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РАЗВИТИЕ ПОЛИТИЧЕСКОГО КРИЗИСА В ЙЕМЕНЕ ПОСЛЕ 2015 ГОДА: РЕАЛЬНОСТЬ И ПРИЧИНЫ

В статье анализируется развитие политического кризиса в Йемене после 2015 года, который вновь всплыл на поверхность одновременно с началом так называемых революций «арабской весны», путем изучения его внутренних и внешних детерминант, а также его политических, экономических и социальных аспектов. Йемен, как и другие арабские страны, находится в состоянии кризиса в своих внутренних и внешних отношениях с момента создания современного йеменского государства в 1918 году и до сих пор, и это отражается на нынешней йеменской сцене и предыдущих исторических событиях, которые бросают тень на единство государства в политическом, географическом и социальном плане. Среди причин этих внезапных протестов и революций были распространение коррупции, экономический застой и плохие условия жизни, а также политические ограничения и в целом плохие условия жизни в арабских странах. Эти протесты распространились в ряде арабских стран, в том числе в Йемене, стране сложного характера с такими проблемами, как проблемы хуситов с правящим режимом и присутствием в стране элементов Аль-Каиды.

Страна вступила в политический кризис с множеством партий внутри страны и различными альянсами за рубежом. Таким образом, исследование стремится доказать, что кризис в Йемене был осложнен внешним вмешательством, что привело к внутренним и внешним последствиям для страны и региона.

Ключевые слова: Йемен, кризис, Саудовская Аравия, Иран, хуситы.

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DEVELOPMENTS IN YEMEN'S POLITICAL CRISIS AFTER 2015: REALITY AND CAUSES

This article analyses and discusses the developments of the political crisis in Yemen after 2015, which resurfaced coinciding with the outbreak of the so-called Arab Spring revolutions, by examining its internal and external determinants and its political, economic and social dimensions. Yemen, like other Arab countries, has been in a state of crisis in its internal and external relations since the establishment of the modern Yemeni state in 1918 until now, and this is reflected in the current Yemeni scene and previous historical events that cast a shadow on the unity of the state politically, geographically, and socially. Among the reasons for these sudden protests and revolutions were the spread of corruption, economic stagnation, and poor living conditions, as well as political restrictions and generally poor conditions in Arab countries. These protests have spread in a number of Arab countries, including Yemen, a country of complex nature with problems such as the Houthis' problem with the ruling regime, and the presence of Al-Qaeda elements in the country.

The country entered into a political crisis with multiple parties at home and divergent alliances abroad. Therefore, the study seeks to prove that the crisis in Yemen was complicated by external intervention instead of solving it, imposing internal and external repercussions on the country and the region.

Key words: Yemen, Crisis, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Houthis.

Introduction. The crisis began with the Yemeni youth revolt against President Ali Abdullah Saleh, who led Yemen for more than 33 years after Saleh left power in early 2012 as part of a mediated agreement between the ruling authority and opposition groups, led by then Vice President Abd Rabbuh Mansour Hadi, who struggled to unify the country's divided political landscape and ward off threats from both AQAP and the Houthis, who had been engaged in the Saada conflict for several years, in 2014, Houthi fighters launched the Battle of Sanaa (2014), and entered negotiations with President Hadi on a «national unity government» with other political factions while the Houthis continued their oppression. These developments led to sharp regional reactions, including a military intervention by the «Decisive Storm» coalition of ten countries led by Saudi Arabia, where the Yemeni crisis is worsening with its bloody chapters that leave daily deaths and injuries, destruction and hunger in various Yemeni regions. The crisis turned into a bloody tragedy after the failure of a political solution and the start of a Saudi-led war against the Houthis and their allies.

The Historical Roots of the Yemeni Crisis. Even before the Arab Spring in 2011, the Republic of Yemen and its 28 million people had experienced several military cataclysms that had undermined the country's political system. Two civil wars were of particular significance: the 1994 war between the north and the south, and the 2004-2010

conflict between the government and the Houthis (known as the Ansar Allah movement since 2013). The war facilitated the transformation of an intrinsically culturally driven local movement within the country's Zaidi community, led by the prominent religious leader Hussein Badreddin al-Houthi, into a military-political force that received the support of this Shiite community. The war in the south of the country gave rise to a powerful separatist movement among the local population, and the Houthi war paved the way for a religion-fed conflict of identities between the traditional communities and the proselytising radical salafist groups led by the Muslim Brotherhood. The latter forms the religious core of the country's second most influential political party, the Islamic congregation al-Islah.

That split caused the tandem of the country's two largest political forces, al-Islah and the General People's Congress (GPC), to fall apart. Al-Islah's tribal wing, led by the clan of the al-Ahmar sheikhs, became fierce opponents to the clan of the country's former president, Ali Abdullah Saleh. Against the background of these problems, al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), a Yemen-based terrorist organization, had gained so much strength by 2010 as to be declared the most serious security threat to the United States and Saudi Arabia.

The current Yemeni crisis dates back to 2011 when popular protests, known as the «Yemeni Youth Revolution», began against former President Ali Abdullah Saleh. In 2012, President Saleh relinquished the presidency under an agreement that transferred power to his deputy, Abdullah Mansour Hadi. However, the agreement collapsed when the Ansar Allah (Houthis) attacked Sana'a and other areas and took control of large areas of Yemen.

This new situation took another turn with the beginning of the air strikes led by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia under the name «Decisive Storm». This is at a time when the Yemeni crisis is unfolding in its bloody chapters, which has left the Yemeni people devastated, and the crisis has turned into a bloody tragedy after the failure of the political solution. After we have learnt about the history of the Yemeni conflict and the Yemeni crisis, we must address the causes and repercussions of the Yemeni crisis, which we will mention in the second section as follows:

Causes and repercussions of the Yemen crisis. The Yemeni crisis is at a critical turning point, making it difficult to predict possible resolution scenarios. One reason for this difficulty is an inaccurate understanding of Yemeni society, both by its people and the international community. The belief that Yemen is a homogeneous society with limited differences oversimplifies the issues it faces, underestimating the seriousness of the crisis and its impact on the social fabric. In addition, the complexities of the crisis are often ignored and the overlapping responsibilities of those involved are often overlooked. The conflict in Yemen is not only driven by domestic factors, but is also influenced by international and regional dynamics. To effectively address the crisis, all three levels of actors must recognise their roles in triggering and perpetuating it, and work together to resolve it and mitigate its effects.

Yemen's poverty, both in terms of its national income and economy, has made it susceptible to the influence of international and regional actors. These global actors

have used Yemen as a part of their strategy to assert control over the country and other nations in the region. As a result, Yemen has lost its regional and international influence, and the international community has intervened in the country under the guise of humanitarian aid, often with hidden agendas related to intellectual invasion and cultural change. The internal war and military intervention in Yemen have further aggravated regional conflicts, which have had direct implications on the situation in the Middle East and North Africa. Additionally, the role of the United Nations in managing the transition has been significant. Overall, Yemen's vulnerability and the conflicts it faces have highlighted the need for democratic change and intensified regional contradictions.

The transitional phase in Yemen began after the February 2011 revolution against former President Ali Abdullah Saleh's regime. The revolution was triggered by protests and demonstrations that started in 2005, driven by issues such as rising oil prices, low income, unemployment, poverty, and corruption. Despite these challenges, the government has implemented various programs to address these issues, including specialized training and mobilizing the Southern Movement, which started as a demand for human rights but evolved into political demands. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Social Affairs, Ministry of Justice, and other government departments have been involved in organizing these initiatives. The amnesty granted in Tunisia in 2011 also gave Yemeni people hope for change without relying solely on opposition parties to take the lead.

The Yemeni crisis is a complex, multifaceted and intertwined complex consisting of both internal and external factors, the first of which is the struggle for power between the political forces in Yemen, which do not have a common national project even if they have a common national project. The absence of a common national project left even to a minimal extent, and the absence of an organised political space to organise the country's political system has greatly contributed to the severity of the conflict. The continued absence of this project makes the resolution of the crisis more complex and the achievement of lasting stability more elusive.

The second is epitomised by regional contradictions and conflicts, especially between Saudi Arabia and Iran, which are competing for the regional and political role towards in the context of international realities and developments and the unprecedented increase in security challenges in the Arab region.

The two sides of the Yemeni political conflict are divided by ideologies and doctrines and are unequal in terms of capabilities and possibilities, but they have in common that they are not ready to build a modern civilian state. They are unprepared to build a modern civil state, a state of law and order that represents the foundation of stability, equality, equal citizenship and equal opportunities.

Yemen is a significant part of the Arabian Peninsula's geography, culture, and history. Its accession to the GCC would bring strategic, security, economic, and social benefits, strengthening Gulf integration and enhancing performance in various fields. However, the GCC countries have excluded Yemen due to outdated and misguided

beliefs and narrow calculations, or at the very least, have not responded to regional and international changes.

Regarding the political developments in Yemen, the GCC countries will follow a unified position if the Ansar Allah movement (Houthis) takes control of the reins of government in Yemen and imposes its authority in practice.

Saudi Arabia and the UAE, along with Bahrain and Kuwait, preferred reforming the political system in Yemen over liberal democratic changes, but without enabling the Yemeni Islah Party to manage the next stage, and to serve this purpose the United Arab Emirates sought to a great extent Aim to establish a direct relationship with the «General People's Congress Party» and Saudi Arabia With the alliance of former President Ali Abdullah Saleh, although the Kingdom did not accept Saleh, who is at the same time the head of the General People's Congress Party, with the Ansar Allah group (Houthis), it saw this as a provocative act that threatens its security and determined a position This is from the former president on this basis, and this is what strengthened the position of the interim president. Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi and forced him to abandon his old and partisan relationship with former President Saleh and adopt an independent position, although it was not devoid of flexibility and closeness to the political leadership in Riyadh, while Qatar, which aspires to be a pivotal state in the region, supported the Yemeni Islah Party, just as it supported political Islam in all Arab Spring countries and tried to contain the Ansar Allah group (Houthis).

The keenness of some forces to retain power and the absence of a specific and clear United Nations strategy for the transitional period, despite the unified and consistent position of the Security Council regarding the political future of Yemen, greatly influenced the failure to achieve the political transition in in Yemen during the period stipulated in the Gulf Initiative and its mechanisms, and this in turn It not only affected the deterioration of the general situation in Yemen and left it out of control to dangerous levels, which gave Iran an appropriate opportunity to interfere in the political process in Yemen.

Iran attempted to exploit Yemen's absence from the GCC system and the country's internal conflicts to expand its influence and create a new political sphere in the region. Iran provided political and diplomatic support... The Ansar Allah group in Yemen has been impacted by military action due to their status as a sectarian minority with grievances and doctrinal differences with the prevailing doctrine in Saudi Arabia. This has raised concerns in the Gulf, particularly in Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and Kuwait, which have Shiite minorities. The withdrawal of the Islah Party from the military confrontation during the invasion of Sanaa by the Ansar Allah group changed the equation that many internal and external political parties were betting on and enabled Ansar Allah to... At the same time, he was able to seize power by force and expand into several regions of Yemen with ease.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has realized that the opposition of the Yemeni Islah Party led to Ansar Allah being able to control Yemen. In this case, it must reread its political reading of the Yemeni scene. And determine its position according to developments, and this is what made it work to find a cooperative relationship with the

Islah Party in confronting the enemy. It succeeded in doing so to a great extent, and this became clear through the Islah Party's announcement of its support for «Decisive Storm» and Riyadh's reception of the majority of its leaders and the provision of political and military support.

The Yemeni crisis has clear repercussions not only on Yemen and the Gulf states but also on the entire Arab regional system. The most prominent of these repercussions are:

- **Growing Iranian influence in the region:**

Since the outbreak of the «Yemeni Revolution» on February 11, 2011, Iran has been seeking to exploit the political instability in Sana'a in order to expand its influence in the region. In this context, Tehran provided financial, political and media support to Ansar Allah (Houthis), and also supported them with weapons. The Yemeni authorities intercepted a number of ships loaded with weapons on the coast of the Red Sea. Among them were ships that were seized carrying weapons in January 2013, including missiles and explosives, rocket shells, and the revelation that the source of those weapons was Iran, and that those weapons were destined for Ansar Allah (Houthis).

- **Impact on Gulf security:**

There is a Gulf need for a secure and stable Yemen in the face of common dangers. In addition to the importance of the Yemeni strategic location, and the vital area it represents, it overlooks the Red Sea, the Arabian Sea, and the Indian Ocean. The Gulf of Aden and the Bab al-Mandab Strait, the southern entrance to the Red Sea, represent double importance in securing the passage of international and regional sea vessels, in addition to the importance represented by the Gulf of Aden. Where it passes through and meets the three most important international maritime waterways, which are: the line coming from The Arabian Gulf, the line coming from East and Southeast Asia, and the line coming from East and South Africa to the Red Sea. These three lines affect navigation in the Red Sea, which represents a very vital waterway for maritime transport and global trade.

There are a number of geopolitical and economic repercussions of the Yemeni crisis on the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries. Yemen represents a barrier to the Gulf states from illegal immigration and terrorist organisations such as Al-Qaeda.

- **The exacerbation of terrorism:**

This matter is evident through the intensification of the conflict between Al-Qaeda in Yemen and the Ansar Allah group (Houthis). Their control of Sanaa led to an escalation in the danger and activity of the Al-Qaeda organization, and it also gave the conflict and its terrorist operations an ideological dimension, which generated some sympathy from the Yemenis, through the shadows. He pretended to be defending the Sunnis against the Shiite Ansar Allah (Houthis), and hence The organization is now fighting on two fronts in Yemen, one front against Ansar Allah (Houthis) and the other against the Yemeni government.

The Yemeni government monitored a number of terrorist incidents that took place in Yemen from January 1996 until December 2003, the most prominent of which were

two terrorist incidents that had a direct impact on the Yemeni economy. Yes, the first was the attack on the American destroyer (USS Cole) in the port of Aden in October 2000. The destroyer suffered human losses (17 sailors were killed and 28 others were injured). The second incident was the bombing of the French oil tanker «Limberg» in the port of Mukalla in Hadramaut Governorate in October. On the first day of 2002, which led to the burning of the tanker, the death of one person and the injury of 17 others.

Regional and International Dimensions of the Yemeni Crisis.

Regional Dimensions of the Yemen Crisis.

The dimensions of the Yemeni crisis in its current form are not only limited to an intra-power struggle, but also go beyond that as it poses a serious threat to regional security.

What is happening in Yemen, in terms of military confrontations and humanitarian conditions, constitutes a threat to the security of the Gulf. If some of the countries in the Arab region that experienced what was called the «Arab Spring,» such as Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya, were the hotbed of political conflicts. Therefore, the Middle East region, and the Gulf region in particular, constituted a more intense focus of tension due to the geo-strategic and economic nature of the region and the ambitions of external countries.

We consider that what is happening in Yemen in terms of conflicts and fighting raises several fundamental questions about the causes of the Yemeni crisis and its regional and international dimensions. In this context, the following question arises: Have the events that occurred in some Arab countries in the recent period weakened the ability of the Gulf states to deal with the military developments in the region at a time when the United States, Europe and its allies were busy fighting Islamic State groups in Iraq and Syria? Can Saudi Arabia play the role of policeman to maintain balance in the Gulf region?

Iranian dimension. The Yemeni crisis cannot be isolated from the regional context of the major political events that the Arab world has witnessed in recent years to form a new Middle East far from the leadership of the United States of America. On this basis, it can be said that the Yemeni conflict has an important geostrategic dimension, because Iran has been doing everything it can for years to have a presence in the Red Sea region. In the event that the Ansar Allah (Houthis) gain power in Yemen, this may constitute a region Iranian influence in the future and will have a vital movement between Europe and the Far East.

Hussein Badr al-Din al-Houthi – the older brother of Abdul-Malik Badr al-Din al-Houthi, the current leader of this movement since 1991 – founded the Al-Haq Party in Yemen and participated in the elections that took place in 1993, and became a member of the Yemeni parliament. Iran is betting a lot on Ansar Allah (Houthis) because they are trying to restore the Zaidi imamate movement that ruled Yemen until 1962.

In order to achieve this goal, Ansar Allah (Houthis) gathered momentum both as a fighting force and as a political movement, and took advantage of the security vacuum

created by the unrest in the country in 2011 in the context of the «Arab Spring.» They took advantage of the political stalemate that followed. This was clearly demonstrated when Ansar Allah (Houthis) took control of the capital, Sana'a, and seized the main Salafist institutions, in addition to controlling the headquarters of the Islah Party and Al-Iman University, which is a stronghold of the extremist Salafist cleric Abdul Majeed Al-Zindani and the headquarters of the 1st Armored Division led by Major General Ali Mohsen Al-Ahmar.

Decisive Storm. President Abd rabbuh Mansur Hadi requested, in a letter dated March 24, 2015, to the leaders of the Gulf Cooperation Council, calling for them to stand by the Yemeni people, protect them, and provide immediate support by all necessary means and measures to protect Yemen. As a threat to the aggression of the Houthi alliance and Ali Abdullah Saleh, in order to restore legitimacy in line with the support Internationally, through Resolution No.(2216) issued by the UN Security Council in 2015. Some believe that «Decisive Storm» was necessary to protect the security of Saudi Arabia first before protecting the security of the Gulf second.

Participating forces:

The military operation «Decisive Storm» began with the first air strikes directed by Saudi aircraft against the strongholds of the Houthi group in Yemen. The Arab Gulf states – except for Oman – participate in the bombing operations, and other countries are also present in the operation, which is expected to increase the size of the forces and participating countries as it continues. The total announced participation in the operation reached 185 combat aircraft, including 100 from Saudi Arabia, which is also mobilizing 150,000 fighters and naval units ready to participate if the military operation develops.

International dimensions of the Yemeni crisis.

The security vacuum in Yemen reflects international fears of losing control over the Gulf of Aden and the Bab al-Mandab Strait and their transformation into the dangers of terrorist operations and maritime piracy. This was clearly demonstrated when a group of pirates attacked a Co. oil tanker. Yatiya in the Gulf of Aden in February 2015.

Perhaps what is notable in this context is that the return of the phenomenon of maritime piracy in this vital region of the world has given the Yemeni crisis international dimensions in addition to its regional dimensions, as some observers believe that the aforementioned situation will threaten The global trade movement, where about 16 thousand commercial ships pass every year. During the Bab al-Mandab Strait, the return of maritime piracy will also lead to higher insurance costs for shipping companies.

In addition, despite some analysts ruling out the return of maritime piracy in light of the international interest in securing international trade movement in this region, especially with the presence of American, French, Iranian, and Turkish forces as part of an international coalition to combat piracy operations. On the other hand, a scenario emerges of international powers intervening in the Yemeni crisis by exerting international political and economic pressure on all parties to the Yemeni crisis.

On the other hand, the humanitarian-international dimension of the Yemeni crisis is highlighted, as the number of people infected with the cholera epidemic reached one million injured, according to the International Committee of the Red Cross on December 21, 2017, in the worst humanitarian crisis in the world, according to the United Nations.

The Saudi ambassador to the United States of America, Adel Al-Jubeir, visited the White House and told President Barack Obama's advisors that he urgently hoped to obtain President Obama's support for a new war in the Middle East, and that Iran had moved to the moral annihilation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia with the help of the Houthi rebels who had overtaken the country's capital, Sana'a. They were trying to establish ballistic missile sites in a group of Saudi cities.

The first American field steps were to send the destroyer (Cole USS) to the international corridor (Bab al-Mandab Strait), which is a water part. In turn, the Yemeni political analyst, Dr. Abdul Baqi Shamsan, believes that the American statements or the movement of the destroyer (Cole USS) to the water... Ah, the regional «comes to the curb.» The Iranian ambition has greatly crossed the lines drawn for it, but the statements require procedural steps from the US Treasury and State Departments to combat Ansar Allah (Houthis) and Al-Qaeda.

He added: «I expect the intensity of the escalation in Iran to increase, leading to achieving some kind of balance in controlling the relationship.» Shamsan explained, «The equation changed after Ansar Allah (Houthis) and former President Saleh previously sought to target ships in territorial waters, with the aim of calling for international intervention in territorial waters.»

On the other hand, Yemen's positions on the Gulf crisis came as a surprise to the United States, in light of the good relations between the two countries since the mid-eighties. Despite the American administration's understanding of Yemen's non-extremist position at the beginning of the crisis, Yemen's insistence on opposing the decision to go to war against Iraq was a costly situation for Yemeni-American relations, as the American administration's attempt failed. Yemen won the victory alongside the international coalition. As a result, Yemen received a threat that it would He often pays the price for his position on the situation in the Gulf.

The Russian role in Yemen. Russian policy regarding the Yemeni crisis was characterized by neutrality, or ambiguity at times, and was less intersecting with the course of American policy and some Western countries, which was to recognize the authority of President Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi and dealing with it as a legitimate authority on the one hand, and preventing the defeat of the Ansar Allah group (Houthis) on the other hand. Secondly, it did not support Decisive Storm, nor did it declare its support for Ansar Allah (the Houthis), nor did it object to or support UN Resolution No (2216). The Russian leadership is aware of the specificity of the Yemeni file, and despite the dwindling opportunities in light of the size of the challenges regarding the Russian role in Yemen, there are those who push Moscow to exploit the monotony of the conflict and the state of international vacuum in the Yemeni scene.

In a report, the Russian International Affairs Council (RIAC) called on his country's government to take advantage of this opportunity to strengthen its political and diplomatic presence in Yemen. Explaining the Yemeni crisis from the beginning of the war until now, the report laid out three scenarios for the future of the conflict in Yemen, all of which indicate the continuation and deterioration of the political and humanitarian situation unless the United Nations intervenes. A strong external position accepted by all parties, in reference to Russia.

Russia's desire to consider the Yemeni file as a strategic area of influence is clear from the statements of Russian officials, including what the Deputy Director of the African Department in the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Lij Ozerov) said in... A conference was held in the Russian city of Sochi, and was titled: «Russia in the Middle East a player in all arenas,» as he said that Russia and Western countries can cooperate effectively in resolving the Yemeni crisis, and in the Yemeni file.

Kirsil Semenov, an expert at the Russian International Affairs Council, was more clear when he said that Russia is seeking to enhance its reputation in the role of mediator in several conflicts, and it is possible to exert influence in Yemen to push the two sides to sit at the negotiating table, as part of its efforts to obtain a base. A permanent military presence on the coast of the Red Sea, similar to other countries that have military bases on the Bab al-Mandab Strait in Yemen.

The late Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh was aware of Moscow's desire to build a military base, so on August 12, 2016, he called on Russia to fight terrorism, according to his claim, and said that he was ready to provide all facilities at the bases. Yemeni airports and ports.

On the other hand, Ansar Allah (Houthis) and the Iranians are trying to push Moscow towards intervention in Yemen to create a pressing international balance.

In this context, it was recorded that the Houthi militia carried out a series of public activities demanding Russian intervention in Yemen, as it organized more than three protest stops in front of the Russian embassy in Sanaa, all of which called for a Russian position on Yemen. It was clear that there were leaders from the militia at the head of the organizers and those calling for the movements.

Conclusion. There is no doubt that political geography plays a major role in determining the paths of countries, and talking about the future of Yemen in light of military operations cannot be separated from Yemen's geopolitical reality, as the collapse of state authority and the collapse of its institutions, the rise of conflicting militias, the worsening regional nature of the conflict and the presence of sectarian authority and regionalism. Also, the division of the conflicting groups against themselves, the tendency of the conflicting regional powers to use tribal-religious components for proxy fighting, and the transformation of the conflict into an existential conflict for all parties concerned, threatens to enter Yemen into a phase of chaos and long-term civil war. Therefore, it is necessary to urgently reach a political settlement according to the principle of sharing power, which paves the way for rebuilding the political field on state and modern foundations.

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