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Forum: Security Council

Issue: The Situation in the Central African Republic

Chair: Jasper Yeh

Introduction

The Central African Republic (CAR) has been a victim of violence and humanitarian crisis for years due to the aftermath of civil war and continued conflict between several rebel factions and religious groups. The numerous coup d'états that occurred ever since the country's independence in 1960 only furthered worsened the already complicated situation. According to the United Nations High Commissioners for Refugees (UNHCR), more than 540,000 refugees have fled the country, and another 600,000 are displaced within the CAR. Prolonged conflict also exacerbated the economic instability of the nation, and with a GDP per capita of merely \$380 US dollars, the country is considered one of the poorest. Overall, the current situation in the Central African Republic is a result of both political and economic crisis, and has affected the entire population, sparing no men, women, and children.

While the current situation of widespread chaos and political instability in the CAR can roughly be traced back to numerous events since its independence from France in 1960, a more recent and direct cause would be a violent exchange of power in 2013, when the Seleka, an alliance of several predominantly Muslim militia factions, took over the capital of Bangui. After the seizure of the capital, the president of the CAR, Francois Bozize, was overthrown, and Michel Djotodia, leader of the Seleka, was installed into power. The Anti-balaka, a Christian militia group, acted in retaliation of the violent acts of the Muslim Seleka, and added a religious component to the ongoing conflict. Upon taking power, Djotodia officially dissolved the Seleka, but violent, and often religiously motivated, conflict between the ex-Seleka forces and the Anti-balaka continued. The actions of Djotodia's Seleka forces have been considered as serious human rights violations, with recruitment of child soldiers, killing and raping of civilians, and destroying of public infrastructure.

Definition of Key Terms

Anti-balaka

The Anti-balaka is a predominantly Christian militia group. They are the opposition group of the Seleka, and began carrying out attacks as revenge of the brutal acts by the Seleka. The militia was created when President Francois Bozize was uncertain of the security of CAR civilians, thus established protection groups to offer local security. Atrocities committed by the Anti-balaka are often justified by the militia through references of violent crimes committed by the Seleka, reflecting on the Anti-balaka as largely motivated by revenge.

MINSUCA

The MINUSCA, also known as the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission of the Central African Republic, is a UN peacekeeping mission founded in 2014 to ensure the security of civilians in the CAR. Although more than 10,000 peacekeepers have been deployed across the country, there have been allegations of sexual exploitation and violence by peacekeepers of CAR civilians, indicating the ineffectiveness of peacekeepers to the ongoing conflict.

Seleka

Led by Michel Djotodia, the Seleka is an alliance of many Muslim militia factions. The full name of the alliance is Seleka CPSK-CPJP-UFDR, signifying the three factions that signed the agreement to form the Seleka: Patriotic Convention for Saving the Country (CPSK), Convention of Patriots for Justice and Peace (CPJP), and the Union for Democratic Forces for Unity (UFDR). Although the Seleka has been dissolved, after its disbandment, ex-Seleka members continued to conduct atrocities against Christians and supporters of Francois Bozize across the country.

War Crimes

As defined by the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, war crimes are “grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949.” In other words, they are any acts that go against the Geneva Conventions, which is a collection of rules that established standards for the treatment of people in times of war.

Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration Programs

Also known as DDR, this type of process is meant to rebuild peace and security in post-conflict areas, as a part of the recovery process. As suggested by the name, there are three phases to DDR. As defined by the United Nations Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Resource Center (UNDDR), disarmament refers to the control of small arms trade and weapons from army forces as well as civilians. This is usually done through disposal or documentation of weapons and development of ammunition management programs. Demobilization refers to the disbandment of armed forces. Often, resources such as shelter, allowance, and medical services are provided for the combatants as preparation for the process of reintegration. Reintegration refers to the process in which these ex-combatants gain civilian status and find a stable income. DDR programs are included in many agreements throughout CAR history, especially many security council resolutions.

General Overview

Historical Context

The current political instability began ever since the CAR's independence from France in 1960. The country's history is filled with coups, human rights violation by governments and rebel factions, and overall chaos

and instability it almost all its aspects. Clearly, the issue at hand is not a new one. Countless peacekeeping missions and military interventions such as the MINSUCA have been conducted, and several peace treaties have been negotiated, signed, and broken. The United Nations and its organs, as well as many nations, have attempted different strategies and solutions, but evidently, the issue is far from resolved, and the over one million internally displaced people and refugees still haven't returned home.

Ever since president Ange-Felix Patasse was sworn in as president of the Central African Republic in 1993, many coups arose due to varied reasons such as unpaid wages, mismanagement of the government, and corruption. In 2003, Francois Bozize and his rebel forces took over the CAR capital of Bangui, ousted president Patasse, and declared himself president. A transitional government, an emergency government set up during political transitions, was immediately established until 2005, when Bozize won presidential elections. This, however, did not mean political stability and an end to rebels. Different rebel groups continued to carry out violent attacks on CAR army camps and take over numerous cities. In 2007, the Birao Peace Agreement was signed, which was a peace agreement between CAR and UFDR rebels. The main goal was for the rebels to cease violent military operations in the country, and consisted of reintegration of UFDR soldiers into the CAR army, an amnesty, and permission of political participation of the UFDR in the CAR. Later, in 2008, the Libreville Comprehensive Peace Agreement was signed between the CAR and three rebel groups, which, similar to the Birao Peace Agreement, also called for disarmament and reintegration of rebel combatants into the CAR army.

However, in 2013, the Seleka overthrew president Bozize over accusations of violations of peace agreements signed throughout his presidency. The rebel group took over the capital of Bangui and the leader of the Seleka, Michel Djotodia, declared himself president. Fighting among numerous rebel groups, namely the Seleka and Anti-balaka, ensued, including mass killings and human rights violations on the verge of genocide. As violent internal conflict between rebel groups escalates, the international community was quick to implement military intervention. However, UN peacekeeping forces proved ineffective after reports of the UN peacekeepers themselves abusing and raping the civilians emerged. In the midst of conflict in 2014, the Seleka forces and Anti-balaka forces conducted ceasefire talks in Brazzaville, but conflict continued as the ceasefire quickly crumbled. Later in May of 2015, the Bangui National Forum was held by the CAR government, which led to the signing of the Republic Pact for Peace, National Reconstruction and Reconciliation. Furthermore, an agreement on DDR between the government and nine of the ten forces that participated in the forum was formed. According to UNICEF, over 6,000 child soldiers were also released by the Seleka and Anti-balaka. Due to the recent withdrawal of many foreign forces in the CAR, there has been an increase of violent conflict, showing that the crisis is far from over yet. The UNHCR stated in September 2017 that since the beginning of the crisis in 2013, the CAR is currently at the highest level of displacement, at more than a million people.

Major Countries and Organizations Involved

African Union (AU)

The African Union (AU) is a union that consists of all the countries on the continent of Africa. In December of 2013, Security Council resolution 2127 was passed, which supported the African Union's deployment of the African-led International Support Mission in the Central African Republic, also referred to as MISCA. The peacekeeping mission consisted of troops from AU's prior established peacekeeping mission of Multinational Force of Central Africa (FOMAC) as well as from France. The Peace and Security Council (PSC), an organ of the AU has also convened multiple times to discuss plans on ceasefire and protection of civilians. The PSC is currently working on plans to implement its Roadmap for Peace and Reconciliation in the CAR, but will be difficult considering the many failed ceasefires and constant resurgence of violence throughout the history of the war-torn nation.

Cameroon

Cameroon, a country that is immediately east of the CAR currently houses approximately 274,000 refugees that fled the CAR in the midst of chaos and violence. While fleeing to neighboring countries may mean some degree of peace and security, it definitely does not mean a better life. During the peak of the conflict in 2013-2014, the CAR was a subject of global attention, and people and organizations all around the world were quick to donate large amounts of money to help refugees. However, recently, the crisis in CAR is slowly being forgotten. Funding from the Bekou Trust Fund of the European Commission stopped in June of 2017, and according to the UNHCR, donations only met 5% of the necessary amount to sustain the refugee camps. As Cameroon also has to deal with widespread poverty themselves, extreme lack of development in the refugee camps continue to pose serious problems, and the crowded camps often lack basic necessities such as water, food, and firewood. Overall, civilians of the CAR that have fled as refugees are not necessarily in better living conditions due to poverty and lack of attention from authorities and the international community.

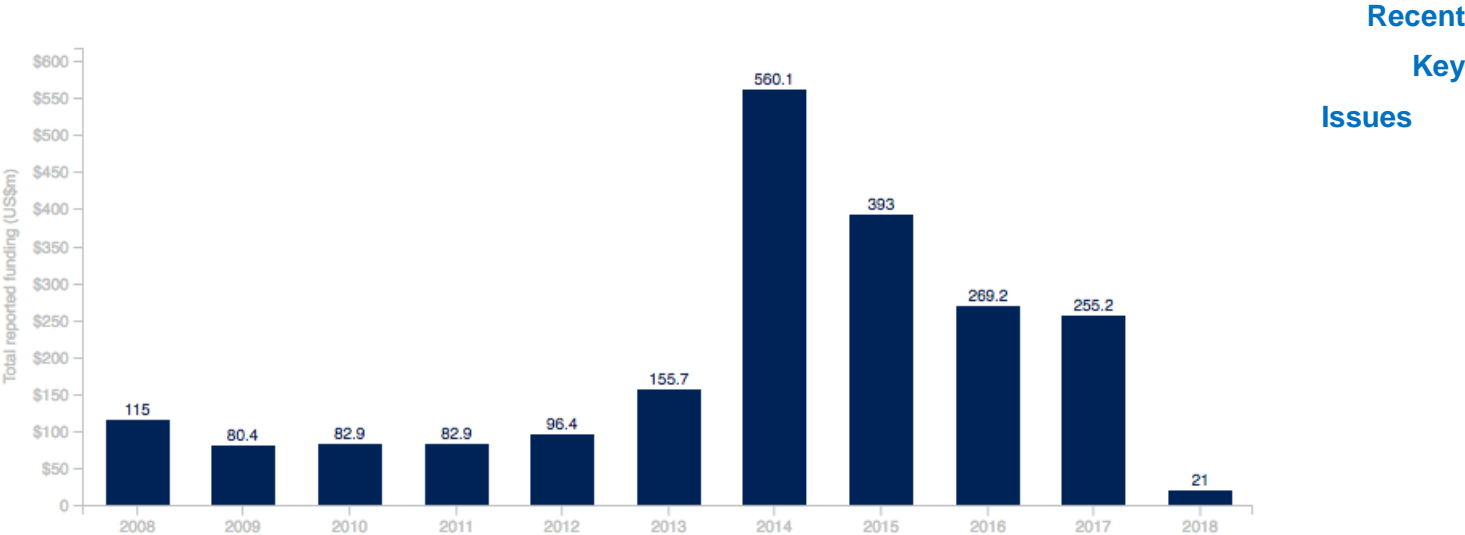
France

France has contributed a considerable amount of military and economic aid to the crisis in the CAR, and is in fact the only country that has an embassy in the capital of Bangui. As part of the MISCA peacekeeping mission, France has deployed troops in the CAR as part of Operation Sangaris in December of 2013, which was the seventh military intervention by France since the CAR's independence in 1960, further outlining the countless conflicts that occurred in the CAR. In January of 2014, UN Security Council resolution 2134 called upon the deployment of European Union Force RCA, also known as EUFOR RCA, which initially consisted of approximately 150 troops, mostly contributed by France and Estonia. As of now, French soldiers are still participating in the European Union Training Mission in the Central African Republic (EUTM RCA) and French troops are still part of the MINUSCA peacekeeping mission.

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

The UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, has taken much actions to help the near half a million refugees that have fled the CAR. The UN program has provided necessities such as sleeping mats and plastic sheeting, and has also drilled many wells to curtail the spread of water-borne diseases due to widespread water use from the unclean waters of the Ubangi River. Despite all these actions, refugee programs for refugees from the CAR are still largely underfunded. The UNHCR along with other organizations appealed for 9 million US dollars in 2017, but by October of 2017, only 9% of those funds have been met. Continued flow of refugees out of the CAR and into neighboring countries such as Cameroon, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, and the Republic of Congo is becoming increasingly difficult to sustain due to drastic decreases of necessary funding. As seen from data by the Financial Tracking Service (FTS), funding to the CAR peaked in 2014 during the most intense period of conflict, then was reduced by nearly half by 2017.

Caption 1: Funding by year to the Central African Republic as recorded by the FTS



Recent
Key
Issues

Continued Conflict and Weak Justice System

While the situation in the CAR is often referred to as post-conflict, conflict among the government, other militias, and UN peacekeepers are still ongoing in the nation. Many who have previously committed crimes and human rights violations have been linked to ongoing armed violence. Clearly, these people must be held accountable for their crimes, as they appear to continue to commit numerous crimes and human rights abuses. However, resources are lacking for judicial authorities to investigate crimes in detail, and witnesses and victims deny testimony in fear of facing reprisal attacks. Outside of the capital of Bangui, where many regions are controlled by armed forces, these forces take charge of the judicial system, and can make decisions on impunity themselves. Prison conditions throughout the nation were also poor and only eight out of the 38 detention facilities in the nation remains functional. Abuse of prisoners by prison guards is prevalent, and also causes attempted prison breaks.

Poverty

Poverty is one of the glaring issues in the Central African Republic today. The nation's GDP per capita is \$380 USD, extremely low compared to the world average of \$15,800 USD. The CAR is in fact abundant in natural resources such as gold, diamonds, and uranium, which would yield much profit to the nation if managed properly. However, due to widespread conflict in the region, there is a lack of infrastructure to extract and distribute these resources. Poverty leads to the vicious cycle of the inability to build infrastructure and reinstate peace and security in the nation, thus causing more widespread poverty. With the lack of infrastructure, healthcare is clearly also lacking, and this only serves to worsen the ongoing HIV/AIDS epidemic in the CAR. 4.7% of the adult population has the disease and approximately 11,000 were killed in 2012 as a result. Apart from HIV/AIDS, protozoal diarrhea, dengue, malaria, typhoid fever, hepatitis A and E, rabies, and so on, are also prevalent in the CAR, further reflecting on its complete lack of sufficient sanitation infrastructure. Furthermore, the CAR is also severely underfunded, and as funds continue to decrease, it is becoming increasingly difficult for assistance to reach the nation.

Environment

The environment only further contributes to instability in the already war-torn nation. Exploitation of resources in the nation such as poaching and deforestation has led to desertification and soil erosion. Despite the wet climate of CAR, its tap water is unsafe to drink and widespread lack of infrastructure also prevents the filtration of water for safe use. Clearly, environmental issues are only exacerbating the current situation as it decreases health of the citizens and minimizes arable land for self use and profit.

Refugee Camps

As aforementioned, over a million people are currently displaced as a result of this conflict, and approximately half of them currently seek shelter in refugee camps in neighboring countries. According to Amnesty International, at least 2.3 million people both inside and outside of the CAR need humanitarian assistance. Funding has only been going downhill, and is recently at its lowest point. Neighboring countries to the CAR and the international community must take action to increase funding so as to provide sufficient resources for those living in refugee camps.

Timeline of Events

Date	Description of event
August 13, 1960	The Central African Republic gained independence.
October 22, 1993	Ange-Felix Patasse is sworn in as president of CAR.

May 1996	Soldiers stage mutiny in Bangui over unpaid wages.
December 2000	Riots occur over accusations of mismanagement and corruption of Patasse.
May 28, 2001	Failed coup staged by former CAR president Andre Kolingba kills 59.
March 15, 2003	President Patasse is ousted after Bozize takes over Bangui and declares himself as president.
March 13, 2005	Francois Bozize wins presidential election and is officially sworn in.
October 31, 2006	Rebels seize the city of Birao along with other nearby towns.
April 1, 2007	The Birao Peace Agreement is signed between the UFDR and CAR government.
May 9, 2008	The Libreville Comprehensive Peace Agreement is signed
December 2012	Seleka rebel group becomes active and starts seizing towns and working towards taking over Bangui and overthrowing Bozize
March 24, 2013	The Seleka takes over Bangui and Michel Djotodia declares himself president.
September 13, 2013	Djotodia dissolves the Seleka, but the rebel fighters scattered across the country continue to fight with the Anti-balaka and conduct mass killings
December 5, 2013	UN Security Council resolution 2127 calls upon deployment of MISCA
January 10, 2014	Michel Djotodia resigns as president of CAR over criticisms of failure to control conflict and bloodshed in the country. Catherine Samba-Panza takes over as interim leader
January 28, 2014	UN Security Council resolution 2134 approves deployment of EU intervention troops in the CAR
July 21, 2014	Three day ceasefire negotiation between the Seleka and Anti-balaka begins in Brazzaville
November 29, 2015	Pope visits the CAR in Bangui as he declared himself a "pilgrim of peace and an apostle of hope."
March 30, 2016	Current president Faustin-Archange Touadera is inaugurated after winning presidential election

September 15, 2017

UNHCR states that displacement of CAR people has reached record high since the beginning of the conflict, at over 1.1 million people

UN Involvement, Relevant Resolutions, Treaties and Events

- Security Council Resolution 2127, 5 December 2013 **(S/RES/2127)**

The resolution called upon the deployment of MISCA, created methods of more effective and efficient humanitarian assistance, and established embargoes and sanctions. This was only one of the approximately 25 Security Council resolutions passed on the CAR since 1997, most of which included the topic of military intervention.

- Security Council Resolution 2134, 28 January 2014 **(S/RES/2134)**

This resolution renewed the mandate of United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic (BINUCA), and authorized EU military intervention. Upon adoption of resolution 2149 in April of 2014, BINUCA has already been integrated into MINUSCA.

- Security Council Resolution 2301, 26 July 2015 **(S/RES/2301)**

The resolution renewed the mandate of MINUSCA. The mandate of MINUSCA has been renewed many times and its troops increased on multiple occasions, reflecting on the complexity of the long-standing crisis.

Possible Solutions

One solution would be to have NGOs lead the process of rebuilding the government and facilitate negotiations between the Seleka and Anti-balaka. Due nature of NGOs as lacking affiliation with any government, NGOs can act as an unbiased party in resolving conflict among rebel groups and the government. Furthermore, without being led by a government, they do not violate the sovereignty of the CAR, and can assist in reconstruction of the government in a relatively unopposed manner. However, most NGOs provide humanitarian aid such as basic necessities including food and shelter, and work in the short-term until the government or other larger organizations replace it. NGOs may struggle to restore political stability as it would mean long term help in the CAR, without a government to replace it in the long-term. It would not just be humanitarian assistance, but also political and military restoration.

As two main parties in the CAR crisis, negotiation and peace between the Seleka and Anti-balaka are extremely important to resolving the issue at hand. Very few talks have taken place between the rebel groups, and ceasefire deals have never lasted long. They must be more actively pushed towards negotiation, and the current CAR government and other religious leaders must mediate between the two parties to resolve political and religious differences. Furthermore, the International Criminal Court (ICC) must hold people and groups that

have previously committed atrocities responsible for their actions. These people must be brought to justice to enforce laws and to prevent similar events from repeating itself.

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Forum: Security Council

Issue: Writing Chair Reports for TASMUN - Situation in Yemen

Chair: Claire Toh & Henri Reyes

Introduction

Dubbed “the worst in the world” by UN agencies ever since the eruption of the Arab Spring in 2010, the crisis in Yemen manifests itself not only as a messy conflict between various parties but as a grave humanitarian crisis and blatant disregard for war ethics.

The conflict stems from religious divide within the nation, with a rebel group known as the Houthis emerging from the Arab Spring with resentment towards the economic and political reforms it brought. Backed by Iran, a country sharing the Houthis adherence to Shiite Muslim, the rebels fight against the Yemen government, endorsed notably by Saudi Arabia. The Saudis, backed by various Middle Eastern countries and world leaders like the US and UK, currently face controversy surrounding their airstrikes on Yemen soil, only adding to the complexity of the situation. With neither side willing to give in and the ever-looming threat of Al-Qaeda, the crisis in Yemen shows no signs of stopping.

Along with the militarial aspect of the conflict, the war between the Houthis and the Yemen government brings with it an alarming humanitarian crisis. UN estimates total casualties since 2016 alone at 11,000. Many of these casualties were due to Saudi-led coalition airstrikes. Yemen ranking 168 out of 188 on the Human Development Index in 2015, measuring general quality of life, does little to aid the 42% of its population in poverty, approximates the Rural Poverty Portal. Citizens with cholera and other diseases lack proper medical assistance amidst a raging war. Demonstrable violations of the laws of war, including 18 unlawful strikes on civilian sites, only help to worsen the condition for the innocents caught in the crossfire.

Definition of Key Terms

Sectarian conflict

Sectarian conflicts are communal conflicts arising from the perceived differences in the sects within a particular region of a nation--in the case of Yemen, the conflict stemming from fundamental belief-oriented disputes that have manifested themselves in war.

Proxy War

A proxy war is defined as a war where none of the parties directly engages in the combat. The term can also be used when defining two warring sides engage in a conflict in a territory where neither side claims to control.

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

This term refers to anyone who has lost their home and is currently on the loose within their home country. A refugee would be referring to one that is encountering the same situations but has already crossed the borders of his/her home country.

Houthis

The Houthis are one of the major rebelling forces of Yemen. It is a Shia rebel faction in conflict with the Yemeni government and Al-Qaeda since 2004. Strongly in line with Shiite beliefs (specifically a sect known as Zaydi), the Houthis are militarily and financially endorsed by Iran, which shares similar religious beliefs.

General Overview

Historical context

Yemen

Originally ruled by a monarch in the north and the British in the south, Yemen suffered from numerous coups sentencing the country to decades of violence. President Saleh, later ousted from the presidency following the Arab Spring, is inaugurated in North Yemen during this time. It is worth noting that estimates place North Yemen's population at around 12 million, while both north and south unified in 1990, existing tensions between the nation and regional enemies, as well as domestic issues persisted - notably the 1992 food price riots, has since accentuated with the dawn of 2010. The unification was short lived, however, when president Saleh subdued a rebelling South Yemen proclaiming independence led by former vice president Ali Salim al-Baid, reasserting control over the region.

Following this coerced reunification, Saleh leads guerilla strikes on Shia rebels at odds with his actions towards al-Baid and other South Yemen leaders in Aden, who had deemed the North as "ignoring the needs of the south". The time between this dissolution of South power and 2010, minor conflicts between factions sprung up throughout the country. Riots on humanitarian issues like food prices and cuts on fuel subsidies ensue, as well as the displacement of persons due to conflict numbering in the thousands. Saleh wins another election, Al-Qaeda attacks threaten US navy operations and the tourism industry, and by the time the Arab Spring rolls around Yemen is stirring with a need for reform. This is where the current civil war picks up, and where peace and security are more important than ever before.

Saleh presidency

On the 5th of December, President Saleh was assassinated following his public separation from the Houthis, whom which he had previously declared allies. Saleh's death contributed greatly to accentuate already turbulent conditions in Yemen for citizens--but his largest changes took place during a rule of 33 years prior to 2012, at which point he handed off the presidency to his vice president Hadi. He was considered by many a dictator, plundering billions of dollars from the nation and managing the country's economic situation poorly, especially during the Arab Spring.

Up to 2012, however, Saleh experienced large success in his presidency; re-elections in both 1983 and 1988, as well as being named the president of a unified Yemen in 1990, allowed Saleh to continue rule untouched for the most part. Saleh connected with world leaders like the United States, speaking with president George W. Bush on a \$400 million relief package to be delivered to Yemen, securing Saleh's position in international affairs as in the interest of Yemen. However, 2010 and the Arab Spring brought protests demanding constitutional reform in countries across the Middle-East/North Africa area--Yemen was no exception. Opposition to rule was stirred up in this time and culminated in a missile strike on capital, injuring Saleh and marking the tipping point for his decision to turn things over to Vice President Hadi.

Hadi presidency

The shift of power from Saleh to Vice President Hadi in 2012 was, as Rosie Perper from Business Insider puts it, "an internationally brokered move to foster stability in the region." In a time when Al-Qaeda were at their strongest than ever before, political unrest threatened national authority and the civil war had reached new heights, the transfer of Hadi both satiated the mounting resentment of Saleh's rule and gave Yemen hope for a brighter future. However, that hope was not met with the corresponding changes that Yemen needed. While Hadi struggled to "keep Yemen afloat", both socially and economically, the growing presence of Al-Qaeda and corruption stifling reform resulted in widespread poverty and unemployment. Eventually in 2014, the Houthis looking to exploit weakness in the Yemeni government, saw their opportunity and captured Sana'a. Hadi fled the city, calling it an unconstitutional coup d'état. He later returned when Saudi-led forces recaptured the city--but war with the Houthis was far from over.

Proxy war

Founded upon religious beliefs and a growing need for reform, Yemen's civil war has grown from a historically domestic issue into a far-reaching, international proxy war fuelling both sides.

The Houthis, Shiite Muslim in nature, are primarily backed by a likewise Shiite Iran. Originating from North Yemen, Iran has been accused of smuggling increasingly potent weapons to Houthi rebel groups, including "anti-ship and ballistic missiles, deadly sea mines and even explosive boats that have attacked allied ships in the Red Sea or Saudi territory across Yemen's northern border", according to Officer Kevin M. Donegan, a United States vice admiral situated in the region. Both Saudi Arabia and the Hadi government have criticized Iran's actions and point to Iran's use of the Houthis as a "puppet group" masked in a "relationship of mutual convenience", "akin to

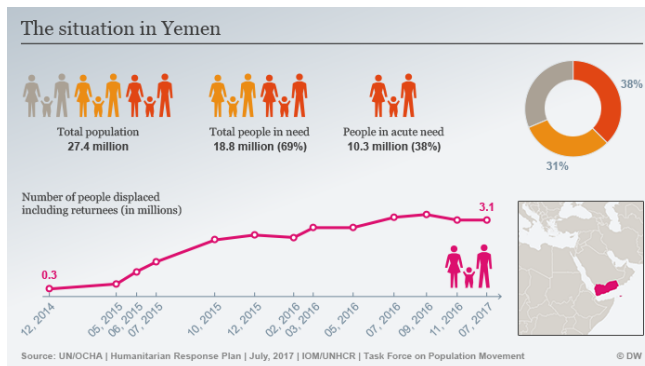
the Lebanese Shiite militant group Hezbollah”, according to Adam Baron, a visitor at the European Council on Foreign Relations. Such a relationship has been denied by Iran.

The Hadi presidency, the other major side to the battle, was backed by Saudi Arabia--in turn endorsed by nine African and Middle-eastern countries, as well as the US and UK--in 2015. The countries relayed financial, military and humanitarian aid through Saudi Arabia, a neighboring country to the crisis. It is unsure how much of this aid has actually been delivered (see *Possible Solutions* for more information). However, countries like Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates are taking matters into their own hands, conducting airstrikes targeting Houthi strongholds--though incidences of failed airstrikes costing civilian lives raises questions on the countries' intentions. Furthering this controversy is the Saudi's naval blockade, stemming the flow of resources into Yemen, including humanitarian aid.

As well as Saudi Arabia and its allies, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) launched an initiative they call “Operation Decisive Storm”, an effective war on the Houthis and their supporters in Yemen to help the country stabilize and prevent another humanitarian catastrophe. While less direct than measures employed by Saudi Arabia and its allies, the GCC's broad intentions make it worth keeping an eye on.

Problems raised

According to the Rural Poverty Portal in 2015, “an estimated 42 percent of the people [in Yemen are poor, and one Yemeni in five is malnourished”. Furthermore, “only 0.7 percent of rural people have access to sanitation services”, according to the same source. These numbers have no doubt since increased in recent years. Further illustrating the intensity of the civil war in recent years is casualties: since 2016, about 4,000 have been killed and 7,000 wounded, according to the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)--the majority of which were due to coalition airstrikes. Total numbers equate to 10,000 dead with over



40,000 wounded.

Demonstrable violations of the laws of war are rampant throughout Yemen, including but not limited to: “laying banned anti-personnel landmines, mistreating detainees, and launching indiscriminate rockets into populated areas in Yemen and southern Saudi Arabia, killing hundreds of civilians”. Such acts, as reported by the Human Rights Watch in 2016, refer solely to those committed on the Houthi side. However, the Hadi presidency and its backers have their share of war crimes: the Human Rights Watch also investigated 18 apparently unlawful strikes, some of which used US or UK-supplied weapons, on 14 civilian economic sites. The

strikes “killed 130 civilians and wounded 173 more”; such attacks, seemingly deliberate, only add to and accentuate the poverty many Yemeni citizens already are in.

Along with war crimes, the cholera outbreak in Yemen, deemed one of the worst in the world by the UN, currently afflicts 400,000 Yemeni citizens and has killed roughly 1,900. This is especially alarming due to the shortage in medical supplies, notably Doctors Without Borders retracting aid after two years, threatening the Yemen national blood bank. Furthermore, the airport in Sana’a, has been closed since 2016 to hinder arms shipments to Houthi forces. Its closure also blocks humanitarian aid to Yemen--evoking a sense of panic to the rising number of Yemeni citizens without substantial healthcare.

Key Players

Saudi Arabia

As discussed earlier, Saudi Arabia is the main backing force behind the Hadi presidency, funneling resources donated by allies through to Yemen directly. Their alliance with the Yemeni government dates back to the summer of 2015, where they helped Hadi supporters restore control of Aden after losing it to Houthi forces in the area. By early 2017, their pro-government forces had secured sections of the Red Sea, yet remained stalled in Central Yemen.

However, Saudi Arabia's motives have been questionable in recent times. The inexperience of Saudi pilots, fearful of enemy ground fire, leads to high-altitude bombing runs. This results in decreased accuracy and higher chances of accidental civilian bombing, of which Saudi Arabia has done on numerous occasions. While not an easily fixed problem the consistency of these ‘accidental bombings’ invites skepticism on Saudi Arabia's true motives; as Mark Mazzetti and Eric Schmitt for the New York Times put, “American advisers suggested how the pilots could safely fly lower, among other tactics. But the airstrikes still landed on markets, homes, hospitals, factories and ports.” The Saudi's naval blockade has also posed issues for the civilian population through bottlenecking imports, including humanitarian aid--in November 2017, Saudi Arabia agreed to partially relax its naval blockade preventing aid from entering the country, but the issue of starvation and poverty still remains.

But do the Houthis *themselves* give reason for the Saudis to participate to such an extent in Yemen's civil war? As April Longley Alley of the International Crisis Group reasons, “The Houthis do pose threats to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's (KSA) national security interests, not least because they are unlikely to allow KSA to pull the strings in Yemen or have the influence KSA once had.. but whatever diagnosis of the threat, the reaction was a war of choice that is having devastating consequences for Yemen and Saudi security.”

Al Qaeda

The Al Qaeda is a terrorist group that is currently thriving in an environment of state collapse, growing sectarianism, shifting alliances, security vacuums, and a burgeoning war economy. This terrorist group consists of subgroups that targets the people of different countries in the middle east that is currently going through crisis. The Yemeni civil war hence created conditions that enabled the Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) to expand its power. The process of counterterrorism against AQAP slowed as the Saudi-led coalition and Hadi government prioritized the civil war. AQAP took advantage of the focus on the fight against the al Houthi-Saleh bloc and seized control of Yemen's third-largest port city for over a year. The protracted war and absence of national political resolution aided the AQAP to remerge. They were able to adapt to the rapidly shifting political terrain, modifying into an insurgent movement capable of controlling territory and challenging state authority. AQAP was able to work within local norms, forging alliances with Sunni allies, assimilating into militias and embedding themselves in a political economy of smuggling and trade that spans the various fighting factions, including the former President Saleh alliance. It had controlled territory in South Yemen and appears embedded in the fabric of opposition to the Houthi/Saleh alliance (dominant in North Yemen), that is fighting the internationally recognised, Saudi-backed interim government of President Hadi.

United States

The United States, indirectly involved with perpetuating the Yemen conflict by supporting Saudi Arabia with weaponry, wrestles with the dilemma of being criticised for war crimes while maintaining a long-lasting relationship with Saudi Arabia. It should be noted that they have accepted the international definition of war crimes to include “practical assistance, encouragement or moral support’ [as] sufficient to determine liability for war crimes”, as stated in an email between US and Yemen officials referencing a 2013 war crimes trial (Warren Strobel, Jonathan Landay for Reuters). Since March 2015, they joined the Saudi-led movement backing the Hadi presidency, supplying over \$22.2 billion in weapons sales, with \$1.29 billion in precision munitions replenishing Yemen-based supplies. As of 2017, Saudi Arabia agreed to another \$7 billion worth of these precision munitions, a generally frowned-upon sale considering the growing controversy due high civilian casualties.

Caught in conflicting interests, the Obama Administration considered both sides of the narrative. They believed the ensuing chaos from the Yemen civil war would allow gains from terrorist groups, yet still decided to support the Saudi effort with “refueling, logistics and intelligence support in 2015” to 1) “show solidarity with a longstanding ally” and 2) “reassure Riyadh [Saudi Arabia’s capital] in the wake of [their differing stances on] the Iran nuclear deal” (Mark Mazzetti and Eric Schmitt for the New York Times). Concerning the US’ relations with Iran, Adam Baron, a visitor at the European Council on Foreign Relations warns, “there is nothing the Iranians would like more than to drag the US into Yemen”. Both rising civilian casualties attributed to Saudi-led bombings and UN criticism of such led the US to second-guess its unqualified support of Saudi Arabia, deciding to deintensify military operations supporting Saudi

bombings in June 2016, as well as blocking the sale of 16,000 guided munitions December of the same year.

All in all, as a world leader and one deeply involved in the Situation in Yemen, the US is caught in a predicament--they must deeply consider the ramifications of their actions in both support and military operations, maintain relationships with allies, all while contributing to humanitarian efforts in the region.

Timeline of Events

Date	Description of Event
1978	Ali Abdullah Saleh president of North Yemen
1986	President Muhammad flees country, sentenced to death Saleh declares state of emergency
May 1994	Northern forces capture Aden
May-July 1994	US navy vessel damaged in Al-Qaeda attack
October 2000	Saleh wins elections
September 2006	Saleh launches fresh attacks against Shia rebels in Sadaa province
August 2009	Arab Spring began
2010	Bombs found on Yemeni US-bound plane
October 2010	
June 2011	Protests become prevalent within the country
September 2014	Houthi rebels take control of Sana'a
26 March 2015	GCC airstrikes commence

April 2015	Resolution 2216 passed (Russian Federation abstains)
11 May 2015	Saleh declares alliance with Houthis
17 May 2015	Houthis boycott dialogue at capital
June 2016	US drone strike kills leader of the AQAP
November 2016	Houthis form new government, ignoring UN peace process
29 January 2017	Trump authorizes raid on Yakla
5 December 2017	Former President Saleh killed by Houthis rebels
Jan 24, 2018	Yemen Al-Qaeda leader calls for attacks on Jews

UN Involvement, Relevant Resolutions, Treaties and Events

- Resolution 2014 (passed unanimously in 2011)

This resolution calls to an end to violence, acceptance of the GCC's peace plan with orderly transfer of power. The resolution condemns the so-called human rights violation by authorities and abuses by other actors, in Yemen following months of political strife, the UNSC demanded that all sides adopt the actions mentioned above.

- Resolution 2140 (passed unanimously in 2014)

This resolution welcomes the progress within Yemen's political transition and expressed strong support for completion of future decisions, such as drafting a new constitution, and holding a referendum as well as general elections. The UNSC encourages all the country's constituencies, including youth and women's groups, to continue their active and constructive engagement in Yemen's political transition.

- Resolution 2201 (passed unanimously in 2015)

This resolution demands members of the Houthi group to withdraw from government institutions. This releases President Hadi and other members of the same party from house arrest and engage in good terms in UN-brokered negotiations designed to keep the fracturing Middle Eastern country on a steady path towards democratic transition.

- Resolution 2216 (passed in 2015// Russian Federation Abstained)

This resolution reinforced the main points of resolution 2014 and included sanctions on key figures in militia operations. The resolution further states that all parties must immediately and unconditionally end violence and refrain from further unilateral actions that threatened the political transition.

Possible Solutions

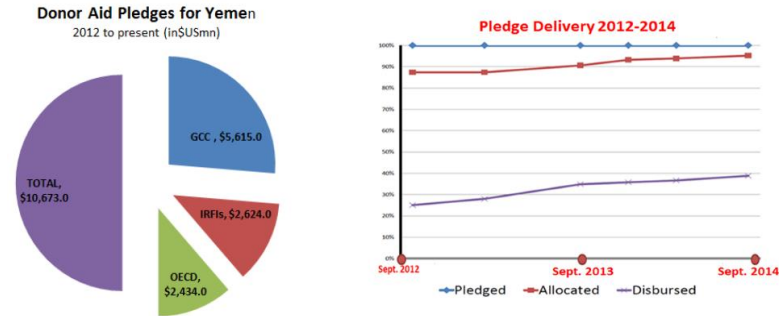
The consensus within the international community, as with many topics discussed in Model United Nations, is that if a simple and effective solution existed it would have been discovered by now. It's ultimately up to delegates to come up with creative, thoughtful solutions that, through debate and lobbying, are refined to a state that deserves genuine consideration in implementation--but a few possible areas of improvement are discussed briefly here.

Concerning Al-Qaeda and their movement, the International Crisis Group conducted a report on the terrorist group in Yemen, the solution to which they describe as "an overarching political settlement that has buy-in from the country's diverse constituencies, including Sunni Islamists". Delegates should further expand and specify what this 'political settlement' will entail. As implementation of such a 'settlement' will take time, they recommend taking steps restricting Al-Qaeda's growth, including the improvement of governance in impoverished areas as well as consolidating the military power that has sparked such controversy in its usage. Methods to decrease civilian casualties as a byproduct of military-based attempts at combating Al-Qaeda, such as was the case with the 29 January 2017 raid on their affiliates in the Yakla area of the Al-Bayda province, should also be of the highest importance.

The humanitarian crisis in Yemen has sparked numerous inventive strategies to more efficiently transport aid into and across the country. One such project, underway since 24 January, 2018, is a road costing \$5 million that links the North and South of Yemen. This critical road infrastructure, the ambassador of Yemen Comprehensive Humanitarian Operations (YCHO) predicts, "will create 15,000 new job opportunities for the people of Yemen and... will link comprehensive humanitarian relief efforts from north to south" (Noor Nugali, for Arab News). Other methods of ensuring safe and timely delivery of aid could be utilizing drones to deliver supplies in mass quantities across the country, or implementation of short-term, fertile agricultural alternatives to the war-torn farmland that currently limits food growth in Yemen--though the economic ramifications of both should be further investigated.

Another possible issue concerning the humanitarian crisis that could be addressed in solutions is the disparity between pledged donation amounts and how much has actually been delivered to Yemen itself. As the World Bank estimates, since September 2012 over \$10.6 billion has been pledged by donors supporting Yemen's transition, yet just shy of 40% has actually been delivered, mostly as direct budget support from countries like Saudi Arabia. This poses issues not only to the citizens of Yemen who desperately need such aid,

but puts the accountability and efficiency of both organizations and countries responsible for distributing these resources into question. As demonstrated in the visual, donations--especially those supporting economic reform or humanitarian assistance--appear sufficient on paper but lack in execution.



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