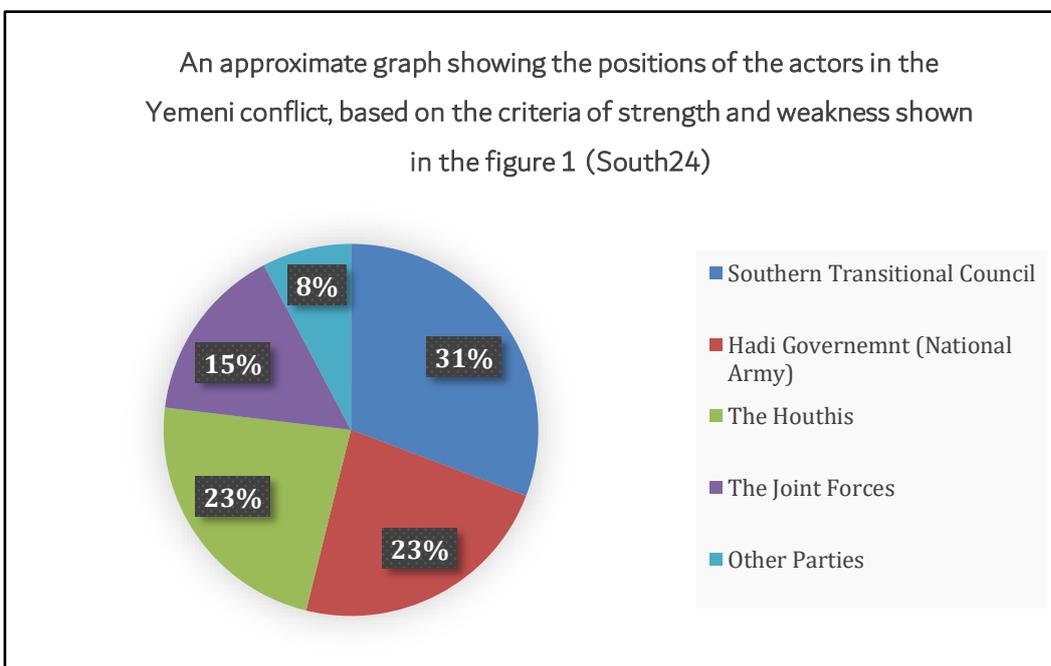
humanitarian and relief files. The weakness points of the United Nations envoys have emerged through their laxity and toleration with the Houthis in many of the files and

conditions they set. Moreover, each envoy was keen to keep his predecessor’s approach, especially with regard to their commitment to Resolution 2216, related to the bilateral model in the negotiations, ignoring the rest of the other main effective parties on the ground.

A quick inventory of the regional and international approach in dealing with the Yemeni file clearly indicates the need to change the current policy towards a wider and more inclusive operation reflecting the interests of the local parties of the dispute according to their centers of power and influence. Moreover, bypassing the rest of the actors would create a fertile environment for turmoil and instability, contrary to what peace advocates aspire to.

Based on the above, we can say:

that the equation of participation of the influential parties on the ground capable of imposing the establishment of peace is no longer confined between the Hadi government on one hand and the Houthis on the other hand; Rather, it is supposed to expand according to the changes that occurred on the political and military scenes. In terms of the rise and fall indicator of the level of influence for all parties stopped. This requires the involvement of STC, which has outperformed the other parties, in terms of obtaining the highest strength order of importance, and its involvement at least as a major independent third party in terms of the balance of its weight and the size of its influence and strength on the ground. The Joint Forces in the Western Coast must also be taken into consideration as a new influential party, and its participation in the negotiation process as a party among the other parties in the scene.



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Main photo: A fighter on one of the fighting fronts in Yemen (AFP)

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