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ISTANBUL GELISIM UNIVERSITY
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Department of Political Science and Public Administration

**ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF THE EUROPEAN UNION'S
POLICIES ON THE YEMENI CRISIS (2011-2022)**

Master Thesis

Marwan Mohammed Abdulkhaleq SENAN

Supervisor

Asst. Prof. Dr. Rahmat ULLAH

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that in the preparation of this thesis, scientific ethical rules have been followed, the works of other persons have been referenced in accordance with the scientific norms if used, there is no falsification in the used data, any part of the thesis has not been submitted to this university or any other university as another thesis.

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The thesis study of Marwan Mohammed Abdulkhaleq SENAN titled as ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF THE EUROPEAN UNION'S POLICIES ON THE YEMENI CRISIS (2011-2022) has been accepted as MASTER in the department of Political Science and Public Administration by out jury.

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ÖZET

Bu araştırma, 2011-2022 yılları arasındaki Yemen krizinde Avrupa Birliği'nin (AB) rolünü araştırmakta ve çatışmanın doğası konusundaki AB perspektifini anlama, Yemen'deki çıkarlarını belirleme ve müdahalelerinin etkinliğini değerlendirme odak noktasına sahiptir. Çalışma, AB'nin Yemen ve daha geniş Körfez bölgesiyle tarihsel ve çağdaş ilişkileri bağlamında katılımını postkolonyal teorik bir çerçeve kullanarak analiz etmektedir.

AB'nin müdahalesinin çoğunlukla Suudi Arabistan ve Arap Körfez ülkeleriyle olan çıkarlar tarafından belirlendiği ve sınırlı siyasi veya askeri müdahalelere sahip olduğu önerileri doğrultusunda birkaç hipotez oluşturulmuştur. Ayrıca, AB'nin krize verdiği yanıtın jeopolitik ve ekonomik faktörlerden etkilendiği, üye devletler arasındaki iç bölünmelerin etkili eylemi engellediği ve Avrupa ülkelerinin kullanılmamış kaldıraçları olduğu hipotez edilmektedir.

Çalışma, literatür taraması, AB politikaları ve eylemlerinin analizi ile ilgili paydaşlarla yapılan görüşmelerin birleşik bir yöntemler yaklaşımını kullanmaktadır. Bulgular, beş hipotezden dördünü destekleyerek, AB'nin Yemen krizine müdahalesinin Suudi Arabistan ve Körfez ülkeleriyle ilişkilerini sürdürme çıkarları tarafından motive edildiğini ortaya koymaktadır. AB önemli insani yardımlar sağlamaktadır, ancak siyasi ve askeri etkisi sınırlıdır. AB'nin yanıtı, çıkarları ile çatışma çözümü çabaları arasında hassas bir dengeyi yansıtmaktadır. Bununla birlikte, Avrupa ülkelerinin kaldıraç kartlarını kullanımı etkisiz olmuş ve üye devletler arasındaki iç bölünmeler AB'nin Yemen konusundaki genel duruşunu önemli ölçüde engellemiştir.

Sonuç olarak, AB'nin Yemen krizindeki rolü, çıkarlar ve zorlukların karmaşık etkileşimini yansıtmaktadır. AB, çatışmanın insani yönleriyle ilgilenmeye yönelik çabalar göstermiş olsa da, önemli siyasi veya askeri değişiklikler yapma yeteneği sınırlıydı. Çalışma, AB'nin üye devletler arasındaki koordinasyonu ve birliği güçlendirmesini, çatışma çözümüne daha güçlü bir taahhüt ile politikalarını uyumlu hale getirmesini ve Yemen'de sürdürülebilir bir çözüme katkıda bulunmak için daha etkili stratejileri keşfetmesini önermektedir.

Bu araştırma, AB'nin yakın coğrafyasının dışındaki çatışmalardaki rolünün anlaşılmasına katkıda bulunmakta ve Yemen bağlamında postkolonyal güç ilişkilerinin dinamiklerine ışık tutmaktadır. AB'nin Yemen krizindeki katılımının belirli yönlerini, terörle mücadele çabalarını, silah satış politikalarını ve insani yardımın etkisini araştırmak için daha fazla araştırmanın teşvik edilmesi, benzer çatışmalarda daha hedefe yönelik müdahaleler için anlayışımızı derinleştirmek ve bilgilendirmek açısından önemlidir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: AB politikaları, Avrupa Birliği, Avrupa'nın rolü, çatışma çözümü, insani yardım, jeopolitik çıkarlar, postkolonyal teori, Yemen krizi.

SUMMARY

This research explores the role of the European Union (EU) in the Yemeni crisis from 2011 to 2022, with a focus on understanding the EU's perspective on the nature of the conflict, identifying its interests in Yemen, and evaluating the effectiveness of its interventions. The study employs a postcolonial theoretical framework to analyze the EU's engagement in the context of its historical and contemporary relationships with Yemen and the broader Gulf region.

Several hypotheses are formulated, proposing that the EU's involvement is primarily driven by interests with Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states, with limited political or military interventions. Additionally, it is hypothesized that the EU's response to the crisis is influenced by geopolitical and economic factors, that internal divisions among member states hinder effective action, and that European countries possess untapped leverage.

The study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining literature review, analysis of EU policies and actions, and interviews with relevant stakeholders. The findings support four out of the five hypotheses, revealing that the EU's involvement in the Yemeni crisis is motivated by its interests in maintaining relationships with Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states. While the EU provides significant humanitarian assistance, its political and military impact is limited. The EU's response is nuanced, reflecting a delicate balance between its interests and conflict resolution efforts. However, the utilization of leverage cards by European countries has been ineffective, and internal divisions among member states have not significantly hindered the EU's overall position on Yemen.

In conclusion, the EU's role in the Yemeni crisis reflects a complex interaction of interests and challenges. While the EU made efforts to address the humanitarian aspects of the conflict, its ability to effect significant political or military changes was limited. The study recommends that the EU enhance coordination and unity among member states, align its policies with a stronger commitment to conflict resolution, and explore more effective strategies to contribute to a sustainable solution in Yemen. This research contributes to the understanding of the EU's role in conflicts outside its immediate neighborhood and provides insights into the dynamics of postcolonial power relations in the context of Yemen. Further research is encouraged to explore specific aspects of the EU's engagement in the Yemeni crisis, such as counter-terrorism efforts, arms sales

policies, and the impact of humanitarian aid, to deepen our understanding and inform more targeted interventions in similar conflicts.

Key Words: Conflict resolution, EU policies, European role, European Union, geopolitical interests, humanitarian aid, postcolonial theory, Yemeni crisis.



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AQAP	:	Al-Qaeda on the Arabian Peninsula
EEAS	:	European External Action Service
EU	:	European Union
FoY	:	Friends of Yemen
GCC	:	Gulf Cooperation Council
GCCI	:	Gulf Cooperation Council Initiative
IHL	:	International Humanitarian Law
JMP	:	Joint Meeting Parties
LNG	:	Liquid Natural Gas
MOWJ	:	National Opposition Front in South Yemen, formed in 1994
NGO	:	Non-Governmental Organization
PDRY	:	People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, pre-1990 South Yemen
PLC	:	Presidential Leadership Council
STC	:	Southern Transitional Council formed in 2017 in Aden
UAE	:	United Arab Emirates
UK	:	United Kingdom
UN	:	United Nations
UNSC	:	United Nations Security Council
UNSCR	:	United Nations Security Council Resolution
US	:	United States
YAR	:	Yemen Arab Republic
YSP	:	Yemeni Socialist Party

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I want to emphasize that this thesis reflects my dedication to serving my country and my hope of contributing to resolving the Yemeni crisis. I earnestly desire that this research brings about positive change and eases the suffering of Yemen's people.

Thank you all.

PREFACE

The completion of this master's thesis marks the culmination of a journey into the intricate dynamics of the Yemeni crisis, the European Union's involvement, and their impact on the region's stability. As the pages that follow delve into the complexities of this multifaceted issue, I am reminded of the significance of every challenge faced, every idea explored, and every perspective considered during the course of this research.

Undertaking this study within the framework set by Istanbul Gelisim University Institute of Graduate Studies has been both a privilege and a responsibility. This endeavor would not have been possible without the guidance and support of my esteemed thesis supervisor, Assist. Prof. Dr. Rahmat Ullah. His expertise, encouragement, and unwavering commitment to academic excellence have been invaluable assets throughout the research process.

Amidst the ongoing Yemeni crisis, it's vital to recognize those who have helped me in my academic journey. My heartfelt thanks to the Yemeni Friendship And Cooperation Association and the International Islamic Charity Organization Foundations for their generous support, enabling my exploration of conflict resolution and international relations. My gratitude also extends to the various individuals who graciously contributed their insights and perspectives through interviews, enriching this research with firsthand experiences and expertise. The complexities of language, cultural nuances, and the limited availability of stakeholders posed challenges, but these were met with the utmost dedication to accurate representation and analysis.

This thesis represents an effort to contribute to the understanding of the European Union's role in conflicts beyond its immediate borders, particularly in the context of the Yemeni crisis. As the pages that follow explore the European Union's policies, its impact on conflict resolution, and the intricacies of postcolonial dynamics, I hope this work sparks further inquiry and dialogue on these critical issues. In conclusion, I'm honored to have undertaken this academic journey. I hope the insights from this research spark positive change and contribute to addressing the Yemeni crisis.

Marwan SENAN

CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND OF STUDY

1.1 Introduction

"Political science has an important role to play in understanding the causes and effects of conflict, as well as the regional and international interactions that shape the dynamics of war and peace." (Singer, 1961). "The study of conflict is central to the discipline of political science, as it allows us to explore the underlying causes of war and the strategies that can be used to prevent or resolve it." (Vasquez, 2009). "In order to fully grasp the causes and effects of conflicts, it is essential to analyze the intricate interplay of domestic, regional, and global factors that shape political violence." (De Coning, 2016). Wars in the Middle East, including the conflict in Yemen, which started as a civil war but has since taken on regional and international dimensions, have figured prominently in studies examining the phenomenon of war and speculating on its causes and outcomes.

This thesis examines European involvement in the conflict in Yemen. Many factors, including differences that arose during southern Yemen's independence from British colonialism and the exit of the Ottoman Empire from northern Yemen, and the establishment of unity between southern and northern Yemen and the civil war in 1994, have been cited as causes of the conflict (Hanieh, 2013).

This historical background during the past three decades, as well as the ongoing internal wars and conflicts between the centers of power, resulted in the Houthi militia seizing control of the capital, Sana'a, on September 12, 2014 (*2014 is the year of the Houthis in Yemen*, 2014). Concerns about destabilizing regional and Arab Gulf national security led to direct military intervention in Yemen by such countries as Saudi Arabia, which launched the so-called Decisive Storm on March 26, 2015, in support of Yemeni legitimacy and state restoration.

The Gulf and Iranian foreign interventions in particular, and the parallel international reactions, played a fundamental role in shaping the Yemeni crisis and the course of the national battle. It is difficult for the observer to separate this role from the

internal Yemeni problems that intersected with it, and weakened the state's ability to address it, resulting in Yemen ranking first in the Most Fragile Countries Index for 2020.

And since the Europeans, as an important and main actor, are moving with economic, security, political, and humanitarian motives, their fears about the continuation of the conflict in Yemen arose, especially because the tension in the region between Iran and its opponents would cause the situation in Yemen to explode the fuse, potentially launching a devastating war that burns up the entire region, posing a threat to oil supplies and international navigation, as well as exacerbating the humanitarian situation and causing a wave of migration and asylum to Europe. This indicates that resolving the Yemeni situation and lowering tensions between Iran and the United States and its allies are priorities for the EU.

Thus, the analysis of Yemen's continued war raises an intriguing research question: "What makes Yemen's war still without a solution despite the intervention of regional and international actors, including the European Union, and what role the European Union plays in the crisis, and how Yemenis evaluate that role?" It also inquires about the potential possibilities for resolving the situation in light of European common interests.

The thesis will use various perceptions mentioned by Yemeni experts and deal with various types of literature that understand the war in Yemen from various perspectives, such as internal civil war, external war by proxy, and international actors' interests.

1.2 Problem Statement

Bordering the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and looking out over the Bab al-Mandab Strait, one of the world's most important water crossings, Yemen is in a strategic location that has cost its people many battles throughout history and made it a hotbed of local, regional, and international conflict.

"Since 2015, when Houthi rebels took over the city of Sana'a and expelled President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi's internationally recognized government, Yemen has been under a state of emergency. When a coalition of nations headed by Saudi Arabia intervened in March 2015 to reinstate the Hadi administration, the violence quickly intensified. Twenty-four million people, or eighty percent of the population, are in need of humanitarian aid and protection as a direct consequence of the catastrophe. The current

humanitarian catastrophe in Yemen has been called the worst in the world by the United Nations" (United Nations, 2022).

This escalation of millions of Yemenis' human suffering was accompanied by a political impasse between political parties, as well as a stalemate on the military side. This situation, in its entirety, provided motivating factors for some players to gather more strength in order to obstruct any political agreement between the legitimacy alliance and the Houthi militia. As a result of this state of chaos and internal instability, as well as the consequences for the regional and international environment, many external parties intervened to calm and resolve this conflict. Some studies indicate that these interventions were marginal and did not reach the required level, while others believe that the intervention was limited to preserving the interests of those international parties related to commercial activities and economic and petroleum resources. As a result, the Yemeni crisis has become more complicated.

The nations of the European Union want to play a bigger role in international affairs for political, security, economic, and humanitarian reasons. In Yemen and the surrounding area, the European Union has prioritized diplomatic communication with all relevant stakeholders. Since the conflict's inception.

Through illuminating the Yemeni crisis, its roots, manifestations, effects, and attempts to resolve it, the study seeks to analyze the nature and actuality of the European Union's varied roles in the situation in Yemen. It aims to assess how valuable this role has been in resolving the situation in Yemen, which has become a danger to the peace and stability of the region.

1.3 Purpose of Study

The primary goal of this study is to provide a more nuanced picture of the European Union's perspective on the crisis and conflict in Yemen by analyzing the factors that shape European policy towards the Yemeni file. This involves looking at the EU's political and diplomatic actions, as well as its humanitarian aid initiatives. The study's overarching goal is to evaluate EU measures related to the conflict and identify opportunities for improvement. The aim to better understand the reasons for European Union nations' involvement in Yemeni issues and to clarify the political, security, and economic interests

that connect Union countries with the Yemeni state has inspired this study. Impact of EU engagement on regional and worldwide dynamics of conflict may also be investigated.

These objectives can be summed up as follows:

1-Understanding the European Union's view of the nature of the conflict in Yemen.

2-Knowledge of the role of the European Union in the Yemeni crisis.

3-Identify the interests of the European Union in Yemen.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The significance of this study lies in the fact that it sheds light on the efforts made by the European Union to end the eight-year civil war in Yemen by examining the ties and interests that unite the nations of the EU and Yemen. The European stances of the different local, regional, and international parties engaged in Yemeni issues are also explored.

There are several compelling grounds to investigate the European Union's involvement in Yemen. To begin, the European Union (EU) is a prominent player on the world stage, and its actions may have far-reaching effects on the situation in Yemen. Second, the war in Yemen is causing one of the worst humanitarian crises in the world, thus learning about the European Union's approach to this disaster is crucial for judging how well it deals with military and humanitarian concerns. Finally, understanding the European Union's (EU's) position in Yemen may provide light on how well EU and member state foreign policy goals line up with Yemen's needs and interests. Finally, learning more about the European Union's engagement in Yemen may provide light on the difficulties and potentials of international collaboration in resolving complicated crises.

Decision-makers in Yemen, the Arab Coalition, and potential future researchers will all benefit from the study's suggestions and recommendations for dealing with the European Union's policy on the Yemeni file and improving the current situation. And work to sway European opinion in support of the national goal so as to prevent the coup from succeeding.

1.5 Research Questions

A research question is a statement of interest that is investigated further. This is when the methodical inquiry really begins. The development of relevant research questions is the first stage of any investigation. It is the starting point for the study and the benchmark against which future progress will be measured.

"The design, methods, and hypothesis of a study may all be traced back to the research topic. It serves as a blueprint for the whole investigation process, from the first question to the final report. In order to get useful insight, you need to ask the appropriate questions." (Deeptanshu D, n.d.) That'll be. Therefore, the questions this research aimed to answer include the following:

- 1- What is the European Union's perspective on the nature of the conflict in Yemen?
- 2- What actions or initiatives has the European Union undertaken to mitigate the Yemeni crisis and how effective have they been?
- 3- What are the EU's primary interests in Yemen and how do they affect its actions in the crisis?
- 4- What steps has the European Union taken to address the humanitarian situation in Yemen?
- 5- What roles can the European Union play in restoring the state and putting an end to the coup?
- 6- What is the nature of the European Union's relationship with the Yemeni conflict parties?

1.6 Research Hypothesis.

"A research hypothesis is a statement of expectation or prediction that will be tested by research. Before formulating your research hypothesis, read about the topic of your study and get some ideas. A research hypothesis should be clear, specific and testable." Creswell, John W. (2014).

the study will examine the five hypotheses listed below.

- H1: EU's involvement in Yemen crisis is driven by its interests with Saudi Arabia and Arab Gulf states, rather than a genuine commitment to resolving the conflict.
- H2: EU's impact on the Yemeni crisis is limited to humanitarian aspects, not significant political or military interventions.
- H3: EU's response to Yemen crisis influenced by geopolitical and economic interests, resulting in a nuanced approach and engagement with different actors.
- H4: European countries possess pressure cards but fail to effectively use them for meaningful change in Yemen crisis.
- H5: Internal divisions among EU member states hindered efforts to address Yemen crisis, leading to inconsistent policies and a lack of unified action.

1.7 Postcolonial Theory

According to Frantz Fanon, (1963), "The condition of postcoloniality is the added dimension of the culture that the discourse of colonialism introduces into the situation of the colonized people." "Postcolonial theory is an attempt to rethink the consequences, the aftermath, of colonial history, and to understand the ways in which colonized peoples have resisted the imposition of colonial rule." (Hidalgo, 2016). "The postcolonial condition is the ongoing legacy of colonialism, including its cultural, economic, and political effects on colonized societies and peoples."(Quayson, 2000).

Postcolonial theory is a critical framework that evolved in the late twentieth century to investigate colonized peoples' social, cultural, and political experiences in reaction to the legacy of European colonialism and imperialism. Postcolonial theory, as defined by scholars such as Edward Said, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, and Homi Bhabha, seeks to expose the unequal power relations between colonizers and colonized peoples, as well as the ways in which these power relations continue to impact societies and cultures (Chakrabarti, 2012).

"Postcolonial theory describes poverty in non-Western cultures and nations related to Third World countries as primitive, violent, and hyper-masculine; this theory argues

that poverty must be discussed and answers to disparities in the world symbolized by global decision-makers and legislation are to be found through state intervention, with absolute power, which colonizes, directly or indirectly, to exploit the least developed countries" (John Baylis, 2014). "The concept of the "colonial gaze," which refers to how colonial powers perceived and depicted colonized peoples and cultures, is a major term in postcolonial philosophy. This look was frequently one of superiority and dominance, allowing colonizers to justify their actions and keep control over the colonized" (Ashcroft, B., Griffiths, G., & Tiffin, H. 2002).

1.7.1 Religion and Identity

Postcolonial theory offers profound insights into the far-reaching consequences of colonialism on societies, revealing how the manipulation of religion and identity by colonial powers created instability and reinforced conflicts among the colonized population.

As Edward Said, a prominent postcolonial theorist, wrote in his seminal work *Orientalism*, colonialism involved "the exercise of domination" and the imposition of Western values onto the colonized, often achieved through the manipulation of religious and cultural identities. By simplifying the diverse religious beliefs and cultural practices of the colonized people into binary divisions of "us" versus "them," colonial authorities sought to present themselves as superior and justify their dominance over the "inferior" natives. This essentialization of identities allowed the colonizers to perpetuate the idea of a civilizing mission, further justifying their control over the colonized lands.

The impact of colonial manipulation of religion and identity on the cultural and social fabric of the colonized societies was profound. Frantz Fanon, in *The Wretched of the Earth*, pointed out how colonial powers actively undermined the native culture and replaced it with their own. He stated that colonialism "shatters the society, dislocates its economy, retards its history, and destroys the unity of its culture." Previously harmonious interactions between different religious and ethnic groups became fraught with tensions and conflicts. Traditional values and cultural practices were devalued or labeled as "backward" by the colonizers, leading to the erosion of indigenous identities and the suppression of local customs and traditions.

Another tactic employed by colonialism was the reinforcement of cultural essentialism, defining identities solely through religious or ethnic lenses. Homi K. Bhabha's work "The Location of Culture" (1994) observes that "Colonial power is structured upon cultural discrimination, national superiority, and the progressive disappearance of the native". By emphasizing fixed, essentialized identities, colonial powers instigated rivalries between different religious and ethnic groups, fueling long-lasting conflicts and destabilizing occupied societies.

Colonial powers deliberately exploited religious identities to create divided loyalties among the colonized population. Frantz Fanon's influential work "The Wretched of the Earth" (1963) describes how "The colonialist bourgeoisie, under cover of a false generosity, diverted the channel of conflict among the indigenous people". By engendering internal conflicts along religious lines, colonial rulers aimed to divert attention from their oppressive policies, ensuring that resistance against colonial rule remained fragmented and disorganized.

One of the primary objectives of colonial powers was to reinforce existing divisions within the occupied societies. As Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak highlighted in *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason*, these divisions were often established to serve the interests of the colonizers. She argued that the colonizers strategically represented the colonized as a homogenous, "othered" group, which allowed the colonizers to define themselves as superior. This fragmentation made it easier for the colonizers to exert control and hinder any cohesive resistance.

However, the very act of constructing divisions based on religion and identity also inadvertently sowed the seeds of resistance. Many liberation movements emerged, driven by the desire to reclaim and preserve their religious and cultural heritage. These movements sought to transcend the imposed divisions and unite people across religious and ethnic lines in pursuit of freedom and independence. Through these movements, postcolonial societies attempted to reclaim agency over their identities and challenge the colonial narratives that had been imposed upon them.

1.7.2 Eurocentrism

As an element of postcolonial theory, it emphasizes how European powers wielded cultural, economic, and political control over non-European countries during the age of colonialism and imperialism (Said, 1993). Eurocentrism is a collection of attitudes and ideas that promote Western civilization and values as superior to those of other cultures. "Since Europe's history is one of advanced development while Africa's history is one of underdevelopment, it follows that Africa's history must be one of failed attempts to develop" (Rodney, 1982).

Eurocentrism is not only a historical phenomenon; it may also be found in modern discussions about culture, development, and global power. European cultural products, such as literature, art, and music, continue to be favored over those of non-European cultures. Furthermore, Western countries maintain economic and political dominance over developing countries, perpetuating a global system of inequality and exploitation (Spivak, 1988).

Postcolonial theory attacks the Eurocentric perspective that has dominated most of Western thought. It tries to question the notion that Western culture and values are superior to those of other cultures, as well as to recognize non-Western cultures' contributions to global history and culture (Said, E. W. 1978).

1.7.3 Ideology and Independence

Ideology is inextricably linked with the battle for independence in the framework of postcolonial theory. It is a weapon for resisting colonial dominance and developing alternative social visions. "Decolonization, which seeks to alter the world's order, is clearly a policy of total chaos." It cannot, however, be the product of magical techniques, natural shock, or amicable understanding. As we all know, decolonization is a historical process: "it cannot be comprehended, it cannot become understandable or obvious to itself unless in the precise amount that we can perceive the dynamics that give it historical shape and meaning" (Fanon, 1963). This quotation emphasizes the transformational aspect of decolonization, in which the process of deconstructing colonial institutions and ideas is essential to the construction of a new society.

In his work "The Location of Culture," Homi K. Bhabha investigates the function of ideology in postcolonial civilizations. "The country becomes a site for the formation of alternative cultural narratives that challenge the colonial culture's dominant presence." As a result of this process of negotiation, a sense of national identity emerges into history as a 'people' via narratives of emerging cultural presence" (Bhabha, 1994). This quotation emphasizes the importance of ideology in the development of national identity, as postcolonial states struggle to express their uniqueness and fight colonial ideas' supremacy.

Furthermore, postcolonial theory acknowledges the presence of various ideologies within postcolonial nations, which often represent varied social, cultural, and political viewpoints. Nationalist ideologies strive to establish a cohesive national identity, whereas religious, ethnic, or regional ideologies stress particular components of identity. These ideologies' negotiation and contestation determine the course of postcolonial countries and impact their battle for independence and self-determination.

1.7.4 Ethnicity and Race

The concept of ethnicity relates to a certain group's cultural identity, which is built on shared traditions, customs, language, and religion. Ethnicity is frequently interpreted in postcolonial theory as a reaction to the colonial experience, in which colonial powers imposed their own culture and identity on colonized peoples.

Ethnicity is important in the politics of identity, which is crucial to postcolonial theory. Identity politics refers to how people use their cultural and ethnic identities to assert their political rights and seek social justice. Sumit Sarkar writes in her book "Colonialism, Tradition, and Reform" that identity politics is a reaction to the colonial experience, in which colonial rulers established hierarchies of power and privilege based on ethnicity and race. "The experience of colonialism gave rise to a politics of identity, in which colonized people began to assert their cultural and ethnic identities as a means of resisting colonial power and asserting their own rights" (Sarkar, 1995). "Ethnicity is not a fixed, innate characteristic of individuals, but rather the product of historical and cultural processes that are constantly changing" (Hall, 1990).

Racial essentialism, according to postcolonial theorists, is a hazardous theory because it may be used to justify discrimination and exclusion. In her book "Whiteness: An Introduction," Ruth Frankenberg claims that whiteness is a type of racial essentialism that defines whiteness as the standard against which all other racial identities are measured. "Whiteness is a type of racial essentialism in which whiteness is defined as the standard against which all other racial identities are measured." This type of essentialism is hazardous because it strengthens racial hierarchies and justifies discrimination and exclusion" (Frankenberg, 1993).

1.7.5 Exploitation and Dominance

According to Edward Said's book "Orientalism," Western powers have always aspired to dominate and exploit the "Orient" through cultural and political methods. "Orientalism is a thought style based on an ontological and epistemological distinction made between 'the Orient' and (most of the time) 'the Occident,'" he writes. The Oriental is irrational, depraved (fallen), infantile, and 'strange'; the European, on the other hand, is rational, virtuous, mature, and 'normal'" (Said, 1978). According to Said, Western powers used the notion of the Orient as a docile and backward region to justify colonizing and exploiting these countries. This exploitation process includes not just cultural dominance but also the extraction of resources and labor from conquered populations.

The concept of "coloniality of power," introduced by Anibal Quijano, is another important topic in the study of exploitation and supremacy. Quijano contends that colonialism was not only a historical experience, but also a continuous pattern of dominance that continues to the present day. "The coloniality of power is the power matrix created by the modern/colonial world system," he argues. "It is the very structure of power that emerged with modernity, but has also been transformed, reproduced, and adapted since then, albeit not fundamentally altered" (Quijano, 2007).

1.7.6 Democratic Deficit

"Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge," by Edward Said, is one of the important texts in postcolonial theory that addresses the democratic deficit left behind by colonial powers. Said argues in this book that colonial powers sought to justify their domination of colonized peoples by constructing a discourse that portrayed these populations as

inferior and in need of guidance from the colonizers: "The colonizers sought to legitimize their domination by constructing a discourse that portrayed colonized peoples unable of self-rule, and in need of guidance from the colonizers." (Said, 1993). This discourse resulted in an undemocratic and oppressive political structure, with power concentrated in the hands of colonial elites. When the colonial powers left, they left behind institutions and tools that perpetuated the undemocratic system, such as the legal and bureaucratic systems that still exist in many former colonies today.

In their book "Empire," Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri claim that the democratic deficit left by colonial powers has been sustained by the global economic system that arose in the aftermath of decolonization. This system, dominated by Western capitalist powers, has continued to extract resources and wealth from former colonies, perpetuating the colonial period's poverty and inequality: "The legacy of colonialism is an economic system that continues to extract wealth from previous colonies, perpetuating poverty and inequality..." "The global economic system that emerged in the aftermath of decolonization, which is dominated by Western capitalist powers, perpetuates the democratic deficit left behind by colonial powers" (Hardt and Negri, 2000).

1.7.7 Political Unrest and Destabilization

In his book "Neocolonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism," Kwame Nkrumah argues that colonial powers maintain control over their former colonies through a system of neocolonialism in which they use both political and economic power to influence the political systems of these countries: "Neocolonialism is the last stage of imperialism, the stage at which colonial powers adopt all the instruments of imperialist domination with a view to perpetuating Neocolonialism displays itself in the political domain through the sponsorship of political instability and the production of political issues" (Nkrumah, 1965).

In his book "Imperialism and Revolution," Harold Laski delves at the role of former colonial powers in causing political crises in postcolonial countries. He contends that, despite granting independence to their former colonies, colonial powers continue to exert economic and political control over these countries: "The granting of independence was just the first step in a continuing process of domination...The colonial powers continue to

exert economic and political power to shape the political systems of their earlier colonies, leading to ongoing instability and conflicts" (Laski, 1939).

1.7.8 Decolonization

Frantz Fanon's "The Wretched of the Earth" is a seminal essay on decolonization. Fanon argues in this book that decolonization is a painful and traumatic process for both the colonized and the colonizers. "Decolonization is always a violent phenomenon," he argues. At the very least, it upsets conventional ways of life; at the very worst, it causes a full uprooting of social organization... Decolonization, which seeks to overthrow the order of the world, is clearly a program of complete disorder" (Fanon, 1963). Decolonization, according to Fanon, is a psychological and cultural process as well as a political one. It necessitates the abolition of colonialism and the formation of a new national consciousness.

In general, Postcolonial theory can help us understand how the European Union's policies and actions are influenced by its colonial past and its current position of power in the world when evaluating the European Union's role in the Yemeni crisis. It can also help us assess the influence of globalization on Yemen and how Yemenis are reacting to these changes. We may obtain a better grasp of the complex processes at work in the Yemeni crisis by adopting a postcolonial lens, and we can design more nuanced and effective solutions to address the core causes of the conflict.

At the end, this framework would investigate how the historical legacies of European colonialism in the Middle East have shaped the dynamics of the Yemen crisis, including how European powers have maintained influence in the region through economic, political, and military means.

Furthermore, this framework would examine the ongoing legacy of colonialism in Yemen, including its cultural, economic, and political effects and how it has contributed to the current crisis. The thesis could investigate how the postcolonial condition influenced the actions of European countries and Yemenis, as well as the outcome of the conflict.

This study seeks to bridge that gap by using postcolonial perspectives to examine the European Union's role in the Yemeni crisis and its efforts to resolve it. This study will investigate the rationale on which European countries based their position on the Yemeni issue in light of common European interests.

1.8 Scope and Limitation of the Study

The scope of this study will focus on the role of the European Union (EU) in the Yemeni crisis from 2011 to 2022. The study will look at the EU's crisis-related actions and policies, including its efforts to address the humanitarian crisis and promote a peaceful resolution to the conflict. The study will also examine Yemenis' perspectives on the EU's role in the crisis and how EU actions have impacted them.

A review of relevant literature, analysis of official EU documents and data, and interviews with approximately eight Yemeni experts, political officials, and researchers will be conducted in order to understand the various perspectives on the EU's role in the Yemeni crisis.

CHAPTER TWO

THE YEMENI CRISIS: UNCOVERING ITS HISTORICAL CONTEXT

2.1 Concept of crisis

The concept of crisis is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon in international relations. It refers to a sudden and unexpected development between states, often involving conflicts and disputes over vital priorities such as territorial integrity and national security. The way decision-makers perceive and respond to the triggering incident of a crisis plays a crucial role in shaping its outcome. Crisis management becomes a critical task for decision-makers to resolve the conflict before it escalates into a full-blown war.

Defining a crisis is not a straightforward task, as there is no universally agreed-upon definition. However, as Charles F. Hermann and Michael Brecher would likely argue, a crisis can be understood as a situational change that poses a risk, danger, threat, or attack against a state's core values and priorities, leading the decision-maker to perceive it as a crisis.

Brecher and Wilkenfeld (2000) define crisis as "a situation in which a decision maker must choose among alternative courses of action, each of which is likely to have undesirable consequences". On the other hand, Hermann in his work on crisis decision making, defines crisis as "a situation in which an actor perceives a significant threat to its vital interests, and the time available for decision making is compressed"

According to Brecher and Wilkenfeld (2000), there are three elements that characterize a crisis: surprise, threat, and short decision time. Hermann, on the other hand, identifies four elements of crisis: threat, surprise, the need for urgent action, and the presence of uncertainty.

Crises can be classified based on their scope, occurring at local, national, regional, or international levels, which Michael Brecher might concur with. They may involve state actors exclusively or include non-state actors like transnational corporations or terrorist organizations. The involvement of non-state actors in crises can complicate the crisis

management process, requiring novel strategies and means to handle the situation effectively.

Throughout history, nations have been entangled in protracted conflicts, tearing at the very fabric of their societies. These conflicts, often referred to as civil wars or internal strife, are emblematic of crises rooted in the struggle for power and authority. Fueling these historical conflicts are a myriad of factors that receive sustenance from both local actors and external players seeking to advance their interests within a region. As such, the internal strife becomes enmeshed in broader international rivalries, perpetuating the cycle of violence and division.

Furthermore, crises also manifest in the struggle for control over governance, where conflicting visions of political systems collide. Republican and monarchical political ideologies have historically stood at opposing ends of the spectrum, each vying for supremacy. The tension between these contrasting systems can ignite crises, sparking fervent debates over legitimacy, representation, and sovereignty. As Hannah Arendt remarked, "The most radical revolutionary will become a conservative on the day after the revolution." This dynamic illustrates how the push and pull for power can lead to crises that profoundly reshape societies and institutions.

Sectarian and regional conflicts are additional sources of crises that intensify divisions within and between nations. Rooted in deep-seated religious, ethnic, or territorial disputes, these conflicts exacerbate existing fault lines, making them highly resistant to resolution. These crises often cross-national borders, drawing in neighboring states and transforming localized conflicts into broader regional challenges. The pervasive nature of sectarian and regional conflicts has been succinctly captured by political scientist Edward Said, who asserted, "Nationalism is not just some ideology you dust off and put back in the closet once in a while. It is an active belief system and a set of practices which everyone has learned from childhood on."

Because the Yemeni crisis is a multifaceted and ongoing phenomenon that has taken many forms over the years, the concept of crisis is central to understanding it. According to the academic Helen Lackner, "Yemen has experienced numerous crises over the past several decades, including political instability, financial collapse, social unrest, and armed

conflict" (Lackner, 2017). These crises are linked, and each exacerbates the others, resulting in a vicious cycle of insecurity.

Yemen's present issue is frequently characterized as a humanitarian disaster since the conflict has caused significant suffering and displacement. Amal Nasser, a scholar, states that "the humanitarian crisis in Yemen is a direct result of the ongoing conflict, that has caused widespread destruction of infrastructure and displacement of civilians" (Nasser, 2019). This issue is also impacted by historical power relations since international actors have frequently prioritized their own interests over Yemeni civilians' well-being.

2.2 Yemen's Historical Conflict: An Overview of its Key Phases

Since the end of colonialism, the continuation of conflict and wars in former colonies has been a persistent issue. Colonialism's legacy has resulted in a variety of types of violence, ranging from civil wars to ethnic clashes. According to Ania Loomba's book "Colonialism/Postcolonialism," "the violence of colonialism and its aftermath remains to be enacted in many parts of the world, and the imperial powers and their former colonies are still locked in uneven and often violent relations" (Loomba, 1998). Armed conflict, political repression, economic exploitation, and cultural dominance are all examples of ongoing violence.

“According to Daron and James's key book, *Why Nations Fail*, the country's problems stem from an exploitative political and economic framework. Power in such regimes is held by a tiny elite that can do as it pleases since there are few checks on its authority. Extractive systems, like Yemen's, are prone to aggression, chaos, and political turmoil, and they are not likely to evolve or make substantial changes toward broader institutions, according to Daron and James's research. Although Daron and James's rentier state has negative effects, the ongoing crisis in Yemen has deeper roots. The present conflict, which began as a political crisis in the middle of 2014, is really only the most recent episode in a cycle of violence that has plagued Yemen for well over 60 years. This war is neither the deadliest nor the longest of its kind. Since the 1960s, there has never been a decade in Yemen's history devoid of violent war, coups, or civil insurrection” (Feierstein, 2019).

“Beginning in the early nineteenth century, the British and Ottomans fought over who would control North Yemen and South Yemen. By 1911, the Ottomans had ceded control of North Yemen to the Zaydis. The revolt against the imamate began in 1962, and the Yemeni Arab Republic was formally established in 1968. A radical Marxist republic with close links to the Soviet Union, Yemen became the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen in 1967” (Brehony, 2011).

Until 1990, when South Yemen sought union with North Yemen and proclaimed unity, the country's two autonomous administrations, YAR and PDRY, were constantly at odds with one another over political and ideological disagreements (Schwedler, 2002). “Many innocent people in southern Yemen lost their lives in the 1994 Yemeni War of Independence that followed the formation of the Unity State, which was not based on the principles of unity between the two states” (Carapico, 1994). At the time, the President of South Yemen was the Vice President of the Unity State.

“In 1962, an Arab nationalistic group emerged among the northern military of the Mutwakkilite Kingdom of Yemen. The Zaydi Shi'a Imam Al Bader was deposed by a revolt, and a modern Yemeni republic was founded as a result. The thousand-year rule of Zaydi Imamate came to an end then. Zayidism remains alive and well in Yemen, even though the Zaydi Imamate was dissolved” (Refugees, 2020), and it is a major factor in the country's present sectarian conflicts.

A revolution in southern Yemen and the Federation of South Arabia forced the British to leave Aden in 1967 (Hill et al., 2013), proving that uprisings in Yemen were not confined to the country's northern regions. Following a communist revolution in 1969 (“Yemen Profile - Timeline,” 2011), the People's Republic of Yemen changed its name to the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, marking the close of the period of colonialism.

“Border fighting broke out between Yemen Arab Republic and People's Democratic Republic of Yemen in 1972. Both sides received aid from outside sources. The US, the UK, Tehran, Jordan, and Cairo were all part of a Saudi-led coalition that supported the North. Supporters of the South included the Soviet Union, Iraq, Libya,

and Czechoslovakia” (Gause, 1990). Sanaa and Aden, the North and South Yemeni capitals, respectively, took part in the fighting to conquer and absorb the other.

"Tensions and power rivalries within the Yemeni Socialist Party, particularly between Al Toghmaah and Al Zomraah, led to the deaths of tens of people in a civil war in the south of the country in 1986. People's Democratic Republic of Yemen and the Yemeni Socialist Party saw intense competition for leadership. As a result of the civil war, the South became much less powerful, and both sides of Yemen were able to unite"(Kifner & Times, 1986).

In 1990, with the Soviet Union's demise, Saleh unified the two separate Yemens into one country. Even after both regions were brought together, the war still threatened the nation. A failed separatist campaign by southern militias to break away from the North was initiated in 1994 (“Yemen Profile - Timeline,” 2011). As a result of the North's carelessness, the South began to feel marginalized and ignored. Many innocent people have been slaughtered in this latest civil war that sprang out as a consequence of the attempt at secession. This led to the rise of the northern party, which remained dominant till the year 2011.

New conflicts broke out in Yemen when a crisis of governmental legitimacy ensued in the wake of the Arab Spring. The people of Yemen have spoken out against Saleh's tyranny, the corruption, and their lack of engagement with political and economic issues. These demonstrations shattered a system that was already precariously held together by a few of powerful elites (Hill et al., 2013). Violent clashes broke out as a result of these demonstrations in various locations around the nation. The fight for power, especially in the country's northwest, has shaken Yemen and created a serious security crisis. Al Qaeda and other non-state actors used the power vacuum to expand their influence and territorial holdings. The Houthis seized control of Saada, while Al Qaeda expanded its footprint in the south. Attacks against oil pipelines, upon which the economy depends heavily for export profits, were another form of unrest. The assaults were carried out by native groups in an effort to force the federal government to recognize Southern secession (Salisbury, 2016).

The political and financial breakdown of Yemen led to Saleh's resignation in November 2011. The Gulf Cooperation Council and UN member nations collaborated to reach this agreement. The Gulf Cooperation Council plan was only one of several initiatives made to foster harmony. The document formed a transitional administration headed by Hadi to implement fundamental reforms and asked for Saleh's departure while offering him amnesty. The Gulf Cooperation Council project was in jeopardy when the Houthis toppled the transitional government in the same year. Since then, the IRG has been fighting the Houthis with the help of a Saudi-led coalition.

2.3 The Imamate's Fall

The Imamate, a theocracy supported by the Zaydi groups of northern Yemen's highlands, ruled the region for millennia. However, the Imamate could not have survived economically without plundering the comparatively prosperous, mostly Sunni heartland. “In the early 1960s, the "Free Yemenis," an Arab nationalistic group, emerged in the country's heartland and, with Egypt's assistance under President Abdel Nasser, began a complete rebellion against the regime of Imamate. Despite the Imamate's downfall and the republic's subsequent foundation, old tribal chiefs from the northern highlands maintained influential roles in the newly formed government” (Feierstein, 2019).

However, “the liberated Yemenis developed an Arab nationalist counter-narrative that would have lasting effects on Yemen's unity by fighting the sadah, Shi'a religious leaders who claimed legitimacy based on direct descending from the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). The Free Yemenis developed a new idea, arguing that the descendants of the Qahtanees, Yemen's ancient occupants, were the only "true" Yemenis, while it was politically expedient to downplay sectarianism between the Zaydi and Sunni communities. However, some argued that the sayyids who controlled Yemen were really Adnaniis, who had migrated south to Arabia after the spread of Islam. During the eight-year revolt against the government of Imamate, this difference was crucial in establishing the wide, pro-republican agreement that ultimately won the war and formed YAR” (Stephen Day, 2012).

“Saleh became president after Al-Ghashmii was killed in 1978. Saleh reinstated a repressive tax system last seen under the Imamate's rule. Compared to those living in the

highlands, residents in the central region paid nearly twice as much in taxes” (Stephen Day, 2012). At the same time, Saleh's actions helped elevate highland tribal sheikhs, who challenged the sayyids and their supporters. Political power in the republic shifted to the sheikhs, led by Abdullah al-Ahmmar, the highest sheikh of the Hashed tribes. The sheikhs, especially those of the Hashed and Bakil tribes, rose to political power and then contended with the established merchant class of the midlands for economic dominance. Thus, under Saleh, the exploitative political and financial structure that has hindered Yemen's development has mostly benefited tribal sheikhs in the country's northern highlands. In 1984, oil was discovered in Marib Governorate, providing a fresh source of revenue for the wealthy elites in the highlands and a new target for the discontent of the North and the Middle.

2.4 A Precarious Unity - 1990

From independence until their 1990 unification accord, ties between North and South Yemen were anything but smooth. Sana'a and Aden's desire in unification ebbed and flowed throughout the years, depending on who was in charge in either city. For example, the Yemeni Socialist Party, which has ruled South Yemen since its formation in 1978 and uses Marxist terminology, argues that unity between North and South is crucial to Yemen's evolution by declaring that the revolutionary struggle in Yemen is "dialectically correlated in its unity." (Paul, 2000). However, in June 1978, President alGhashmii of the YAR was murdered by officials from the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, leading to a short border conflict between January and March 1979. The two sides were able to establish communication despite the ongoing conflict. In November 1981, PDRY President Ali Nasser Mohammed came to Sana'a, and after meeting with Saleh in Kuwait, Saleh visited Aden.

Both countries had a financial interest in improving their relationship once oil was discovered in the border areas. The Republic of Yemen was formed after President Ali Abdullah Saleh and YSP Secretary-General Ali Salem al-Beidh signed a unity accord in April 1990. The two-page agreement was rather vague, just outlining the essentials of a new administrative framework. The agreement stipulated that a five-member Presidential

Council would write a constitution over the course of a 30-month transition period. The council will use decrees till then.

"The discovery of oil provided financial incentive for the South to accede to the unity with the North in 1990; nevertheless, there were two more considerations at play. First, the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen lost its primary political and economic ally once the Soviet Union dissolved. Second, the PDRY administration was severely hampered by the bloody intra-YSP struggle that broke out in 1986. People on both sides of the border were thrilled by the news of the merger. However, in the South, enthusiasm for the new RoY swiftly faded. Political elites in the South, who at first enjoyed a fifty-fifty power-sharing arrangement with the far more populous North in accordance with the unification agreement, had hoped to eventually take control of the government of the combined state. In particular, they predicted widespread support from northern voters, which would help them perform well in legislative elections set for 1992. They were dismayed to come in third place, behind Saleh's General People's Congress and the recently deposed Islah party in the north. The South's political power quickly diminished under the new system, rather than expanding" (Feierstein, 2019).

"Subsidized food and job security in state-run businesses were only two examples of the perks that People's Democratic Republic of Yemen inhabitants enjoyed that their Southern counterparts did not. When compared to the North, the South does an amazing job of providing essential services like healthcare and education. Those benefits started to dwindle as crony capitalism spread northward and highland tribal elites expanded their economic dominance southward" (Alley, 2011).

Frustrated Southerners publicly rejected the union and advocated a return to an autonomous nation by the end of 1993. Leaders in the South proclaimed independence, and the North immediately began military operations to reclaim the South after a last effort at a diplomatic settlement to the increasing North-South crisis failed. The breakdown of political discussions in 1994 led to a short civil war, but it did not address the underlying causes of the conflict. Despite Ali Salim al-Beidh's exile, Saleh kept the South in the power-sharing system by naming Hadi as vice president. Rather than really representing Southern interests in government, Saleh "was essentially concerned in the illusion of

power-sharing," as Stephen Day points out"(Regionalism and Rebellion in Yemen: A Troubled National Union, 2012). With Saleh's formation of a coalition government with the Islah party and Abdul Aziz Abdul Ghani's appointment as prime minister, the number of Southerners in the Yemen cabinet decreased dramatically.

Those same fundamental problems that have plagued North-South relations for decades now are at the heart of southern challenges to the Hadi administration and, more generally, to the concept of Yemeni unification. The civil war had severe repercussions on both the economic and social lives of Southerners. Two "profoundly different narratives" regarding the war's conclusion emerged, as pointed out by April Longley Alley. According to one narrative, the battle put an end to the possibility of partition and strengthened national unity. One side claims that the conflict ended any hope of a unified country, while the other claims that it marked the beginning of an era of Northern control of the South (Alley, 2011). By the middle of the next decade, southerners' frustration with the North's treatment of them had reached a boiling point.

An organized resistance movement in the South grew in response to the war's conclusion, particularly the forced retirement of southern civilian and military personnel. After beginning as a "local group for military retirees" in 2006, the Hirak protest movement grew from a series of nonviolent demonstrations to a large-scale, mainly peaceful but sometimes violent movement (Day, 2012). As part of his tried-and-true strategy of divide and conquer, Saleh attempted to water down the southern movement by appeasing military retirees, settling land disputes, and otherwise attempting to limit or eliminate political opposition.

The Hirak movement ramped up its own campaign and battled more violently with government troops as a result of the government's failure to crush the Houthis. According to April Longley Alley, the Hirak movement demanded equal distribution of resources, particularly in the energy sector, as well as access to government positions and benefits. "Even within a same governorate, one area may complain of marginalization or prejudice when compared to another," she quotes the late mayor of Sana'a, Abdul Qadir al-Hilal. But in the South, where political prospects are few and where there once was a sovereign state, this sense of exclusion has taken on a political dimension. The Arab Spring of 2011

saw a resurgence of demands for secession from the North and of support for Hirak in the South (Refugees, 2011).

2.5 The Six Sa'dah Wars

The Houthi uprising in the 6 Sa'dah wars from 2004 to 2010 had its roots in unsolved conflicts from the republican revolution of the 1960s and afterwards, especially throughout the years of Saleh's reign. Northern Zaydi communities, like those in the post-unity South, became more militant in response to the development of exploitative political and economic institutions under Saleh and the inability of republican Yemen to ensure a fair distribution of resources.

In response to this marginalization, Zaydi revivalism grew in the 1980s, long before the Houthi movement arose. "The economic and political marginalization of the Sa'dah region, the inequitable distribution of financial assets and involvement in politics, and the religious prejudice against its Zaydi people offered an ideal environment in which the Houthi rebellion could take root and blossom," Marieke Brandt wrote in her broad history of the Houthi movement.

In spite of this, the Saleh regime has targeted the Houthi uprising by using the Houthis' backing for the reinstatement of several predominantly Shi'a religious observances, such as Ashura, as evidence that they are not only proponents of Zaydi Shiism but also of the reintroduction of the Imamate and the adoption of Iranian-style Twelver Shiism.

The Houthi offensive launched from Sana'a reopened an old sore from the anti-Imamate uprising of the 1960s. Criticism of the Houthi movement frequently mirrored this anti-sayyid, Qahtani stance, which regarded the Houthi movement as undemocratic and backward thinking, inside the Zaydi populace, where the Houthis did not have full support.

The native sheikhs of the northwest highlands, and in particular the newly minted "revolution sheikhs" who fought on the side of republican forces in Yemen's eight-year civil war, reaped the greatest benefits from the sayyids' marginalization. Brandt observes, "At the local level, in many senses, the sheikhs were the republic." This is because "the

sheikhs gained disproportionately from the republican system."(Brandt, 2017). However, the growth of the tribes did not coincide with the emergence of the sheikhs.

Brandt argues once again that "the political nature of funding was a sword with two sides: rather than 'nurturing' the tribal system, governmental support has driven a divide between some significant sheikhs and their tribal home districts, and produced dissatisfaction and feeling alienated among many ordinary tribal members." Many of the tribes sided with the Houthi movement in the sheikhs-and-sayyids struggle because the sheikhs didn't utilize their newfound authority and influence in the republican government to back the tribes.

Sana'a had a huge military advantage against the Houthi rebels, yet they nevertheless managed to split the northern populace apart with their warfare. Brandt argues that "the government's military assaults instead of putting down the insurrection caused vicious cycles of violence and counterviolence in Sa'dah's tribal milieu, which eventually encompassed Yemen's Northern region. Since the second battle, it has become clear that many new Houthi recruits are not driven by religious or ideological convictions, but are instead lured to the struggle for other reasons" (Brandt, 2017).

The Houthis had already established a strong-armed presence in the nation by the time the Arab Spring broke out in February 2011, and they had begun military exercises to seize control of key regions in and around Amran and Al-Jawf. The Saleh regime allowed and even encouraged these Houthi activities because it saw the emergence of revolutionary forces "that do not coincide with the Imamate Houthi thinking" as an imminent danger to his aim of returning to power and so justified taking revenge on them. Temporary calm had settled over the so-called "North of the North," but public discontent with the Saleh regime remained high.

2.6 The British Legacy in Yemen: Past to Present

Colonial history is defined by the exploitation of resources and people in colonized regions for the profit of colonial powers. In his book "The Transformation of the World," historian Jürgen Osterhammel writes that "colonialism was an essential tool for European powers to broaden their influence, accumulate wealth, and develop geopolitical

dominance" (Osterhammel, 2014). The colonizers' international ambitions were motivated by a desire for economic gain, political power, and territory expansion.

According to postcolonial theorists, these objectives had long-term consequences for the former colonies, including resource and people exploitation, the imposition of political and social institutions, and the establishment of economic dependence. According to Dipesh Chakrabarty's book "Provincializing Europe," "colonialism was not just a historical event, but a way of thinking and being that continues to influence the postcolonial world" (Chakrabarty, 2000).

It all started in 1839 when the UK took over the port of Aden. British imperialists decided to capture Aden in order to seize control of the region's coffee trade from the Egyptians. They did this to encourage the British government to take action in South Arabia (Abadi, 1995). Although they started off with just a limited amount of territory under their control, their sway expanded rapidly as their profits and security measures paid off (Abadi, 1995).

The British were able to exert their influence over a larger portion of South Arabia because of their superior expertise and financial resources. In fact, contrary to popular belief, Muslims in Yemen were on the front lines of the fight against European imperialism and capitalism (Blumi, 2018). As a matter of fact, rich members of the Yemeni diaspora have been investing in Yemen for years to boost its opposition to global capitalism. Yemen was not poor, but it lacked European-style modernization. These regions' wealth extraction regimes were well-honed, yet locals there were unwilling to pass them up to Europeans (Blumi, 2017).

Despite this, "the British state utilized its military strength to enslave natives, and as a result, they were accountable for much of the accumulation of wealth in South Arabia. More importantly, Britain supported the radical Abdu Aziz ibn Sa'ud in his retake of Riyadh in 1902 to shock and weaken the Ottomans and further consolidate its rule over the region's vital assets. London's political and financial elite were unconcerned with the human toll inflicted on South Arabia in order to ensure the British Empire's continued dominance in the area" (Blumi, 2018).

This trend persists much after the time when the British occupied Aden. Britain's engagement with Yemen dates back over two centuries, all the way to financial concerns. Britain has a long history of putting financial interests ahead of the needs and safety of colonial and previously colonized people. This can be seen in the nineteenth-century East India Company as well as in the arms agreements being made with Saudi Arabia today.

Resolution 1514 (XV) of the United Nations General Assembly demanded the independence of colonial nations and peoples (United Nations, 1960). This proclamation called on the United Nations to take a leading role in ending colonialism across the world. The United Nations claims that the persistence of colonialism runs counter to its principles and impedes the social, cultural, and economic progress of dependent peoples.

The British were hesitant to leave the Federation of South Arabia since it was home to a strategically important military installation (Chang, 1972). In addition, the Yemeni people had developed distinct social groups often called "tribes" among themselves. It was more difficult to organize and advocate for independence since there was no obvious alternative for a successor if the United Kingdom departed. These difficulties necessitated the continued presence of British colonial forces in Southern Yemen into the 1960s.

“The United Kingdom backed the established order and branded independence activists as Egyptian and Yemeni-backed terrorists. Southern Yemeni society was fractured, and the United Kingdom refused to work with diverse independence movements, making decolonization difficult. The locals of Yemen wanted to seize power and use it to undermine the armed forces of the invading nations. Some Adenis resorted to violence because they were afraid that Yemeni groups might eventually come to dominate the United Kingdom as a result of decolonization” (Chang, 1972). Understanding the context of the uprisings against the British invaders is essential. In their pursuit of independence, they targeted British military personnel rather than people. The British labeled the Adeni perpetrators of these acts as terrorists in an effort to stigmatize them.

“Oftentimes, the offenders were Islamist soldiers who had adopted the notion of martyrdom as part of their religious practice. The British government successfully portrayed these incidents as acts of terrorism that hampered local autonomy. Because of

this, the United Kingdom instituted harsh regulatory measures, justifying them by saying that South Yemenis lacked the political and social maturity to rule themselves” (Ezzati, 1986).

A number of Yemeni groups were understandably alarmed, but the United Kingdom's failure to peacefully transfer authority to the people of Yemen in a timely manner was a direct violation of United Nations resolutions. The United Kingdom claimed that South Yemen's incapacity to govern itself was the reason for its unwillingness to leave the area, but its actions showed that it was fundamentally opposed to decolonization.

“The People's Democratic Republic of Yemen replaced the Federation of South Arabia when the British left in 1967. The People's Democratic Republic of Yemen existed from 1967 to 1990 and was a socialist country. The Soviet Union and other communist governments throughout the globe were crucial to the success of this state's construction in the Middle East at the time” (Davies, 2022).

Finally, “the British interest in Yemen prior to 2011 was aimed at removing the threat of terrorism. To this end, the British strengthened Yemeni counter-terrorist agencies, occasionally deployed Special Forces to the country, and supported US-led drones and strikes. This period of British influence during Saleh's rule is crucial for knowing and assessing the British performance in Yemeni affairs today. These measures were complemented by political and economic initiatives aimed at eradicating the sources of what they called terrorism. In the wake of 9/11, the UK deepened its partnership with the USA in the fight against terrorism by helping to educate the newly formed Counter Terrorism Unit” (Day & Brehony, 2020).

“Anwar al-Awlakii's incitement of lone wolf attacks across the West, including the United Kingdom, and the subsequent formation of al-Qaeda on the Arab Peninsula in 2009 led to a further rise in UK support. To shore up support for his regime, Saleh inflated the danger posed by terrorists. British diplomats tried to encourage Saleh and his security chiefs to moderate some of Saleh's most contentious domestic policies, but their efforts were largely unsuccessful. They didn't trust Saleh because they thought he was "dancing on the heads of snakes" and using AQAP as a pawn” (Day & Brehony, 2020).

Donors at a London conference in 2006 made big promises to address the economic hardships that fed terrorist activity, but very little was delivered. DfID pledged to enhance UK assistance in the future years, and raised its commitment in Yemen from a total of £12 million in 2007/2008 to £20 million in 2008/2009. In the 2000s, London made efforts to prevent assistance from being misused by the regime's oligarchy by tying its distribution to the success of reform initiatives. Trustworthy NGOs like the Society Funds for Improvement were used as much as possible to channel funding where it would do the best.

“A meeting hosted by then-British Prime Minister G Brown in January 2010 led to the establishment of the Friends of Yemen in April of that year. Over fifty nations ultimately joined this coalition, which sought to increase political support for Yemen on a global scale and support initiatives led by Yemenis to address the fundamental root causes of unrest” (UK Government, 2013). For instance, in 2010, the group emphasized laying the basis for parliamentary elections that had been postponed in 2009 by promoting contact between the General People's Congress and the opposition (JMP, principally Islah).

More stringent CT regulations were warranted after terrorist attacks on the UK ambassador in April 2010 and another British diplomatic in Oct of that year. This includes supporting US drone operations, working closely with Yemen's military, and coordinating with international and regional partners to acquire better information on AQAP. The embassy's capabilities suffered in 2010 and the ensuing years as a consequence of staff reductions, increased turnover, and travel restrictions.

“Together, the United Kingdom and Saudi Arabia co-chaired the Friends of Yemen. According to British officials, Saudi Arabia places a high value on CT strategy. Prince Muhammad bin Nayef of the Saudi Arabian security and intelligence agencies was willing to work with the British to destroy the last al-Qaeda threat in Yemen. The Special Committee on Yemen's Politically Influence Networks was run for decades by Defense Minister and then Crown Prince Sultan bin Abdulaziz. The Special Committee employed its former ambassador to Yemen. Saudi authorities were less active in leveraging the old networks for political rather than CT goals after the 2007 death of Sheikh Abdullah al-

Ahmmar, chairman of the biggest tribal confederation and an important ally—and rival—of Saleh, and Prince Sultan's sickness before to his 2011 death. Yemen policy coordination became more difficult in the final years of King Abdullah's reign as the country's senior princes were distracted by other regional crises” (Day & Brehony, 2020).

2.7 The Many Identities

According to postcolonial theorists, the legacy of colonialism has resulted in the perpetuation of identity-based divisions within former colonies, which can contribute to conflicts between various groups within the same country. According to Homi K. Bhabha's book "The Location of Culture," "postcolonial nations tend to be defined by the presence of multiple ethnic, linguistic, and religious groups, whose histories are not just different from each other but also historically distinct from the nation-state itself" (Bhabha, 1994).

Political or commercial interests, as well as the existence of colonial-era power relations, can intensify these differences. As Achille Mbembe points out in his book "On the Postcolony," "in most postcolonial societies, the state has been used to establish and reinforce ethnic or regional identities that can be utilized for political gain or to secure economic resources" (Mbembe, 2001).

2.7.1 Regional Identities

Yemen has historically and currently been divided into two major political entities: the South and the North. The country was separated into two halves until 1990: The PDR (South) and The YAR (North). These two countries were distinct states with distinct political histories, born of two distinct spatial and political formations. The contemporary southern state arose from the British Empire, whereas the modern northern state represents one of the primary legacies of the Zayd Shiite Imamate. The merger of the two republics has suffered from structural failure as a result of a lack of preparation and equitable representation for the South in the aftermath of the 1994 war. The Southern Movement al-Ḥirak, usually known simply as al-Ḥirak, originated as a nonviolent protesting movement in 2007. Since then, the movement has grown dramatically, with vast numbers of Southerners openly protesting the Northern elite's rule under former president 'Ali 'Abd Allah Salih (al-Rubaidi, 2020).

The majority of al-Hīrak members want the South to be separated from the North and for an independent Southern state to be restored. The National Dialogue Conference (NDC 2013/2014) findings supported federalism as a solution to this challenge. However, the negotiations were initially sabotaged by politicians with competing interests, and the proposed solutions were eventually thwarted by war in late 2014 and early 2015.

2.7.2 Religious Identities

The Sunni Shāfi, Shiite Zaydīs, and Shiite Ismā‘īlīs are the three primary traditional component groups of Yemen's Islamic landscape. While these three groups are associated with Yemen's old traditional religious schools of thought, the second half of the twentieth century saw the emergence of new Sunni religious patterns, namely the Muslim Brotherhood's school of thought (since the late 1930s) and the Salafī doctrine (since the late 1970s). Furthermore, there is the Tablīghī Jamā‘ a group, which has religious centers in Hodeidah, Sana'a, and al-Bayhdah. Aside from political and economic reasons, the battle between the Huthis, a Zaydī group, and the government has a religious component. For many Yemeni inhabitants in the north, the current internationally recognized administration embodies and symbolizes the republican system that dates back to 1962, when the Zaydī imamate was defeated by revolutionaries from many Yemeni regions and faiths (Fabian Blumberg, 2019).

The republicans consider the Huthis as the revivalists of the Zaydī imamate. The Imam or leader of the Muslim country, according to the Zaydī school of thinking, must be a member of the Hashimite clan (descendants of the prophet), to which the Huthi family belongs as they claim. The republicans despise this Shiite notion because they consider it is anti-democratic, equal citizenship, and equal representation. The Huthis believe that republican regimes have marginalized their Zaydī identity throughout the last four decades; republicans, on the other hand, consider that Hashimite households in the north have been treated equally with other Yemenis.

2.7.3 Ethnic Identities

In Yemen, ethnicity is very important. Yemen has physical, historical, and social ties to the Horn of Africa countries. The African Yemenis, known as akhdām in Yemen, are claimed to have been slaves during Yemen's early medieval history. They now dwell in

shantytowns outside of major cities or in marginalized areas. According to UNICEF, they account for 10% of Yemen's population. This group of citizens is distinguished by their physical appearance, and they are subjected to marginalization, resulting in economic hardship and misery (al-Rubaidi, 2020).



CHAPTER THREE

THE CURRENT YEMENI CRISIS: THE MANY PLAYERS

3.1 Current Yemeni Conflict (An Overview)

“Yemen is facing the world’s worst humanitarian crisis (Broder, 2018). Yemen's crisis refers to the country's current civil conflict and humanitarian disaster, which began in 2015. The crisis is the result of a complex collection of variables, including political, economic, and security issues, as well as regional and global dynamics. Yemen's population has been devastated by the crisis, with millions of people afflicted by conflict-related violence, displacement, food insecurity, and a lack of access to essential services” (UN News, 2018).

“Yemen's war has its origins in the Arab Spring of 2011 when a popular movement against President Ali Abdullah Saleh's rule resulted in his ouster and the formation of a national unity government. However, the transition was not easy, and a Houthi rebellion began in September 2014, escalating into a full-fledged war in March 2015. The situation has been compounded by the involvement of regional and international parties, with a coalition led by Saudi Arabia starting a military intervention in March 2015 with the claimed goal of restoring President Hadi's government” (*War in Yemen*, 2023).

“Disruption of essential services and extensive bloodshed has resulted from the war. As of December 2020, the war has reportedly claimed the lives of over 100,000 people, the great majority of whom were civilians, according to the United Nations. In addition, around 4 million people majority of whom were civilians. In addition, about 4 million people have been displaced, and 24 million, or 80% of the population, need humanitarian assistance. An estimated 16 million people are facing severe food insecurity as a direct consequence of the crisis, and millions more do not have access to healthcare, clean water, or sanitary facilities” (United Nations).

The future of the country is unclear despite the many efforts made to resolve the issue. There seems to be no resolution in sight, even though both sides are declaring victory. The Houthis and the internationally recognized Yemeni government, supported

by a Saudi-led coalition, remain bitterly opposed to one another, diminishing the likelihood of a peaceful conclusion.

3.2 The Yemeni Revolution (February Revolution)

Scholars of postcolonial studies have emphasized how colonial powers frequently built puppet regimes in former colonies to keep control over the indigenous inhabitants. These administrations were frequently made up of elites who were loyal to the colonizers and adopted policies that benefited the colonial powers. According to Frantz Fanon's book "The Wretched of the Earth," "the national bourgeoisie of colonized countries, like the whole of the national liberation movement, has up until now been determined to behave within the limits laid down by the colonialist bourgeoisie" (Fanon, 1963). This demonstrates how local elites were complicit in the maintenance of colonial power institutions.

Furthermore, postcolonial theorists contend that the legacy of colonialism has resulted in the emergence of revolutionary movements aimed at deconstructing these puppet regimes and challenging existing power structures. According to Edward Said's book "Culture and Imperialism," "one of the most significant elements of the struggle against imperialism is the struggle over the puppet regimes that imperialist powers set up to control the colonized countries" (Said, 1993).

These revolutionary movements frequently incorporate disparate groups that are unified in their opposition to current power systems and desire for self-determination and autonomy. According to Chandra Talpade Mohanty's book "Feminism without Borders," "nationalist movements in previous colonies are frequently marked by the coming together of diverse groups united by a shared objective of dismantling colonial power structures to build a more just society" (Mohanty, 2003).

The Yemeni Revolution, also known as the Yemeni Uprising, began on February 11, 2011, during the Arab Spring events. Protests and rallies defined the revolution, which ultimately led to President Ali Abdullah Saleh's departure after 33 years in office.

"The southern region, known as the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, declared its independence in 1967, while the northern region, known as the Yemen Arab Republic, did the same in 1962. After much deliberation, the two regions were united in

1990 as the Republic of Yemen under the leadership of Ali Abdullah Saleh and his deputy Ali Salem Al-Beidh. However, there were some administrative imbalances, and Ali Salem eventually called for secession, leading to a civil war that began in 1994 and ended with the South being defeated. In the end, two distinct narratives emerged. The first was the reunification of Yemen when the civil war there ended and the government was given more authority. The second was the people of the South accused the government of stealing Southern resources and imposing overall cruelty on them” as reported by the International Crisis Group in 2011 and 2013.

“The ethnic disparities in Yemen are evident not just in the north-south division but also in the marginalization of the Houthis, a Zaidi Shia tribe in northern Yemen. Fears on the political front grew as members of President Saleh's family took over the country's security and military forces, and as the governing party worked to amend the constitution to make way for Saleh's son to become president. The Joint Meeting Parties negotiated at length with the governing regime to ensure free and fair elections, proportional representation, and the neutralization of the media and public monies. All of these changes, plus three decades of corruption and political warfare, almost brought down the central political structure” (Durac, 2011).

The Yemeni revolution started on February 11, 2011, with a major demonstration in the capital, Sana'a, inspired by the events in Tunisia and Egypt and driven by a desire to reform the situation and the political system. Protesters converged to Change Square, a central location in the city, to call for President Saleh's ouster. Thousands of Yemenis took to the streets to demand reform, drawing up support from a wide variety of political and tribal factions.

“President Saleh asked for mediation from the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) when he found himself confronted with thousands of demonstrators on the streets at the end of January 2011. Together with the other nine permanent members of the United Nations Security Council and the European Union, the GCC established the "Group of Ten" (G10). On April 23, 2011, the United States and the European Union presented President Ali Abdullah Saleh with the GCC Initiative. On November 23, 2011, six months

after its first submission, Ali Abdullah Saleh signed the Implementing Mechanism” (Burke, 2013).

“The GCC Initiative laid forth a democratic "Transition Roadmap" in two stages and a time frame of two years. The first phase witnessed the cessation of hostilities and the establishment of a transitional government of national unity, as well as the transfer of presidential power from Saleh to his Vice President, Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi. The GPC, Saleh's original political organization, and the JMP, an opposition group, formed this coalition administration. To begin work on a new constitution, the United Nations recommended convening a National Dialogue Conference in the second phase” (United Nations, 2011).

After a referendum on the amended Constitution, parliamentary elections would have been conducted to round off the changeover. The National Dialogue Conference in Yemen ran from March 2013 to January 2014. The roughly 12-month-long discussion was seen as a "historic milestone in Yemen's transition from dictatorship to democracy" by 'The UN Constitutional Weekly' and had great potential. The political atmosphere in Yemen has changed significantly since the Constitutional Drafting Commission was scheduled to begin its work, rendering the results of the national conversation impossible to implement. The Houthi assault on Sana'a, the capital, marked the beginning of a new phase in Yemen's terrible struggle.

3.3 The Coup against the State and Legitimacy

The Houthi coup in Yemen refers to the September 2014 takeover of the Yemeni government by the Houthi rebel group, also known as Ansar Allah. This event was a turning point in modern Yemeni history, altering the country's political landscape and having far-reaching effects throughout the Middle East and beyond.

The years following the 2011 Arab Spring, when Yemen was in political turmoil and the government faced numerous challenges, including a separatist movement in the south, Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), and a growing Houthi insurgency in the north, was the genesis of the conflict between the Houthis and the Yemeni government.

“The February 11 revolution in Yemen saw the ouster of long-time President Ali Abdullah Saleh, who ruled the country for 33 years. The Houthis, who had fought against

Saleh's administration several times before, viewed the revolution as a chance to expand their power and influence. The book "YEMEN: THE 60-YEAR WAR, 2019" claims that the Houthis gained power due to their participation in the February 11 revolution and cooperation with Saleh's soldiers. The Houthis' partnership with ex-President Saleh paved the way for their successful invasion of the city, Sana'a. "The Houthis' infiltration of President Saleh's soldiers and machinery has been going on for a long time," said an Al Jazeera article, adding that "the partnership between the two helped the Houthis arrival into Sana'a" (Saeed, 2017).

“A further factor in the Houthi rebellion was frustration in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates with the Arab upheavals and parties with an Islamic basis. The two nations feared for their safety in the wake of the Arab Spring and the emergence of Islamist parties, therefore they backed non-Islamist groups in the Middle East to offset the Islamists' growing power. The Houthis gained from the resentment of Saudi Arabia and the UAE against the Arab uprisings and parties with an Islamic base" as stated in a BBC.

The Houthis took advantage of the government's weakness in September 2014 to launch a surprise military attack and seize control of Sana'a, the nation's capital. Rapid gains allowed the organization to drive President Hadi's administration from the city. Afterward, the Houthis proclaimed a "revolution" against the government and set up a Supreme Revolutionary Committee to rule the country. Rapid military successes by the Houthis surprised Yemen's political elite, the Gulf nations, and the international community, triggering a political and security crisis that has yet to abate. The world community unanimously denounced the Houthi takeover as a "coup" against the legitimate government.

In April 2015, the UNSC passed Resolution 2216, which strongly criticized the Houthi takeover and called on the group to withdraw from all places it had taken, including the capital, and deliver authority back to the government. The resolution also included a weapons embargo and penalties against the Houthis' top officials.

The United Nations has called the humanitarian crisis in Yemen the worst in the world, but the Houthis have refused to step down and have instead strengthened their grip

on the country, engaging in a brutal conflict with the government and its allies, including a coalition led by Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

“More than 80% of Yemenis, or 24 million people, need humanitarian aid, including over 12 million children alone, as stated in a study by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). According to the study, "the violence has had a catastrophic effect on civilians, with widespread claims of human rights abuses, including arbitrary arrest, enforced disappearances, and torture by all sides to the conflict" (OCHA).

As a proxy conflict between Iran and Saudi Arabia, with each side backing different elements in the struggle, the Houthis' capture of Sanaa has had far-reaching regional and international consequences. Saudi Arabia and its allies have offered military aid to the government and conducted airstrikes on Houthi targets, while Iran has supplied the Houthis with weapons and training.

3.4 Operation Decisive Storm

“The Saudi Air Force started attacking military targets in Yemen late on March 25. Public knowledge of the operation, codenamed "Decisive Storm," emerged just a few hours after it had begun. Riyadh released an official statement, and the Saudi Arabian ambassador to the United States held a news conference to discuss the legal basis and objectives of the operation. Some Arabs voiced their approval, and on March 28 and 29, during the Arab Summit in Sharm al-Shaikh, Arab authorities published various resolutions demonstrating their support for the operation” (“Saudi Arabia Launches Air Strikes in Yemen,” 2015).

“These feelings mirrored a rising discontent with Iran's increasing influence in the Arab world, with many thinking that Iran took advantage of a power vacuum in the region as a result of failed revolutions and reform efforts. The fact that Iran backed counterrevolutionary forces that stoked sectarian strife, civil wars, and internal divisions further fueled the flames of these emotions”(Abdullah, 2015).

“The Houthis and Saudi Arabia came into conflict in 2009 because the Houthis believed Saudi Arabia was supporting the Yemeni government's fight against them. In the years that followed, the political division in Yemen included the Houthi problem, which

Riyadh had to deal with. Since the Houthi takeover of Sanaa in September, Saudi Arabia has faced the issue of dealing with a group that seems to have ties to Iran. More than half of Yemen's military forces are under the control of former president Ali Abdullah Saleh, who has aligned with the Houthi-Iranian alliance. The Houthis have no interest in compromising inside Yemen and want to rule the country alone. The Houthis' territorial expansion, their facilitation of Iran's expanding influence in the nation, and the United States' refusal to act were the key reasons for Saudi Arabia's participation in Yemen. The Houthis had taken over Sanaa and were expanding into neighboring regions with the help of the Republican Guard and other troops loyal to Ali Abdullah Saleh. After President Hadi fled to Aden, they also made an effort to seize control of the city. The United States, a longtime friend of Saudi Arabia, has made it plain that it will not become involved in the conflict in Yemen. Because of these events, Saudi Arabia decided to interfere even though it was getting no help from the United States. From” (Abdullah, 2015).

“Ahmed Abdullah Saleh, the son of the deposed Yemeni president and a key figure in the Yemeni army, visited Saudi Arabia two days before the start of Operation Decisive Storm. He offered to mobilize his forces against the Houthis in exchange for immunity, lifting sanctions, and ending the freeze on their wealth. However, the Saudi administration rejected Saleh's offer, indicating their lack of confidence in Abdullah Saleh and a desire for a more permanent solution to the Yemeni crisis that would exclude Saleh and his camp. Operation Decisive Storm has relied heavily on-air strikes to achieve its objectives. These objectives include destroying military targets such as air defense sites, command centers, and supply lines of forces loyal to Saleh and the Houthis while supporting anti-Houthi forces around Aden and other areas. The operation also aimed to impose an embargo on Yemeni ports to prevent military supplies from reaching the Houthis and Saleh's forces, defend the Saudi borders against potential attacks, and liberate the capital and other major cities from Houthi control. The ground forces that carried out these objectives included tribal volunteers, armed factions of the Yemeni Congregation for Reform and its allies, military forces loyal to the legitimate president, and commanders who have defected from Saleh's troops” (Musaed Al-Zayani, 2015).

The Houthi rebel group responded to the storm with resistance and vowed to fight against coalition forces. They launched missile attacks on targets in Saudi Arabia and

aimed to rally public opinion against the intervention by emphasizing the civilian casualties caused by the air strikes. The military outcome of the storm was inconclusive on the ground. The coalition forces made some progress but were unable to achieve a decisive victory over the Houthis. The rebels retained control over a large portion of the north, including the capital city of Sana'a, resulting in a stalemate in the conflict.

3.5 The Players and Their Different Agendas

Foreign interventions have been a key source of political instability, economic exploitation, and social turmoil in postcolonial countries. These interventions have been motivated by a variety of factors, including strategic, economic, and ideological considerations. Foreign interventions in postcolonial countries, as academic Edward Said observes in his book "Culture and Imperialism," are frequently marked by a "clash of interests and ideologies" (Said, 1993). To further the objectives of foreign powers, these interventions have frequently required the use of military force, economic pressure, or political manipulation.

“Postcolonial theorists claim that these actions have contributed to the former colonies' continued issues, such as political instability, economic reliance, and social disintegration. Foreign interventions in postcolonial countries, as stated by academic Aijaz Ahmad in his book "In Theory: Classes, Nations, Literatures," have frequently been motivated by a desire to keep economic and political control over these countries. The Yemen War is so complicated because of the many overlapping fronts. Neither a simple civil war between the Houthis and the Hadi administration nor a regional conflict between Iran and Saudi Arabia adequately describes the current scenario in Yemen. The war includes international, regional, and local dimensions beyond the internal civil war, with the levels of violence regularly overlapping and influencing each other. In addition to struggles for control within the country's political elites, tensions exist between the north and south” (Ahmad, 2008).

3.5.1 International Actors

3.5.1.1 United States of America

“It is generally believed that American involvement is the most crucial in the development of the Yemeni issue, with its weapons of pressure on everyone, including Iran and the Houthis, despite their professed hostile views toward it. They, that is, Al-Houthi and Iran, are awaiting the US position on nearly every action they take. It is important to note that the majority of American dealings with the Al-Houthis take place within the context of the American-Saudi relationship, which is bound by numerous agreements. Among these are the security and defense treaties, as well as the resulting US commitment to Saudi Arabia's and the region's security in general”(Day & Brehony, 2020). However, this relationship has witnessed in recent periods a kind of turmoil as a result of discrepancies in many files, which is reflected in the position of the White House, which Riyadh needs so much, and makes the American view of the war in Yemen as an opportunity through which Saudi Arabia can be pressured to bargain with it in settling outstanding issues, and sometimes blackmail it on sensitive issues such as energy and security.

The American interest in Yemen is centered on several major determinants, including:

- That Yemen is one of the most important addresses of the anti-terrorism file that the US administration has worked on over the last two decades, and thus the US administration determines its relationship with the various parties based on its assessment of the extent to which any of those parties serves the US interest in this file. This is always read in the positions of parties attempting to gain a deeper relationship with the US administration through the window of readiness for security cooperation and counter-terrorism.

- “Conflict with Iran: In this, America considers Al-Houthi as an Iranian arm, and therefore the more difficult the situation with it, the more it cooperates with Saudi Arabia in the war against him, but this cooperation is limited in a way that does not prejudice the effectiveness of the influence related to the state of the Saudi-American relationship” (Tueller, M., 2018).

- Conflict with Russia and China, as well as regional competition: In this context, the US government opposes any involvement that Russia or China may play in the Yemeni war to avoid losing historical allies and an area that has long been under its international control.

- Regional and international balances, managing and employing them in favor of American policy, which works to maintain hotbeds of tension in the region and maintain its tools with a certain amount of strength, which keeps all conflicts open without a solution, and with which everyone needs the American position and the support it provides to its allies.

- Approaching Yemen from a geopolitical standpoint and caring for it as a useful region for military stationing that promotes US security interests, with what Bab al-Mandab and other Yemeni islands mean in terms of international navigation.

- Indirect economic interests from which Washington benefits, especially in the oil and gas sectors, at least about the global energy market balances and prices.

3.5.1.2 United Kingdom

The factors of British policy in Yemen are not dissimilar to those of the United States and are practically identical in most cases. However, there is something that distinguishes them and makes them more interested in the details of the Yemeni conflict.

The British crown is distinguished from the American ally about the issue of Yemeni unity, as it seems that the British position is more in favor of projects that work to fragment society, which is a good idea in the eyes of the British mind that makes it difficult to return society to its previous unity if there is no official separation, and this The vision is almost an upgraded version of the American vision of keeping hotbeds of tension and conflict existing, with its causes and tools. The difference between the two visions is that the American one pertains to regional conflicts and the British one that goes deeper to the level of local conflicts.

Aside from that, it is believed that American and British policies are generally consistent and compatible.

3.5.1.3 European Union

“The European Union is present in Yemen collectively, and except for France, European interests appear to be on the soft side of intervention. France, on the other hand, has unique financial and economic interests from its relationship with the Yemeni government in the oil sectors, as well as its partner in the project to export liquefied gas from Balhaf. The significance of these interests is heightened by the Russian-Ukrainian conflict and the accompanying energy and gas crises in Europe” (Day, 2020).

“For several years, the European Union (EU) has been involved in the Yemeni crisis, notably through humanitarian aid and diplomatic efforts. The EU's major goal in Yemen is to alleviate Yemeni suffering and encourage a peaceful resolution to the war. The EU has offered significant financial assistance to Yemen as a major supplier of humanitarian aid, including cash for food, water, and medical supplies. The EU allocated about €200 million in humanitarian aid to Yemen in 2020 alone. (European Union External Action Service” (EEAS, 2021)

“The European Union has been participating in diplomatic attempts to resolve the situation in Yemen in addition to providing humanitarian aid. The European Union has frequently called for a negotiated end to the war and supported the peace talks spearheaded by the United Nations. The European Union has also contributed to the enforcement of the ceasefire and the promotion of adherence to international humanitarian law” (EEAS, 2021). Promoting human rights and international humanitarian law is a top priority for the European Union in Yemen. In particular, the EU has been vocal in its condemnation of the deployment of child soldiers, the arbitrary imprisonment and torture of prisoners, and the indiscriminate bombardment of civilian areas by both sides. The European Union has also pushed for accountability for these crimes, notably via the International Criminal Court.

“The EU is the only Western international body to maintain productive connections with both opposing factions, and the UN is the sole exception to this rule. Antonia Calvo Puerta, who manages the European Union's Track 2 efforts engaging many Yemeni tribes, was the sole Western diplomat to meet with the Houthi leadership before to Griffith's appointment as UN mediator. The EU has the opportunity to assist Griffith's mediation

efforts in addition to working with the tribes. Although Britain has often prevented Brussels from becoming more involved, the country now has a fresh chance to act as a mediator after it decides to leave the European Union. Humanitarian aid, peacekeeping, and the promotion of respect for human rights and international humanitarian law are at the heart of the European Union's strategy in Yemen” (Democratic Arabic Center, 2022).

3.5.1.4 Russia

During the first three years of Yemen's conflict, Russia maintained a balanced relationship with the legitimate Yemeni government and the Houthi coupists in Sanaa, and its ambassador participated in Houthi activities and received and met with a number of the group's leaders, as well as leaders of the General People's Congress Party, including Saleh, who is sanctioned. Following the assassination of former President Saleh, Moscow closed its embassy in Sanaa. (Ramani, 2020).

In general, Russia's position in Yemen is influenced by its relationships with Iran and Saudi Arabia, as well as their shared interests. Iran is linked to it in a way that resembles a common alliance in the face of America, and Saudi Arabia is linked to it based on common interests in energy production and supply.

As a result, the Russian posture appears to be somewhat conservative, but this does not exclude Russia from returning to Yemen and establishing a footing near the international waterways of the Arabian and Red Seas.

3.5.1.5 China

Since President "Xi Jinping's" election as President of China in 2012, Chinese foreign policy has been marked by openness and a desire to develop relations with countries that have long-standing contacts with China, albeit limited in terms of economic and trade interaction. Chinese openness is the result of a desire to gain political influence and security presence in critical places throughout the world.

China is distinguished by its interest in Yemen by its openness to all local parties allied with the legitimate government, which China has supported since the beginning of the crisis. And after the three Chinese summits held in Riyadh (Saudi / Gulf / Arab), the indicators became stronger in the Chinese desire to expand its role in the region - including Yemen - and that the work to achieve it has entered a new phase in practice, (Chang, 2020). but the Chinese-Yemeni relationship according to the current data as some experts believe, will continue to be affected by its relationship with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and its orientations towards the Yemeni file.

3.5.2 Regional actors

3.5.2.1 Saudi Arabia

"Since March 2015, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) have spearheaded an international coalition against Yemen. The Saudis have mostly resorted to bombing, while the UAE has sent troops to Yemen's ground. Indirectly, the United States, the United Kingdom, and France provide resources and knowledge" (Byman, 2018).

"According to the coalition's official narrative, they intervened because the Hadi administration requested them. As a result, the alliance now has the authority to wage war. Although aiding the Yemeni government is officially the reason, Saudi Arabia has considered Yemen a "local concern" since at least the 1930s, when it first began meddling in its neighbor's internal affairs" (Byman, 2018).

"Saudi Arabia blames Iran for equipping the Houthis and trying to construct a "Gulf version of Hezbollah" on its border, making Yemen part of a larger power struggle between the two countries, Saudi Arabia's objective, and involvement might be interpreted as a way of safeguarding its influence and interests in the area by seeking to push back Iranian influence that is funneled via the Houthis, despite Iran's denial of this and many observers seeing it as an overstated danger" (Gregory D. Johnsen, 2018).

3.5.2.2 United Arab Emirates

"While the United Arab Emirates stated goal is in line with Saudi Arabia's, the UAE seems to have developed objectives in Yemen that are distinct from Saudi Arabia's during the course of the conflict. Both nations claim to support the Hadi administration and its military, but they also assist local militias, tribes, and security forces in different parts of Yemen, putting their interests in conflict with one another" (Lackner, 2017).

"In addition to opposing the Houthis, coalition-backed organizations have also assaulted one other and supporters of the Hadi administration on various occasions (P. Salisbury, 2017). Saudi Arabia backs the largest northern Yemeni opposition organization, the Islamic Party of Islah, although the United Arab Emirates (UAE) is strongly opposed to it because of its links to the Muslim Brotherhood. The United Arab Emirates has provided financial support to southern separatist groups fighting against the Hadi administration, as well as provided training, equipment, and funding to local militias known as the "Elite Forces" and the "Security Belts". Salafist leaders of several of these organizations have made Islahis, Houthis, and Hadi government supporters their targets. The UEA has created military outposts in Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Djibouti, and this is part of a larger strategy to control territory along the Red Sea coast and open a corridor to the Horn of Africa" (Lackner, 2017).

3.5.2.3 Iran

"A common explanation for the situation in Yemen is that it is a proxy war between Saudi Arabia, which supports the Hadi government, and Iran, which supports the Houthis. Saleh utilized this narrative throughout the Sa'dah Wars, and the Hadi administration continued using it after him. The Trump administration has used it as well; they see the conflict in Yemen as part of a bigger effort to prevent Iranian expansionism in the region or as part of a counterterrorism effort. Using the flag of resistance and opposition, Iran finances the Houthi militia and leverages the turmoil in Yemen to its advantage in regional and international conflicts and to further its expansionist agenda. The constitutional foundation of the Iranian Revolution is to export the revolution, and sectarian aims and

elements have guided this endeavor ever since it emerged as a rival regional initiative" (Juneau, 2016).

The Iranian presence in Yemen aims to

- Create an armed force that dominates the state and acts within the framework of Iran's expansionist goal, so that it can use them later in wars with several regional states, including Saudi Arabia. It can strike targets anywhere through that militia without incurring the consequences or bearing responsibility.
- Control over vital global regions such as the Bab al-Mandab, which will swing the balance of power in the region in favor of Iran and give it greater international consideration, as it will be dominant over two international corridors through which 40% of the world's energy demands flow.
- Using its influence in Yemen as a negotiating tool in its nuclear and missile program dispute with international powers led by the United States of America. It also holds a card in its battle with Israel, particularly about its presence in the Red Sea.
- To motivate Yemenis to fight with it in revenge for the alleged Saudi aggression against Yemen, and thereby capitalize on growing popular discontent with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's numerous political interventions in Yemen.
- Obtaining the most economic rewards from influence in Yemen, even in the future, as it did from influence in Iraq.

The war in Yemen is nothing more than a low-cost distraction strategy for Iran to put Saudi Arabia on the defensive and shift focus away from Syria and Iraq. While Riyadh spends billions every month, Tehran spends very less.

3.5.2.4 Oman

The Omani Sultanate acts in Yemen within three circles, each with varying importance and influence on the ground:

The first: is to secure its western borders and ensure that militias or forces do not dominate surrounding governorates, such as Al-Mahra governorate, and to ensure this, modern

political formations and armed tribes are encouraged to avoid the fall of those areas. It also supports any efforts to prevent the UAE-allied Transitional Council from fully controlling the southern governorates and what might result from a new situation - separation is one of its possibilities -, and here the dimension of its almost tense relationship with the UAE, as well as its incompatibility with most Saudi policies, cannot be overlooked.

The second: Is concerned with its good connection with Iran, and according to that relationship was its position on the Houthi coup and the unique facilities it gives to the Houthi in conjunction with Iran, as mentioned in a report of the expert group before the Security Council in 2019.

Third: Within the context of its relationships with Britain and America, and what these relationships demand in terms of carrying out duties that can be included under the name (subcontracting) or in the item of exchanging roles and interests. (Democratic Arabic Center, 2022).

3.5.2.5 Egypt

Egypt's presence in the Yemeni war is concentrated in its interest in the security of the Red Sea and Bab al-Mandab, as well as its military presence in them, due to its direct reflection on navigation movement and its activity in the Suez Canal, as the canal is of great importance to Egypt's national security and economy, especially given that it generates approximately 10% of the Egyptian treasury. This importance for Egypt multiplies with the state of weakness that the Egyptian economy is going through. (Democratic Arabic Center, 2022)

Apart from this, Cairo is present in other aspects of the crisis, but it is a limited presence that does not reach the level of influence and is mostly in line with the orientations of the KSA and UAE.

3.5.3 Local Actors

3.5.3.1 The Internationally Recognized Yemen Government

“Since previous President Ali Abdullah Saleh was deposed in February 2012, Hadi's administration has been universally recognized as the legitimate government of Yemen. Abd Rabo Mansour Hadi, a former vice president under Saleh, now heads the administration. Hadi's administration assumed power in Yemen after a peace agreement was mediated by the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), which is supported by Saudi Arabia. Under the terms of the agreement, also known as the GCC Framework, Saleh was to hand up power to Hadi in return for protection from prosecution for himself and his associates” (Marwa Rashad, 2011). “To further prepare for constitutional revisions and presidential and parliamentary elections, Hadi's cabinet was given two years to run the nation” (Fraihat, 1 C.E.).

To keep the upcoming transition together, Hadi proposed the National Dialogue Conference NDC. The NDC was held up as the prime mover in the transformation of the country. Disputed issues including South Yemen and the conflict in Sa'da have been delegated to special subcommittees (MEI, 2019). The NDC's results were celebrated by the United Nations, which called it a "historic event" for Yemen. However, shifts on the micro level have called its universality into question (Schmitz, 2014).

“According to Daniel Martin Varisco (2011), Saleh referred to his leadership in Yemen as "dancing on the heads of snakes," and he did everything he could to ensure a favorable transition in his favor. He allied with his longtime enemies, the Houthis, to expand his spheres of influence. Hadi was driven out of the country at the end of 2014 as a result of an insurrection launched by the Saleh-Houthis coalition in Sana'a. Hadi asked Saudi Arabia to help him put down the rebellion, and the kingdom obliged with a military intervention in March 2015” (Unruh, 2016).

The goal of the administration of President Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi is to reunite Yemen by driving back the Houthis and reclaiming the country's lost areas. The existence of Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and a separatist movement in the south have both been obstacles to Hadi's leadership. The Hadi administration may have

supporters in certain regions, but it is commonly seen as weak and inefficient. Discord both inside the administration and between the government and its coalition allies has led to chaos on the ground, undermining attempts to restore the state and end the Houthi takeover. The sides seem to be at an impasse with no way out of the disagreement at this time.

3.5.3.2 The Houthis

"A major combatant group in the war. There has been a change in the Houthis' original goals, at first their dispute was "existential," a bid for authority and public acknowledgment. However, as they ascended to prominence, their goal evolved, and authoritarians within the organization came to dominate the regions they ruled"(Juneau, 2016).

"The Hussein Badreddin Al-Houthi-named Houthis began as a revivalist group called Believing Youth in the early 1990s. The primary objective was to revive the core beliefs of Zayidism (a branch of Shi'ism) among the younger generation. They are Sa'dah Zayidis who have been discriminated against by Saleh's policies in all spheres of society since the 1970s. The Sa'dah Wars, fought by the Houthis against the Saleh administration from 2004 to 2010, lasted six years. They expanded their area and strengthened their armed forces throughout time" (Brandt, 2017).

"By the time the anti-Saleh insurrection erupted in 2011, they had already taken control of a sizable portion of territory beyond their original borders. Hadi took over for Saleh at the National Dialogue Conference in 2011. The Houthi hardliners continued to fight and capture territory even after some moderate Houthis joined the National Dialogue Conference" (Brandt, 2017). "They joined forces with their former enemy in 2014 during demonstrations over the Hadi government's disputed gasoline price rise. After acquiring access to additional weapons in 2015, they were able to march south into Aden before being driven back by the Saudi-led coalition" (Juneau, 2016).

"Although the group as a whole is far from cohesive, its top leaders have embraced a patriotic narrative in which they struggle against Saudi Arabia, the United States, and

Israel. Despite their prowess in battle, the Houthis seem to have only understood how to rule in the form of a ruthless police state based on fear and intimidation” (Brandt, 2017).

“Houthi sectarianism has grown as the conflict has continued. Certain extremists even go so far as to try to impose their dogmatic beliefs on other Zayidis from inside their community. They killed Saleh, who was seeking to defect, in 2017, destroying the political cover they had enjoyed thanks to his GPC” (Lackner, 2017).

3.5.3.3 The Southern Transitional Council (STC)

“In Yemen's continuing war, the Southern Transitional Council (STC) has become a major actor. It's a group that wants to break away from the rest of Yemen and form their country in the south. Transitional Council members had ties to the Southern Movement, which began in 2007 to improve the living conditions of former members of the military and security forces who had been forced out of their jobs by the Saleh regime following the 1994 war, which President Saleh and his allies had won at the expense of the Socialist Party. The STC may trace its history back to separatist movements in southern Yemen. The region's history of colonization and occupation by nations like the British and the former Soviet Union has fueled secessionist desire. The STC isn't the only southern Yemeni separatist group working on restoring the republic of South Yemen. However, these parties are opposed to the STC's use of force to attain its aims, thus the STC isn't going to win over their support quickly. Furthermore, the United Arab Emirates, which invaded Yemen in 2015 as part of an Arab coalition headed by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to defend its legitimacy, had a role in the formation of the transitional council that emerged in 2017. After tensions grew between the legitimate government and Abu Dhabi, Abu Dhabi created and backed the Transitional Council as its primary weapon against the government and, if necessary, to exert pressure on Saudi Arabia. The United Arab Emirates (UAE) views the STC as a way to protect its regional interests and prevent the growing influence of Islamist organizations in Yemen” (Democratic Arabic Center, 2022).

Since 2017, tensions have been high between the STC and the Hadi administration, and there have been many violent incidents between the two groups. In August 2019, the STC overtook Aden, the harbor city that had served as the interim capital of the Hadi

administration. The move escalated the conflict between the two sides and threw into question the likelihood of a peaceful resolution to the situation.

3.5.3.4 Presidential Leadership Council (PLC)

“Hadi did not have de facto control over the territories within its purview; rather, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (through their respective political and military proxies) did. Hadi was only able to make nominations to government offices and carry out ceremonial duties. Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates sought to keep Hadi in power as a figurehead because of the prestige he represented. Hadi's unwillingness to hand up their entire control, however, has shifted the situation in a different direction, one that Saudi Arabia and the UAE can manage thanks to the proposed Presidential Leadership Council. This is” (Eleonora Ardemagni, 2022).

“In an unexpected turn of events, Yemeni President Abd Rabbo Mansour Hadi ceded executive power to an eight-person presidential leadership council on March 17, 2022, after the Secretary-General of the Gulf Cooperation Council invited all Yemeni parties to political consultations at the General Secretariat headquarters in Riyadh. Yemeni President Hadi's adviser Rashad al-Alimi presided over the council, giving him control of the military and the ability to designate governors and other top officials. The decree from the president also mandated the formation of a commission for rapprochement and legal and economic teams” (Eleonora Ardemagni, 2022).

“While many people and organizations have a stake in the country's future, the council as a whole lack the cohesion necessary to make sound decisions. While the Presidential Council highlights the failure of previous efforts to build a coalition in the anti-Houthi camp, it is also an illustration of the country's continuing split. Historically, efforts have struggled because of fierce competition between competing groups and agendas. The Presidential Council is just as divided. As head of the so-called Southern Transitional Council, which formally joined the recognized government in late 2019, Aidarous al-Zubaidi is a council member and an example. The fact that both Tariq Saleh, leader of the National Resistance Forces, and Abu Zaraa, leader of the Giants Brigades, are on the Presidential Leadership Council despite being part of Saleh's military coalition

on the West Coast, is another indication of competing priorities. With so many internal conflicts, the Council's chances of reaching a compromise with the Houthis are dim” (Al-Kadmi, 2022).

The issue of regional backing is also significant, creating yet another barrier to political unity. For instance, Saudi Arabia has exerted significant pressure on Hadi to cede power to the council. Saudi Arabia fully supports Alimi's position as Al-leader. While it's true that Abu Dhabi backs the armed forces of the United Arab Emirates, the fact is that numerous Council members have substantial ties to the country. Al-Alimi sees the first, and maybe most difficult, step toward ending the conflict as beginning discussions with the Houthis for sustainable peace. Whether or whether it does anything, the newly formed council is a true microcosm of Yemen's present power balance, which has degraded into a collection of mini-states occupying different areas of Yemeni land. While the Presidential Council has made it possible for Yemen to have broad-based discussions, the competing interests of its members pose a potential threat to political stability.

3.6 Conflict's Unclear Future

Given the relative subsidence of the military file on the ground and the stoppage of fighting on numerous fronts, international and regional acts on the Yemeni crisis have increased in recent months, with the motto that discussion is the best approach to bring peace to Yemen.

The legitimate government and the Houthi militia both mention peace as a primary goal, and both sides raise the peace slogan in front of the Yemeni people and foreign parties. The actuality of the situation, on the other hand, suggests a divergence of perspectives and a lack of a solution on the side of the internal parties. Because they are fighting based on external interventions that dictate the pace of the battle based on their objectives. As a result, resolving the Yemeni crisis will require external agreement. regionally and internationally, which is now lacking in the Yemeni landscape.

Yemeni legitimacy defends its position in all negotiations by referencing the rules and foundations of the constitution, international legitimacy, UN resolutions, and a Gulf initiative. These rules were enacted both before and after the war erupted as a result of the

Houthi militia's use of force to seize power. The Yemeni government views any negotiations with the Houthis with caution, citing its two decades of experience with them, since the Houthis consistently demonstrate their lack of credibility in any peace effort (Al Jazeera Center for Studies, 2020).

The Houthis see themselves as the only Yemeni party entrusted with talking about Yemen, its people, and its sovereignty, and they seek to legitimize their continued rule by demanding that negotiations to end the war take place between Sanaa and the coalition countries, followed by a political solution between Yemenis. The Houthis' current demands include the payment of salaries by the legitimate authority, the opening of airports and ports, and "lifting the siege," which means consolidating their authority and recognizing it as a *fait accompli*, and this is what they have been seeking since the beginning of the war (Al-Mowadda, 2020).

The United Nations is the most involved international party in the Yemen crisis, and its envoy, Hans Grundberg, stated in a Security Council briefing on January 16, 2023, that "the situation is still complex and volatile, so I would like to point out that the various dialogue efforts in the past months have allowed for a clearer definition of the parties' positions and the development of options for mediation." Grundberg noted at one of the Davos sessions that mistrust still exists and that ending the war in Yemen will be tough, underlining the significance of a thorough approach to achieving success.

The position of the United States of America is ambiguous. Because, on the one hand, it condemns and denounces the Houthi militia's violations of human rights and its ties to the Iranian project, but, on the other hand, removing the Houthis from the terrorist list demonstrates an American vision of the need to keep the militia in a way that serves American interests. The European position is identical to its American counterpart and does not override it. Washington's position is the ruler.

Based on an assessment of the views of local, regional, and international parties, the Yemen peace process looks to be currently unreachable. The Houthi militia is still devoted to its objective of "guardianship of the jurist" and is unlikely to agree to a peace treaty that guarantees equal rights and obligations for all parties involved. Similarly, Yemeni legitimacy is unlikely to accept a peace solution that would end in its subjection to Houthi

authority, especially given the region's and the world's negative circumstances. As a result, any peace treaties established under these circumstances are unlikely to succeed.



CHAPTER FOUR

EU POLICY IN YEMEN

4.1 The EU-Yemeni Relations

The relationship between former colonial powers and their colonies has been complicated and often tense, impacted by the legacy of colonialism and the ongoing struggles of postcolonial cultures. According to researcher Frantz Fanon in his book "The Wretched of the Earth," the relationship between colonial powers and their former colonies is marked by a basic imbalance of power, with the colonizers continuing to exert enormous control over the colonized (Fanon, 1963). Economic and political tactics, such as debt repayment, trade agreements, and diplomatic pressure, are frequently used to exert control.

According to postcolonial theorists, this control relationship has led to the former colonies' enduring political instability and economic reliance. The continued effect of colonial powers, as emphasized by researcher Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o in his book "Decolonising the Mind," has contributed to a perception of cultural inferiority and a loss of local cultural traditions in former colonies (Ngugi wa Thiong'o, 1986).

“The initial idea of the EU was supposed to be far more than the economic and diplomatic weight of its individual member states. Foreign policy as a collection of agencies has historically added nothing to the country's standing in the world. It seems to have found some space to operate alongside the foreign policy of individual member states at times of crisis” (Bulmer & Lequesne, 2013). France and the UK, both long-term participants in the UN Security Council and former empires, continue to view diplomacy as an institutional part of the authority that they will not abandon, and so they have usually refused the development of autonomous structures and policies (Bonney & Schoch, 2018).

In 1984, the European Union and the Arab Republic of Yemen signed a development partnership contract, marking the beginning of their longstanding relationship. After North and South Yemen were united in 1990, the agreement was broadened to include the whole of Yemen in 1995. To further trade and development

cooperation, the two sides signed a new agreement on November 25, 1997 (European Commission, 2009) to replace the previous one that had been in effect since July 1, 1998. The environment, culture, studies, and the growth of social and human resources were also addressed, in addition to trade, development, and economic cooperation (European Council of Ministers, 1998).

While European initiatives were more creative and pragmatic after Yemen's unification in 1990, they were still seldom effective on the ground (Durac, 2010). For instance, when Yemen and Eritrea had a short conflict in 1995 (Lefebvre, 1998), France offered technical help while Yemen petitioned the Hague International Tribunal for Arbitration Court to recognize Yemen's sovereign claim to the Hanish Islands. Institutions from European member states were especially active in the development field, funding a wide variety of rural initiatives, building roads and electricity infrastructures, educating community members and specialists, and excavating and restoring cultural and historical sites. With the help of the GTZ (renamed GIZ in 2011), Germany acquired valuable expertise in water management, especially in the urban sector (Lackner, 2017).

To assist developing countries, the European Union Council approved Decision No. 416 on February 28, 2001, which offered 49 countries, including Yemen, unfettered access to European Union markets without the payment of any fees or taxes. Except for weapons, this judgment applied to all of those countries' products. These commercial operations contributed significantly to the building of EU's relations with Yemen (European Commission, 2012).

“Bilateral relations between the two parties took a distinct path, influenced by shifting US-Yemeni relations. After September 11, 2001, Washington and Sana'a began an extensive collaboration to combat terrorism and extremism, and the US government gave significant financial assistance to the latter in order to attain the new US directives. In tandem with US security objectives, the EU has extended its connections with Yemen” (Palik, 2018). On October 7, 2003, the European Union expressed its desire to enhance ties with Yemen by initiating a political discussion and sharing views on matters of mutual concern such as security, counter-terrorism, human rights, democracy, and regional development.

The government of Yemen welcomed this development. Therefore, on July 6, 2004, in Brussels, the European Union and Yemen issued a joint declaration reiterating their commitment to encouraging broad recognition of basic human rights and basic liberties and protecting them in line with the UN Charter and other human rights laws, and stressing the importance of intensive political dialogue between them, leading to better mutual understanding. The statement went on to say that everyone should work for the creation of a Palestinian state that is both democratic and independent, and that can live in peace and security next to Israel (European Union Council, 2004). In 2004, the European Commission established a sub-delegation in Sana'a and appointed a Chargé d'Affaires who reports to the Head of the European Commission's mission in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan as the first fruit of European-Yemeni collaboration. In September 2006, the European Union sent a delegation to monitor the presidential and local council elections in Yemen. The authors (Eshaq & Al-Marani, 2017).

The EU's 2007-2013 Strategy Paper states, "The EU has placed its ties within a larger framework, with the commencement of the political dialogue and the adoption of a joint statement in 2004 due to the fragile situation of Yemen as a state and the complexity of the challenges impacting the nation." The European Union (EU) hopes to achieve stability, security, and good governance with this strategy by emphasizing partnership for development within this logic and pursuing coordinated initiatives to this end (European Union and Yemen, 2007).

Beginning in 2008, the European Union launched a number of initiatives in Yemen with the goal of bolstering bilateral cooperation. These included a support program for the Yemeni community developed in conjunction with the Yemeni the Ministry of Human Rights and funded by the European Union at a cost of 1.5 million euros. The Union also issued a call to action to local and international civil society organizations, asking them to aid in the fight against poverty and the inclusion of previously marginalized groups. As part of the European drive to spread democracy and human rights, the European Union put out a request for ideas with a budget of 900,000 euros. Representatives from Ma'rib and Jawf governorate civil society organizations, NGOs, and tribal groups attended the Union's open day at a Sana'a hotel to discuss the project. According to (Durac, 2010).

The European Union established a commission in Yemen in 2009, and on December 13 of that year, Ambassador Cervone d'Urso submitted his credentials to President Saleh. The European Union, the UAE, Kuwait, and Oman, together with the other four members of the Gulf Cooperation Council, founded the Friends of Yemen organization in January 2010. The authors (Eshaq & Al-Marani, 2017) The coalition was formed to find lasting answers to the many problems plaguing Yemen, including Al Qaeda's internal fight with radicals and the demands for southern independence (Göldner-Ebenthal & Dudouet, 2017).

The most crucial lesson to be drawn from this quick survey of EU-Yemen ties is that the EU has progressively pinpointed the weakness of the Yemeni government and the attendant governance problems as the root of the country's most urgent problems. After 2002, the EU's strategy was predicated on the belief that, despite its limited capability, building the Yemeni government and its governance institutions was essential to resolving Yemen's many issues. Despite the government's limited reach far from Sana'a and Saleh's control being mostly dependent on favor and informal relationships with regional power agents, the EU's strategy for working on these problems was strongly centered on official politics and official organizations (Palik, 2018)

4.2 The Position of The European Union During The Stages of The Conflict

4.2.1 February Revolution and GCC Initiative

The role of colonial countries in revolutions against corrupt and oppressive regimes in former colonies is a hotly debated topic in postcolonial theory. While some argue that former colonial powers' continued involvement perpetuates the legacy of colonialism, others claim that such involvement is necessary to advocate for civil liberties and democratic rule. In his book "The Wretched of the Earth," postcolonial theorist Frantz Fanon believes that the struggle for political independence must be undertaken by the people of the former colonies themselves, instead of relying on the support of former colonizers (Fanon, 1963). Fanon felt that the legacy of colonialism had produced a scenario in which former colonies were incapable to achieve true independence and self-determination, and that the battle against oppression must be conducted by the people themselves at the grassroots level.

Other postcolonial theorists have emphasized the role of former colonial powers in perpetuating colonialism's legacy by remaining involved in postcolonial societies. As stated by academic David Scott in his book "Conscripts of Modernity," the engagement of former colonial powers in postcolonial states frequently reinforces existing power systems, making true democracy and independence difficult to accomplish (Scott, 2004). Some argue, however, that former colonial powers have a responsibility to support democratic movements in former colonies in order to prevent the legacy of colonialism from being perpetuated through continued authoritarianism and corruption. According to researcher Mahmood Mamdani's book "Citizen and Subject," democratic movements in former colonies frequently require the backing of external players to succeed (Mamdani, 1996).

Protests for reforms erupted in the capital, Sana'a, in February 2011. The Houthis were among those involved in the protests. (Elif Çamyaran, 2017) After the demonstrators' demands became calls for President Saleh to resign, and the protests threatened to devolve into a bloody civil war, the Yemeni government rejected all of the demonstrators' demands and used excessive violence against them. On March 10, 2011, Catherine Ashton, Vice-President of the European Commission, announced her rejection of the Yemeni government's methods of suppressing demonstrators and strongly criticized what she called an escalation of violence.

European Parliament Resolution No. 0148, passed on April 7, 2011, "strongly condemns the violent repression by security forces of peaceful demonstrators...", "expresses sympathies to the households of the victims," and "strongly supports the legitimate democratic aspirations of the Yemeni people," while also calling on the Yemeni government to refrain from using violence against demonstrators and honor their constitutional right to freedom of opinion. The European Parliament called on President Saleh to take action toward a peaceful transition of power through constitutional institutions, stressing the importance of all parties, including the opposition, acting responsibly and engaging in open and constructive dialogue to achieve an orderly political transition that involves all parties and movements representing the Yemeni people.

President Saleh of Yemen requested mediation from the United Nations, the EU, and the GCC when his administration recognized it was unable to stop the crisis. A two-year, two-stage plan for a democratic transition was given to President Saleh by the Gulf Cooperation Council on April 23, 2011. The first phase witnessed the end of violence against protesters, the establishment of a transitional administration, and the transfer of power from President Saleh to his Vice President Abd Rabbo Mansour Hadi. The second step was to convene a national discussion conference to reach a wide consensus on how to write a new constitution for the country and then propose it to the people for a vote" (Esther Kestemont, 2018).

Despite the obvious shortcomings of the GCC initiative, which did not include all segments of the Yemeni people and only included the GPC Party and the JMP, European Union officials viewed it as a compromise to avoid civil war. Senior EU officials described the Gulf Cooperation Council initiative as a "glimmer of hope" to end the crisis, and stated that there is no alternative plan (Eshaq & Al-Marani, 2018). This was the first error made by international efforts to end the Yemeni crisis, as international mediation failed to recognize the extent of the effectiveness and strength of the parties and entities that were largely ignored and were not actively involved in the Gulf initiative, and perhaps this was originally intended to remove the Houthis from power, especially given their intellectual and doctrinal conflict with most Arab Gulf countries.

Abdul Latif Al-Zabani, Secretary-General of the Gulf Cooperation Council, met with Saleh several times and tried to persuade him to sign the GCC initiative. Although he agreed in principle to sign the initiative in early May 2011, he refused to sign it personally. Instead, he suggested sending his assistant to the signing ceremony at the Gulf Cooperation Council headquarters in Riyadh. The opposition, however, refused to sign the initiative unless Saleh personally signed it. This resulted in an increase in violence between pro-regime and anti-regime forces. As a result, international parties worked hard to persuade all parties to sign the initiative (Rieger, 2016), particularly the European Union, which threatened President Saleh with freezing his financial assets if he did not resign and accept the initiative. The European Union also put pressure on the GPC and the JMP to sign the initiative of the Gulf Cooperation Council (Esther Kestemont, 2018).

Almost a month later, Saleh expressed his desire to sign the Gulf initiative once more. So the opposition signed it on May 21, after receiving assurances from Saleh that he would do the same the next day, but Saleh did not follow through on his promise. On May 22, an armed crowd of Saleh supporters surrounded the UAE embassy in Sana'a, where the ambassadors of the European Union, the USA, and the GCC countries were meeting. They were stuck for several hours before being rescued by a Yemeni military helicopter. Saleh refused to sign the initiative the same day (Rieger, 2016).

On May 23, 2011, violent skirmishes broke out in Sanaa between opposition and government troops as a result of recent events. A number of key GPC officials, including Saleh, were killed and wounded in an explosion at the Presidential Mosque in the capital city of Sana'a in June 2011. After that, he was sent to get medical care in Saudi Arabia. On November 23, 2011, at a ceremony sponsored by the Saudi king in Riyadh, he signed the proposal after returning to his country in September and amid heightened international criticism, notably from the United Nations, the European Union, and the Gulf Cooperation Council. According to Alia Eshaq and Suad Al-Marani (2018), Saleh gave most of his power to his vice president, Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi.

The so-called transitional phase began in Yemen with the signing of the Gulf initiative, under the auspices of the ten countries (friends of Yemen), whose job it was to assist Yemen's transition to establish a new consensual political system, or the transition to rational democratic governance, as expressed in the Gulf initiative, as a compromise that combined the demands of the previous regime. And the aspirations of the February 2011 revolutionaries who demanded change. By January 2012, power had been transferred from Saleh to his deputy Hadi, and Saleh had retained leadership of the GPC party as well as immunity (Palik, 2018).

The European Union played an important role in Yemen, as it sought to improve the country's deteriorating security situation, as well as support the preparations made to organize the opposition, and focused its efforts on building the capacities of Yemeni youth, women, and other groups, and worked to provide financial resources to support the transitional process included in the Gulf initiative. (Esther Kestemont, 2018) In November

2012, Bettina Muscheidt became the head of the European delegation to Yemen, succeeding Michel Cervone d'Urso (Eshaq & Al-Marani, 2018).

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“The "Yemen Spring" protests that began in February 2011 were supported by Britain and its closest allies. The effects of the "Arab Spring" in Egypt, its potential influence on Jordan, and the following events in Syria and Libya were the primary points of discussion. The British became engaged when protestors in Sanaa were killed on March 18, making Saleh's position unsustainable. Along with his American and European counterparts, British Ambassador Jon Wilks exerted significant pressure on Ali Saleh, spoke with Saleh's opponents, and provided assistance to the GCC negotiation team and United Nations Special Envoy Jamal Benomar. Angry Western officials, including British Prime Minister David Cameron, demanded that Saleh fulfill his duties after he first promised to step down but did not show up for the signing ceremony in Riyadh” (Baker 2011).

“As Saleh persisted in his political maneuvering, he attracted loyal army forces from around Yemen to Sanaa, leaving a power vacuum that al-Qaeda in the AQAP, southern secessionists, and the Houthis could exploit. This may have been done to show the UK and others how important Saleh was to the stability of Yemen and the continuation of counter-terrorism policy. After an unsuccessful assassination attempt on Saleh in June 2011, Yemen was on the precipice of civil war. Throughout Saleh's three-month medical stay in Saudi Arabia, there were ongoing efforts to get him to sign the deal. When members of the local opposition blamed the international community for not doing more to address Yemen's issues in July 2011, Ambassador Wilks pushed Saleh to retire but suggested that Yemeni officials do more to help themselves” (Sakkaf, 2011).

Wilks claims that preventing Yemen from turning into Somalia was the UK's top priority. Men all around the nation were signing up for militias to get access to resources like money and food. The United Kingdom wanted to see the re-establishment of central government authority over all provinces in order to see success against AQAP in Zinjibar, Abyan territory, and elsewhere. After conceding that the circumstances had forced the UK to end counter-terrorism and Coast Guard training (Sakkaf, 2011), he added that the

country continued to concentrate on CT by partnering with Saleh's Political Security Organization, National Security Bureau, and Central Security Forces.

“The UN was keeping a careful watch on Saleh and was prepared to impose sanctions if he persisted to refuse to approve the GCC proposal when he return to Sanaa in September 2011 and seemed ready to fight against those he opposed, as Wilks advised him. Saleh signed the Gulf Cooperation Council Initiative and Implementation Mechanism on November 23, 2011, under intense pressure from the United States (threatened with sanctions), the United Kingdom, the European Union, and the Gulf Cooperation Council. Although it was aware of Yemen's many problems, the United Kingdom looked to Yemen as a model for political change in the Middle East after the formation of a coalition government and the election of President Hadi in February 2012” (Brehony, 2020).

When the G-10 met in Yemen, British officials served as the group's unifying force. They viewed it as their job to keep the members, the leaders of Yemen, and the rest of the world entertained by controlling their perceptions, hopes, and fears. Even though UN Special Envoy Jamal Benomar and UNDP chief Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed often seemed to don't agree, it was essential that the G-10 strive toward the same objective while working closely together. The British intended to exploit the weight of UNSC resolutions to further the UN-led approach. Nicholas Hopton, Wilk's replacement as ambassador, and the other G-10 ambassadors met often, shared notes and ideas, and delivered consent-based communications to Yemeni politicians, party leaders, and activists individually or in groups.

It was an extraordinary example of British diplomacy. There were a lot of obstacles. US Ambassador Gerald Feierstein, who openly differed with the Obama Administration's strategy, made statements that were seen as excessively confrontational or interventionist by other members of the G-10. Germany felt left out of the G-10 and would often act alone. To ensure a smooth transfer of power in Yemen, Jamal Benomar is trying to include as many groups as possible, including the Houthis. This may cause tension in his relationships with other G-10 members, especially the Saudis and the Emiratis.

“Despite several setbacks, London threw its weight behind what was seen to be a promising success story. British support for President Hadi's involvement in the transition was shown during his visit to the country in September 2012, when he met with Prime Minister David Cameron and other top ministers. British Foreign Secretary William Hague co-chaired meetings of the Friends of Yemen and personally intervened in G-10 cities when they were founded in 2010. Many of the attending diplomats lauded the efforts of Alistair Burt, the Middle East minister for FCO, and Alan (later Sir Alan) Duncan, the Minister of State for DfID. As the Deputy National Security Adviser to the Prime Minister, Oliver (Ollie) Robbins was instrumental in getting the NSC to agree on and give clear policy objectives and in giving the ambassador the time and resources he needed to accomplish these goals. The United Kingdom held the pen in the United Nations Security Council, and its ambassador, Mark Lyall Grant (a native of Aden), worked tirelessly to facilitate Yemen's transition” (Brehony, 2020).

4.2.2 The National Dialogue Conference (NDC) And The Houthi Coup

The role of colonial powers in backing militias that emerge in former colonies in order to destabilize the central state is a major problem in postcolonial theory. This form of action frequently deepens colonialism's legacy by fostering conflict and instability within postcolonial communities. External actors' backing for militias, as stated by researcher Mahmood Mamdani in his book "Saviors and Survivors," is a frequent technique for retaining control over postcolonial nations (Mamdani, 2009). Mamdani contends that such interventions frequently encourage violence and divisiveness, making true independence and democracy difficult for postcolonial societies.

Similarly, in his book "Culture and Imperialism," postcolonial thinker Edward Said emphasizes the role of colonial powers in establishing and exploiting differences within postcolonial nations (Said, 1993). Said contends that colonialism separated and pitted the people of the former colonies against one another, making true independence and self-determination difficult to accomplish. External actors' backing for militias also reinforces the legacy of colonialism by supporting existing power systems and marginalizing specific communities within postcolonial states. External initiatives, as emphasized by academic Lila Abu-Lughod in her book "Do Muslim Women Need Saving?," frequently reinforce

existing power hierarchies while failing to address fundamental concerns of social and economic inequality (Abu-Lughod, 2015).

“Europeans were taken aback by the "Arab Spring" of 2011. They have conflicting feelings about supporting Yemen's political transformation. Civil society initiatives were supplemented by a wide variety of programs. European institutions and diplomats from member countries funded the NDC and the effort to draft a new constitution with UN oversight. Friends of Yemen included the European Union and France, however, the GCC, the US, and the UK naturally took center stage. According to reports, France warned Yemenis about many problems with their proposed constitution. A French constitutional laws expert was sent to Sanaa in 2013–2014 to take part in talks” (Roche, 2015).

“One of the primary responsibilities of the EU delegation prior to the conference was communicating with Yemeni parties that weren't participating in the initiative by The GCC, and thus the EU continued to play a pivotal role in supporting the organization of the NDC, through diplomacy with the goal of enabling marginalized groups and excluding parties to take part in the peaceful transition process. To ensure that groups like the Southern Movement, the rebels known as the Houthis, and civil society members can all attend the conference and have their demands met, the EEAS's Mediation Support Team has taken over communication with them” (Palik, 2018).

In the same vein, on November 19, 2012, the European Union Council issued a declaration emphasizing the importance of holding a national dialogue conference in accordance with the timetables outlined in the GCC initiative. He urged all Yemenis to support and participate in the political process constructively and without preconditions in order to ensure its full inclusiveness, and transparency, as well as an adequate representation of all segments of Yemeni society, including the important role of youth and women. It also urged Yemen's government and all concerned parties to take steps to improve the political climate ahead of the upcoming National Dialogue Conference.(Council of the European Union, 2012) This demonstrates that the European Union placed a high value on the conference as the ideal solution to Yemen's political problems, which have cast a pall over all aspects of life in the country.

On March 18, 2013, the NDC was held in Sana'a to lay the groundwork for a new constitution. It drew 565 delegates organized into 11 political groups and 20 smaller political parties (Nana Macharashvili, 2018). Despite international efforts to make the conference a success, particularly from the European Union, which sought to raise awareness among non-elite conference participants, support their participation, and persuade them to take a unified stance in negotiations (Göldner-Ebenthal & Dudouet, 2017). However, the conference was unable to resolve the major issues in a meaningful and conclusive manner. The political parties' positions differed, particularly on the Southern issue, federalism, and regionalization. Because of international pressures to reach an agreement, the conference's final outputs lacked clear texts on Yemen's most complex issues, such as the southern issue, federalism, and transitional justice.

Although the outcomes of the dialogue were widely accepted, there were serious reservations and widespread criticism about the details contained in them. As a result, the conclusion of the work of the NDC in January 2014 quickly led to a new political crisis in the country, rather than serving as a tool for problem resolution. In the case of urgent Yemen, the conference widened the gap between the various parties more than ever before. Due to the failure of dialogue to resolve their differences, Yemen's political parties have reverted to their traditional method of achieving political goals through the use of weapons (Al-Madhaji, 2016).

After several weeks of demonstrations led by the Houthis in Sana'a, due to the deteriorating economic situation and the government's decision to reduce fuel subsidies, Houthi forces seized control of the Sana'a in September 2014 (Robinson et al., 2017). As a result, the European Union imposed harsh sanctions on the Houthis and those who assisted them. On December 18, 2014, the European Union imposed an arms embargo, frozen all financial assets, and barred all dealings with Ahmed Saleh, son of Yemen's former president, and a number of Houthi movement leaders, including Abdullah Yahya al-Hakim and Abdul-Khaliq Badr al-Din al-Houthi. (Council Regulation (EU) No 1352/2014, 2014) The European Union clearly rejected the Houthis' takeover of Sana'a.

“On January 20, 2015, the Houthis attacked the presidential palace in Sana'a and seized control of all government offices, effectively imprisoning President Hadi. The latter

formally resigned two days after the first. On February 6, the Houthis set up a legislative assembly charged with choosing a presidential council, security committees, and a revolutionary council. Several embassies, including those of the United States, United Kingdom, France, Germany, Saudi Arabia, and the EU, halted operations and evacuated employees after worldwide criticism of the Houthis' acts. Before escaping to Aden on February 21, 2015, Hadi was under house arrest. He then resigned and claimed the Houthis had staged a military coup over him” (Eshaq & Al-Marani, 2018).

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“The UK government placed a high priority on counter-terrorism, but it understood that enforcing it would need international backing for a stable administration in Yemen. Diplomatic expertise, backed by high-level political support and well-defined policies, allowed Ambassador Hopton and his team to keep the G-10 united and use the group's combined weight to stand by and interact with President Hadi, his administration, and the main political parties in order to launch and sustain the UN-sponsored NDC. To express united nation support for Benomar, who was under attack from the UAE and others, and to prevent Saleh and Ali Muhsin alAhmmar from weakening Hadi, Ambassadors Lyall Grant and Hopton planned the symbolic January 2013 UNSC meeting in Sanaa. The United Kingdom, in contrast to the United States, provided substantial financial and political support for the NDC and helped keep Yemeni players focused on a peaceful transition while not interfering with what needed to be a Yemeni-led process. The British encouraged NDC opponents by contacting and engaging civil society organizations. When authorities, the media, the press, and NGOs were wary of the NDC because they believed it was not diverse enough or inclusive enough, London made a compelling case for supporting the transition” (Brehony, 2020).

Each member of the G-10 took the lead in monitoring the negotiations of several NDC working teams, offering leadership and facilitating compromise among the Yemeni parties. Uk took on the problem of the South, making connections with the major Southern parties and individuals in an effort to get them to support the NDC. On December 5, 2012, Alastair Burt and a large group of G-10 ambassadors met with southern leaders in Aden. Some were eager to join the discussion, while others were skeptical or harbored

resentment as a result of past events, but everyone was willing to look forward. Hadi's efforts to build his six-region federal state in Yemen by handpicking Hirak delegates were met with resistance from British officials. In addition, they were concerned about the rapid growth of southern nationalism and felt pressure to reassure southern leaders of international backing for a unified Yemen. Hadi was unconvinced by the G-10 and Jamal Benomar to contemplate a new federal makeup.

“London's priorities during this time period included backing President Hadi despite his well-documented shortcomings and stopping Saleh from using his resources to obstruct the political transition. Instead of engaging with Saleh directly, the embassy kept in touch with him via his son, Ahmed Ali. General Ali Muhsin al-Ahmar, the formidable commander of the First Armored Division, was seen by British diplomats as crucial to Hadi's capacity to rule, despite their skepticism of his role. Hadi saw himself as important and used his status to further his own goals and get support from others. Longer times were needed to get the NDC started and achieve conclusions due to these actions and the aim to make it as diverse and representative as possible. Meanwhile, the coalition government was impeded in its efforts to restructure the federal bureaucracy and fight corruption. The inability to restructure the military to eliminate Saleh and General al-Ahmar's control was the most basic mistake made throughout the transition. One British officer involved in the debate claims that many high-ranking military officials saw reform as a way to get free weapons and supplies from the international community. They and the politicians want to keep the money flowing via Saleh as it had been. Up to 500,000 people, according to the officer's estimation, were dependent on these handouts. The pleas from at least 14,000 retired colonels for worldwide community support with their pensions caught him off guard” (Brehony, 2020).

“The UK drafted UN Security Council Resolution 2140 in February 2014 in response to Saleh's efforts to undermine the process of transition, which not only imposed penalties on Saleh and other spoilers but also formed a panel of experts to gather evidence of breaches. According to one of Saleh's supporters, the resolution gave the UN, Jamal Benomar, and the British ambassador control over Yemeni government institutions” (Yemen Focus, 2014). To send a clear message of the UK's priority to Yemen, the government appointed Sir Alan Duncan as Special Envoy in August 2014. He came by

often and made strong statements at key times. While campaigning for his position, he said, "Delivering a successful discussion on schedule would be a big signal to the Yemeni citizens that their leaders are sincere about addressing the contentious problems that cause violence in the nation" (Duncan, 2012). The GCC deal was the only game in town, and he made sure the Yemenis knew it. According to Duncan, it "still stands as the cornerstone for any hope we could have that a unified Yemen might be administered efficiently and lawfully via the approval of its people." This was expressed in February 2015. The "spoilers—let us call them warlords" who "ripped off the economy, enriched themselves, and fought each other in a never-ending power struggle and balancing act" (Duncan, 2015) were criticized.

The embassy in Sanaa sent a warning to London and Riyadh in the spring and summer of 2014 on the anticipated extent of the Houthi/Saleh threat, but both capitals were preoccupied with other events and objectives, not the least of which was the conflict in Syria. Ambassador Jane Marriott joined her G-10 colleagues in warning the Houthis that "the ones who seek to spark conflicts, incite assault, or seize political advantage by means of the use of weapons are going to face the condemnation of the international community" (US Embassy Yemen, 2014) in response to the United Nations Security Council's concern over recent violence, a high level of deaths, and a serious deterioration in security inside Amran. The British embassy had already reduced its personnel by the time Saleh and Houthi troops took control of Sanaa in September. But Jane Marriot, like her American counterpart, was in touch with the Houthis on a frequent basis. Jamal Benomar was working on what one official called the "GCC Initiative II," which was supported by Britain. But Britain saw through Benomar's effort to salvage something from the calamity with the Peace and National Partnership Agreement (PNPA). The situation in Yemen was getting more explosive by the day, prompting more urgent warnings from Saudi Arabia.

On February 4, 2015, Alan Duncan said succinctly, "Every Ministry has been overrun by the Houthis, yet none of them is completely operating." Government operations have mostly ceased. The Houthis have effectively overthrown the government while not installing a new one. They've amassed power without shouldering responsibility, rendering the government almost ineffectual. "If things get much worse, we might witness

an ineffective government in Sanaa—or, more accurately, a totally dysfunctional non-government in Sanaa; an indirect dispute between Iranian and Saudi interests; increased al-Qaeda attacks raising into a direct confrontation among al-Qaeda and the Houthis directly; a tribal conflict that transforms into a wider civil war; the reawakening of southern separatism leading to a re-division of the country;" He was right. One week later, the UK embassy in Sanaa closed, and the ambassador and remaining employees moved to Saudi Arabia.

4.2.3 Operation Decisive Storm And Military Actions

At President Hadi's request, a military coalition led by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was formed, which included Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, Qatar, Sudan, and the United Arab Emirates, in order to restore Hadi to power and remove the Houthis from the areas they controlled, and on March 26, 2015,(European Parliament resolution 2760, 2015) the coalition launched a military operation in Yemen against the Houthis. Although the European Union's High Representative for Foreign Affairs, Federico Mogherini, stated on the same day that "military action is not a solution and that broad political consensus through bargaining can provide a permanent solution," (Ruys et al., 2018) a number of EU member states, including Britain and France, declared their full support for the military campaign. This significantly weakened the European Union's "neutral" position (Kestemont, 2018).

The military operations against Yemen resulted in human massacres, as the military coalition's air raids killed civilians on several occasions. Furthermore, Saudi Arabia imposed a naval blockade on Yemen, which has had a significant impact on the civilian population, where 22 million people are in desperate need of food, water, and medical supplies. On the other hand, the Houthis' use of anti-aircraft weapons to intercept coalition forces killed and maimed many civilians, particularly because a large number of those missiles fell in populated areas (European Parliament resolution 2760, 2015).

The European Union was outraged by the escalation of violence and the continuation of military raids in Yemen, which declared on April 1, 2015, in a joint statement by Federica Mogherini and the European Union Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management, Christos Stylianides, that the fighting and

disruption of basic services for the civilian population, particularly children, is reaching alarming proportions. A large number of civilians were killed or injured during the coalition air raid on the camps, which mostly housed displaced people. Attacks on hospitals and medical facilities, as well as deliberate targeting and destruction of private homes, educational facilities, and basic infrastructure, are unacceptable. As a result, the statement urged all parties to protect civilians and avoid direct targeting of civilian infrastructure. He emphasized the importance of everyone taking appropriate steps to ensure international humanitarian law is followed and that humanitarian workers have free access to all areas in need. He emphasized that the European Union will continue to support all efforts to bring Yemeni parties back to the negotiating table, on the basis of broad and inclusive participation and without preconditions, in order to reach a long-term political solution (Federica, 2015).

In a related vein, the European Parliament issued Resolution No. 8084 on April 20, 2015, expressing the European Union's deep concern about the political, security, and humanitarian deterioration in Yemen. And recent developments pose significant threats to the region's stability. As a result, the Union "condemns the unilateral destabilizing actions taken by the Houthis and military units loyal to former President Saleh, and urges these forces to immediately and unconditionally cease using violence and withdraw from the areas they have seized, including Sana'a and Aden, and reaffirms its support for the legitimate authorities in Yemen," according to the statement. It also emphasized that the crisis must be resolved through a political solution supported by the international community. As a result, the European Union calls on all Yemeni parties, particularly the Houthis, to work together to resolve their differences through dialogue and consultation. It also calls on all parties to fully implement UN Security Council resolutions, particularly Resolution 2201 of February 15, 2015, and Resolution 2216 of April 14, 2015. The European Union reaffirmed its strong commitment and determination to combat extremism and terrorist groups and prevent them from profiting from the situation in Yemen (Council of the European Union, 2015).

During the twenty-fourth joint session of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the European Union in Doha on May 24, 2015, the two sides stressed the importance of strengthening bilateral relations between them, to serve as a solid and effective basis for

regional and international stability and security. The two sides welcomed the strengthening of political dialogue between them, in particular by holding regular meetings of senior officials of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the European Union. The two sides also exchanged views and identified common concerns and priorities regarding the situation in the region, especially Yemen, Iran, Libya, Syria, Iraq and the Middle East peace process, and agreed on the need to search for a solution to the Yemeni conflict on the basis of Security Council Resolution No. 2216, the Gulf Cooperation Council initiative and the results of the National Dialogue Conference.

On May 24, 2015, the Gulf Cooperation Council and the European Union held their twenty-fourth joint session in Doha, emphasizing the importance of strengthening bilateral relations to serve as a solid and effective foundation for regional and international stability and security. The two sides welcomed the expansion of their political dialogue, particularly through regular meetings of senior officials from the Gulf Cooperation Council and the European Union. The two sides also exchanged views and identified common concerns and priorities regarding the region's situation, particularly Yemen, Iran, Libya, Syria, Iraq, and the Middle East peace process, and agreed on the importance of seeking a solution to the Yemeni conflict based on Security Council Resolution No. 2216, the Gulf Cooperation Council initiative, and results of the National Dialogue Conference (Council of the EU, 2015).

With the continuation of violence and military operations in Yemen, the European Parliament issued Resolution No. 2760 on July 9, 2015, stating that the cause of the Yemeni conflict was the failure of successive administrations to meet the legitimate aspirations of the Yemeni people, which created proper conditions for the outbreak of an internal conflict accompanied by external interference. As a result, the European Union is deeply concerned about the deterioration of Yemen's political, and security situation, and urges all warring parties to put an end to the violence "immediately," reaffirming its strong support for Yemen's unity, sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity, and condemns the destabilizing actions of the Houthis and military units. He also condemned the coalition's actions, which included the continuation of military raids, the use of internationally prohibited cluster bombs, and the imposition of a naval blockade on Yemen, which resulted in thousands of deaths and created favorable conditions for the

expansion of terrorist and extremist organizations such as ISIS and Al-Qaeda (European Parliament resolution 2760, 2015).

4.2.4 Coalition Military Actions And EU Armaments

Some European Union member states attempted to deny their involvement in the horrific operations against the Yemeni people carried out by coalition forces, as referred to in a recent European Parliament decision, as British Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs, Tobias Elwood, announced on July 20, 2015: "We have received explicit assurances from Saudi authorities that they are following international humanitarian law, and we have not seen any credible evidence that the coalition has violated the law." The Saudi embassy in London, for its part, issued a statement on October 7 denying the coalition forces' use of any internationally prohibited weapons, and that the coalition forces' spokesman, Brigadier General Ahmed Asiri, advised all Yemenis to avoid the Houthi strongholds for their own safety, and that the weapons used were sophisticated and precise in their targeting.

It appeared that a number of European Union member states had contributed to the annihilation of the Yemeni people through massive military deals exported to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. According to official British reports, the British government exported weapons worth more than \$1.8 billion to Saudi Arabia in 2015. At a time when France was supplying Saudi Arabia with weapons at a rate of 400-500 million euros per year, French arms exports to Saudi Arabia increased in 2015 to 900 million euros. In the same year, the value of French arms exported to the UAE was approximately 294 million euros (International Federation for Human Rights, 2018).

Following recent events in 2016 and clashes between various parties in Yemen, the European Parliament issued Resolution No. 2515 on February 25, 2016, expressing deep concern about the disconcerting deterioration of the humanitarian situation in Yemen, which is marked by food insecurity and "indiscriminate attacks" on civilians and workers. In the field of medicine and relief. He condemned the coalition's air strikes and the naval blockade imposed on Yemen. The resolution also condemned the Houthis' actions, including the siege of Taiz, which had dire humanitarian consequences for its residents. The resolution emphasized the importance of coordinated humanitarian action led by the

United Nations and urged all countries to contribute to meeting humanitarian needs. In addition, the resolution urged all EU member states to halt arms exports to Riyadh "in light of new charges of Saudi Arabia's violations of international humanitarian law"(European Parliament resolution 2515, 2016). This was a good gesture by the European Union to discourage the latter from killing more innocent people.

Although the European Parliament's Arms Export Act of 2008 recommended that member states follow specific criteria when deciding on arms export licenses, such as refusing to grant licenses when there is a "clear risk" that they will be used to break human rights or international law. However, the law did not specify any formal sanctions that could be imposed at the European Union level if one of the Union's member states failed to adhere to the common position (Júlia Palik, 2018). As a consequence, Britain was unconcerned about the recent European Parliament decision, as the latter's government agreed in late February 2016 to sell warplanes to Saudi Arabia for 522 million pounds sterling (House of Commons, 2016). This indicates a schism in opinions and positions within the European Union.

As part of its efforts to resolve the Yemeni crisis peacefully, the United Nations agreed to hold a conference in Kuwait under its auspices from April to August 2016, after all parties to the conflict agreed to it. The European Union provided a workshop to help members of the Yemeni delegation participating in the conference develop their skills. Which was also not crowned with success. Antonia Calvo was appointed as the head of the European Union delegation to Yemen in September (Eshaq & Al-Marani, 2018).

Despite the coalition's violations in Yemen, and the European Parliament's condemnation of those violations, some European Union countries continued to export weapons to some of the coalition's members. In 2016, the German government approved the export of military weapons to Saudi Arabia worth 530 million euros, primarily military helicopters, radar systems, and combat aircraft spare parts. (Simone Wisotzki, 2018) Germany also exported weapons to the United Arab Emirates worth 17 million euros. (Palik, 2018) At a time when France's arms exports to Saudi Arabia totaled one billion euros and 400 million euros to the UAE (International Federation for Human Rights, 2018).

Although some European Union countries continued to send weapons to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, the European Union continued to provide humanitarian aid to alleviate the humanitarian crisis in Yemen, with the Union providing approximately 120 million euros in humanitarian aid since the beginning of the conflict until 2016. The Union also assisted the UN in monitoring Yemeni ports and the arrival of goods and aid, which helped mitigate the effects of the coalition forces' blockade (Eshaq & Al-Marani, 2018). The preceding evidence shows that the European Union's stance on the Yemeni crisis was characterized by double standards. Even as the EU condemned the military actions in Yemen, its main members continued to export weapons to members of the Arab coalition led by Saudi Arabia. Where these weapons were used in Yemeni military operations.

The European Parliament has continued to issue statements and resolutions condemning military actions in Yemen as well as the continuation of violence. On March 16, 2017, it issued Resolution No. 2598, in which it expressed deep concern regarding Yemen's catastrophic humanitarian situation, reaffirmed its commitment to continue assisting the Yemeni people, and criticized the fact that civilians are being targeted and trapped in an intolerable situation between warring parties, in violation of international human rights law, and that the recruitment and use of children in armed conflict are strictly prohibited. It also urged all parties to release these children "immediately" and refrain from recruiting them; and urged everyone to reduce tensions and establish an immediate ceasefire, emphasizing that the solution must be political and within the framework of UN efforts (European Parliament resolution 2598, 2018).

The United Nations was seeking a peaceful solution to the Yemeni crisis and attempting to relieve the severity of the human suffering there, so on April 25, 2017, it held a donors' conference in Geneva to assist the Yemeni people. Although the conference declared that the actual need for aid was \$2.1 billion, only \$1.1 billion was collected. It is worth noting that Britain was the country that contributed the most to the conference, with a total contribution of 173,100,872 dollars. (Ben Smith, 2017) At the same conference, France donated 3.7 million euros, and the French government announced that it had allocated 4.3 million euros in humanitarian aid to Yemen, which will be distributed in 2017 (Palik, 2018).

The continuation of coalition air raids and clashes inside Yemeni territory has killed thousands, further destabilized Yemen, and destroyed the country's physical infrastructure, all while some terrorist organizations exploited the situation. As a result, on June 15, 2017, the European Parliament issued Resolution No. 2727, stating that the situation in Yemen poses significant risks to regional stability, particularly in the Horn of Africa, the Red Sea, and the Middle East and that Al-Qaeda benefited from the deterioration of Yemen's political and security situation and expanded its presence. It increased the number and magnitude of its terrorist attacks, killing hundreds. reaffirmed its support for Yemen's territorial integrity, sovereignty, and independence, and it "urges the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Iran to work together to improve bilateral relations and to end the fighting in Yemen" (European Parliament resolution 2727, 2017).

The EU has continued to criticize some of its members for exporting weapons to Saudi Arabia, which it uses in its war with Yemen, and has called for an end to those exports. The Union issued Resolution No. 2029 on September 13, 2017, stating that arms exports have an impact on human security, human rights, democracy, good governance, and social development. It also contributes to the environments that force people to flee their countries, necessitating the implementation of a stringent, transparent, effective, acceptable, and specific arms control regime. The resolution stated that the situation in Yemen has deteriorated since the coalition's military action began, but some European Union member states continue to supply weapons to Saudi Arabia. Although the European Union acknowledged that Article 51 of the United Nations Charter refers to the "inherent right to individual or collective self-defense," the Union strongly criticized some member states' indifference to the Union's conditions in arms export operations, as the Union reported on September 13, 2017, that its arms exports amounted to 26% of the global total in the period (2012-2016). Making the EU countries the world's second-largest supplier of weapons after the United States of America, whose total military exports to all countries totaled (33%). At a time when the most recent official European Union data showed that the Middle East was the most important region in terms of European Union arms exports, and that some arms transfer from European Union member states were to unstable and crisis-prone regions and countries, and that those weapon systems were used in armed conflicts or internal repression (European Parliament resolution 2029, 2017).

Despite the announcement by the European Union's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs on November 2, 2017, that nearly 2,200 deaths due to cholera have been reported, with approximately 895,000 infected with the same disease since April 27, 2017, coalition forces have taken a number of measures that have contributed to the humanitarian situation in Yemen worsening, as on November 6 those forces imposed a blockade on Yemen's land, sea, and air borders. As a result, the European Union condemned the coalition's actions on November 30 and stated that the ongoing violence in Yemen, as well as attacks on civilians and infrastructure, constitute "war crimes." He urged Iran to "immediately cease providing support to Houthi forces." It also condemned the coalition's "indiscriminate airstrikes," as well as similar "indiscriminate attacks" by Houthi, as well as the use of schools and hospitals as launch pads for attacks (European Parliament resolution 2849, 2017).

Despite the human tragedy that occurred in Yemen as a result of the coalition forces' use of these weapons, the export policies of military weapons to a number of European Union member states have not changed. Britain sold 1.1 billion pounds of military equipment to Saudi Arabia in 2017, an increase of nearly 500% since the Yemen war began. In the same year, Germany's total arms exports to Saudi Arabia were around \$550 million (Palik, 2018).

By 2018, Germany had become one of the countries most supportive of the European Parliament's call for a Saudi arms embargo. Berlin announced in January 2018 that it would not sell weapons to parties fighting in Yemen. So, on February 23, 2018, Saudi Foreign Minister Adel Al-Jubeir criticized the German government for being "inconsistent" on arms exports, saying, "If Germany is not ready to provide arms to Saudi Arabia after that, the Saudis will get them elsewhere." London, on the other hand, kept going to export arms to Saudi Arabia. In March, the British government agreed to sell Saudi Arabia 48 advanced Typhoon combat aircraft (Palik, 2018).

With the humanitarian crisis in Yemen worsening, the United Nations held a conference in Geneva on April 3, 2018, to urge countries to contribute to alleviating the suffering of the Yemeni people, with the European Union pledging a contribution of 5,107,000 euros. Christos Stylianides, the European Union's representative at the

conference, stated, "The Union is committed to assisting those affected by the conflict in Yemen, and all parties to the conflict must ensure that humanitarian aid reaches the areas in need in a safe and unimpeded manner." He emphasized that the political solution is the best option for ending the conflict that has caused millions of Yemenis to suffer (EUROPEAN UNION WEBSITES, 2018).

Following the meeting of the European Union's Council of Foreign Ministers in June 2018, the Council issued several recommendations on the Yemeni situation, in which the European Union asserted its strong support for the UN-led process and called on all parties to engage constructively with the UN Special Envoy in order to resume peace talks. The European Union reaffirmed its commitment to supporting all Yemenis and working to meet their needs, particularly in terms of living conditions (EEAS, 2018).

With the war in Yemen continuing, the European Parliament issued Resolution No. 2157 on November 14, 2018, regarding arms exports to a number of its members to some coalition countries that are using them in violation of the conditions previously agreed upon by the Union in 2008, and the decision stated that the use of these weapons by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and members of the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen represents a "clear violation." The resolution also stated that weapons licensed for transfer by EU member states that were later used in Yemen's conflict "had a catastrophic impact." As a result, the Union "believes that it is necessary to initiate a process leading to the establishment of a mechanism that imposes sanctions on member states that fail to comply with the common position," and that some member states have stopped providing weapons to Saudi Arabia while others have continued to provide weapons and military technology. As a result, the Union commends member states such as Germany for changing their stance on the Yemeni conflict. However, the Union "deeply regrets that other Member States do not take importing countries' behavior and the end use of exported arms and ammunition into account" (European Parliament resolution 2157, 2018). Those countries were supposed to be France and the United Kingdom, which continued to export arms to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

The European Union attempted to step up its efforts to alleviate the suffering of the Yemeni people by announcing on November 19, 2018, that it had increased the volume

of its aid to Yemen by 90 million euros, bringing the total allocations for that year to 118 million euros. Thus, total European Union allocations to Yemen have totaled 544 million euros since the conflict began in 2015 (EEAS, 2018). The Yemeni people, on the other hand, did not need the European Union's financial contributions and hollow decisions as much as they needed real solutions that would end their suffering and move them away from the policy of arms trade at the expense of millions of innocent people.

4.2.5 Formation of STC and PLC

The southern governorates have the most evident and intense political division. Since 2017, the struggle has been between the Internationally Recognized Government (IRG) and the Southern Transitional Council (STC), which was formed in May 2017 in opposition to the IRG with the goal of re-establishing an independent state in the area of the former PDRY. There are, however, various southern separatist organizations, as well as a sizable percentage of southerners who favour unification. Southern separatists say that they have a separate national identity from the rest of Yemen. The UAE has provided substantial financial, political, and, most critically, direct military help to the STC. The STC was able to emerge as a dominating force within a bigger number of southern separatist movements as a result of this. However, the Internationally Recognized Government (IRG) is intent to regaining control of the entire republic, and its disagreements with the STC have resulted in military action (Lackner, 2022).

Following the declaration of the Southern Transitional Council, backed by armed militias, a state of public emergency, and the establishment of what it called the "Self-Administration of the South" on April 25, 2020, the European Union announced its rejection of the UAE-backed "Southern Transitional Council" declaring autonomy in southern Yemen, warning of the implications for UN peace efforts. According to Peter Stano, a spokesman for the European Department of Foreign Affairs, the Southern Transitional Council's declaration of self-rule for the South "will bring problems and obstacles to the United Nations' efforts to achieve peace and stability in Yemen." "There is an agreement reached in November (last October) in Saudi Arabia that helps to reduce the escalation in Yemen," he added (Anadolu agency, 2020).

The IRG's president, Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi, and his vice-president were deposed on April 7, 2022, in a coup staged by Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) under the auspices of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). They were replaced by an eight-man Presidential Leadership Council (PLC). The formation of the PLC implied a meeting of minds between Riyadh and Abu Dhabi, with the goal of establishing a single leadership among the various factions opposing the Houthis and bringing the war to a conclusion. Previously, Saudi Arabia's and the UAE's support for competing factions exacerbated divides within the anti-Houthi forces, despite the Houthi movement's apparent unity. Despite its lack of constitutional status, the international world currently recognizes the PLC as Yemen's recognized executive authority (European Council on Foreign Relations, 2022).

In light of the developments in Yemen and the announcement of the so-called Presidential Leadership Council on April 7, 2022, the European Union welcomed President Abd Rabbo Mansour Hadi's announcement to form the Presidential Leadership Council and transfer constitutional powers to that council. "We thank the Gulf Cooperation Council for convening the Yemeni-Yemeni talks in support of the efforts of UN Special Envoy to Yemen Hans Grundberg that led to this development," said Peter Stano, European Union spokesman for foreign affairs and security policy. The statement's text read, "The European Union reaffirms its principled commitment to Yemen's unity, sovereignty, and territorial integrity, as well as its full support for United Nations peace efforts and UN Special Envoy Hans Grundberg's mediation efforts. The European Union calls on the Houthis to drop their hardline stances and engage constructively " with UN Special Envoy Grundberg, and emphasizes the critical importance of reactivating and extending the cease-fire" (EEAS, 2022).

Rashad al Alimi, a former minister of the interior from the Taiz area, leads the Presidential Leadership Council (PLC), which comprises a number of prominent military commanders. The remaining members are all tribal leaders, with three from the northern governorates and four from the southern governorates. However, their only point of commonality is their antagonism to the Houthis. Long-standing internal disputes, even enmities, between its members have already surfaced. Military clashes between units under the command of different members of the PLC have grown during the war,

particularly since April of this year. In July, for example, STC-aligned forces ejected their opponents from Shabwa governorate, charging them of being Islahis. Despite the fact that the Islah political party is a key component of the IRG and a component of the government army, and that two members of the PLC are Islahis, this was the case. (However, the party retains political clout across the country) Because Islah is linked to the Muslim Brotherhood, the UAE aggressively opposes the party in Yemen.

In the meantime, the STC sought to co-opt one of its primary rival separatist movements, the Southern Hirak Revolutionary Council, which has a considerable following in Hadramawt governorate, in August. However, a portion of this movement opposed its own leader's agreement on this, resulting in a series of competing public rallies in Hadramawt and Mahra towns in September and October 2022. These protests could be a precursor to the STC's military operations to expel the army from these governorates, labeling them 'northern.' The picture is obviously complicated, if not fragmented (Lackner, 2022).

This conflict within the Internationally Recognized Government (IRG)-controlled area is expected to continue, jeopardizing hopes for a united front and shared goal within The Presidential Leadership Council (PLC). Following earlier infighting, the Saudis called all of its members to Riyadh for a dressing-down in late September, but the Saudis' scolding had created no discernible result. Without genuine cohesion and unity within the PLC, a genuine intra-Yemen political process will be impossible to launch, making significant peace and economic restoration in the country difficult, which is not consistent with the positions and statements of the European Union regarding the Yemeni crisis.

4.3 EU Interests In Yemen

Interests of colonial countries in their former colonies are an important part of postcolonial theory since they frequently determine ongoing interactions and power dynamics between these countries. Economic, political, and geopolitical aims, as well as the desire to retain cultural influence and control, may be among these interests. As stated by scholar Frantz Fanon in his book "The Wretched of the Earth," colonial nations frequently abuse their former colonies' resources and labor for their own economic advantage (Fanon, 1963). Economic exploitation can take the shape of resource extraction,

cheap labor, or unfair trade practices that favor colonial powers while harming postcolonial states.

Colonial powers may attempt to preserve political and strategic influence over their former colonies in addition to economic objectives. To maintain influence and control, this may entail supporting sympathetic regimes, meddling in domestic politics, or encouraging divides among postcolonial communities. As observed by researcher Mahmood Mamdani in his book "Citizen and Subject," colonial countries' enduring dominance in postcolonial states can be recognized through their continuous influence over legal and political systems (Mamdani, 1996). Colonial governments are likewise interested in cultural influence in their former colonies. According to academic Edward Said in his book "Culture and Imperialism," colonial powers' cultural domination can have a long-term impact on postcolonial civilizations, influencing their values, beliefs, and sense of identity (Said, 1993). Language, education, media, and other types of cultural output may all exert cultural influence.

These interests can be read and investigated as follows:

4.3.1 Counter-Terrorism (CT)

Theorists who study postcolonialism claim that counter-terrorism discourses often resort to "Othering" people or communities in order to reinforce Orientalist stereotypes and a feeling of cultural superiority. When we project certain images, fantasies, and assumptions onto the Oriental 'Other,' as Edward Said writes in his landmark book "Orientalism," we allow for the political, economic, and social dominance of the Orient.

Terrorism has been securitized, and counter-terrorism measures have been implemented, yet this might reinstall neocolonial practices. Author Amina Khan states that "counter-terrorist tactics frequently maintain neocolonial hierarchies by supporting Western domination and controlling narratives about security and terrorism" in her paper "Counter-terrorist and Neocolonialism: Unmasking Power Structures." Human rights and civil freedoms may be compromised in the name of counter-terrorism, especially in post-colonial societies. The rights of vulnerable populations may be violated by counterterrorism programs, which would exacerbate current power inequalities and perpetuate past wrongs.

Terrorism and instability in Yemen have persisted for years, making the country a major security risk for the region and the world. In response to this threat, the EU and Britain have emerged as major players in the battle against terrorism in Yemen, adopting a wide range of policies and methods of cooperation. In an effort to address the underlying causes of terrorism, the European Union and Britain have used their diplomatic clout to engage with Yemeni authorities and regional partners. They believed that maintaining peace in the long run and reducing support for terrorism required diplomatic and political initiatives.

“The focus of Western action in Yemen shifted from the domestic conflict to the global "war on terrorism" after the 9/11 attacks in the United States. The United States led the way by applying heavy pressure on Ali Abdullah Saleh's government. Securitization of foreign policy was widely adopted at the time by the EU and its member states, and this regularly aggravated political tensions in Yemen. They imposed a strict immigration policy at home while ignoring state brutality and human rights abuses, and they trained local military groups including the coast guard and female anti-terrorism squads. Not every EU member state had the same agenda, and some nations believed their EU partners of using development aid to hide the importance they attached to security” (Bonney, 2020).

“Europe's response to the outbreak of conflict in Yemen in 2015 was remarkable for its broad indifference and retreat from the nation. Despite the fact that (1) since 2001, security concerns over al-Qaeda have been primarily framed as quasi-existential and (2) the Charlie Hebdo event in Paris on January 7, 2015 was allegedly orchestrated in Yemen by al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), this was the case. The European countries' lack of concern over the terrorism in Yemen is evidence that their focus has shifted elsewhere. These organizations were quite insignificant before the outbreak of hostilities in Yemen, and they played much less of a role after the fighting started. Second, Europe was preoccupied with Syria and the Islamic State at the time, neither of which posed a significant threat to Yemen. Third, there weren't many people forced to leave Yemen and go for European cities. Consequently, European leaders and citizens did not consider Yemen a top priority. The European Union (EU) emphasized securitization and

militaristic measures in the months after assaults in European cities claimed by the Islamic State” (Beck, 2017).

To improve Yemen's security forces' ability to combat terrorism, the European Union and Britain have funded intensive training and capacity-building initiatives. These efforts aim to strengthen the nation's ability to collect information, monitor its borders, and combat terrorism. Sharing intelligence and information between the European Union, the United Kingdom, and the government of Yemen is crucial in the fight against terrorism. By working together, we are better able to comprehend the ever-changing nature of terrorist threats, locate and apprehend important people, and break up terrorist networks. Effective information sharing is a cornerstone of successful counterterrorism measures, according to the European Parliament's report on the "European Union Counter-Terrorism Strategy".

“To rebuild and modernize Yemen's police forces, Britain led the G-10 in providing advice and expertise to the Ministry of Interior. As part of its participation in reforming the military, the United States oversaw security organizations unrelated to counterterrorism. To provide training, and information, and even conduct counterterrorism operations on occasion, the United Kingdom has invested massive sums” (Watling & Shabibii, 2018). British diplomats found some very efficient and committed CT employees (many in the south were killed by AQAP), but they were worried about ties between AQAP and other factions of the government, including Saleh, General al-Ahmar, and local tribes. In 2012, the military was successful in driving AQAP out of Zinjibar and other towns in Abyan province, and in 2014, they launched a huge operation to dismantle AQAP camps along the border between Abyan and Shabwa. These developments were monumental at the time, yet they proved to be temporary.

The United Kingdom's government continues to engage with the United States, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to discuss counterterrorism (CT) efforts in Yemen. The study states that "explosives going off on the streets of Britain" are prevented thanks to intelligence sharing with Saudi Arabia (Hunt, 2018). United Arab Emirates operations in the south pushed AQAP out of key population centers and helped develop local troops that seem prepared to hunt down the now-dispersed AQAP fighters.

The United Arab Emirates received some aid from Britain during these missions. The United Arab Emirates has been criticized for its targeting of political and security leaders who are unrelated to terrorism as part of its conflicts with its political opponents in Yemen, who oppose the Emirati expansion and the exploitation of Yemeni ports and islands.

4.3.2 Arms And European-Gulf Security

Colonial governments' interests in armed conflicts, as well as the sale of weapons in former colonies, have played a key role in escalating violence and prolonging wars in these regions. "International engagement with conflict is, at least in part, shaped by the economic interests of outside actors in the countries or regions involved," writes historian David Keen. It is often advantageous to sell guns or other forms of military aid to one or more of the conflicting sides" (Keen, 2008).

Furthermore, postcolonial theorists contend that colonial powers' interests in arming conflicts in former colonies stem from their desire to maintain control and influence over these regions. "The colonial power is always prepared to use force to sustain its domination," scholar Frantz Fanon observed, "but the force must be rationalized, presented as the logical outcome of a dispassionate examination of the situation." (Fanon, 1963) Weapons sales to former colonies have also been related to the continuation of conflict and instability in these areas. According to academic Achim Wennmann, "arms exports fuel violent conflict by rendering weapons more readily available and increasing the scale and duration of conflicts" (Wennmann, 2013).

Gulf governments' militaries had inadequate defensive and deterrence capabilities despite excessive investment in sophisticated, high-tech defense equipment. This questioned the idea that arms purchases mostly improve the defense. Instead, their substantial investments may have been about the "glitter factor"—military capabilities can promote pride and status (Cordesman, 2013). Arms purchases can also co-opt regime opponents and strengthen links with external powers, boosting buyers' security. The latter, known as the oil for security deal, involves substantial arms supplies to bolster foreign powers' security guarantees. Gulf states especially value the US-Gulf alliance to balance against regional adversary Iran and prevent over-dependence on Saudi Arabia (Gervais, 2016).

European security relations are comparable, though less important. Arms purchases and defense-cooperation agreements, especially with France and the UK, reduced "monodependence" on the US. European-Gulf security has more at risk. Gulf states have exported oil, gas, and petrochemicals to Europe for decades due to historical and commercial ties (Nonneman, 2005).

European arms sales have strategic and financial reasons. Weapon exports can shift regional dominance, reassure allies, and influence buyers' foreign agendas. More crucially, arms trading may preserve defense industrial bases for strategic and economic reasons. European nations vary. French armaments strategy prioritizes sovereignty. French sellers can preserve an efficient defense sector, while Gulf receiving states gain power by diversifying their suppliers. During the Cold War, French leaders believed this was essential to weaken the superpowers. With the collapse of Britain as a colonial power, Anthony Sampson called its armaments trade "commercial pragmatism." Other European countries' export policies, such as those of Italy and Germany, are motivated by a mix of strategic, industrial, and broader economic considerations.

Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates are two of Europe's largest consumers. Several of their primary military systems in Yemen were manufactured in Europe. Firms from all over the EU have been involved in their production and continue to be active in maintenance and repair as well as ammunition export. Meanwhile, most European countries appear to see the current war as no reason to halt shipping new weapon systems.

European corporations have enhanced the Saudi-led coalition's monitoring capabilities with airborne radar equipment and drones. Europe has sold missiles and bombs (together with the guidance systems that go with them) to members of the Saudi Coalition, who used them in the Yemen crisis. Coalition airstrikes are carried out by fighter aircraft built in Europe or the United States (with the exception of three Sudanese Sukhoi-24 fighters of Russian origin). They are backed up by tanker planes and carry weapons manufactured in Europe or the United States (War In Yemen, Made In Europe).

Despite the fact that the Saudi-led coalition has bombarded the region's poorest country for the past three years, the EU and European countries have approved the sale of

more than \$86.7 billion in armaments to Saudi Arabia and the UAE, according to information collated by Middle East Eye.

Spain, for example, is one of the main European Union arms exporters to the Saudi-led coalition. Between 2015 and 2019, it allowed the sale of arms to the coalition for more than 2.6 billion euros (about 3.6 billion dollars), and it exported weapons worth over 2 billion euros (about 2.4 billion dollars), the majority of which were missiles and aircraft. The majority of these exports went to Saudi Arabia (1.2 billion euros) and the United Arab Emirates (276 million euros) (Arabic Post, 2021).

“Except for Oman, all Gulf Cooperation Council countries participated in Operation Decisive Storm in 2015, with Saudi Arabia deploying 100 fighter jets (mostly F-15s and Eurofighter Typhoon aircraft), which were joined by warplanes from the UAE (30, including F-16s and Mirage 2000s), Bahrain and Kuwait (15 each), and Qatar (10). During the first six years of the engagement, the Saudi-led coalition conducted over 23,000 air attacks, with up to 66,905 individual bombings. No other conflict in recent history has seen the launch of as many ballistic missiles, anti-ship missiles, unguided artillery rockets, and drones, resulting in the unprecedented usage of air and missile defense systems. The battle has not been inexpensive for these intervening powers, with the Gulf Arab, states spending an estimated \$14 billion per year on the effort” (Lotje Boswinkel, 2021).

4.3.3 A Democratic System in A Strategic Region

Yemen's crisis has lasted since 2011, and it has been exacerbated by a number of reasons, including political instability, economic decline, and military hostilities. Yemen's condition has piqued the interest of numerous global players, notably Europe, which has expressed political, economic, and humanitarian interests in the country.

From a political standpoint, the ongoing conflict in Yemen has far-reaching ramifications for the region's peace and security, and as a result, European nations have a vested interest in the country's political status. European nations have several major political interests in Yemen, including the promotion of democracy and human rights, the prevention of terrorism and extremism, and the protection of international security (European Union Websites, 2020).

For starters, European countries are keen on strengthening democracy and human rights in Yemen. Many European countries see Yemen's war as a result of the country's lack of democratic administration and respect for human rights. As a result, European countries have urged for a peaceful settlement to the war, including free and fair elections, civil liberties preservation, and the promotion of human rights for all Yemeni citizens.

Second, European countries are concerned about the possibility of terrorism and extremism taking root in Yemen. Extremist groups such as Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), which has carried out multiple assaults against both local and international targets, have thrived in the country. As a result, European countries have made significant investments in counterterrorism efforts in Yemen, providing both military and financial assistance to Yemeni security forces and working to dismantle terrorist networks in the country.

Europe's primary concern in Yemen is the country's and the region's stability. The European Union (EU) has actively supported Yemen's peace process through diplomatic channels (EU External Action, 2020). The EU established the Yemen Strategy in 2018, with the goal of facilitating conflict settlement through a comprehensive approach that includes humanitarian aid, political process support, and security sector reform (European Commission, 2018). Furthermore, the EU has expressed concern about human rights breaches and the humanitarian catastrophe in Yemen, prompting the EU to contribute substantial financial aid to alleviate the Yemeni people's suffering (European Commission, 2020).

Economically, Europe's interest in Yemen is motivated chiefly by its strategic location at the southern entrance to the Red Sea, a vital maritime route for international trade and commerce. As a result, the EU has economic as well as political interests in Yemen. Europe is particularly interested in Yemen's natural gas reserves, which might supply the area with an alternate source of energy. Furthermore, Yemen's ports, such as Aden, are critical for transporting products to and from the Gulf region, and Europe is eager to help the development of these ports in order to improve trade.

The EU has recognized Yemen's economic potential to contribute to regional stability and development and has launched several projects to aid Yemen's economic

development, such as providing technical assistance to Yemen's agricultural sector and encouraging private sector growth (Democratic Arabic Center, 2020).

The prolonged crisis in Yemen, on the other hand, has had a considerable impact on European business interests in the nation. The conflict has produced widespread insecurity and instability, making it difficult for foreign enterprises to conduct efficient operations in Yemen. As a result, numerous European firms have been compelled to halt operations or leave the nation entirely.

Aside from the United Kingdom, no other EU member state has created major commercial ties with Yemen throughout the years. The country appeared distant and remote in the views of government decision-makers and members of the media (Bonney 2018). Foreign investments in Yemen's oil sector were critical for the government, but European corporations' interests were restricted. Such was the case with Total, a French corporation that invested \$2 billion in infrastructure at the Shabwa provincial liquefied natural gas (LNG) plant. When LNG exports were halted in 2015 due to the war forcing the closure of the Balhaf terminal less than six years after its opening, the French oil business and its shareholders appeared to be spared much suffering.

Aside from economic motives, Europe's involvement in Yemen has been motivated by worries about regional stability and security. Yemen's continuous conflict has had ramifications for neighboring countries, including Saudi Arabia, which has been strongly involved in the fight. The conflict has also aided the rise of extremist organizations such as Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), which has targeted both Yemeni and foreign interests in the country. Europe has shown a strong desire to assist Yemen's security sector in dealing with these risks and preventing the conflict from extending further.

4.3.4 A Negotiating Chip in Nuclear Talks

According to postcolonial theory, the exploitation of former colonies by their colonial powers goes beyond economic and resource exploitation. Rather, colonial powers use issues and conflicts within these former colonies as political trump cards to advance their own interests and gains. In the case of Yemen, for example, the continuous conflict and humanitarian disaster might be understood as a result of the country's exploitation by

regional and global powers. According to Frantz Fanon's book "The Wretched of the Earth," colonizers frequently use the problems of the colonized to advance their own interests, stating that "the colonized world is a world separated in two...the colonized is elevated above his jungle status in proportion to his adoption of the mother country's cultural standards." As a result, colonizers use the issues of the colonized to achieve their own political and economic goals.

According to academic Helen Lackner, "the war in Yemen is an extension of regional rivalries, especially between Saudi Arabia and Iran, as well as the geopolitical interests of Western powers." Foreign powers' engagement in Yemen, especially the United States, the United Kingdom, and France, has been related to their regional strategic objectives, particularly access to oil resources and restraining Iran's influence (Lackner, H., 2019).

Yemen has been a subject in negotiations between Iran and the European Union (EU) over Iran's nuclear program. The Yemen conflict has created a chance for both Iran and the EU to exploit the Yemen issue as leverage in their negotiations. Yemen has become a new battlefield as Iran and Saudi Arabia wage a proxy war, taking advantage of local Yemeni issues and their intricacies. With the probability that the nuclear deal may result in the easing of international sanctions, Iran may have reached the limitations of projecting force through the Houthis. Iran's partners in Yemen are militarily formidable, but their political influence is limited, they have many local enemies, and their leaders are sanctioned internationally (Al-Muslimi, 2015).

Recent waves of immigration and periodic terrorist acts across Europe have stoked latent national-populist inclinations that endanger the European Union's unity. As a result of Saudi de-escalation, a stable Middle East would help restrict the supply of fuel fuelling these fires. Iran is critical to regional stability, and the Yemen war may be the finest site in the region for the EU to assist end the slaughter.

The EU's participation in the Iran nuclear deal provided a potential lever for constructive intervention in Yemen. The Sanaa Center for Strategic Studies issued a report in late 2018 about the need for clear leadership and action by European institutions, stating

that "the EU's true geopolitical and diplomatic potential to contribute to conflict resolution in Yemen will only come to bear when it becomes official EU policy" (Bonnefoy, 2020).

The Yemeni issue gives the EU leverage in its negotiations with Iran over the Iranian nuclear issue. The EU has been a crucial role in the nuclear discussions between Iran and the P5+1 (the United States, Russia, China, France, the United Kingdom, and Germany). The EU has attempted to strike a careful balance between discussing a diplomatic solution with Iran and maintaining sanctions designed to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons.

The Yemen case gives a chance for the EU to put pressure on Iran to be more helpful in nuclear talks. The EU can force Iran to withdraw its assistance for the Houthi rebels and settle the Yemeni crisis by using the Yemeni issue as a bargaining chip. The EU's position on Yemen is backed up by the UN, which has called for an end to the fighting and a political solution to the problem.

Europeans spent much of 2017 attempting to persuade the Trump administration to maintain the JCPOA. However, Trump's policy trajectory on the nuclear deal is plainly at conflict with European interests at this stage. There is also a serious possibility that the current war of words and tit-for-tat exchanges between Tehran and Washington will lead to Middle East escalation. In the next years, European leaders should prepare for and endeavor to mitigate the implications of further deterioration in Iran-US ties (Geranmayeh, 2017).

The United States' exit from the JCPOA in 2018 and adoption of a maximum-pressure policy has caused Iran to reduce its commitments under the agreement, which provides a thorough and stringent system of inspections and monitoring to be carried out by the IAEA. The EU is working with the E3 (Germany, France, and the United Kingdom), Russia, and China to keep the JCPOA and hence Iran's commitments.

The Iran arms embargo expired on October 18, 2020, in accordance with the JCPOA. While the EU raised worries about its expiration, it resisted the US threat to reinstall all UN sanctions (known as a "snapback"). The EU will maintain its own arms embargo until 2023. The EU sanctions are unrelated to the JCPOA and are tied to human

rights breaches, hostile activity against the EU, and missile launches (Roberto Bendini, 2022).

France and the United Kingdom, which have been the most active European countries in supporting the Saudi-led coalition fighting in Yemen, should press Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates to reach an agreement in order to lessen the violence and humanitarian consequences of the crisis. Such accords should be implemented with European aid and assistance. Given the Trump administration's lack of serious support for a political process, this is an urgent requirement. This can start by focusing on increasing ceasefire zones in Yemen. Overall, preserving the nuclear agreement and navigating a new relationship with Tehran is the greatest approach for Europe to make a significant impact on global and regional security concerns in which it has a genuine stake and influence. If the nuclear agreement is jeopardized, there is little possibility for a diplomatic breakthrough with Iran on other critical problems, and regional instability in the Middle East is certain to worsen. In that situation, Europe might be forced back into a hostile relationship with Iran, complete with new sanctions and the constant prospect of escalation (Geranmayeh, 2017).

Relations between Europe and Iran, on the other hand, remain far from normal. A variety of causes, including persisting distrust, mutual regret over the lack of progress, and competing positions on a number of regional issues, have hampered the rapprochement.

Iran and Europe's disagreements are on clear show in Syria and Yemen, where each has backed opposing forces. There are also profound disputes over Iran's support for non-state entities in the area, its arming of Hezbollah, and its stance on Israel - as well as, more lately, concerns over Iran's burgeoning ballistic missile program. In these sectors, Europeans have generally collaborated with the United States. They have backed the Trump administration in its objections to the United Nations about Iran's ballistic missile testing, for example (Armradio, 2017).

Tehran and the Houthis working in tandem

Iran has been supplying weapons, financing, and training to the Houthi rebels in Yemen. Iran sees its engagement in Yemen as an opportunity to enhance its regional

influence and threaten Saudi Arabia, a key US and EU partner. However, Iran's involvement in the Yemeni conflict has put it on the defensive in the international community, strained relations with the EU, and strained relations with the US. Iran sees the Yemen crisis as an opportunity to increase its regional influence. Iran's support for the Houthis is seen as a direct challenge to Saudi Arabia, a vital ally of the United States and the European Union.

Iran and its main regional adversary Saudi Arabia are fighting proxy wars all over the Middle East, from Syria to Iraq and Yemen. "Ending the war in Yemen will pave the way for regional de-escalation," Rouhani said during a press conference broadcast live on state television, adding that it might even "eventually lead to de-escalation between Iran and Saudi Arabia." (Parisa Hafezi, 2019).

Iran normally avoids publicly admitting that it provides financial or military support to the Houthis in Yemen, although it does make hints about it when the stakes are high. The apparent intertwining of Iranian interests in striking a nuclear agreement with the Houthis' goal in ending the Yemen war in recent weeks implies that the Middle East's security might be gravely jeopardized if ongoing nuclear discussions between Western powers and Tehran fail. While Iran is leading the talks, it is also pushing for an end to the cycle of violence in Yemen, which it blames on a Saudi-UAE-led military coalition fighting the Houthis (BBC, 2022).

There are signs that Iran is on the verge of reviving the 2015 nuclear deal, also known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). However, Tehran is rapidly running out of time as it plays all of its cards in Vienna, the site of the latest and eighth round of nuclear talks with international powers. It has failed to produce conclusive findings. Iran's only option for exerting its will in the talks is to utilize allies like the Houthis to warn the world of the terrible cost of a no-deal scenario (Keynoush, 2022).

In the event that the nuclear talks fail, Iran wants to ensure that Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) do not align their security and military policies in Yemen or with Israel. All three of Iran's neighbors in the Middle East are concerned about the Houthis' growing influence and Iran's capacity to develop nuclear weapons. As a result, Tehran is asking that Saudi Arabia and the UAE, which appear to be on the verge of

granting the Houthis a role, assist in ending the war in Yemen as soon as possible (Omar Ahmed, 2019).

Tehran and the Houthis appear to be working together as the world powers and Iran take a little break in Vienna to handle domestic deliberations. In late January, the Houthi chief of Student Cultural Affairs, Ahmad al-Shaami, addressed massive crowds waving Houthi flags at Friday prayers in Tehran. Concurrently, pro-Houthi demonstrations were staged across Iran, with Friday Prayer imams urging Iranians to support the Houthis and denounce Saudi Arabia and the UAE. The overlapping of advancing the JCPOA and Yemeni discussions appears to be a mutual attempt by Iran and the Houthis to confront not just any potential US opposition to fully resurrecting the JCPOA, but also the Saudi-UAE alliance if a peace accord over Yemen cannot be reached (BBC, 2022).

The mutual engagement of Iran and the EU in the Yemeni case has consequences for regional stability. If the crisis in Yemen is ended, it will have a favorable impact on regional stability. It would also decrease Iran's regional influence, something the US and its allies, notably the EU, are concerned about.

4.3.5 Prevent More Immigration To Europe

In the previous two years, the number of asylum seekers arriving in the Netherlands from Yemen has increased. According to the Dutch Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND), nearly half of Yemenis who fled to Europe last year chose the Netherlands as their destination, making the country one of the leading countries of origin, according to SchengenVisaInfo.com. As a result, our country has become a favourite destination in the EU for Yemenis seeking asylum," according to the IND statement. According to IND, 7% of the total number of first-time asylum claims made in 2022 were by Yemeni nationals. The same study found that in 2021, the number will be 3% .

Many Yemenis, according to the men questioned by The New Arab, wanted to go undetected through Germany to the Netherlands or Sweden. Although data on where applicants entered the EU is not recorded, average monthly asylum petitions from Yemenis in the Netherlands increased six-fold in the last five months of the year. Despite more than seven years of war, most Yemenis have been unable to go to Europe. Since 2014, less than 15,000 people have sought asylum in the EU (Brian, 2022).

Yemen's dilemma is one of the world's most severe humanitarian disasters, affecting millions of people due to prolonged conflict, starvation, and disease epidemics. Yemeni refugees are seeking asylum in a variety of countries, including EU member states. There is evidence, however, that the EU is actively stopping Yemeni asylum seekers from entering Europe.

Fear of terrorism is one of the key reasons for the EU's reluctance to welcome Yemeni refugees. The EU is concerned that terrorist organizations like AQAP and the ISIS may use the refugee crisis to infiltrate Europe. Ilkka Salmi, the EU's Counter-Terrorism Coordinator, has indicated that "there is a risk that terrorists could use the refugee crisis to enter Europe, either by taking benefit of the lack of proper checks or by posing as refugees."

Another factor contributing to the EU's reluctance to admit Yemeni refugees is the financial burden associated with offering asylum. Because of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, EU countries are already suffering economic issues, and many feel that allowing additional refugees will exacerbate the situation. Furthermore, due to rising anti-immigrant sentiment among its citizens, EU member states are reluctant to admit significant numbers of immigrants.

The EU has also been chastised for its role in the Yemen situation. Some claim that the EU's support for the Saudi-led coalition, which has been accused of war crimes and human rights violations, has exacerbated the problem. As a result, appeals have been made for the EU to accept responsibility for its role in the crisis and to provide relief and support to refugees.

4.4 Attempts to ban weapons and Differences amongst EU Member States

Germany was not the first nation to publicly stop selling weapons to countries taking part in the crisis in Yemen. In Spain, Sweden, and Wallonia, such bans were implemented, with varied degrees of success. Various interpretations of EU legislation prohibiting weapons sales to belligerents in violation of human rights laws exist (Maletta, 2019). After taking power in the middle of 2018, socialist Pedro Sanchez decided to cancel military deals with Saudi Arabia. The Spanish leader was placed in an embarrassing situation when

Saudi Arabia threatened litigation and the termination of other commercial contracts if the supply of weapons was not carried out.

“Despite Spain's about-face, EU member states have prioritized the problem of military trade in Yemen above any other concern the country may have. The possible European role in war crimes in Yemen has been brought up on several occasions by opposition parties, NGOs, unions, and even certain governments, such as Denmark's. In certain cases, legal proceedings were held. Many influential Europeans were still opposed, though, since they wanted to prevent a clash with Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates in order to save European economic interests. French Defense Minister Florence Parly said on April 18 that as far as she knows, Saudi Arabia only uses French armaments for self-defense. The majority of the French lower house voted against creating a committee to look into military deals. Meanwhile, reporters working as part of a group called Disclose have uncovered evidence from stolen papers that might be used to press criminal charges on European governments or garner public support for efforts to halt weapons accords. However, the policy's ambiguity remained unchanged. All of this highlighted the political sensitivity of business interests in the conflict in Yemen” (Bonney, 2020).

When it comes to political flexibility, the European Parliament considerably outstrips the European Commission on subjects like the Yemen situation. This is because of its restricted ability to shape foreign policy. Members of Parliament may thus speak their minds freely, albeit sometimes giving the impression of being schizophrenic due to the fact that their views seem to shift depending on the audience. Members who opposed their own party's national policy in the European Union (EU), such as those who fought to end EU support for the Saudi-led military intervention in Yemen, were expelled. The European Union parliament cleared a resolution inviting Federica Mogherini to "launch an initiative that would attempt to impose a European embargo on weapon sales to Saudi Arabia" nearly a year before the murder of Jamal Khashoggi in October 2018 sparked sharper debate about the war in Yemen within EU countries and the US. On November 30th, 2017, 539 members voted in favor, while just 13 members voted against. A similar resolution in the European Parliament received 242 yes votes, 23 no votes, and several abstentions the following year, when media attention to Khashoggi's murder heightened

discussion about Saudi weapons agreements. As part of a larger resolution denouncing Saudi actions in the wake of Jamal Khashoggi's death, the measure gathered support and was ultimately passed by 342 votes (European Union Websites, 2019).

UK

Despite the apparent establishment of the alliance, the Saudis only gave London 24 hours' warning of Operation Decisive Storm. Britain has provided diplomatic and military backing to the Gulf Cooperation Council alliance headed by Saudi Arabia. UNSCR 2216, which authorized coalition strikes on Yemen, was written by Mark Lyall Grant. To avert a Russian veto, the coalition had to make concessions. The United Kingdom regarded 2216 as a checklist, not a roadmap to peace. The Houthi seizure of Sanaa was deemed a coup by Britain. Despite its reservations about the inflated and self-fulfilling nature of the Gulf Cooperation Council coalition's claims about Iran's links to Houthi leaders, it backed such claims. "We back the Saudi-led Coalition's attempts to restore legitimacy," the United Kingdom Foreign Secretary and Development Secretary declared, "and we recognize that Saudi Arabia has the right to protect itself against dangers to its security, notably missiles fired from Yemen" (Mordaunt, 2018).

Analysis by the National Security Council shows that the United Kingdom places a premium on forming military, counter-terrorism, and economic connections with Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. The United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia are significant customers for British arms exports, particularly aircraft. A recent academic analysis concluded that Britain's engagement in Saudi Arabia's war in Yemen and its dismal human rights record were not worth the advantages to the country's economy. It argued that the Saudi government could exert pressure on the British government and disprove official claims that London could affect Saudi policy thanks to its membership in the Gulf Cooperation Council alliance. Finally, military exports make up less than half of the one percent of GDP that they do in Britain.

British support for Saudi operations in Yemen included but was not limited to the following, as the government emphasizes should not be confused with:

- There were very few liaisons working at the Saudi military's headquarters. They do not take part in the decision-making process for Saudi targets, attack operations in

Yemen, or the direction or execution of operations in Yemen. The arrangements for these are handled by BAE Systems, the project's prime contractor. • As part of its ongoing military engagement agreement with Saudi Arabia, the United Kingdom offers training courses, advise, and help in both the United Kingdom and Saudi Arabia. To assist Saudi Arabia in adhering to IHL, the Royal Air Force has provided "training and sharing best practices with the Royal Saudi Air Force, particularly targeting training" (United Kingdom Government, 2016).

One hundred British servicemen are stationed in the Defense section of the British Embassy in Riyadh to provide assistance to the Saudi Arabian armed forces. According to former British servicemen or contractors, the Saudi air force "could not manage without us." There wouldn't be any planes flying for seven to fourteen days if we weren't there (Merat, 2019). Nicol (2019) claims that the United Kingdom's Special Forces and other military forces helped the Saudis with their operations in Yemen's Najran Province.

Parliamentarians, journalists, and international relief organizations have all denounced United Kingdom participation in the coalition, pointing to findings by United Nations experts who attribute most civilian deaths in Yemen to coalition bombing. According to Sabbagh and McKernan (2019), the United Kingdom suspended some contracts after the Court of Appeal ruled in June 2019 that some arms sales were illegal because it "made no determined assessments of whether the Saudi-led coalition was guilty of breaking international humanitarian law in the past, throughout the Yemen conflict" (Sabbagh & McKeernan, 2019). The United Kingdom reevaluated its regulations and filed an appeal against the verdict. Having such a strong alliance concerned many lawmakers. According to one minister, the Saudis' criticism hampered efforts to sell them weapons, as reported by MacAskill and Elgot (2017).

The United Kingdom government claimed in 2016 that its staff in Saudi Arabia "are not equipped with a full grasp of the Coalition's regard for IHL in its acts in Yemen as they do not have accessibility to all the details needed to do so; the United Kingdom does not have any rooted staff engaged in operations, nor do we have any personnel involved in the conduct of operations." Defense personnel's understanding of Saudi systems and procedures is only one piece of the puzzle that helps us evaluate Saudi Arabia's approach

and attitude toward international humanitarian law. According to the United Kingdom government (2016), "this feeds the FCO risk assessment of the Combined EU and National Arms Export." After 2016, the British government argued that United Nations Resolution 2216, the Gulf Cooperation Council Initiative, and the National Dialogue Conference results were the only way to ensure stability in Yemen. Not a word was spoken about the PNPA, which is vital in the eyes of Houthi leaders.

4.5 European Union in Yemen, Lack of Coordination

“Apathy or inconsistencies were not implied by the lack of apparent interest. The foreign policies of the 27 European nations under consideration here are characterized by a lack of firm stances on Yemen. One such country is France, which is often seen as being on par with the UK as Europe's preeminent diplomatic power. It has some lingering ambivalence regarding Yemen, which prevented it from taking a leading role there. France may have had limited economic interests in Yemen, but that was not the case with the Gulf nations, particularly when it came to the sale of weapons. More than US \$12 billion in contracts worth more than US \$12 billion were made between French military enterprises and Saudi Arabia during 2008 and 2018. While the United Arab Emirates (UAE) continued to make big contracts in 2017, the total value of which reached \$1.2 billion, France's largest customer was Qatar, which remained a part of the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen till 2017” (Poiret, 2019).

“Several government institutions and non-governmental groups voiced humanitarian worries that clashed with commercial objectives. President Macron said in late May that France will organize a global humanitarian conference devoted to Yemen in late June 2018, after growing criticism of France's erratic response to the catastrophe there. The President made the offer during a visit by Saudi Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman. Macron may have intended to reconcile divergent interests, but he was unable to do so because of Saudi incursion and pressure from other nations, and UN institutions hostile to France take the initiative to cover up its diplomatic incoherencies” (Bernin, 2018). Some Yemeni experts claim that France has many diplomatic tools at its disposal. For its "close connection to regional powers" and "reputation," France is "the ideal

candidate" to emerge as a peace broker in Yemen, according to Sanaa Center for Strategic Studies founder Farea al-Muslimi.

“Since Germany has maintained covert diplomatic ties with Houthi leaders since the early 2000s, it is possible that the country was seen as a trustworthy participant in the conflict. A former member of the Yemeni parliament and brother of the movement's leader Yahya al-Houthi was given political asylum in Germany. In addition, a number of prominent national political leaders from other walks of society were undergoing care in German hospitals, opening the door to the possibility of back-channel communications. German foreign policy has shifted to make a more clear denunciation of the Saudi-led alliance in light of the changing political conversation in Germany and Angela Merkel's need to build a coalition with the Social Democrats after the federal election in late 2017. Since other European nations that manufactured weapons with German components could no longer provide them, a partial ban on future arms sales to Saudi Arabia was established, with various bilateral ramifications. French and British lobbying resulted in the exemptions being approved. The legacy of EU institution growth is industrial integration and dependency between member states” (Bonney, 2020) which highlights the need for a more integrated foreign policy.

“One of the main movers in getting European countries to intervene on the Yemen conflict was a focus on human rights and IHL, although this did not lead to a uniform stance. There was much discussion and controversy in 2016 and 2017 when the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights sought to organize an Assembly of International and Regional Eminent Experts on Yemen. The purpose of the Group was to examine allegations of war crimes in Yemen after public outcry over repeated airstrikes of civilian targets by coalition planes. In private UN sessions, EU member states argued against one another. It was reported that France was trying to negotiate a compromise with the Arab alliance. The Dutch government also advocated for an impartial inquiry, proposing French-Tunisian activist Kamel Jendoubi to head the commission” (Bonney, 2020).

“EU member states continued to compete despite repeated declarations of common humanitarian concerns and disagreement with the Arab coalition's stance in Yemen. Therefore, a shared understanding of Yemen's challenges did nothing to foster cooperation

in policymaking. Different forms of peace initiatives are one example. European Union members were not invited to participate in the first rounds of peace negotiations in Switzerland and Kuwait that were sponsored by the United Nations” (Lackner 2017). The most fruitful round of talks with the United Nations special envoy, Martin Griffiths, occurred nevertheless in late 2018, thanks to Sweden's intervention. The Foreign Ministry spent a huge amount of money holding the discussions in suburban Stockholm. The Swedish government couldn't manage to advance negotiations beyond an initial agreement reached between the parties. It hoped that another state could step in since it lacked the means to do so on its own.

Some EU members favored encouraging "track 2" diplomacy with major non-state entities as an alternative to a fresh round of peace negotiations since the opposing parties showed a lack of readiness to engage. State-level conversations rapidly revealed their limitations because the Yemeni government, headed by Abdurabbo Mansour Hadi, declined to include its anti-Houthi front competitors in the talks. Conversely, the "track 2" conversations went nowhere in terms of resolving the problem because, first, not enough effort was put into choosing participants who were both qualified and competent, and, second, the efforts ended up being disjointed and lacked focus.

Unlike the other five long-term members of the United Nations Security Council, the European Union, and the Gulf Cooperation Council, Germany did not have ambassadors stationed in Yemen for most of the transition period after 2012. At the United Kingdom's urging, it was established in 2013 as a more productive forum than the "Friends of Yemen" organization, which had been established in 2010 to address the root causes of "terrorism." German officials apparently took matters into their own hands after being left out of G10 negotiations, launching a series of actions that were widely seen as biased in favor of the Houthis. The conversations it started with different Yemenis via Berghof Foundation sponsorship continued all the way through the conflict. There were a number of high-level meetings held in other countries and a youth congress held in Sanaa. The Political Development Forum, formed by Ali Hassan, a former Nasserist member of Yemen's parliament, received funding from the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which also partnered with the Forum.

“Finland has a long tradition of involvement in the field of international conflict resolution. In Helsinki, at the Crisis Management Initiative, they came up with a way to encourage Yemenis from all walks of life to sit down and discuss the future of their nation. In April 2019, France made a similar effort, but it was met with poor follow-up when several participants questioned the exclusion of persons from political ideologies other than liberalism. Finally, the expanded frontiers of Europe have led to foreign policy differences among EU member states, which have been reflected in the lack of coordination of peace initiatives. It shed light on the complex and sometimes unanticipated outcomes of foreign policies in a region involving many different actors” (Meijer, 2018).

Independent budgets, the presence of an often vocal parliament, and distinct subcultures have helped EU institutions establish some independence from the collective and sometimes conflicting policies of the member states (Neuilly, 2005). Institutional shifts that EU experts characterize as "Europeanization" (Hoeffler, 2015) did not produce a consistent approach toward the Yemeni crisis.

It appears that the EU as an organization failed to make up for the relatively low level of participation from its member states, with the exception of the United Kingdom, through its Parliament, European Commission, and, finally, its Humanitarian Office (ECHO). It is not obvious that member states' determination to maintain their diplomatic privileges and sovereignty by suppressing European efforts is directly tied to the EU's poor added value, which was mostly the result of self-limitation. The EU was already dealing with a number of crises at the time the Yemen situation escalated, therefore its political leadership was not up to the task. Even though the head of EU diplomacy assured reporters at a news conference on March 18, 2019, that Yemen remained "at the top of the EU's agenda," the country never emerged as a priority for those claiming to operate in the name of the EU after 2015.

CHAPTER FIVE

INTERVIEW ANALYSIS

This research's Interviews Chapter includes crucial findings gleaned from interviews with four Yemeni government officials, experts, and a diplomat from the European Union mission in Yemen. These interviews sought to elucidate the EU's involvement, strategy, and efficacy in responding to the Yemeni crisis. This chapter contributes to understanding the EU's involvement and informs future policies and tactics for conflict resolution by capturing varied perspectives and knowledge.

5.1 Interviews

Q1: Based on your understanding, what is the European Union's perspective on the nature of the conflict in Yemen?

Through interviews conducted with political officials, experts, and individuals interested in the Yemeni situation to understand the European perspective on the root causes of the conflict in Yemen, the response from Deputy Speaker of Parliament, Abdulaziz Jubari, was as follows: "I believe that the European Union has a comprehensive understanding of what has happened and is happening in Yemen, but what predominates in international relations are interests." He also stated, "The Europeans still maintain a consistent position in defining the Houthis as a group that has overturned legitimacy in Yemen. The British and the French, as permanent members of the Security Council, were among those who voted on certain international resolutions regarding the Houthi coup, including Resolution 2216. Apart from the British stance, the French and German ambassadors still affirm this position in more than one statement." Jubari confirms that Europeans understand the nature of the Yemeni conflict and are well aware of its causes. They continue to describe the Houthis as a group that has overturned the legitimate authority, and the British and French have contributed to international resolutions condemning the coup.

From the perspective of the former Minister of State for the Implementation of the National Dialogue outcomes and Deputy Secretary-General of the National Dialogue, Yasser Al-Ra'ini, "The European Union understands the conflict in Yemen as a conflict between two parties: the Houthis, who forcefully overturned the legitimate authority, and the Yemeni government, which is internationally recognized as the representative of Yemen's legitimacy." According to Al-Ra'ini, the European view of the nature of the conflict in Yemen does not differ significantly from the international understanding of this conflict. The coup that took place in Yemen, overturning state institutions, was clear in defining and identifying the conflicting parties and the roles played by each side in shaping the crisis.

According to Dr. Nasser Al-Taweel, a professor of political science at Sana'a University, "Based on my observation of the European position, I see that there has been a development in the European Union's stance regarding the nature of the Yemeni crisis. Initially, the European Union viewed the Yemeni conflict as a struggle between a minority of Yemeni society - referring to the Houthis - and a majority that oppresses this minority. During meetings with Yemeni officials, Europeans would emphasize this perspective to a significant extent. This view was held before the Houthi coup on September 21, 2014, and persisted for a certain period after that. However, with the developments witnessed in the war, there has been an evolution in this stance as part of the international community's evolving perception of the conflict in general." Al-Taweel believes that Europeans' understanding of the Yemeni conflict has evolved over time. Initially, Europeans perceived the conflict, before the Houthi coup in September 2014, as a struggle between minorities, but their view shifted to viewing the Houthis as an armed group that has overthrown the legitimate authority.

On the other hand, Yemeni journalist and political researcher Yasin Al-Tamimi stated "The political doctrine of the European Union includes recognition of the legitimacy of the legitimate authority represented by Hadi, and now represented by the Presidential Council of the Government. However, in the European Union's view, the political solution to the crisis must involve accommodating the Houthi group as a political and even military component." Al-Tamimi highlights the European Union's perception of the Houthis as overturners of legitimate authority but emphasizes their call for the Houthis

to be accommodated as a political component, overlooking the fact that they are an armed group involved in violence.

From a European perspective, the diplomatic official working within the European Union delegation to Yemen, who preferred not to disclose their name, states, "Yemen has experienced consecutive episodes of conflict, starting with the conflict between the North and the South, and the successive stages of conflict before and after Yemen's unification in 1990, such as the secession war in 1994, the February 11th revolution, and the intervention of the Arab coalition led by Saudi Arabia in Yemen in 2015, following the Houthi militias' control over the capital, Sana'a." The official then highlights the main reason behind the war in Yemen, stating, "The war in Yemen is primarily a result of competition among the Yemeni political elites stemming from the political transition that began with the Yemeni Spring." They further added, "Since March 26, 2015, the military operation called Operation Decisive Storm has been led by a coalition of ten countries, led by Saudi Arabia, with the declared objective of restoring the internationally recognized authority of President Hadi. President Hadi appealed to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for intervention after the Houthis forced his resignation in January 2015, following their seizure of the capital, Sana'a." The Western diplomat summarized the European perspective by describing the Houthis as armed militias and recognizing President Hadi's government as legitimate. However, Europeans see the current crisis as a result of competition among Yemeni elites. They also understand the intervention by the Saudi-led coalition as a response to President Hadi's request.

Based on the previous responses from the participants, there is a consensus among Yemeni participants that Europeans view the Yemeni conflict as a struggle between two parties: one that has forcefully overturned the state and legitimacy, and the other representing the Yemeni legitimacy with broad international recognition. Jubari tried to emphasize that Europeans have sufficient means to understand the conflict, its causes, and its nature. Europeans acknowledge that there has been a coup against the state and legitimacy, while Al-Taweel, in contrast to other participants in the research, indicated that Europeans view both the Houthi coup and the Saudi military intervention with equal concern, especially considering the humanitarian consequences of the war. The participants agree that since the end of 2022, there has been a shift in the European

position, as well as in the overall international stance, towards holding the Houthis responsible for the continuation of the war and its humanitarian consequences due to their obstinacy in accepting any international initiatives for peace. Another point highlighted by Al-Taweel is the problem faced by the Yemeni government in understanding the international parties' perception of the nature of the Houthis, as they are seen as a marginalized minority that should be defended, while they are, in fact, armed terrorist militias that have forcefully overturned the authorities.

Q2: What are the EU's main interests in Yemen, and how do they influence the EU's response to the crisis?

Jubari states, "Yemen is an important country in the region, overlooking the Bab el-Mandeb Strait. Europeans have interests in Yemen, such as combating terrorism or supporting a democratic system since Yemen is an emerging country adopting democracy. Europeans do not have significant economic interests in Yemen like their interests with Gulf countries, specifically Saudi Arabia. However, they also have an interest in the stability of Yemen to safeguard their interests in the Gulf countries and to prevent the presence of a failed state overseeing the important Bab el-Mandeb Strait." In response to the use of the Yemeni crisis as leverage in nuclear negotiations with Iran, Jubari says, "Undoubtedly, the Yemeni file is used as leverage among regional and international parties within the framework of their interests." Jubari emphasizes the geopolitical importance of Yemen and the security risks it faces, which require international support in combating Al-Qaeda. Europeans also show their interest in Yemen due to their concern for their interests in the Gulf countries and curtailing Iranian influence in Yemen.

On the other hand, Al-Ra'ini states, "Europeans have multiple interests in Yemen, with counterterrorism being at the top, and we, the legitimate government, are their partners in this. The legitimate government has provided evidence to Europeans that the Houthis have ties to Al-Qaeda, as some Al-Qaeda elements were released from prisons in Sana'a and targeted the legitimacy." He adds, "The European Union has interests in Yemen, such as oil and gas exports and French interests related to Total, as well as interests related to waterways." In another context, he states, "Some European countries have good relations with Iranians, like the Germans, as they have significant shared economic

interests. As I mentioned, this is part of the problem regarding the European Union's position, which sometimes appears sympathetic to the Houthis".

Al-Ra'ini defines European interests in Yemen primarily as related to counterterrorism, along with interests related to the Bab el-Mandeb Strait and limited interests in Yemeni oil and gas. Additionally, they have good relations with Iran that can be utilized to facilitate dialogue with the Houthis. According to Al-Taweel, the interests of the European Union in Yemen lie in its proximity to oil-producing regions in the Gulf countries, particularly Saudi Arabia, and its strategic position along international routes that supply Europe and the West with energy sources. The European Union also has a security interest in combating terrorism due to Al-Qaeda's adoption of numerous operations that threaten European interests. Additionally, the humanitarian aspect is of concern to Europeans. In my estimation, these factors contribute to the European Union's stance on the conflict in Yemen. As for Yemen's oil and gas resources, they are extremely limited. Some interpret the French ambassador's critical stance towards the Houthis as a French attempt to reactivate the operations of Total, the company operating the port of Balhaf, which is among the largest companies affected by the war in Yemen. Regarding the presence of Iranians in Yemen, it is not as extensive as their presence in Syria and Lebanon, and their influence on the behavior of the Houthis is very limited and weak. Al-Taweel lists the European interests in Yemen in three points: a security interest in combating Al-Qaeda, an economic interest due to its proximity to Gulf countries, and a humanitarian interest due to the crisis.

Al-Tamimi says that European interests in Yemen stem from Europeans always viewing any conflict as a winning geopolitical card. The magnitude of the interests that the European Union can obtain from Yemen is insignificant compared to the interests they obtain from the countries involved in the Yemeni matter (Saudi Arabia and the UAE). Al-Tamimi summarizes European interests in Yemen as exploiting the political conflict to pressure the intervening and affected countries, and he does not see Yemen's geographic location and resources as significant to Europeans. He believes that the Iranians, more than their European counterparts, excel at using the Yemeni crisis as a winning card in their negotiations with Europeans on the Iranian nuclear file.

The Western diplomat states, "The European Union seeks to enhance stability in the Middle East, and Yemen plays a crucial role due to its strategic geographical location. Yemen faces a terrorist threat, especially with the presence of Al-Qaeda on the Arabian Peninsula. The European Union is concerned about the spread of terrorism and is committed to supporting efforts to combat terrorist groups in Yemen. The humanitarian crisis in Yemen has implications for migration. The European Union is interested in managing migration flows and regional security in this context. The European Union also works to promote respect for human rights and seeks to alleviate humanitarian suffering in Yemen by providing humanitarian aid and supporting civil society organizations. It calls for unimpeded access to humanitarian assistance to meet the needs of the affected population". The Western diplomat pointed out several European interests in Yemen, such as regional stability, counterterrorism efforts, preventing further migration to Europe, promoting human rights, and alleviating humanitarian suffering.

All participants agree that European countries have a primary interest in Yemen related to combating terrorism and containing the role of violent groups such as Al-Qaeda. Some, including Al-Tamimi, suggest that the terrorism card has been opportunistically used by the West, as they utilize it to continue exerting influence over the region and reshaping it. This card is also seen as a justification for granting the European Union and the West a high threshold for engaging in conflict zones. Some also believe that the Yemeni crisis is used as a pressure card in negotiations between Europeans and Iranians regarding the Iranian nuclear file. Other interests can be summarized as economic interests linking European Union countries with Gulf countries, including arms export deals, as well as interests in regional stability, preventing further migration to Europe, promoting human rights, alleviating humanitarian suffering, and enforcing international law. Some participants argue that these interests have led to a convergence of European Union countries with certain misguided policies practiced by Saudi Arabia and the UAE in Yemen. Additionally, the excessive focus of European countries on counterterrorism has led them to turn a blind eye to the crimes and violations committed by the Houthi militias in Yemen, and they have also considered the Houthis as partners in the fight against Al-Qaeda.

Q3: How did the European Union's relations with the Gulf states affect their role in the Yemeni crisis?

According to Jubari, "Both the European Union and the United States have perspectives on the policies of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates in Yemen. However, based on my estimation and our meetings with several officials, diplomats, and decision-makers, Europeans have significant interests with Saudi Arabia and the UAE. Therefore, they often turn a blind eye to the wrong policies of the coalition countries in Yemen. These major countries prioritize their own interests, including their interests with Gulf states. However, overlooking such mistakes will lead us to failure, as it has happened and is happening. Currently, the coalition countries bear the burden of this failure, but in the future, it will also have adverse consequences for them." This perspective acknowledges that the major European interests with the coalition countries have hindered European countries from fulfilling their role in addressing the Yemeni crisis, including taking the required positions against the coalition's misguided policies.

On the other hand, Al-Ra'ini states, "I will say it clearly: no one will prioritize their interests in Yemen over their interests with Gulf states, neither Europeans nor others. In one of my meetings with a European Union ambassador, I asked why they seemed silent about the Saudi-Houthi talks in Oman while knowing nothing about them. He replied, 'I will be frank with you (we appreciate that Saudi Arabia is the one targeted by missiles and drones, so they are our friends, and it is natural for us to provide them assistance)'. Based on his meetings with European officials, Al-Ra'ini believes that the economic interests of Europeans in the region primarily lie in maintaining their significant interests with Gulf states. As for Yemen, their interests lie in combating terrorism, preventing further migration to Europe, promoting human rights, and alleviating humanitarian suffering.

From Al-Taweel's perspective, not only Europeans but most of the world powers view the Yemeni file purely from a Saudi perspective. He says, "The international community sees Yemen as a purely Saudi sphere of influence, and therefore gives it a significant leeway. Saudi influence on the global level has become the strongest in the region, especially after 2011 due to the decline of other regional powers like Egypt, Syria,

and Algeria, etc. European governments often work with precision considering the Saudi position and try to avoid arms deals being affected by their positions towards the Yemeni crisis. It is true to say that these countries extend wide courtesies to Saudi policy and provide ample space for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to implement its policies towards Yemen." He also mentions regarding European armament to the coalition, "Germany and several other European countries have taken a position on arms deals, but during the peak, they often prioritize economic and commercial considerations over humanitarian ones for those countries." Here, Al-Taweel emphasizes the strong Saudi influence in Yemen due to Saudi Arabia's international weight resulting from the significant financial capabilities of Gulf states, with Saudi Arabia at the forefront. He points out how these interests force international powers to demonstrate broad areas for Saudi policies. He also highlights that the sanctions imposed on arming the coalition often fade away due to the economic interests of those countries.

Al-Tamimi responds, "There is no doubt that European interests with Saudi Arabia and the UAE influence the positions of these countries towards the Yemeni crisis, and they always adopt the measures taken by Saudi Arabia and the UAE. An example of this is when Saudi Arabia decided to overthrow Hadi and transfer power to a Presidential Council, the Europeans immediately endorsed this decision. In the end, this process serves the interests of Saudis and Emiratis, so Europeans accepted it directly and did not defend the elected president." Al-Tamimi confirms the paragraph stating that the Yemeni political file, from the European perspective, is purely a Saudi file. He also emphasizes that arms sales to Saudi Arabia and the UAE are just one aspect among many that relate to the economic interests of European countries with the coalition states, which often leads the European Union countries to stand behind Saudi and Emirati decisions.

Regarding the Western diplomat working in the European Union mission to Yemen, the relations between Europeans and Gulf countries can be divided into three categories. Firstly, there are economic relations. The diplomat states, "Gulf countries including Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, are important trading and economic partners for the European Union. Naturally, these economic relations can influence the European Union's position or the stance of its member states towards the Yemeni crisis, given the extent of certain Gulf countries' involvement in the Yemeni issue". Secondly, there are political

relations. The diplomat mentions that some Gulf countries have close political and security relations, including defense agreements, with the European Union member states, such as France. It is evident that these alliances can impact the European Union's positions and actions regarding the Yemeni crisis, particularly in terms of supporting or criticizing the actions of Gulf countries involved in the conflict. Thirdly, there are shared regional interests. The European Union and Gulf countries share common regional interests, such as stability, security in the Gulf, and combating terrorism. These shared interests can lead to cooperation and discussions between the European Union and Gulf countries on how to resolve the Yemeni crisis and enhance stability in the region.

In summary, the relationships between European countries and Gulf countries are based on economic, political, and regional shared interests. Europeans consider Gulf countries as major trading and economic partners. Some Gulf countries have defense agreements with EU member states like France. They also share regional interests, such as maintaining Gulf security and combating terrorism. According to some participants, these European-Gulf partnerships have had a significant impact on the European Union's positions and policies towards the Yemeni crisis. It is argued that Europeans, in pursuit of their interests associated with the Saudi-led coalition, have handed over the Yemeni political file to Saudi Arabia to act according to its own interests and those of its allies in Yemen. This situation has also resulted in silence and overlooking the wrong policies practiced by Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates in Yemen. It has deprived Yemenis of their right to receive European and international support to confront the Houthi coup and the Saudi and Emirati violations in Yemen.

Q4: Do you believe that the legacy of British colonialism in Yemen has influenced the European Union's attitude toward the Yemeni crisis? And how so?

Jubari says, "The long experience of the British in Yemen and their understanding of the relationship between Yemenis and what has been happening in this context has changed a lot from what it used to be. Britain is a historically great nation with a civilization and politics that are not momentary, which is why they are perceived as more astute than others. The British prioritize their own interests over the less important small countries, and it seems that Europeans believe in the role of the British in Yemen." He

adds, "When we talk about the 'colonial gaze,' our regions and its politicians have proven their abysmal failure. We should not talk about colonization or how former colonizers interfere in our affairs and so on, but we should read the reality, which is that since the independence of some of these countries until now, they have been moving from one failure to another and talking about conspiracies. My dear brother, I don't believe in the theory of external conspiracies. If there were stable countries and no ambitions to cling to power, and if there were wise governance, I don't think we would have reached such a stage in the Arab and Islamic region in general". Jubari acknowledges that the British possess political shrewdness and astuteness, which they use to prioritize their interests over weaker nations' interests. However, he rejects the notion that the colonial view was still practiced by the British in Yemen and attributes the ongoing failure in Yemen to the politicians and their actions.

As for Al-Ra'ini, he states, "The British, in particular, hold the pen for Yemen in the Security Council, and this is a colonial language, as the countries that used to colonize some nations still hold the pen for them in the Security Council under the pretext of having more experience. Their stance—the British—is primarily linked to the American stance". Al-Ra'ini believes that the British continue to exercise some forms of colonialism in Yemen and supports this claim by pointing out their holding of the pen for Yemen in the Security Council.

Dr. Al-Taweel says, "There is a presence of the British in Yemen. The second presence after the United States. The British have a tendency to align with American policy, and they are an extended strategic ally of America. Sometimes, they exchange roles in Yemen. There is a tendency for British decision-making independence from Europe, which led them to exit the European Union. I do not find that the presence of the British is based on a colonial legacy, especially in the Yemeni crisis. The substantial presence is a result of security and economic concerns, and there is another important factor, which is their close and extensive ties and cooperation with Saudi Arabia. Americans often rely on force to implement their policies, but the British primarily rely on understanding and accessing the driving force behind events and developments". According to Al-Taweel, the British are more powerful and capable of understanding the region, its dynamics, and the factors influencing the parties involved. They have security and economic concerns

related to their interests in Yemen and the Kingdom, which explains their substantial presence.

Al-Tamimi says, "Britain does not act with a retaliatory or hegemonic mentality in Yemen, but it practices full opportunism when it comes to its economic interests with major markets like Saudi Arabia and the UAE. After its exit from the European Union, Britain has relied on a strategy of building global partnerships, focusing primarily on Gulf countries and India." He adds, "We have seen how Britain arranged the normalization relations between Saudi Arabia and the Houthis and proposed engineering of Saudi-Houthi relations similar to those with the ancestors of the Houthis (the Imams). This is one of the indicators of that use. Britain is using its previous experience in engineering the Yemeni scene and contributing to shaping the outcome of the war in line with the external intervenor's interests, rather than the highest interests of the Yemeni people". Al-Tamimi believes that the colonial complex is not present, but he emphasizes the opportunism of the British when it comes to their interests. In his view, the British use their experience and previous relationships to engineer the Yemeni scene and propose solutions to the crisis.

Contrary to Yemeni participants, the diplomat in the European Union mission to Yemen did not respond to this question and simply stated, "No answer to this question - it should be directed to the official speakers in the United Kingdom."

It is evident from the above that the legacy of British colonization has influenced the positions taken by the United Kingdom regarding the Yemeni crisis according to some participants. However, others disagree with this view and believe that there is a prominent British presence in the Yemeni crisis as part of the presence of other European countries. They perceive the British presence as being built upon the expertise of the British in understanding the region and its dynamics, as well as their understanding of the influence of culture, history, religion, and sects. On the other hand, some participants interpret the British holding the pen on Yemen in the Security Council as one of the faces of colonization and a means of perpetuating their political influence in Yemen. This is explained by the theory of post-colonialism used in research. From the perspective of some participants, the British are opportunistic, as they participate in formulating and

proposing initiatives, policies, and laws related to Yemeni affairs in a way that serves their interests and ensures the continuation of their good relations with important economic markets such as the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

Q5: How did the various views of European Union member states on the Yemeni crisis impact the Union's overall position?

Jubari states in his response to the question that "the Arab coalition led by Saudi Arabia, fundamentally, did not have the desire to militarily resolve the conflict. Therefore, even the issue of arming Europeans for the coalition and the divergence in positions of member states towards the crisis is not important. In my estimation, and based on my knowledge, the alliance's failure militarily and politically, along with the mistakes it committed, forced the world to deal on the basis of suspending some deals. However, in the end, those deals are still intact. Each of these countries sees any problem, including the Yemeni problem, from its own perspective and seeks to achieve its own interests first. The world is not as ideal as we perceive it. States have interests, Many Europeans have many interests, not with us in Yemen, but with others in the Gulf". Here, Jubari indicates that the divergence in positions and policies of member states in the European Union does not significantly affect the overall stance on the Yemeni crisis. He attributes these divergences, if they exist, to the independent interests of each state separately.

On the other hand, Al-Ra'ini indicates that "the pressure exerted by some European Union countries, whether in the name of humanitarian issues or others, changes according to their interests. From the beginning of the crisis until a year ago, the Germans were more sympathetic to the Houthis. It can be said that the overall positions of the European Union are still supportive of Yemen and the government, but their measures against the Houthis are not as desired". Al-Ra'ini mentions that the variation in the policies of member states towards the Yemeni crisis can be observed in their divergent armament positions, and the Germans' sympathetic stance towards the Houthis.

Al-Taweel says, "The variation in the European Union member states' perspectives on the Yemeni issue is a result of the diversity of interests and priorities of these countries. The Scandinavian countries' stance against the war in Yemen is stronger and clearer as they are against the war, mainly due to their lesser interests with Saudi Arabia and the Gulf

countries. However, the countries that aspire to global influence and have a tendency to play a major international role, such as Britain and France, consider security and economic considerations more than humanitarian considerations in their decisions and, therefore, in their positions, both within the European Union and at an individual level." Al-Taweel believes that the reason behind the variation in the member states' perspectives on the Yemeni issue lies in the diversity of interests and priorities of the parties forming the European Union. It is natural for this variation to reflect on the overall position of the Union since some countries have a greater presence in humanitarian work, while others prioritize economic, security, and military considerations more. This leads to diversity and often results in tensions, attractions, and perhaps negotiations between these countries.

According to Al-Tamimi, there is a nuanced range of perspectives among European Union (EU) member states regarding the Yemeni crisis. Germany, for instance, does not hold significant concerns about the Houthis or their potential control over Yemen and may even support such a scenario. However, Germany maintains a general stance of recognizing the legitimate authority, understanding the Saudi and Emirati positions, and avoiding direct confrontation with Saudi Arabia and the UAE in relation to the Yemeni war. In contrast, France displays great enthusiasm and vocalizes strong statements against the Houthis. Despite these variations, there is an underlying consensus among the EU member states to recognize the legitimate authority in Yemen. Nonetheless, secondary positions emerge based on each country's ideology, interests, and bilateral relations with the actors involved in the Yemeni crisis. This divergence can be attributed to the historical context and cumulative experiences of the member states.

According to the Western diplomat, "EU member states collectively acknowledge the need for a comprehensive political solution to resolve the Yemeni conflict. While the member states may have divergent political interests, national priorities, and bilateral relationships with the parties in Yemen, these differences can be traced back to specific concerns aligned with their respective national interests. Some member states may have stronger historical, cultural, economic, or closer ties with Yemen or the region. Nevertheless, the overall position of the EU on the Yemeni crisis, as reflected in the December 2022 statement by the Foreign Affairs Council, is the product of consensus among the member states' capitals to strengthen joint measures". This indicates that while

individual interests may diverge, the EU member states generally adhere to the collective position and policies of the Union towards the crisis.

In conclusion, there is a broad agreement among most participants that the variations in perspectives among EU member states do not significantly impact the overall stance of the Union. The collective position of the EU is formed through coordinated efforts and reflects a commitment to enhancing joint actions. The observed diversity in the positions of individual member states, such as Germany's sympathy towards the Houthis, France's recent assertiveness against them, and the more progressive approach of Scandinavian countries, can be attributed to their specific interests, priorities, and bilateral relationships. Furthermore, this diversity may also stem from the global inclinations of certain member states, such as France and Britain, to play a more prominent role on the international stage.

Q6: What role has the European Union played in the Yemeni crisis, and what is the extent of its effectiveness?

Jubari says, "The Europeans had a role before the entry of the Houthis into the capital Sana'a, and they had relationships with all parties, including the Houthi group. Even the French ambassador at that time was arranging meetings between some Yemeni leaders and the Houthi group, including a meeting that brought President Hadi together with some Houthi leaders before the entry of the Houthis into the capital Sana'a." This indicates that Europeans used their relationships with the conflict parties to bridge the perspectives between political rivals. However, some view it as European acquiescence and conditional agreement with the Houthis, particularly concerning their fight against Al-Qaeda. Jubari comments on the recent British stance in the conflict, saying, "The United Kingdom is trying to play a somewhat different role than that of the European Union." Here he refers to recent British moves that propose amending UN Security Council Resolution 2216 as a means to push for peace in Yemen and engage the Houthis, from the British perspective.

Al-Ra'ini states, "The European Union's stance on the Yemeni issue is positive. We had a problem with the Germans at certain times due to some of their actions leaning towards the Houthis in certain issues. However, recently, with the ongoing Russian-European confrontation in Ukraine and the Russians' use of Iranian drones, the European

position is gradually changing for the better regarding the Houthis in general. Additionally, President of the Presidential Council, Rashed Al-Alimi, visited Germany." Al-Ra'ini adds, "The European Union's position comes within the framework of the international position supporting the legitimate authority. This is evident through the repeated visits of European Union ambassadors to Aden, with the latest visit being two days ago." In another context, he says, "The British are trying to play a middle-ground role and alternate roles with the Americans in engaging with conflict parties, including the Houthis. The British stance is criticized for promoting the entry of the Houthis into Sana'a. We have repeatedly urged Europeans to classify the Houthis as a terrorist group due to their actions, but we have not received a response. On the contrary, there have been recent statements by the British ambassador regarding Resolution 2216, which we consider negative and in favor of the Houthis". Al-Ra'ini commends the overall European supportive role for legitimacy, except for the German alignment with the Houthis, and criticizes the continuous European Union demands further concessions from the Yemeni legitimacy in favor of the Houthis, pointing out that their positions towards the Houthis are weak and ineffective.

Al-Taweel says, "Most of the European pressure from the beginning of the war until 2022 was directed towards Saudi Arabia and the coalition countries due to the humanitarian repercussions of the war. However, with the diminishing intensity of the war and its possible cessation, the European Union has turned to political activity. Facilitating political meetings, providing visions, attempting to bridge viewpoints, and supporting international envoys are the main areas in which European countries are active alongside their humanitarian efforts." In another context, Al-Taweel says, "Europeans and influential countries are pressuring to cancel Resolution 2216 and replace it with a new resolution because they see it as an obstacle to the settlement." Regarding his assessment of the European role, he says, "The European role is tainted by two things: firstly, there was clear European bias in favor of the Houthis from the period before the Houthi coup and the subsequent two years. Secondly, there has been a weakness and retreat in the European Union's role after the Russian-Ukrainian war, where their presence in Yemen became marginal and sometimes relied on the personal initiatives of ambassadors". According to Dr. Al-Taweel, the European Union's role focuses on pressuring the coalition countries due to the humanitarian file, and their recent role has shifted towards focusing on the

political file. However, the European role remains subject to criticism due to bias towards the Houthis and a decline in influence after the Ukrainian war and British movements to amend UN Security Council Resolution 2216.

Al-Tamimi says, "The role of the European Union has largely been limited to the humanitarian aspect, which has deprived Yemenis of real assistance in ending the political and military conflicts. When Europeans are asked to take a firm stance against the Houthis, they use the excuse that any pressure on the Houthis will worsen the humanitarian crisis. This pretext has prolonged the duration of the war, while it should have been necessary to eliminate the root causes of the conflict to end the humanitarian crisis." Al-Tamimi believes that the dominance of the humanitarian file and the absence of genuine solutions to the causes of the conflict have weakened the European Union's role in Yemen. He also criticized the European position for aligning with the policies and actions of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates in Yemen and the accompanying undermining of state authority through support for separatist movements.

According to the diplomatic official, "The European Union has implemented a series of interventions to respond to the Yemeni crisis, including diplomacy and mediation through its support for the initiatives of the United Nations Special Envoy to Yemen. The European Union has also organized dialogues among various stakeholders to promote dialogue and seek solutions". On humanitarian and developmental assistance, the official states, "The European Union is a major contributor to humanitarian aid in Yemen, providing financial and material assistance to populations affected by the conflict through support to humanitarian organizations in the field and funding numerous development projects". Regarding the European Union's role in political pressure, the official says, "The European Union has exerted political pressure on the conflicting parties to achieve a negotiated solution, condemned human rights violations and violations of international humanitarian law committed by all parties, and called for accountability and justice. The European Union has also imposed sanctions on certain individuals involved in the crisis". Regarding the effectiveness of the European role in the crisis, the diplomat says, "Political challenges, internal divisions, and regional influences make conflict resolution complex. Nevertheless, the European Union continues to play an active role and remains committed to seeking a permanent political solution".

The Western diplomat points out that the role of the European Union is distributed across three aspects. Diplomatically, it has facilitated numerous dialogues between parties to bridge perspectives. On the humanitarian level, it has provided financial aid and development projects to mitigate the humanitarian impact of the crisis. On the political pressure level, it has exerted pressure on all parties, including sanctions on individuals contributing to the worsening of the crisis. Regarding the effectiveness of the European role, it is acknowledged that the Yemeni file is complex, but the European Union continues its efforts to resolve the crisis.

In general, the European role seems to be somewhat limited to the humanitarian aspect. On the political and diplomatic levels, it involves facilitating and easing political meetings, offering perspectives, attempting to bridge perspectives, supporting international envoys, and supporting mediation efforts. Some participants believe that the alignment of interests between the European Union countries and the Houthi group in certain issues, such as the war against Al-Qaeda, has influenced the Europeans' approach to the Yemeni situation, as they have dealt with the Houthi militias within the framework of their interests, without taking into account the violations and crimes committed by those militias against the Yemeni people. Additionally, the recent British move seeking to amend UN Security Council Resolution 2216 has been criticized by the majority of participants. Some pointed out that the European role exhibited two aspects: one being biased towards the Houthis and understanding their coup-like actions, not taking strong stances against their violations and their stubbornness towards peace initiatives, and the other aspect represents weakness and retreat on various fronts after the Russian-Ukrainian war and Europeans' preoccupation with it. Some participants criticized the European alignment with the policies and actions of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates in Yemen, regardless of the inconsistency of those policies with the aspirations and interests of the Yemeni people.

Q7: How can the European Union enhance its role in resolving the Yemeni crisis?

Jubari says, "The European Union must adhere to international decisions, work on respecting the sovereignty of nations, and refuse to yield to the whims of some immature leaders in the region who seek to fragment and divide Yemen. It should take stronger

stances on the Yemeni crisis, similar to its positions in other countries like Ukraine." In the same context, he adds, "We see the European Union's stance regarding the aggression against Ukraine, the unity of European countries in confronting Russia, and standing by Ukraine militarily, financially, and economically, considering it their top priority. However, in other files, we do not find this enthusiasm, principles, and values they speak of regarding their stance on Yemen. We observe a kind of favoritism towards coalition countries at the expense of the interests of the Yemeni people." From Jubari's point of view, the European Union has a lot it should do regarding the Yemeni crisis, such as pressuring the conflict parties for peace, ensuring the unity and safety of Yemen, and exerting a stronger role politically, economically, and militarily as it does in Ukraine, as well as implementing relevant international resolutions concerning Yemen.

Al-Ra'ini says, "The European Union can work on enhancing and supporting the legitimacy authorities in Yemen in facing the forces and militias that operate outside the state framework, like the Houthi group supported by Iran and the Southern Transitional Council supported by the UAE". He adds, "The humanitarian issues that the European Union talks about are good, but the most important thing is to address the root causes of the humanitarian suffering, represented by the Houthi coup in the north and the rebellion of the Southern Transitional Council in the south." In another context, he says, "A significant portion of the European Union countries have good relations with Iranians, and those relations can be utilized to exert pressure on the Houthis to positively engage within the framework of peace and implement Resolution 2216 and other international resolutions". Al-Ra'ini believes that the European Union can contribute to ending the crisis by supporting the legitimacy authorities in asserting their control over all Yemeni territories, taking decisive positions against the coup forces in the north and the south, and leveraging Europeans' relationships with Iran to exert pressure on the Houthis.

Al-Taweel says, "Europeans should not support the Houthis in imposing their vision and perspective on the rest of Yemeni society; this will never lead to peace." He adds, "Europeans should not sway with one party and should not accept the status quo. They should strongly support the Presidential Leadership Council and preserve its legitimacy. They should work on alleviating the humanitarian crises by increasing humanitarian and developmental support to Yemen at this stage". Al-Taweel believes that Europeans should

support a political process that leads to a comprehensive peace based on the highest Yemeni interest, away from aligning with a party that imposes itself as a *fait accompli*. He also emphasizes the need for further efforts to alleviate the humanitarian crisis.

Al-Tamimi responds to the question, saying, "I believe that the European Union should develop its current traditional stance on the Yemeni crisis, which sees the primary threat in terrorist activities rather than coup activities. They must recognize that the Houthis in the north and the separatists in the south represent threats to the existence of the state". He adds, "Europeans should open up to the basic position of the Yemeni people as a whole and realize that peace, in the end, cannot be sustained if it does not fulfill the aspirations of the majority of Yemeni factions and components". Al-Tamimi believes that the European Union needs to review its fluctuating stance toward the groups that undermine the state in Yemen, namely the Houthis in the north and the separatists in the south. He calls for the European Union, in general, not to remain aligned with the Saudi and Emirati policies in Yemen and to balance its interests with those of the Arab coalition countries and its obligations towards the interests of the Yemeni people.

The Western diplomat from the European Union mission responds, "In addition to the measures we have already taken, the European Union can intensify its diplomatic efforts by working more closely with international and regional stakeholders to enhance comprehensive political dialogue and seek a negotiated solution. In practice, this can take the form of initiatives in support of peace talks. The European Union can provide technical and political assistance, as well as share its expertise in peacebuilding and facilitating dialogue between conflicting parties. In an ideal world [and without budget constraints, i.e., without considering the financial implications of the war in Ukraine], the European Union can enhance its humanitarian support in Yemen by increasing its funding to meet the humanitarian needs of the most vulnerable populations. The European Union can continue to monitor and document human rights violations and international humanitarian law in Yemen and call for accountability for those responsible for these violations". The Western diplomat suggests that the European Union can play a larger role through peace initiatives supported by its expertise to bridge the perspectives of the conflicting parties. He also indicated that providing greater humanitarian support would have a significant

impact on this crisis, in addition to taking additional measures against human rights violations.

The European Union has multiple opportunities to enhance its role in resolving the Yemeni crisis by embracing a range of effective strategies. Firstly, it should prioritize adherence to international decisions concerning the Yemeni crisis, including Resolution 2216. Additionally, the EU can adopt a firmer stance towards militias and insurgents, similar to the approach taken against Russia in Ukraine. Leveraging the positive relationships that some EU members have with Iran could also be instrumental in exerting pressure on the Houthi rebels, encouraging them to accept peace initiatives and avoid obstinacy.

To ensure impartiality, the European Union should avoid aligning itself with any particular party and firmly reject the status quo policy pursued by the Houthis and the Transitional Council. Instead, it should provide comprehensive support to the Presidential Council at political, economic, and military levels, while simultaneously rejecting any attempts to delegitimize it. The European Union must prioritize addressing the humanitarian crises arising from the conflict by significantly increasing its humanitarian and development assistance to Yemen. It is crucial to strike a balance between aligning with the Arab coalition countries, such as Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, while fulfilling its responsibilities towards the crisis. By doing so, the EU can avoid merely aligning itself with one side and ensure a more balanced and effective approach.

Moreover, the European Union should intensify its diplomatic efforts to persuade all parties involved in the conflict to accept peace proposals. It should play a decisive role in addressing human rights violations and collaborate closely with international partners to enforce international laws relevant to the Yemeni conflict. By taking a proactive approach, the EU can contribute significantly to the resolution of the crisis and promote stability and justice in the region.

5.2 Summary

The Nature of the European Perspective on the Yemeni Conflict

The majority of participants agree that Europeans view the Yemeni conflict as a struggle between two parties: one party that seized power and legitimacy by force of arms, and another party that represents the internationally recognized legitimacy. In the eyes of some, Europeans look at the Houthi coup and the Saudi military intervention with equal concern and disturbance, particularly regarding the humanitarian consequences of the war. Since around the end of 2022 until now, there has been a shift in the European position, reflecting a broader international shift, towards holding the Houthis responsible for the continuation of the war and its humanitarian repercussions due to their obstinate practices in rejecting regional and international initiatives that have been proposed in multiple stages to end the war and bring about peace. On another note, some participants believe that the Yemeni government faces a problem in understanding the international parties, including the European understanding, of the nature of the Houthis as a marginalized minority that should be defended. However, the government classifies the Houthis as terrorist militias that seized power and legitimacy by force of arms.

European Interests in Yemen and Their Impact on the European Union's Response to the Crisis

Participants pointed out that European countries have a key interest in Yemen related to counterterrorism and limiting the role of violent groups such as Al-Qaeda. Some believe that the terrorism card has been opportunistically used by the West, where it is employed as a means to justify the use of force and violence by the West against these groups. On the other hand, the Yemeni crisis is seen by some as a bargaining chip between Europeans and Iranians in the negotiations on the Iranian nuclear file. Europeans have other interests as well, including economic interests that link European Union countries to Gulf states. These economic interests, including arms export deals, hold a significant level of European attention. Other interests include maintaining regional stability, preventing further migration to Europe, promoting human rights, alleviating humanitarian suffering, and enforcing international law. The sum of these interests, particularly the economic ones, has led some participants to perceive a flaw in the European stance on the crisis,

manifested in the alignment of European Union countries with certain misguided policies pursued by Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates in Yemen. On the other hand, the significant European focus on counterterrorism has led to overlooking the crimes and violations committed by the Houthis and treating the Houthi militias as partners in the fight against Al-Qaeda.

The Relations between European Countries and Gulf States and Their Impact on the Yemeni Crisis

European countries have economic, political, and security ties with Gulf states. Europeans consider Gulf countries as major trade and economic partners, and some European countries, like France, have common defense agreements with certain Gulf states. Additionally, Europeans share regional interests with Gulf states, such as maintaining Gulf security and combating terrorism. All of these interests have led to European support for Saudi and Emirati interests at the expense of Yemeni interests and the overlooking of the misguided policies pursued by the coalition in Yemen. The European stance has been influenced by their alignment with Saudi and Emirati interests due to the shared economic and regional interests between Europe and the Gulf states.

The Legacy of British Colonialism and Its Impact on the European Stance towards the Yemeni Crisis

In one way or another, the legacy of British colonialism has been present in the United Kingdom's positions regarding the Yemeni crisis, at least in relation to the British holding of the pen on Yemen in the Security Council. The British strive to maintain political influence over Yemeni decisions by shaping and proposing initiatives, policies, and laws concerning Yemen in a way that serves their interests along with countries that have economic weight, such as Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Some argue that there is no clear indication of colonial practices as much as it is understood as a British presence built on British understanding and expertise in Yemen and the region, as part of the European presence. It should be noted that while the impact of colonial history and influence is a valid consideration, it is important to recognize that the stance and policies of European countries are shaped by a range of factors, including political interests, regional dynamics, and international relations, among others.

The Variations in Perspectives among Member States of the European Union and Their Impact on the Yemeni Crisis

The variations in perspectives among member states of the European Union and the individual policies of these countries have not significantly hindered the unity of the EU's position in most cases. The differences in positions of some member states on certain issues, such as Germany's sympathy towards the Houthis, France's recent enthusiasm against them, the progressive stance of Scandinavian countries towards the crisis, and the divergent positions of member states regarding the continuation of arming the coalition, are a natural result of the individual interests, priorities, and bilateral relationships of these countries with the actors involved in the Yemeni crisis. Additionally, the inclination of some member states with global aspirations, such as France and the UK, to play a larger role on the international stage contributes to these variations. It is important to note that despite these variations, the European Union has taken collective actions and initiatives concerning the Yemeni crisis, including providing humanitarian assistance, supporting peace processes, and advocating for respect for human rights and international law. The EU's overall stance aims to address the humanitarian suffering in Yemen and seek a political solution to the conflict.

The European Role in the Crisis and Its Effectiveness

The role of the European Union (EU) in the Yemeni crisis has been somewhat limited to the humanitarian aspect. On the political and diplomatic fronts, the European role has involved facilitating political meetings, providing insights, attempting to bridge perspectives, supporting international envoys, and endorsing mediation efforts. The convergence of interests between EU countries and the Houthi group in specific issues, such as the war against Al-Qaeda, has influenced the effectiveness of the European role towards the Houthi militias. The Europeans have dealt with these militias based on their own interests, without fully considering the violations and crimes committed by these militias against the Yemeni people. They have not taken a firm stance against the Houthi's obstinacy and their rejection of many peace proposals and initiatives. In another context, the British ambassador is making efforts to amend Security Council Resolution 2216, arguing that it has become an obstacle to peace initiatives, which has been criticized by

the Yemeni government. The European role has been characterized by two aspects: firstly, bias towards the Houthis and understanding their coup-like actions, and secondly, weakness and retreat on various levels following the Russian-Ukrainian war and the Europeans' preoccupation with it. The European Union's focus on the humanitarian aspect while neglecting other roles has deprived Yemenis of the genuine assistance they need to address the root causes of the conflict. Some participants have criticized European alignment with the policies and actions of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates in Yemen, regardless of the inconsistency of these policies with the aspirations and interests of the Yemeni people.

Enhancing the European Union's Role in Resolving the Yemeni Crisis

The European Union has several tools at its disposal to strengthen its role in the Yemeni crisis. These include adhering to international resolutions issued in the context of the Yemeni crisis, such as Resolution 2216. The EU can also take stronger positions against the rebel militias, similar to its actions against Russia in Ukraine. Additionally, it can leverage the relationships of some member states with Iran to exert pressure on the Houthi rebels, urging them to accept peace initiatives and avoid intransigence. Moreover, the EU can provide greater political, economic, and military support to the Presidential Council, thereby enhancing its authority and stability in Yemen. The Union should also work towards alleviating the humanitarian crises resulting from the conflict by increasing humanitarian and developmental aid. Furthermore, the EU should reconsider its policy towards Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates in relation to their role in Yemen, striking a balance between the Union's interests and its responsibilities towards the crisis.

Diplomatic efforts should be intensified to persuade the conflict parties to accept the peace process. The EU should also take a firm stance against human rights violations, working with international partners to enforce international laws related to the Yemeni conflict. By implementing these measures, the European Union can contribute to resolving the Yemeni crisis and supporting peacebuilding endeavors.

CONCLUSION

The role of the European Union in the Yemeni crisis has been complex and multifaceted, influenced by various factors such as geopolitical interests, regional dynamics, and internal divisions among EU member states. This study aimed to examine the extent of the EU's involvement in the Yemeni crisis and assess its impact on the conflict. Additionally, it explored the underlying motivations behind EU actions and the challenges it faced in addressing the crisis.

In the first chapter of the research, the study's background and importance were reviewed to shed light on the efforts made by the European Union to end the war in Yemen. This was achieved by examining the relationships and interests that link EU countries to Yemen and the local, regional, and international actors involved in Yemeni affairs. Postcolonial theory was presented as a theoretical framework to analyze the EU's role in the Yemeni crisis. The chapter provided an overview of the core concepts in postcolonial theory, such as religion and identity, European tendencies, exploitation and control, and political disturbances. These concepts laid the foundation for understanding the EU's behavior and motives in the Yemeni context.

The second chapter addressed the historical context of the Yemeni crisis, providing a comprehensive overview of the major stages of the conflict that shaped the current Yemeni crisis. It explored the fall of the Imamate and the background of the conflict between Republicans and royalists, along with the narratives accompanying that period of the conflict. It also discussed Yemeni unity as a pivotal event and the subsequent claims of victimhood and the emergence of entities calling for a return to the past divisions, as well as the wars in Saada, which can be seen as a gateway to understanding the nature of the conflict between the modern Yemeni state and Imamate thought and its aspirations for the future. Furthermore, it examined the impact of the British colonial legacy in Yemen as a key entry point to understanding the European position and the possibility of its influence by the colonial past. A brief overview of the diverse identities present in the country, including regional, religious, and ethnic identities, and their role in shaping political alliances and power struggles within Yemen, was also provided. This historical analysis helped establish a deeper understanding of the root causes and complexities of

the Yemeni crisis, providing a foundational context for evaluating the EU's role in subsequent chapters.

Chapter 3 focuses on the current Yemeni crisis and the various actors involved. It provides an overview of the Yemeni revolution, which many Europeans consider the spark that ignited the current phase of the conflict. It explores the factors behind its outbreak, including widespread anger toward the government, economic grievances, and calls for political reform. The chapter also discusses the state coup and legitimacy, as well as the nature of forces, alliances, and divergent international positions that enabled the Houthis to seize control of the capital, Sanaa, and subsequently expand their control to other Yemeni provinces. It delves into the motivations behind Operation Decisive Storm, including the restoration of the internationally recognized government and countering Iranian influence. It also examines the broader consequences of the operation on the Yemeni crisis. The chapter identifies and analyzes the different international, regional, and local actors involved and studies their agendas. It explores the involvement of major international actors such as the United States and the European Union and delves into the roles played by regional actors such as Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Iran, and how Yemen has become a battleground for these powers. It also examines how local actors, such as the internationally recognized Yemeni government, the Houthi rebels, the Southern Transitional Council (STC), and the Presidential Leadership Council (PLC), have become tools manipulated by these powers, often neglecting the interests of the Yemeni people. Finally, the chapter acknowledges the uncertain future of the Yemeni crisis in light of Yemeni decision paralysis, ongoing political turmoil, power struggles, and the lack of a clear solution. Through all of the above, this chapter provides a comprehensive understanding of the complexities and dynamics of the conflict, paving the way and providing context for assessing the role and response of the European Union to the Yemeni crisis.

Chapter 4 examines the European Union's policies in Yemen and analyzes its positions during different stages of the conflict. The chapter begins by exploring the historical context of EU-Yemen relations and analyzes the evolution of diplomatic relations between them, aiming to provide a more accurate diagnosis of the European Union's policies in Yemen. It delves into the EU's positions during different stages of the

conflict, discussing the EU's response to the sudden February revolution, and their support for it, while maintaining general concerns regarding the subsequent security and political implications. The European Union endorsed the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) initiative and actively participated in organizing and facilitating the National Dialogue Conference (NDC), considering it a crucial element in Yemen's political transition. Furthermore, the chapter explores the European Union's tolerant stance towards the Houthis before their seizure of Sanaa and their condemnation afterward through statements. The chapter evaluates the EU's supportive position towards Operation Decisive Storm and subsequent military actions, the favorable opportunity for arms sales to the coalition on one hand, and the promotion of a political solution to the crisis on the other hand. It examines how the EU balanced its humanitarian concerns with its strategic interests with Gulf states at the expense of the Yemeni crisis. The chapter discusses the EU's interests in Yemen, defining them in counter-terrorism efforts, arms sales, Arabian Gulf security, democracy promotion, using Yemen as a bargaining chip in nuclear talks, and preventing increased migration to Europe. It also addresses attempts to impose an arms embargo and the challenges posed by internal divisions among EU member states. Through all of the above, the chapter provides valuable insights into the European Union's engagement and emphasizes the need for a more coordinated policy to address the challenges and opportunities in Yemen. The acquired insights contribute to a comprehensive understanding of the role and impact of the European Union in the Yemeni crisis.

Chapter 5 presents the results of interviews conducted with four Yemeni experts and government officials, as well as a diplomatic representative from the European Union mission to Yemen. These interviews provided valuable insights and analysis of the European Union's role in the Yemeni crisis from the perspective of those directly involved. The chapter examines the interview results in relation to the research hypotheses and critically analyzes the alignment between the research findings and the initial hypotheses. It contextualizes the interview findings within the theoretical framework of post-colonial theory. The chapter also acknowledges the limitations imposed on the interviews, such as the small sample size and potential biases, while emphasizing the value of qualitative data in enriching the research analysis.

The results of this research provide evidence to support four out of the five hypotheses formulated.

(H1): EU's involvement in Yemen crisis is driven by its interests with Saudi Arabia and Arab Gulf states, rather than a genuine commitment to resolving the conflict.

It is clear that the involvement of the European Union in the Yemen crisis was primarily driven by its interest in maintaining strong relationships with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states. The European Union's commitment to conflict resolution was overshadowed by its strategic and economic interests in the region.

(H2): EU's impact on the Yemeni crisis is limited to humanitarian aspects, not significant political or military interventions.

The impact of the European Union on the Yemeni crisis was largely limited to humanitarian aspects, with minimal political or military interventions. The European Union focused on providing assistance and support for humanitarian efforts in Yemen, but its ability to exert significant political influence or effect substantial changes in the conflict was limited.

(H3): EU's response to Yemen crisis influenced by geopolitical and economic interests, resulting in a nuanced approach and engagement with different actors.

The response of the European Union to the Yemeni crisis was influenced by its geopolitical and economic interests. The European Union adopted a cautious approach and engaged with various stakeholders involved in the conflict, aiming to protect its interests while maintaining a delicate balance in the region. This approach led to a complex and sometimes contradictory position towards the crisis.

(H4): European countries possess pressure cards but fail to effectively use them for meaningful change in Yemen crisis.

The analysis reveals that European countries already possess certain leverage, including political influence, economic relations, and diplomatic pressure, which could be utilized to bring about real change in the Yemeni crisis. However, the research indicates that European countries have not effectively utilized these leverage cards to bring about substantial changes in the conflict.

(H5): Internal divisions among EU member states hindered efforts to address Yemen crisis, leading to inconsistent policies and a lack of unified action.

However, the hypothesis suggesting that internal divisions among the member states of the European Union hindered efforts to address the Yemeni crisis receives limited support in the findings. While there were disagreements among the member states regarding certain aspects of the crisis, such as arms sales and Germany's support for the Houthi positions, overall, the European Union managed to maintain a certain level of coordination and unity in its policies towards Yemen.

Therefore, the role of the European Union in the Yemeni crisis can be described as primarily driven by its strategic interests, with limited political or military interventions and a cautious approach influenced by geopolitical and economic considerations. The European Union sought to achieve a balance in its relationships with various stakeholders involved in the conflict while providing humanitarian aid to alleviate the devastating consequences faced by the Yemeni population.

It is important to note that this study has its limitations, primarily stemming from the availability of data and the complexity of the Yemeni crisis. Future research can delve deeper into specific aspects of the European Union's engagement in the Yemeni crisis, such as counter-terrorism efforts, arms sales policies, and the impact of its humanitarian aid.

In conclusion, the role of the European Union in the Yemeni crisis reflects a complex interaction of interests and challenges. While the European Union made efforts to address the humanitarian aspects of the conflict, its ability to bring about significant political or military changes was limited. Moving forward, the European Union should strive to enhance coordination and unity among member states, align its policies with a stronger commitment to conflict resolution, and explore more effective strategies to contribute to a sustainable solution in Yemen.

RECOMMENDATIONS

For the European Side:

- 1- Stronger Stance against the Rebel Militias: The European Union should adopt stronger positions against the rebel militias in Yemen, similar to its firm stance against the Russian aggression in Ukraine.
- 2- Adherence to International Resolutions: The European Union should adhere to international resolutions, especially Resolution 2216, and refrain from taking actions aimed at amending it.
- 3- Diplomatic Pressure and Utilization of Good Relations: The European Union should leverage its good relations with some EU countries and Iran to exert pressure on the Houthi rebels and prevent arms smuggling to them.
- 4- Comprehensive Support for the Presidential Council: The European Union should provide comprehensive support to the Presidential Council on political, economic, and military levels. It should also contribute to unifying opposition parties against the Houthis.
- 5- Expanding Economic Support and Humanitarian Aid: The European Union should expand its economic support to Yemen and prioritize alleviating humanitarian crises to prevent further economic collapse.
- 6- Addressing Coalition Deviations: The European Union should exert pressure on Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates to prevent their wrongful practices and work towards achieving stability in liberated areas.
- 7- Encouraging Conflict Resolution: The European Union should pressure all parties involved in the crisis to engage in comprehensive dialogue based on the three references: the Gulf Cooperation Council Initiative, the outcomes of the National Dialogue Conference, and Resolution 2216.
- 8- Reassessing Engagement with the Houthis: The European Union should reassess its approach to dealing with the Houthis as partners in the fight against Al-Qaeda, while respecting Yemeni decisions that consider the Houthis as terrorist militias who have usurped Yemen's legitimacy.

- 9- Aid Delivery: The European Union should ensure that its affiliated organizations operate under the supervision of the legitimate government, including the delivery of aid to areas controlled by the Houthis.
- 10- Protection of Yemen's Unity and Regional Safety: The European Union should take a firm stance against threats targeting Yemen's unity and territorial integrity. This includes condemning any attempts to undermine the country's unity and preventing further fragmentation.

For the Yemeni Government:

- 1- Activating Yemeni Diplomatic Efforts: The Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs, embassies, and consulates should proactively engage in diplomatic efforts to raise awareness of the Yemeni cause and the legitimacy of the government's efforts. This includes organizing diplomatic visits, meetings, and dialogues with European officials to garner support for the restoration of Yemen's statehood and efforts to end the Houthi rebellion.
- 2- Strengthening Official Aid Channels: The Yemeni government should officially address international actors, including the European Union and humanitarian organizations, to ensure that all aid is delivered under official supervision and channeled through Yemeni government agencies. This will enhance transparency, accountability, and the efficient distribution of aid to those in need.
- 3- Forming a Lobby in European Institutions: Yemen should work towards establishing a lobbying group in the European Parliament and other key institutions. This lobbying effort should focus on informing European policymakers about the Yemeni cause, the impact of the Houthi rebellion, and the importance of supporting Yemen's legitimate government in restoring stability and ending the coup.
- 4- Engaging with International and Media Organizations: Yemeni authorities should actively engage with international media organizations influential in Europe. This can be achieved by organizing media conferences, seminars, and interviews to share the Yemeni perspective and showcase the human rights violations committed by the Houthi rebels. Engaging with media outlets will help build public support

in Europe for the Yemeni cause and create awareness about the urgent need for international action.

- 5- Human Rights Documentation and Accountability: Yemen should work with international human rights organizations to document human rights violations and war crimes committed by all parties, including the Houthi rebels. This evidence can be used to hold perpetrators accountable and demonstrate the urgency of ending the coup and restoring stability in Yemen.
- 6- Engaging European Civil Society: Yemeni authorities should reach out to European civil society organizations, advocacy groups, and human rights activists to gain their support in raising awareness about the Yemeni cause. Collaborating with European NGOs and activists will help amplify Yemen's message and mobilize public support for the restoration of the state.
- 7- Emphasizing Yemeni Sovereignty and Independence: Yemeni authorities should emphasize the importance of Yemen's sovereignty and independence in all diplomatic engagements with European countries. By highlighting the need to work directly with the Yemeni government, independent of external tutelage, Yemen can assert its authority in shaping its own future and political decisions.
- 8- Providing Independent Assessments: The Yemeni government should commission independent assessments and reports on the situation in Yemen, including the impact of external interventions and deviations by other countries. These assessments can be shared with European countries to provide a more balanced and nuanced understanding of the crisis and underscore the need for direct engagement with the Yemeni government.
- 9- Engaging in Track II Diplomacy: Yemen should explore track II diplomacy initiatives, which involve unofficial channels of dialogue and negotiations with European stakeholders. These initiatives can create a space for open and candid discussions, enabling European actors to understand Yemen's perspectives and concerns directly from Yemeni representatives.
- 10- Showcasing Yemen's Potential as a Strategic Partner: Yemeni authorities should emphasize the country's potential as a strategic partner for European countries in areas like trade, counterterrorism, and regional stability. By showcasing the

benefits of a strong partnership with Yemen, European countries may be more inclined to engage directly with the Yemeni government.

11- Acknowledging European Concerns: Yemeni officials should acknowledge European concerns and perspectives regarding the conflict. Taking into account European sensitivities can lead to more constructive dialogue and foster a deeper understanding between Yemen and European partners.

12- Utilizing Diplomatic Envoys: Yemen should appoint diplomatic envoys to European countries, tasked with fostering diplomatic relations, understanding European interests and concerns, and advocating for Yemen's cause. These envoys can play a crucial role in bridging communication gaps and facilitating direct engagement with European governments.

13- Encouraging Yemeni Diaspora Engagement: Yemeni authorities should engage with the Yemeni diaspora in Europe and leverage their networks and influence to promote the Yemeni cause and garner support for the government's efforts to restore the state and end the Houthi rebellion.

Limitations And Biases

Sample Size:

The research conducted on Assessing the impact of the European Union's policies on the Yemeni crisis (2011-2022) has a limited sample size of only five participants. While the inclusion of two Yemeni government officials, two experts on Yemeni affairs, and a diplomat from the European Union mission provides a range of perspectives, the small number of participants limits the generalizability of the findings. The views expressed by these participants may not be representative of the broader range of stakeholders involved in the Yemeni Crisis.

Language Barrier:

The interviews conducted for this research were carried out in Arabic, as the participants did not have proficiency in English. Conducting interviews in a language other than the primary language of the research may introduce limitations in terms of accuracy and nuance of the responses. Translation and interpretation issues might arise,

potentially leading to miscommunications or misinterpretations of the participants' viewpoints.

Selection Bias:

The research participants were selected based on specific criteria, including their positions as Yemeni government officials, experts on Yemeni affairs, and a diplomat from the European Union mission. This selection may introduce a bias towards those individuals who have direct involvement or expertise in the subject matter. The exclusion of other key stakeholders, such as representatives from civil society organizations, non-governmental organizations, or individuals directly affected by the crisis, may limit the breadth and diversity of perspectives considered in the research.

Potential Bias of Diplomat's Interview:

One of the interviews conducted for this research was written in French, as the response from the diplomat of the European Union mission was provided in that language. This introduces a potential bias as the researcher may have relied on their own interpretation and translation of the response. The accuracy and nuances of the diplomat's viewpoints might be lost or altered during the translation process, leading to potential misrepresentations or misunderstandings.

Cultural and Contextual Biases:

The research focuses on the role of the European Union in the Yemeni Crisis, which implies a specific geopolitical context. The findings and interpretations of the research may be influenced by cultural, political, and historical biases associated with the region and the involved parties. It is essential to consider these biases when analyzing and generalizing the research findings, as they may affect the objectivity and neutrality of the research outcomes.

Time Frame:

The research covers the period from 2011 to 2022, which sets a specific timeframe for analyzing the role of the European Union in the Yemeni Crisis. This timeframe might omit important developments or changes that occurred before or after the specified period.

The research may not capture the full complexity and evolution of the crisis over time, potentially leading to incomplete or outdated conclusions.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the research, it is important to acknowledge these limitations and biases when interpreting and generalizing the findings. Researchers should aim for larger and more diverse sample sizes, utilize proficient translators, consider a broader range of perspectives, and account for cultural, contextual, and temporal biases when conducting similar studies in the future.



Addressing Limitations and Biases

In conducting this research on the role of the European Union in the Yemeni Crisis, several limitations and biases were identified. In this section, we discuss the steps taken to address these limitations and biases to ensure the rigor and validity of the study.

Firstly, the small sample size of five participants was acknowledged as a limitation. To mitigate this, efforts were made to select participants who represented diverse perspectives within the Yemeni government and experts on Yemeni affairs, and a Western diplomat in the EU mission to Yemen to learn about the European point of view. Before all that, we sought greater participation from Yemeni and European officials, but the development of events in Yemen made it difficult to communicate with Yemeni officials because of their departure to Saudi Arabia and their preoccupation with some talks. We also encountered a problem with the response of the concerned European authorities, as many requests for interviews were sent to ambassadors, heads of missions, and stakeholders in the following institutions (European Commission, European Parliament, and EEAS), and we only got one response.

The language barrier presented another challenge, as the interviews were conducted in Arabic due to the participants' lack of proficiency in English. To ensure accurate translations, we recorded the interviews to review them more than once to avoid misunderstanding, in addition to that the researcher is fluent in both Arabic and English, which facilitated the translation as he is familiar with the research and its details.

We recognize that the selection of participants, which included Yemeni government officials, experts on Yemeni affairs, and a diplomat from the European Union mission, may have introduced a selection bias. To address this, we made efforts to engage participants with diverse backgrounds and perspectives within these categories. However, it is important to acknowledge that the perspectives of civil society organizations were not included in this study. Future research should aim to incorporate a broader range of perspectives to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the topic.

Moreover, one of the interviews conducted with the diplomat from the European Union mission was written in French. To ensure accurate representation, we enlisted the support of a qualified translator fluent in both French and English. The translated response

was carefully reviewed and compared to the original French text to minimize any potential biases or misinterpretations during the translation process.

Lastly, we acknowledge the presence of cultural and contextual biases inherent in studying the Yemeni Crisis. To mitigate these biases, we adopted a reflexive stance throughout the research process. We engaged in self-reflection, critically examining our own assumptions and preconceived notions, and sought input from diverse sources to challenge our own perspectives. We consulted existing literature and engaged in discussions with experts in the field to gain multiple viewpoints and ensure a more balanced analysis.

By taking these measures, we aimed to address the limitations and biases identified in this research and enhance the validity and reliability of our findings. However, it is important to note that despite our efforts, some inherent limitations and biases may still persist. Acknowledging these limitations and biases is crucial for transparency and allows readers to evaluate the research findings more accurately.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix-1.

Assessing the impact of the European Union's policies on the Yemeni crisis (2011-2022).

Interview Questions:

- 1- Based on your understanding, what is the European Union's perspective on the root causes of the conflict in Yemen?
- 2- What are the EU's main interests in Yemen, and how do they influence the EU's response to the crisis?
- 3- What role has the European Union played in the Yemeni crisis, and what is the extent of its effectiveness?
- 4- How did the European Union's relations with the Gulf states affect their role in the Yemeni crisis?
- 5- Do you believe that the legacy of British colonialism in Yemen has influenced the European Union's attitude on the Yemeni crisis? And how so?
- 6- How did the various views of European Union member states on the Yemeni crisis impact the Union's overall position?
- 7- How can the European Union enhance its role in resolving the Yemeni crisis?

Appendix-2.

Assessing the impact of the European Union's policies on the Yemeni crisis (2011-2022).

Mr. Abdul Aziz Jubari

Vice President of the Yemeni House of Representatives - Secretary-General of the Justice and Construction Party.

PIQ1: بحسب إطلاعكم أستاذ، ما هو منظور الاتحاد الأوروبي لطبيعة الصراع في اليمن؟

PIA1 : أنا أعتقد أن لدى الإتحاد الأوروبي فهم كامل لما جرى ويجري في اليمن، لكن المصالح هي التي تغلب على العلاقات الدولية. الأوروبيون كان لهم دور قبل دخول الحوثيين العاصمة صنعاء وكانت لديهم علاقات مع كل الأطراف بما فيهم جماعة الحوثي، حتى أن السفير الفرنسي رتب لقاءات ما بين بعض القيادات اليمنية وجماعة الحوثي في تلك الفترة، السفير الفرنسي أيضا رتب للقاء جمع بعض القيادات الحوثية بالرئيس عبدربه منصور هادي قبل دخول الحوثيين العاصمة صنعاء وقد عرفت هذه المعلومة مؤخرا.

لقد كان لدى الاوروبيين علم ومعرفة بالمكونات اليمنية، وأنا أذكر أنني التقيتُ بسفيرة الاتحاد الأوروبي عدة مرات قبل دخول الحوثيين العاصمة صنعاء وكانت تستغرب أن جماعة الحوثي لا تعي مدى خطورة اقدامها على الانقلاب على الدولة.

لا يختلف فهم الأوروبيين مع ما يعرفه جميع اليمنيين عن طبيعة الوضع الذي كان قائما في اليمن قبل الانقلاب الحوثي.

Q1.1: هل ينظرون للأزمة اليمنية من منظور أن هناك انقلاب على الدولة وهناك حكومة شرعية؟

A1.1: بالتأكيد، لا زال موقفهم ثابت من ذلك. بريطانيا وفرنسا كاعضاء دائمين في مجلس الأمن ولهم حق الفيتو كانوا من ضمن من صوت على القرارات الدولية المتعلقة باليمن ومنها القرار 2216. السفير الفرنسي والسفير الألماني في أكثر من تصريح وأكثر من لقاء صحفي يؤكدون هذا الموقف. المملكة المتحدة تحاول أن تقوم بدور مغاير نوعا ما لدور الاتحاد الأوروبي.

يبدو أن هناك انسجام ما بين الموقف الأمريكي والموقف البريطاني في كثير من الملفات، ومنها الملف اليمني.

PIQ2: ما هي المصالح الرئيسية للاتحاد الأوروبي في اليمن ، وكيف تؤثر على استجابة الاتحاد الأوروبي تجاه الأزمة؟

P1A2: طبعا هناك مصالح. اليمن دولة مهمة جدا في المنطقة، واليمن تقع في منطقة جغرافية تطل على باب المندب وعلى البحر العربي، ولديها مصالح مشتركة سواء كانت مصالح سياسية أو مصالح في قضايا مثل محاربة الإرهاب، أو مصالح بحكم أن اليمن دولة ناشئة في مجال الديمقراطية وتتنبى هذا النظام السياسي. صحيح أنه ليس لدينا مصالح إقتصادية مثل دول الخليج أو مثل السعودية تحديداً. لكن أيضا لديهم مصالح في اليمن وبالتالي هم يدافعون عن مصالحهم .

Q2.1: هل يعتبر الأوروبيون الأزمة اليمنية كورقة ضغط في المفاوضات النووية بينهم وبين إيران؟

A2.1: معروف أن اليمن تقع على باب المندب، وهذا الممر المائي الهام الذي يمر من خلاله جزء كبير من احتياجات العالم من النفط، وأيضا ممر يربط دول كبيرة ودول مهمة، وهناك صراع للسيطرة على هذه الممرات والمنافذ، وإيران عندما مولت جماعة الحوثي ودعمتها منذ سنوات طويلة، كان الهدف من ذلك السيطرة على هذه الممرات، وأيضا السيطرة على جزء كبير من هذه الأراضي، والعمل على تمدد المشروع (مشروع ولاية الفقيه) في هذه المنطقة، والوصول حتى إلى المملكة العربية السعودية، والهدف هو مكة بحكم أنها مركز ديني للعالم الإسلامي . فالصراع موجود ما بين هذه الدول وما بين دول في الإقليم ودول في العالم. وللأسف الشديد العالم الآن ربما أنه يتعامل مع اليمن فقط من خلال السيطرة على هذه المنافذ، وهو لا يدرك أن اليمن منطقة حيوية، وفيها مخزون بشري كبير. لا نريد أن نخوف الناس من الإرهاب، لكن أيضا اذا ما دخلت اليمن إلى مرحلة أكثر فشلا مما هي عليه في الوقت الحاضر ستتحول إلى بؤرة لتنامي الجماعات المسلحة وبالتالي سيؤثر الإرهاب على كل بلاد العالم . إذا لم يلتفت العالم إلى هذه المنطقة ويعمل على مساعدة اليمنيين في "أن يحكموا أنفسهم بأنفسهم، وأن يكون هناك تنمية حقيقية، وأن يكون هناك قرار يماني مستقل، وأن يكون هناك عدم تدخل في شؤون هذه الدولة على الأقل -إذا لم تجد الرعاية من الدول العظمى ودول الجوار-"، فإنها ربما تكون سبباً في تصدير الكثير من المشاكل اليهم. البعض يعتبر أننا عندما نتحدث عن الإرهاب أننا نخوف العالم مما سيحدث في اليمن، لكن هذه هي الحقيقة، وهذا هو الواقع الذي نعيشه.

P1Q3: كيف أثرت علاقات الاتحاد الأوروبي مع دول الخليج على دوره في الأزمة اليمنية؟

P1A3: الاتحاد الأوروبي وحتى الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية لديهم وجهة نظر حول سياسة السعودية والإمارات في اليمن، لكن حسب تقديري وحسب لقاءاتنا بعدد من المسؤولين الأمريكيين، سواء الدبلوماسيين أو صانعي القرار في الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية بما فيهم أعضاء الكونجرس ومسؤولين كبار في الخارجية الأمريكية، يتضح أن لديهم مصالح كبيرة مع السعودية والإمارات، وهم في كثير من الأوقات يتعاضوا عن بعض السياسات الخاطئة لدول التحالف في اليمن. وتعرف أن هذه الدول الكبرى ترى مصلحتها أولاً، ومصلحتها تتمثل مع هذه الدول، لكن التغاضي عن مثل هذه الأخطاء سيقودنا إلى فشل مثل ما حصل ويحصل. ما يحدث من ممارسات في اليمن أوصلنا إلى جزء كبير من الفشل. والفشل هذا تتحمله حالياً دول التحالف، ومستقبلاً سيكون نتائجه عكسية عليهم أيضا.

P1Q4: هل تعتقد أن إرث الاستعمار البريطاني في اليمن قد أثر على موقف الاتحاد الأوروبي من الأزمة اليمنية؟ وكيف؟

P1A4: البريطانيون بحكم أنهم احتلوا عدن لفترة زمنية طويلة، يعتبروا أن لديهم الخبرة والمعرفة بالعلاقة مع اليمنيين، والكلام هذا تغير كثيراً، لكن يبدو أن الأوروبيين مقتنعين بدور البريطانيين. بريطانيا دولة عظمى تاريخياً، وحضارة وسياسة ليست وليدة اللحظة، وهذا معروف عن بريطانيا، ولذا تجددهم أكثر دهاء من غيرهم. لكن تظل مصلحة بلادهم فوق كل اعتبار، بمعنى أنهم يعملون وعندما تتعارض مصالحهم مع وجهات النظر الأخرى، فإنهم يُغلبون مصالح بلادهم على مصالح الدول الصغيرة الأقل أهمية.

Q4.1: إنني أستخدم نظرية ما بعد الاستعمار كمرجعية للبحث، وأحقق في فكرة "النظرة الاستعمارية"، نظرة الاستعلاء والدونية، التي ينظر بها الأوروبيون إلى دول الشرق الأوسط وبعض الدول النامية، وهل لا زالت تلك النظرة قائمة إلى الوقت الحالي في اليمن على سبيل المثال؟

A4.1: الحقيقة وبكل صراحة عندما نتحدث عن "النظرة الدونية"، فإن هذه المناطق ورجال السياسة في هذه الدول قد أثبتوا فشلهم الذريع. عندما نتحدث عن الاستعمار، وعن أنهم يتدخلون في شؤوننا وما إلى ذلك، يجب أن نقرأ الواقع، منذ استقلال بعض تلك الدول إلى الآن ونحن ننتقل من فشل إلى فشل وبالتالي نتحدث عن مؤامرات، وأنا أخي الكريم لا أؤمن بنظرية المؤامرات "المؤامرات الخارجية". بمعنى آخر، لو كان هناك دول مستقرة، ولم يكن هناك أطماع للبقاء في السلطة، وكان هناك حكم رشيد، لا أعتقد أننا كنا سنصل إلى مثل هذه المرحلة في المنطقة العربية والإسلامية بشكل عام.

P1Q5: كيف أثرت وجهات النظر المختلفة للدول الأعضاء في الاتحاد الأوروبي بشأن الأزمة اليمنية على الموقف العام للاتحاد؟

P1A5: التحالف (التحالف العربي بقيادة السعودية) من الأساس لم يكن لديه الرغبة لحسم المعركة عسكرياً، وبالتالي حتى قضية التسليح في تقديري بحكم أنني مطلع فإن التحالف قد فشل في الجانب العسكري وفي الجانب السياسي أيضاً. في الجانب العسكري هو -أي التحالف- يريد أن يُخضع الجميع ويُضعف الجميع، لا يريد حسم عسكري لأي جهة، يريد أن تظل الأمور كما هي عليه، وبالتالي العالم عندما رأى التخبط في بعض الأوقات في العمل العسكري، والاستهداف للمدنيين، واستهداف التحالف للمنشآت البسيطة الموجودة في اليمن، وضربه لها بدون مبرر، بدأ العالم يتحرك، وبدأ العالم يضغط على هذه الدول، وبدأ يتعامل على أساس أنه يوقف بيع بعض الصفقات، لكن في نهاية المطاف لا زالت تلك الصفقات قائمة. في تقديري أن كل دولة من هذه الدول ترى أي مشكلة في العالم بما فيها المشكلة اليمنية من وجهة نظرها وفيما يحقق مصلحتها أولاً. العالم ليس مثالياً بحسب فهمنا، لديهم مصالح، وكثير من هذه المصالح اقتصادية ليست موجودة لدينا وإنما لدى غيرنا.

Q5.1: هل تعتبرون صفقات السلاح التي تورد للتحالف في إطار المصالح الاقتصادية للاتحاد الأوروبي؟

A5.1 : بالتأكيد. بالتأكيد.

P1Q6: كيف يمكن للاتحاد الأوروبي تعزيز دوره في حل الأزمة اليمنية؟

P1A6: التمسك بالقرارات الدولية، وإحترام سيادة الدول، وعدم الرضوخ لمزاج بعض القادة في المنطقة، "القادة المراهقين" الذين يريدون تجزئة وتقسيم اليمن، وأن يكون لهم مواقف أقوى كموافقهم في دول أخرى. نحن نرى موقف الاتحاد الأوروبي من الاعتداء على أوكرانيا، وتوحد الدول الأوروبية في مواجهة روسيا، والوقوف إلى جانب أوكرانيا عسكريا وماديا واقتصاديا، واعتبارها القضية الأولى بالنسبة لهم، بينما في ملفات أخرى لا نجد هذا الحماس، ولا هذه القيم والمبادئ التي يتحدثون عنها. في بعض الدول ومنها بلادنا نرى أن هناك نوع من المجاملة على حساب مصلحة الشعب اليمني .

ما نراه الآن هو عبث تمارسه الإمارات العربية المتحدة والمملكة السعودية في بلادنا، بينما العالم - بما فيهم دول الاتحاد الأوروبي- يشاهد فقط. أين العالم مما يحدث في بلادنا؟ لماذا كل هذا السكوت؟ لماذا عندما تحصل أية مشكلة في العالم تجدهم يتدخلون بشكل كبير جداً، بينما في بعض المناطق ومنها بلادنا تجدهم ينحازون إلى مصالحهم الإقتصادية وعلاقتهم الدولية على حساب المبادئ والقيم التي لطالما تغنوا بها، والتي لطالما يتفاخرون بأنهم أصحاب قيم ومواقف ثابتة تجاه مثل هذه القضايا.

Q6.1 : هل نفهم أنكم في القيادة السياسية اليمنية إلى جانب رغبتكم في أن يمارس الاتحاد الأوروبي دور على المستوى السياسي في تنفيذ القرارات الدولية، لديكم أمل ورغبة في دعم عسكري أوروبي للحكومة الشرعية لمواجهة الانقلاب الحوثي؟

A6.1: أعتقد أن الفترة الحالية هي فترة البحث عن السلام، والحديث عن الحرب الآن لا كواقع ولا كهدف حسم عسكري لا يزال موجود حالياً. الهدف هو الوصول إلى سلام، ونحن منذ البدايات ونحن نتحدث أن الحرب ليست هدفاً بذاتها، الناس أُجبروا على الدفاع عن بلادهم والدفاع عن مؤسساتهم، ولم يكن الهدف الذهاب الى الحرب. لكنني أرى أن المفترض بهذه الدول أن تضغط من أجل السلام في اليمن، السلام الذي يعيد مؤسسات الدولة، السلام الذي يحافظ على اليمن موحداً، كما تتحدث القرارات الدولية ومبادئ الأمم المتحدة .

ما نراه الآن من سكوت على ما يجري، لا نريد أن نقول بأن هناك رضى دولي، ولكن أيضا هناك نوع من المداهنة، السكوت والمداهنة على حساب مصالح الشعب اليمني.

Appendix-3.

Assessing the impact of the European Union's policies on the Yemeni crisis (2011-2022).

Mr. Yasser Al-Ra'ini

Former Minister of State for the Implementation of the Outcomes of the Yemeni National Dialogue - Deputy Secretary-General of the National Dialogue.

P2Q1: بحسب إطلاعك، ما هو منظور الاتحاد الأوروبي لطبيعة الصراع في اليمن؟

P2A1: بشكل عام موقف الاتحاد الأوروبي دائماً من القضية اليمنية هو موقف إيجابي. كان لدينا في فترات معينة مشكلة مع الألمان في بعض تحركاتهم، حيث تشعر أن مواقفهم بشكل أو بآخر تميل للحوثيين في بعض القضايا، على اعتبار أن السلطة الشرعية ضعيفة، ونتيجة تدخل السعودية وما إلى ذلك، لكن مؤخراً ومع ما يحصل في أوكرانيا والصراع الروسي الأوكراني الأوروبي، ونتيجة لاستخدام الروس للطيران المسير الإيراني، بدأ الموقف الأوروبي يتغير على نحو أفضل فيما يتعلق بالحوثي بشكل عام، أضف إلى ذلك زيارة رئيس مجلس القيادة الرئاسي د.رشاد العليمي لألمانيا حيث كانت جيدة أيضاً. بشكل عام موقف الاتحاد الأوروبي في إطار الموقف الدولي فيما يتعلق بدعم وحدة اليمن وأمنه واستقراره ودعم السلطة الشرعية. في فترة ٢٠١٤ سفيرة الاتحاد الأوروبي كانت تُجري زيارات وعلاقات جيدة مع الحوثيين وبعدها أنتوني أيضاً مضت على نفس السياق. كان لدي أيضاً علاقات جيدة مع السفارة.

موقفهم من القضية اليمنية بأن الحوثيين انقلبوا على السلطة الشرعية، وهو نفس الموقف الذي يوضحه القرار ٢٢١٦ (مضمون الموقف الدولي). لكن في النقاشات والحديث، هم ينتقدون أداء السلطة الشرعية، يتحدثون عن تدخل السعودية، بمعنى أن وجود السعودية كداعم للشرعية جعل سرديّة الصراع خلف سرديّة الصراع لدى الشارع الغربي، فأصبحوا يرون أن المملكة السعودية "الدولة الغنية التي تمتلك السلاح" تصارع اليمن، وتستخدم أسلحتها في اليمن. ونتيجة لضعف أداء السلطة الشرعية على مستوى وزارة الخارجية، وضعف الدبلوماسية اليمنية في إيضاح السردية الحقيقية للصراع في اليمن. السياق العام للموقف الأوروبي تجاه الأزمة اليمنية هو مع وحدة اليمن وأمنه واستقراره، ومع أنه يجب أن ينتهي الانقلاب، وأن يعود الجميع إلى المسار الأساسي الذي بدأ. ما زال التوصيف عند المجتمع الدولي بأن الصراع هو بين الحوثيين كطرف انقلب على السلطة الشرعية، وبين السلطة الشرعية ممثلة بالحكومة اليمنية، وربما أنتم تابعتم قبل يومين تواجد مجموعة سفراء دول الاتحاد الأوروبي في عدن، وهذا التواجد بحسب علمي، الهدف منه هو دعم وتعزيز السلطة الشرعية.

P2Q2: ما هو الدور الذي لعبه الاتحاد الأوروبي في الأزمة اليمنية؟ وما مدى فعاليته؟

P2A2: موقف الاتحاد الأوروبي هو قريب من الموقف الأمريكي، وتستطيع أن تقول أنه تابع له، لكن أحياناً يتبادلون الأدوار في التقارب مع أطراف الصراع بما فيهم الحوثي. مرات كثيرة طالبنا بتصنيف الحوثيين كجماعة إرهابية ولكن لم نجد استجابة. الزيارات المتبادلة لبعض العناصر الحوثية إلى ألمانيا، وزيرة خارجية النمسا تذكرون أنه في فترة من الفترات كانت علاقتها مع محمد عبدالسلام جيدة، أيضاً البريطانيون يحاولون أن يمسكوا بالعصا من الوسط، لديهم منطق يقول بأنه "لا تجعلوا الحوثي في زاوية، حاولوا أن تقرّبوه"، لكن هذه النظرية خاطئة بالنسبة للتعامل مع الحوثي. هذا الذي حصل في ٢٠١٤، كان السفير البريطاني في حينها يروج لفكرة تقريب الحوثي ولو حتى بالسلاح إلى أن حصلت الكارثة.

بشكل عام سياستهم العامة هي مع اليمن ووحدة اليمن واستقراره، ولكن هناك بعض التصرفات سواء من السفراء أو غيرهم تقول دعونا نقرب الحوثي أيضاً. الضغط على الشرعية أحياناً يكون أكبر للتنازل، وهذه واحدة من المشكلات التي نواجهها، حيث يقولون (انتم سلطة شرعية وانتم معنيين، بينما الآخرين ميليشيات، وكيف لنا أن نضغط على الميليشيات؟) طيب: في النهاية عندما تمارسون الضغط على السلطة الشرعية، ولا تمارسونه على الميليشيات، أنتم بذلك تقدمون تنازلاً لصالح الميليشيات وتحولونها إلى سلطة أمر واقع. والتصريحات الأخيرة للسفير البريطاني غير جيدة فيما يتعلق بالقرار ٢٢١٦ والعقوبات، يقول بأنه "إذا كانت العقوبات ستعيق عملية السلام، فلا مانع لدينا من تغييرها". وأنا اعتقد ان هذا لن يعيق عملية السلام فقط، بل سيجعل الحوثي مستقبلاً يتمادى في العنف أكثر. الحوثي يرواغ الآن، الحوثي يطلب أن تلغى عنه العقوبات على أساس السلام وما الى ذلك، ولكن لا أعتقد أن الحوثي سيخضع للسلام.

P2Q3: ما هي المصالح الرئيسية للاتحاد الأوروبي في اليمن، وكيف تؤثر على استجابة الاتحاد الأوروبي تجاه الأزمة؟

P2A3: فيما يتعلق بمسألة مكافحة الإرهاب، هذا موقف امريكي اوروبي كامل، ونحن في السلطة الشرعية شريك لهم في ذلك. بل إننا نؤمن بأن الحوثي عمل على دعم الإرهاب، ودعم الجماعات الإرهابية، ولدى الحكومة الشرعية معلومات أشار إليها د. رشاد العليمي في إحدى مقابلاته، ويمكنك الرجوع لها، بأن الحوثي أطلق بعض عناصر القاعدة من السجون في صنعاء، ووجهوا تلك العناصر ضد الشرعية، وقد قُتل على الشرعية ضباط نتيجة لذلك، تحدث عن هذه الامور د.رشاد بشكل صريح وواضح في بعض مقابلاته، هذا أولاً. ثانياً: اكيد أن الفرنسيين فيما يتعلق بتوتال لديهم مصالح، البريطانيون أيضاً ما زال لديهم بعض العلاقات، الممر الدولي فيما يتعلق بمسألة البحر الأحمر. الاتحاد الأوروبي لديه مصالح في اليمن من ناحية تصدير النفط والغاز، والنقطة الأخرى تتمثل في الممر المائي.

Q3.1: هل يعتبر الأوروبيون اليمن كأحد المصادر البديلة للطاقة في ظل الحرب الروسية الأوكرانية؟

A3.1: ليس بهذا الشكل في الحقيقة. صحيح انهم حاولوا خلال الفترة الماضية تشغيل بلحاف، لكنهم يتحدثون عن تهديدات أمنية. وقناعتي أنها ليست بذلك الشكل، وهم ينتظرون استقرار الوضع وكيف سيكون. انتاجنا من النفط والغاز ليس بالشيء الكثير.

Q3.2: ما رأيكم في القول بأن الأوروبيون والایرانیون يتعاملون مع الملف اليمني كورقة ضغط فيما بينهم فيما يتعلق بمفاوضات الملف النووي الإيراني؟

A3.2: أوروبا لديها علاقات جيدة مع الإيرانيين، وخصوصاً الألمان، لديهم مصالح اقتصادية كبيرة، وكما ذكرت لك هذا جزء من المشكلة فيما يتعلق بموقف الاتحاد الأوروبي أحياناً والذي يظهر متعاطفاً مع الحوثي.

P2Q4: كيف أثرت علاقات الاتحاد الأوروبي مع دول الخليج على دوره في الأزمة اليمنية؟

P2A4: ساقولها بشكل واضح: لن يأتي أحد ويقدم مصالحه في اليمن على مصالحه في الخليج. لا الأوروبيون ولا غيرهم. في أحد لقاءاتي مع أحد سفراء الاتحاد الأوروبي، قلت له انتم في الاتحاد الأوروبي كأنكم صامتون عن التحركات والمحاادثات السعودية الحوثية في عمان، انتم لا تعرفون عنها شيء، والمبعوث الأممي لا يعرف شيء أيضاً، ورد علي بقوله: سأكون صريحاً معك " نحن نقدر أن السعودية هي من تصلها الصواريخ والطيران المسير، ولذا هم اصدقائنا ومن الطبيعي أن نقدم لهم العون".

المحاادثات الأخيرة التي تديرها مسقط بين السعوديين والحوثيين لا يعرف عنها الاتحاد الأوروبي ولا الامريكان ولا المبعوث الأممي شيء، وهم في انتظار ما سينتج عن هذه المحادثات. أكثر ما يتحدثون عنه الان هو الملف الإنساني والقضايا الإنسانية، لكن الملف السياسي بالنسبة للحالة اليمنية هو ملف سعودي.

للاسف الشديد الدور الأوروبي فيما يتعلق بالملف السياسي هو دور ضاغط على السلطة الشرعية فقط، إما بشكل مباشر أو عن طريق التحالف في اتجاه تقديم تنازلات، وهو ما حصل في بعض الاتفاقيات مثل اتفاق الكويت واتفاق استوكهولم. اتفاق استوكهولم فيما يتعلق بالحديدة يعتبر اتفاق سيء، صحيح أن الشرعية والحوثي وافقوا عليه، لكن من نفذ مخرجات الاتفاق هي الحكومة الشرعية فقط، بينما لم ينفذ الحوثي منها شيء، ولم نسمع إدانة لذلك. الممارسات والجرائم التي يمارسها الحوثيون، لا نسمع إدانات صريحة وواضحة لها. تعنت الحوثي عندما ذهب الوفد إلى جنيف في آخر فترة مارتن جريفيت، تخلف الحوثيون عن حضور المشاورات، ومع ذلك لم نجد إدانة ولا ضغوطات حقيقية لتصرف الحوثي، لا من الاتحاد الأوروبي ولا من الآخرين. بمعنى أنه لا توجد ضغوط وإدانات حقيقية ضد الحوثيين. الجرائم التي يمارسها الحوثيون في حق اليمنيين لم نسمع لها إدانات، بينما المفترض أن مثل هذه الجرائم تعد من جرائم الإرهاب، ولم نجد تصنيف الحوثيين ضمن قوائم الإرهاب. صحيح أنها سياسة داعمة للشرعية وللسعودية في الموقف العام، ولكنها أيضاً لا تقوم بالدور الكامل الذي يجب عليها فيما يتعلق بالحوثي وإدانة جرائمه وانتهاكاته.

على سبيل المثال القرار ٢٢١٦ ، لماذا الحوثي لم ينفذ منه شي حتى الآن؟ ما دور المجتمع الدولي كضامن؟ المفترض أن يسند الشرعية في استعادة الدولة تحقيقاً للضمانات التي يقدمونها، ونحن في الحقيقة لا نعول على ذلك. كيميئين: المجتمع الدولي وخصوصاً الأوروبيين لديهم مصالح مترابطة. وكأن الأوربيون يقولون في النهاية لو كان الحوثي هو من سيطر على البلد فلماذا نعاديه؟! فهم دائماً وخاصة البريطانيون يمسون العصا من الوسط. حينما تنظر إلى مواقف السفير الفرنسي مؤخراً، تجد أن مواقفه جيدة، وهذا ربما يفسر سعيهم إلى تشغيل توتال، وهذا ما يؤكد أن بعض المواقف ترتبط بالمصالح، سواء مصالحهم في اليمن أو مصالحهم مع الدول التي لها مصالح في اليمن (السعودية والإمارات على سبيل المثال).

وفي تعليق أياسر الرعيني على مشاركة الاتحاد الأوروبي في رعاية مؤتمر الحوار الوطني قال: الاتحاد الأوروبي كان ضمن الدول العشر الراحية للمبادرة الخليجية ومؤتمر الحوار الوطني الشامل، هذا الدور ليس مقتصرًا على الاتحاد الأوروبي فقط، وإنما هو شأن دولي، حتى تركيا على سبيل المثال كانت إحدى الدول العشر الداعمة لمؤتمر الحوار وهي أيضاً إحدى الدول التسعة عشر الداعمة للمسار السياسي اليمني اليوم.

P2Q5: هل تعتقد أن إرث الاستعمار البريطاني في اليمن قد أثر على موقف الاتحاد الأوروبي من الأزمة اليمنية؟ وكيف؟

P2A5: البريطانيون على وجه الخصوص هم قلم اليمن في مجلس اليمن، وهذه لغة استعمارية، حيث أن الدول التي كانت تستعمر بعض البلدان لا زالت هي من تمسك القلم عنها في مجلس الأمن على اعتبار أنها أكثر خبرة. وكما ذكرت لك بأن موقفهم – أي البريطانيون- مرتبط بالموقف الأمريكي بدرجة رئيسية. صحيح أن البريطانيون يتحدثون أن لديهم علاقات جيدة سواء مع المجلس الانتقالي أو مختلف الأطراف اليمنية، لكن هناك دورين لم نشهدهم من الاتحاد الأوروبي، الأول: هو أن المفترض إدانة الحوثي والضغط عليه بشكل أكبر فيما يتعلق بإنهاء انقلابه والانخراط في عملية سلام حقيقية. والثاني: يتمثل في مواقفهم غير الصريحة من إنشاء الميليشيات والتشكيلات العسكرية خارج إطار السلطة الشرعية.

P2Q6: كيف أثرت وجهات النظر المختلفة للدول الأعضاء في الاتحاد الأوروبي بشأن الأزمة اليمنية على الموقف العام للاتحاد؟

P2A6: دول الاتحاد الأوروبي بشكل عام لديها علاقات جيدة مع السعوديين، وإلى اليوم لا يزالون يبيعون لهم السلاح. مواقف الضغط التي تمارس بين الحين والآخر سواء باسم القضايا الإنسانية أو غيرها تتغير وفقاً للمصلحة. الألمان كما ذكرت لك منذ بداية الأزمة إلى قبل سنة من الآن كان موقفهم أكثر تعاطفاً مع الحوثيين. لكن كل هذه المواقف لا تزال داعمة لليمن، وداعمة للحكومة، ولكنها باتجاه الحوثي ليست بالشكل المطلوب.

P2Q7: كيف يمكن للاتحاد الأوروبي تعزيز دوره في حل الأزمة اليمنية؟

P2A7: اعتقد أن جزء كبير من دول الاتحاد الأوروبي لديها علاقات جيدة مع الإيرانيين، وبالامكان أن يستخدموا مثل هذه العلاقات في الضغط على الحوثيين للانخراط بشكل إيجابي في إطار السلام، وتنفيذ القرار ٢٢١٦ وبقية القرارات الأممية. أيضا يمكنهم تعزيز ودعم سلطات الشرعية اليمنية في مواجهة أي قوة أو ميليشيات تتشكل خارج إطار الدولة، سواء تلك المدعومة من إيران أو من الإمارات العربية المتحدة. لماذا نتحدث عن هذا؟ صحيح أن ما يقوم به الانتقالي لا يمكن أن يغير الواقع، ولكنه يزيد من معاناة اليمنيين، ويزيد من حدة الصراع، ويعوق ويشتت جهود الشرعية.

القضايا الإنسانية التي يتحدث عنها الاتحاد الأوروبي جيدة، ولكن ما لم نعالج اسباب هذه القضايا الإنسانية فإنها ستظل في زيادة وتفاقم. نحن نتحدث سنويا عن زيادة في الحالات الإنسانية، زيادة في المعاناة، مالم نقضي على أسباب هذه المعاناة المتمثلة بانقلاب الحوثي وتمرد الانتقالي المدعوم من الإمارات، مالم تمارس الجهود لتجسيم هذه الميليشيات فإن المعاناة ستستمر في اليمن.

Appendix-4.

Assessing the impact of the European Union's policies on the Yemeni crisis (2011-2022).

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P3Q1: بحسب إطلاعك، ما هو منظور الاتحاد الأوروبي لطبيعة الصراع في اليمن؟

P3A1: من خلال متابعتي أرى أنه حدث تطور في موقف الاتحاد الأوروبي. في البداية كان الاتحاد الأوروبي ينظر إلى الصراع في اليمن على أنه بين أقلية من المجتمع اليمني وبين أكثرية تهضم هذه الأقلية، ولذلك الاتحاد الأوروبي إلى وقت قريب كان ينظر إلى الحوثيون على أنهم أقلية مهضومة، وكان أثناء اللقاءات مع المسؤولين اليمنيين يثير هذا الموضوع على نحو كبير، بمعنى أنها أقلية لها حقوق ثقافية، لها حقوق سياسية، وربما أيضا اقتصادية كانت مهضومة، هكذا كانت وجهة نظر الاتحاد الأوروبي. تقريبا تلك الرؤية كانت قبل انقلاب الحوثيين في ٢١ سبتمبر ٢٠١٤، واستمرت فترة بعد ذلك، لكن مع التطورات التي شهدتها الحرب، حدث تحول من وجهة نظري في هذا الموقف. في البداية كان الاتحاد الأوروبي يسלט الأضواء على التدخل السعودي، وكان ينظر بعينين متكافئتين إلى كل من انقلاب الحوثيين والتدخل العسكري السعودي، على أنهما أمرين متوازيين ومثيرين للاضطراب والقلق داخل اليمن وفي المنطقة، خاصة ما ينتج عن الحرب من تداعيات إنسانية. لكن منذ نهاية 2022 تقريبا وحتى الآن حدث تحول في الموقف الأوروبي من إجمال التحول الذي حدث في الموقف الدولي بشكل عام، على أن الحوثيين بدأوا يهاجمون الأراضي السعودية على نحو كبير، وأيضا الهجوم على محافظة مأرب، وتعنت الحوثيون في عدم القبول بأي تسوية. مبادرة سعودية قُدمت تقريبا في نهاية 2022، مبادرات أيضا من أكثر من طرف كان الحوثيون لا يتجاوبون معها على نحو كافٍ. هذا التحول في الموقف الأوروبي حمل الحوثيين تبعات الحرب أكثر مما حمل السعودية أو الأطراف الوطنية اليمنية الأخرى. كانت مواقف بعض دول الاتحاد الأوروبي متقدمة، خاصة فرنسا. السفير الفرنسي غالبا هو أكثر السفراء الأوروبيين نقداً لعدم تجاوب الحوثيين، السفير البريطاني من وقت إلى آخر يوجه انتقادات للحوثيين في عدم تجاوبهم مع مبادرات التسوية، بمعنى لا يمكن أن نقول أن الموقف الأوروبي ظل ثابتا منذ بداية الأزمة حتى الآن. هذا الموقف تغير وتطور بفعل التحول والتغير في مواقف الأطراف المشاركة في الصراع.

دول الاتحاد الأوروبي هي من الدول التي صوتت للقرار 2216، لكنها باتت اليوم مقتنعة إلى نحو كبير، وخاصة السفير البريطاني حين يصرح من وقت لآخر بأن هذا القرار (2216) لم يعد واقعياً، وأن ميزان القوة - من الناحية العملية - أصبح ثابتا للحوثيين، وأنه ينبغي الاعتراف بهذه الحقيقة، وبأن الشروط والمطالب التي وضعها هذا القرار في أن يُسلم الحوثيين مؤسسات الدولة، ويسلمون السلاح، من وجهة نظر عدد كبير من دول الاتحاد الأوروبي لم تعد واقعية، حيث يرون بأنه من الضروري أن يكون هناك تسوية سياسية، ليس بناء على هذا القرار، وإنما بناءً على موازين القوة في

الواقع. مطالب تسليم السلاح والخروج من المدن والخروج من مؤسسات الدولة لم تعد ذات حيوية بالنسبة لسفراء دول الاتحاد الأوروبي.

P3Q2: ما هي المصالح الرئيسية للاتحاد الأوروبي في اليمن، وكيف تؤثر على استجابة الاتحاد الأوروبي تجاه الأزمة؟

P3A2: مصالح الاتحاد الأوروبي تندرج في إطار المصالح الدولية، وهي تعتمد على ركيزتي الأمن والاقتصاد، وهما ركيزتين متداخلتين، بمعنى أنه قُرب اليمن من مناطق انتاج النفط بشكل كثيف في دول الخليج وخاصة السعودية، وبشكل أكبر قريبا أو اشرفها أو إطلالها على الممرات الدولية التي تغذي أوروبا والغرب بمصادر الطاقة خاصة النفط والغاز، هذين الأمرين وإمكانية تأثر هذين المقومين بالصراع في اليمن هو الذي يحدد المحددات الرئيسية لموقف الاتحاد الأوروبي من الصراع في اليمن. الأمن بدرجة أساسية، ويدخل في الأمن تأثير مصادر الطاقة، وأيضا محاربة القاعدة والجماعات التي تتبنى العنف. في كثير من الأحيان وخلافاً للموقف الأمريكي هناك بُعد إنساني يؤثر على الموقف الأوروبي.

إذاً الأمن والاقتصاد، وخاصة تأثيره على مصادر الطاقة، أيضاً لا ننكر أن هناك بُعد إنساني يؤثر في تحديد موقف الاتحاد الأوروبي خاصة فيما نتج عن الحرب من مآسي إنسانية مروعة، هذه الثلاثة الأركان في تقديري هي التي تحدد أو تساهم في تحديد موقف الاتحاد الأوروبي بمكوناته. الاتحاد الأوروبي ليس مثل الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية كيان واحد. الاتحاد الأوروبي هو عدد من الدول التي تحاول تنسيق سياساتها الخارجية. لكن داخل الاتحاد الأوروبي هناك مكونات ك البرلمان الأوروبي لديه مساحة واسعة، وغالبا ما يهتم بالجوانب الإنسانية، وصوته يكون أكثر حدة تجاه السعودية وتجاه الأطراف اليمينية، لكن المفوضية الأوروبية غالبا تلتزم بما يتم التوافق عليه بين الدول الأوروبية من سياسات تجاه اليمن.

Q2.1 : أنت ذكرت المصالح المتعلقة بالجانب الأمني والاقتصادي، وركزت في الاقتصادية على مصالحهم مع دول الخليج، هل لدى الإتحاد الأوروبي مصالح اقتصادية ذات اعتبار في اليمن؟

A2.1 : المصالح العالمية كلها في اليمن هي مصالح محدودة، بحكم أن اليمن لا تمتلك موارد غازية ولا نفطية كبيرة، مواردها النفطية والغازية محدودة للغاية، ولذلك هذه المصالح لا تمثل ثقل، ولا تكون ذات تأثير على قرارات وسياسات الاتحاد الأوروبي باستثناءات بسيطة، فمثلاً الموقف المتقدم للسفير الفرنسي يفسره البعض بأنه يهدف الى تشغيل شركة توتال المشغلة لميناء بلحاف والمصدرة للغاز، حيث أنها تعتبر من أكبر الشركات تأثراً بالصراع والحرب في اليمن، ولذلك يمكن أن تكون خلف الموقف المتقدم للسفير الفرنسي في نقده للحوثيين بشكل كبير. لكن باستثناء ماسبق، موارد اليمن هي موارد محدودة. لكن العالم أيضا يخاف من القاعدة ومن أخواتها في اليمن، في 2009 و2010 معظم التطورات التي حدثت، ووصول طرود ملغمة إلى أوروبا وبريطانيا، ومحاولة تفجير السفارة، معظم ما كان يؤثر على مصالح الدول الأوروبية في المنطقة من خلال ضرب البوارج، كالبارجة الفرنسية في بحر العرب أو البارجة الأمريكية

في خليج عدن، أو حتى الوصول إلى عُقق أوروبا والمدن الأمريكية، كانت المؤسسات الأمريكية تجد أن من يقوم بذلك بطريقة أو بأخرى له علاقة باليمن، إما أنه يأخذ تسهيلات من اليمن نتيجة ترهل نظامها السياسي وضعفه، أو أنه كان يتم التخطيط والتنفيذ من قبل تنظيم القاعدة في اليمن.

Q2.2 : هل يمكن القول بأن الملف اليمني تم استخدامه كورقة ضغط في المفاوضات بين الأوروبيين وإيران في الملف النووي الإيراني، وأنه تم التعامل معه على أنه جزء من المصالح الأوروبية من الأزمة اليمنية؟

A2.2: في تصوري دورها محدود. الملف اليمني وحضور الإيرانيين ليس بالحضور الكثيف كما هو الحضور في سوريا ولبنان، وكما هو بدرجة أقل في فلسطين. الحوثيين ليسوا على علاقة ارتباط وتماهي كامل مع الإيرانيين، لديهم نزعة للاستقلال إلى حد كبير، الحوثيين جماعة محلية تسعى لإعادة إحياء الحكم الإمامي التاريخي في اليمن، وإن كانت تستعين بإيران في هذه المرحلة. تأثير الإيرانيين على سلوك الحوثيين محدود وضعيف للغاية، والدليل أنه مع إعادة العلاقات بين السعودية وإيران كنا نتوقع أن يحدث انفراجة في الملف اليمني، ولكن إلى الآن ما يزال الحوثيين يتعنتون، لأنه لديهم نزعة عالية للاستقلال، وبالتالي حجم تأثير إيران فيهم محدود، وهذا يُضعف الاهتمام الأوروبي بالملف اليمني من هذه الزاوية تحديداً.

P3Q3: كيف أثرت علاقات الاتحاد الأوروبي مع دول الخليج على دوره في الأزمة اليمنية؟

P3A3: ليس الأوروبيون وإنما معظم القوى في العالم تنتظر للملف اليمني من منظور سعودي بحت. من الثمانينات وحتى وقت قريب في بداية التسعينات، كان الأمريكيين يتعاملون مع الملف اليمني من خلال سفارتهم في الرياض، وليس سفارتهم في اليمن. المجتمع الدولي ينظر إلى اليمن أنها منطقة نفوذ خالصة للسعودية، وبالتالي يعطيها مساحة كبيرة. النفوذ السعودي على المستوى العالمي أيضا يؤثر، السعودية لديها قدرات مالية هائلة، لها مكانة إقليمية متقدمة في المنطقة العربية وفي العالم الإسلامي، خاصة من بعد 2011 نتيجة تراجع القوى الإقليمية الأخرى ك مصر وسوريا والجزائر الخ. كلما زادت قوة ونفوذ السعودية إقليمياً، إضافة إلى قدراتها المالية المهولة عالمياً، هذا يجعل لها سطوة ونفوذ داخل الدول الأوروبية ذاتها. الحكومات الأوروبية بدقة غالباً ما تعمل اعتبار للموقف السعودي، وتحاول أن تُجنب صفقات السلاح من التأثير بالمواقف تجاه الأزمة اليمنية. وبالتالي تقل السعودية بدرجة أساسية، وأيضا دول الخليج بدرجة ثانية، ونفوذها الاقتصادي يجعل صانع القرار في الاتحاد الأوروبي وأيضا صانع القرار في الدول الأوروبية بشكل منفرد، يفكر ملياً قبل اتخاذ أي موقف تجاه اليمن. هناك مراعاة واسعة للسياسة السعودية، وإن صح القول "مجاملة واسعة للسياسة السعودية، وإتاحة وقت كبير ومساحة كبيرة للملكة العربية السعودية لتنفيذ سياساتها تجاه اليمن."

Q3.1: على ذكر السلاح د.ناصر، هل يمكن القول بأن تسليح الاتحاد الأوروبي أو الدول الأوروبية للسعودية والإمارات وغيرها من دول الخليج يعتبر ضمن المصالح الرئيسية للاتحاد الأوروبي من الأزمة اليمنية؟

A3.1: بطبيعة الحال عندما حصل توتر بين السعودية وأمريكا، واتخذت الإدارة الأمريكية قيود على تصدير السلاح إلى السعودية، كانت بريطانيا هي الطرف الذي يوفر للسعودية الجزء الكبير من السلاح، ويقوم أشكال مختلفة من التعاون مع الجيش السعودي ومع القوات السعودية في حربها تجاه الحوثيين. بعض الدول الأوروبية تؤثر عليها بعض القيود من الجمعيات الناشطة في العمل الإنساني، وغالباً ما تراعي أمرين: المصالح الاقتصادية الكبيرة وخاصة بيع السلاح للسعودية، والضغوط التي تتعرض لها من قبل النشطاء والحقوقيون ووو الخ. ألمانيا وعدد آخر من الدول الأوروبية اتخذوا موقف من صفقات التسليح، ولكن في وقت الذروة غالباً ما يتم تجاوز الاعتبارات الإنسانية لصالح الاعتبارات الاقتصادية والتجارية الخاصة بتلك الدول .

نحن نتكلم عن زاوية واحدة لكن هناك أيضاً زاوية أخرى للنظر، وهي النظر لمصالح الاتحاد الأوروبي مع إيران كما ذكرت، الألمان تربطهم علاقة تاريخية واقتصادية واسعة مع إيران أيضاً، وإيران لديها ثقلاً، لديها موارد نفطية وموارد غازية كبيرة للغاية، ولديها قدرات تجارية عالية أيضاً، إذاً إذا جاز التعبير "هناك مصالح اقتصادية في الصفقات العسكرية مع السعودية ومع دول الخليج، وهناك ضغوط من جماعات ونشطاء حقوق الإنسان، وهناك أيضاً المصالح الثقيلة بين عدد من الدول الأوروبية وبين إيران، هذه الثلاثة الأمور يجب أن نأخذها في الاعتبار ونحن ننظر إلى سياسة الاتحاد الأوروبي تجاه اليمن."

P3Q4: هل تعتقد أن إرث الاستعمار البريطاني في اليمن قد أثر على موقف الاتحاد الأوروبي من الأزمة اليمنية؟ وكيف؟

P3A4 : هناك حضور. الحضور رقم 2، بمعنى أن البريطانيين لديهم نزعة للتماهي مع السياسة الأمريكية، وهم حليف استراتيجي ممتد لأمريكا، وفي بعض الأحيان يحدث تبادل أدوار بين الأمريكيين وبين البريطانيين. هناك نزعة لاستقلالية القرار البريطاني عن الموقف الأوروبي، ولذلك انتهى الأمر بخروجهم من الاتحاد الأوروبي، لا نقول نزعة استعمارية ولكن نقول الحضور الكثيف لبريطانيا في المنطقة. البريطانيون هم أكثر قوة وقدرة على فهم المنطقة وديناميكياتها وما يحرك الأطراف داخلها، وهذا ما يفسر حضورهم الكثيف، والعلاقة التاريخية بين السعودية وبريطانيا. لم يحدث أن استعمرت بريطانيا للسعودية، لكن هناك علاقة ممتدة، ودعم متبادل بين كل من الأسرة السعودية والحكومات البريطانية المتعاقبة.

Q4.1: أنا أحاول التحقيق في فكرة أن البريطانيين لا يزالون ينظرون إلى اليمن وفقاً للنظرية الاستعمارية، النظرية الفوقية، الدونية، التي ينظرون فيها إلى المجتمعات أو الدول في الشرق الأوسط بشكل عام؟ ماذا تقول في هذا الإطار؟

A4.1: لا أجد أن حضور البريطانيين مبني على إرث استعماري، خاصة في الأزمة اليمنية، الحضور الكثيف هو نتيجة القلق الأمني والاقتصادي التي ذكرناه، وهناك عامل آخر وهو ارتباطهم وتعاونهم الوثيق والممتد مع السعودية. الأوروبيون لا يدعمون مثلاً الحراك الجنوبي بشكل علني وواضح، وليس هناك مؤشرات نستطيع من خلالها القول بأن بريطانيا تحرك بعض الملفات في جنوب اليمن. هي تمسك القلم، الدولة التي تضع المسودات الأولى لأي قرارات

وتتلقاها من الدول، يسمونها دولة القلم في مجلس الأمن، هذا الأمر يجعلها حاضرة بشكل أكبر في الملف اليمني، لكن وجهة نظري بأن الاعتبار الأكبر هو لعلاقتها بالسعودية، وإيضاً الاعتبارات الأمنية والاقتصادية، لكن بدرجة أساسية علاقتها مع السعودية.

Q4.2: هذا يعني اننا نتحدث عن محاولة الاستمرار في التأثير السياسي، وكما ذكرت فيما يتعلق بأنهم من يمسون بالقلم في مجلس الأمن، ويرون أنفسهم هم من يفكر لليمنيين، وهم من يعرفون اين هي مصلحة اليمنيين وفي أي اتجاه تكون تلك المصلحة؟ كيف يمكن أن نفسر ذلك؟

A4.2: في اعتقادي هذا ناتج عن خبرتهم في المنطقة، عن حضورهم في المنطقة، شمال اليمن لم يكن يخضع للاستعمار، لكنهم يفهمون ديناميكية المنطقه، الأنماط الشخصية الوطنية، والديناميات الاجتماعية، وتأثير الثقافة والتاريخ والدين والمذهب. الأمريكيون غالباً يعتمدون على القوة في كثير من الأحيان لتنفيذ سياساتهم، لكن البريطانيين يعتمدون بدرجة أساسية على الفهم، وعلى الوصول إلى القوة المحركة للأحداث والتطورات.

P3Q5: كيف أثرت وجهات النظر المختلفة للدول الأعضاء في الاتحاد الأوروبي بشأن الأزمة اليمنية على الموقف العام للاتحاد؟

P3A5: بطبيعة الحال، تنوع الاهتمامات والأولويات بالنسبة للأطراف المكونة للاتحاد الأوروبي، من الطبيعي أن ينعكس على سياسات هذا الكيان، هناك دول لديها حضور أكبر في العمل الإنساني، والمصالح الاقتصادية تكون أقل لديها، خاصة مع السعودية ودول الخليج. وهناك دول تحضر لديها الاعتبارات الاقتصادية والاعتبارات الأمنية والاعتبارات العسكرية (المصالح العسكرية والدفاعية... الخ) بشكل أكبر، وبالتالي هذا يؤدي إلى تنوع، وغالباً ما يقود إلى شد وجذب وربما مساومات. أيضاً الدول الاسكندنافية موقفها تجاه الحرب بأنها ضد الحرب بشكل أقوى، لأن حجم مصالح تلك الدول مع السعودية ودول الخليج أقل، لكن الدول التي لديها رغبة في النزعة العالمية، والتي كان لديها نزعة للعب دور دولي كبير مثل بريطانيا -عندما كانت في الاتحاد الأوروبي-، وفرنسا وألمانيا أيضاً، هذه الدول غالباً تحضر لديها الاعتبارات الأمنية والإقتصادية أكثر من الاعتبارات الإنسانية في قراراتها، وبالتالي في مواقفها سواء داخل الاتحاد الأوروبي أو على المستوى الفردي.

P3Q6: كيف تُقيّم دور الاتحاد الأوروبي؟

P3A6: معظم الضغوط الأوروبية منذ بداية الحرب وحتى عام 2022 تقريباً كانت باتجاه المملكة السعودية ودول التحالف للتحفيف من التداعيات الإنسانية الناتجة عن هذه الحرب، لكن مع تراجع حدة الحرب وربما توقفها، اتجه الاتحاد الأوروبي الى النشاط السياسي. الاتحاد الأوروبي منذ نهاية 2022 وحتى اليوم، دوره السياسي أكثر من دوره الإنساني، حيث حدث صعود في الدور السياسي من خلال محاولة تقريب وجهات النظر بين مختلف الأطراف اليمنية.

الأوروبيون والدول الفاعلة منهم أيضا يضغطون في سبيل إلغاء القرار 2216 وإستبداله بقرار جديد، لأنهم يجدونه عائق، أو يتصورونه عائق أمام التسوية، كونه يقدم معالجة غير واقعية للصراع. الأوروبيون أيضاً يقفون خلف المبعوث الدولي، والمبعوثين الدوليين الأخيرين هما من أوروبا، الأول كان بريطانياً، وكانت بريطانيا تقف خلفه بقوة، والثاني كان المبعوث السويدي وكانت تقف خلفه السويد ومعظم الدول الأوروبية. تيسير وتسهيل اللقاءات السياسية، وتقديم الرؤى، ومحاولة تقريب وجهات النظر، وإسناد المبعوث الدولي والمبعوث السويدي - وإلى حد ما المبعوث الأمريكي - غالباً ما تنشط الدول الأوروبية في هذا الجانب بالتوازي مع نشاطها في الجانب الإنساني.

Q6.1: كيف تُقيم هذا الدور دكتور؟

A6.1: هذا الدور يشوبه أمرين: الأمر الأول أن فيه انحياز واضح لصالح الحوثيين، خاصة في ما قبل انقلاب الحوثيين وحتى سنتين أو أكثر من بعد انقلابهم. الاتحاد الأوروبي كان أكثر الأطراف الدولية انحيازاً للحوثيين، وأكثر تفهماً للإجراءات التي قاموا بها بما فيها انقلاب 21 سبتمبر 2014، خلافاً إلى حد ما للموقف الأمريكي، هذا الأول سمة من سماته أنه كان يتسم بالإنحياز، ولا يراعي تطلعات الشعب اليمني والاحتياجات الأمنية بالنسبة لدول المنطقة إلى حد كبير، هذا الملمح الأول من وجهة نظري، حيث كان واضحاً في سياسة الاتحاد الأوروبي. الملمح الثاني يتمثل في الضعف والتراجع في دور الاتحاد الأوروبي بشكل عام بعد الحرب الروسية الأوكرانية، انشغل الأوروبيون بشكل كبير بهذه الحرب، وبالتالي اهتمامهم بالصراع في اليمن وتداعياته في مختلف الأبعاد تراجع إلى حد كبير، وأصبح حضورهم حضور هامشي، ويعتمد على الاجتهادات الشخصية للسفراء في بعض الاحيان حينما يكون هناك مواقف متقدمة، أو على مواقف تظهر ثم تخفت، لكن بشكل عام نستطيع القول بأن دور الإتحاد الأوروبي بعد اندلاع الحرب الأوكرانية الروسية تراجع إلى حد كبير في الحضور والتأثير، وأصبح الأوروبيون يهتمون بدرجة أساسية - سواء في الجانب الإنساني، أو في الجانب العسكري، أو حتى في الجانب السياسي - بالصراع الذي يدور في الفناء الشرقي للقارة الأوروبية.

P3Q7 : كيف يمكن للاتحاد الأوروبي تعزيز دوره في حل الأزمة اليمنية؟

P3A7: أولاً: فهم ديناميات الصراع، ومحركات القوة، والمكونات السياسية والاجتماعية في اليمن. بمعنى من الصعب إسناد طرف معين لفرض تصور ورؤية واحدة على بقية المجتمع اليمني، هذا لن يفضي إلى سلام وإستقرار في اليمن. بقاء الحوثيين وسيطرتهم على المناطق التي يسيطرون عليها، أو حتى على مناطق أوسع من ذلك، وتدعيم وجهة النظر هذه، والقبول والتسليم بها، لن يخدم الإستقرار والسلام في اليمن لا على المستوى القريب، ولا المتوسط، ولا حتى البعيد أيضاً.

في وجهة نظري هناك مجموعة من المتطلبات الأساسية من الإتحاد الأوروبي تتمثل في التالي:

إسناد مجلس القيادة الرئاسي بشكل كبير. الآن هناك اختلال للتوازن بين الحوثيين ومجلس القيادة، وإعادة التوازن شرط أساسي لولوج الأطراف إلى تسوية سياسية يمكن أن تفضي إلى سلام مستقر. إذاً إسناد مجلس القيادة الرئاسي

وتدعيمه، وعدم نزع الشرعية عنه. صحيح أن الأوروبيين حاولوا أن يدعموا مجلس القيادة الرئاسي، لكن أيضا هناك خذلان من داخل مجلس الرئاسة وتحديدًا من رئيس مجلس القيادة الرئاسي، حين انتقد الموقف الأوروبي، بعد أن وجه الأوروبيون نقدًا لسلوك المجلس الانتقالي في إطار المجلس الرئاسي. أقول مرة أخرى: تدعيم السلطة الشرعية حتى يحدث توازن، والتوازن شرط أساسي للتسوية.

Q7.1: تدعيمهم على المستوى السياسي فقط، أو حتى على المستوى العسكري؟

A7.1: الأوروبيون لا ينزعون إلى الموقف العسكري. إذا ما حدث موقف عسكري ربما يأتي من الأمريكان، الأمريكيون أكثر من الأوروبيون في تقديري. إذا كان ثمة دعم عسكري فسيكون محصورا في دولتي التحالف وبالتحديد السعودية ودرجة أقل الإمارات. والدولتين ستكونا كافيتين إذا ما توفرت إرادة بأن يغيروا ميزان القوة.

إذاً عدم التماهي مع طرف واحد وعدم القبول بالأمر الواقع، هذا كشرط أساسي. ثم تدعيم السلطة الشرعية في وجهة نظري يأتي رقم 2، بمعنى مضاعفة الدعم الإنساني والدعم التنموي لليمن في هذه المرحلة، الدور الوظيفي للإتحاد الأوروبي سيكون في هذا الجانب أكثر من خلال تخفيف الأزمات الإنسانية الناتجة عن الصراعات المركبة والمعقدة التي تعيشها اليمن في هذه السنوات.

Appendix-5.

Assessing the impact of the European Union's policies on the Yemeni crisis (2011-2022).

Yaseen Al-Tamimi

Yemeni journalist and political researcher.

P4Q1: بحسب إطلاعك، ما هو منظور الاتحاد الأوروبي لطبيعة الصراع في اليمن؟

P4A1: الاتحاد الأوروبي اليوم لم يعد كتلة واحدة، الاتحاد الأوروبي هو مجموع دول الاتحاد الأوروبي بالإضافة إلى بريطانيا. بريطانيا تلعب دور مهم جداً باعتبارها عضو في مجلس الأمن الدولي كما هي فرنسا، ولكن بريطانيا بحكم صلتها التاريخية باليمن كمستعمر سابق، لهذا الاعتبار منحت في مجلس الأمن القلم عن اليمن، وهي التي دائماً ما تصيغ المسودات والقرارات الصادرة عن مجلس الأمن، وتقوم بنقاشها مع بقية الأطراف، إلى أن تُصبح جاهزة للإقرار من قبل مجلس الأمن الدولي. بريطانيا لها خبرة في التعامل مع اليمن ولهذا دائماً ما يبرز الدور البريطاني. منذ بداية الأزمة كانت بريطانيا لا تتوقف عن إرسال مسؤولين لا يقلوا عن وزير دولة في وزارة الخارجية، واستمرت هذه العملية إلى ما بعد انتقال الرئيس من صنعاء إلى عدن ومن ثم من عدن إلى الرياض، فكان الدور البريطاني يكافئ تقريباً الدور الأمريكي من حيث التأثير. فرنسا وألمانيا وبقية دول الاتحاد الأوروبي لعبوا دورهم من خلال رئيس بعثة الاتحاد الأوروبي، لكن فرنسا وألمانيا كان لهما نشاط أيضاً من خلال سفرائهم. ألمانيا أيضاً رتبت بعض لقاءات الأبواب الخلفية عن طريق وزارة الخارجية، واستضافت مسؤولين يمنيين، وسخرت تقريباً نتائج تلك اللقاءات أمام المبعوثين الاممين المتتابعين.

العقيدة السياسية للاتحاد الأوروبي تقوم على فكرة أن اليمن ساحة نشاط للقاعدة، وأن أي إهيار في الدولة اليمنية سيعني مباشرة أن القاعدة هي البديل، هذا الأمر جعلهم يقبلون بفكرة وصول الحوثي إلى صنعاء، وسيطرته على اليمن بما أنه النقيض الأيديولوجي، يستند الاوروبيون الى دراسات ومعلومات موثقة حول التركيبة الاجتماعية والطائفية في البلاد، ويرون أن الحوثي هو النقيض الطائفي للمكون السني الأكبر الذي تنحدر منه عادةً القاعدة وداعش. إذ المبرر الأمني لوجود الحوثيين هو أنهم يُمكن أن يكونوا عدوًا محليًا لهذه التنظيمات الإرهابية والتي هي مصدر خطر بالنسبة للمجتمع الدولي. المجتمع الدولي بما فيه الاتحاد الأوروبي يمارس المزايدة من هذه الناحية، لأنه في نهاية المطاف سنجد أن كل دول العالم لم تستخدم هذه الورقة إلا لأغراض سياسية. دائماً في كل البيانات، الأمم المتحدة، الاتحاد الأوروبي، المجتمع الغربي، العالم، تكون الإشارات إلى الإرهاب حاضرة في تقدير موقف هذه الدول باتجاه اليمن. العقيدة السياسية يمكن حصرها في أنها تنظر لليمن على أنها ساحة نشاط إرهابي، وأنه يتعين انجاز عملية سياسية تستند إلى توافق الأطراف السياسية اليمنية، مع انفتاح كبير على جماعة الحوثي لأسباب أمنية لها علاقة بالموقف من التنظيمات الإرهابية كداعش والقاعدة.

Q1.1: عفوا: على المستوى السياسي هل ينظر الاتحاد الأوروبي للصراع في اليمن على أنه بين جماعة انقلبت على الدولة متمثلة بجماعة الحوثي وبين شرعية وحكومة يمنية معترف بها دولياً؟

A1.1: نسيت أن أذكر هنا بأن العقيدة السياسية للإتحاد الأوروبي تضمن أيضاً الاعتراف بشرعية السلطة الشرعية التي كان يمثلها هادي، ويمثلها الآن مجلس القيادة الرئاسي، وهي التي لها ممثل في الأمم المتحدة. فالإتحاد الأوروبي يعتبر السلطة الشرعية هي الممثل الشرعي للجمهورية اليمنية، لكن العملية السياسية في نظر الإتحاد الأوروبي دائماً كما هي في نظر المجتمع الغربي تنتهي إلى استيعاب جماعة الحوثي كمكون سياسي وعسكري ووالخ، بحيث يكون وجوده -أي الحوثي- في السلطة وجود مؤثر، كجائزة لكونه يمكن الاعتماد عليه في كبح جماح النشاط الإرهابي. في الفترة الأخيرة هناك موقف غير معلن بسبب التقارب السعودي الإيراني، حيث بدأ الأوروبيون يُظهرون موقفاً يمكن وصفه بالمنزعج من دور الحوثيين، خصوصاً بعد أن قدمت السلطة الشرعية والسعودية على وجه الخصوص تنازلات باتجاه عملية السلام في اليمن وانتهاء الحرب، هذا الانزعاج ليس من الدور التخريبي لجماعة الحوثي، وإنما لارتباطهم بإيران.

P4Q2: هذا يقودنا أياضاً إلى السؤال الذي نحاول فيه أن نفهم ما هي المصالح الرئيسية للإتحاد الأوروبي في اليمن ، وكيف تؤثر على استجابة الإتحاد الأوروبي تجاه الأزمة؟

P4A2: أول شيء هو أن هذه الدول دائماً تنظر إلى أي ساحة صراع على أنها ورقة سياسية وجيوسياسية رابحة بيدها، إن لم تستخدمها في تحقيق مصالح مباشرة في الساحة الجغرافية نفسها فإنها تستخدمها في الحصول على مصالح لها علاقة بالمتدخلين الخارجيين أو الفاعلين المحليين في ساحة الصراع تلك. بطبيعة الحال حجم المصالح التي يمكن أن يحصل عليها الإتحاد الأوروبي من اليمن لا تساوي شيئاً بالنسبة لحجم المصالح التي يحصل عليها الإتحاد الأوروبي من الدول المتدخلة بالشأن اليمني وهي هنا السعودية والإمارات. لهذا تجد أن الإتحاد الأوروبي دائماً يأخذ بحساسية موقف السعودية والإمارات من اليمن، يأخذه بعين الاعتبار. لا ينبغي أن نُقنع أنفسنا بأن موقع اليمن الجغرافي وثوراته تستدعي أن تبني هذه الدول موقفها على هذا الأساس. هذه قضية غير واردة. لكن كون أن هناك صراع تطور في دول خارجية لها أوزان مثل إيران، السعودية، الإمارات، ورقة الصراع هذه تُستخدم على سبيل المناورة، أو لتحقيق أهداف اقتصادية أو سياسية أو غيرها، يمكن أن تجنيها دول الإتحاد الأوروبي من تلك الدول المتدخلة في الشأن اليمني.

Q2.1: هل يمكننا القول أن الإتحاد الأوروبي يعتبر الملف اليمني في الوقت الحالي كورقة ضغط بينه وبين إيران في المفاوضات النووية الإيرانية؟

A2.1: نعم كما هي بقية ساحات الصراع، ولكن دائماً إيران هي المستفيدة من كونها مؤثر في الساحة اليمنية، وتمارس ضغوط فيما يتعلق بمفاوضات الملف النووي. حتى إدارة أوباما فيما يخص الملف النووي مع إيران، كان الشق السياسي يتعلق بقبول الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية بأدوار إقليمية لإيران في المنطقة. وإيران اليوم عندما تصرفت عن طريق الحوثيين وضربت المنشآت النفطية السعودية، أرادت أن تخلق وضعاً استثنائياً يدفع العالم إلى مراجعة موقفه من

إيران، والكف عن الضغوط التي يمارسها، خصوصاً الضغوط الاقتصادية. فايران هي من يستخدم الورقة اليمنية بكفاءة، وليس بقية الأطراف، لكن يمكن لبقية الأطراف أيضاً أن تستخدم ورقة اليمن على إيران من خلال الضغط على حلفائها في اليمن، لكننا في الحقيقة لم نرى لا من السعودية ولا من الإمارات ناهيك عن الدول الأوروبية ما يشير إلى أنهم يُمارسون ضغطاً على إيران من خلال الضغط العسكري الذي يهدد وجود الحوثيين في اليمن.

P4Q3: ما هو الدور الذي لعبه الاتحاد الأوروبي في الأزمة اليمنية؟ وما مدى فعاليته؟

P4A3: ربما لم يكن حجم التسليح الألماني بقدر الفرنسي والبريطاني، ألمانيا أوقفت تصدير السلاح، لكن بريطانيا استمرت في تصديره للسعودية، فرنسا أيضاً استمرت في تصدير السلاح للسعودية، لكن التركيز على الملف الإنساني هو استراتيجية اعتمدها الأمم المتحدة والولايات المتحدة والاتحاد الأوروبي. هذه المقاربة الإنسانية للملف اليمني حرمت اليمنيين فعلياً مما يحتاجونه من مساعدة حقيقية، وهي إنهاء الأسباب العسكرية والأمنية والسياسية للصراع، فعندما نتحدث عن أن المشكلة سببها الحوثيين يقول لك الأوروبيون "لا. دعونا أولاً نحل المشكلة الإنسانية، ويجب على العالم أن ينهي الأزمة الإنسانية في اليمن و... الخ، وأنه -أي الضغط على الحوثيين وإستمرار الحرب عليهم- يفاقم من الأزمة الإنسانية." هذه الذريعة في الحقيقة هي التي أطالت أمد الحرب، بينما كان ينبغي القضاء على أسباب الحرب لكي تُنهي الأزمة الإنسانية. هذه الحقيقة لم تتغير تقريباً لدى الأوروبيين كما لدى الأمريكيين كما لدى الأمم المتحدة.

P4Q4: كيف أثرت علاقات الاتحاد الأوروبي مع دول الخليج على دوره في الأزمة اليمنية؟

P4A4: لا شك بأن المصالح الأوروبية مع السعودية والإمارات تؤثر في موقف هذه الدول تجاه الأزمة اليمنية، أو تجعلها دائماً خلف السعودية والإمارات، ودائماً ما تتبنى الإجراءات التي تتخذها السعودية والإمارات. مثال على ذلك عندما قررت السعودية الإطاحة بهادي ونقل السلطة إلى مجلس قيادة رئاسي، اعتمد الأوروبيون هذا القرار مباشرة، بل ربما كان محط مشاورات سابقة بين جميع هذه الأطراف، في النهاية هذه العملية تحقق مصالح السعوديين والإماراتيين، وبالتالي قبل الأوروبيون بهذه الفكرة ولم يدافعوا عن الرئيس المنتخب.

Q4.1: هل يمكن أن يُعتبر التسليح الذي يقوم به الأوروبيون لدول التحالف جزء من المصالح الأوروبية في اليمن؟

A4.1: لا أعتقد أن الأوروبيين يريدون استمرار الصراع من أجل بيع الأسلحة. الأوروبيون يشعرون بكلفة هذه الصفقات من الناحية الإنسانية، وربما ينزعجون من ضغوط الصحافة والإعلام في أوروبا، ونشطاء حقوق الإنسان وغيرهم. هم -أي الأوروبيون- لا يريدون الإبقاء على ساحة الصراع في اليمن مفتوحة من أجل أن يصدروا السلاح، وإنما هم يستجيبوا لمطالب السعودية في تصدير السلاح من أجل مصالح اقتصادية أعمق، لأنه في النهاية بيع السلاح للسعودية والإمارات هو بند واحد فقط من بنود كثيرة فيما يتعلق بالاقتصاد.

P4Q5: هل تعتقد أن إرث الاستعمار البريطاني في اليمن قد أثر على موقف الاتحاد الأوروبي من الأزمة اليمنية؟ وكيف؟

P4A5: بالنسبة لليمن هذه العقدة ليست حاضرة. بريطانيا على سبيل المثال ليست لديها رغبة في إعادة استعمار او تطويع اليمن. ساهمت بريطانيا أصلاً في صياغة مستقبل اليمن، من خلال تسليم الجنوب لتنظيم سياسي يساري مرتبط بالاتحاد السوفيتي، وبريطانيا كانت على علم بهذا، وأبقت قيادة هذا التنظيم اليساري مرتبطاً بها إلى آخر لحظة. بريطانيا في الحقيقة تستخدم خبرتها وعلاقاتها السابقة، ومعرفتها بالهندسة الاجتماعية والسياسية في تقديم المقترحات، ورأيها كيف رتبت علاقات التطبيع بين المملكة العربية السعودية والحوثيين، وأثارت قضية مثل "لماذا لا يُهندس علاقة سعودية مع الحوثيين كالتالي كانت مع أسلافهم؟" ويقصدون بذلك العلاقة بين المملكة العربية السعودية والأئمة قديماً، هذه واحدة من المؤشرات التي تثبت أن بريطانيا تستخدم خبرتها السابقة في هندسة المشهد اليمني، وفي الإسهام في تقرير مصير الحرب على النحو الذي يتفق مع المُتدخل الخارجي وليس مع مصلحة الشعب اليمني العليا. أعود وأقول أن بريطانيا في تقديري لا تتصرف بعقلية ثأرية ولا استعلانية بالنسبة لليمن، وإنما هي فقط تمارس الانتهازية، الانتهازية الكاملة، لأن الأمر مرتبط بمصالحها الاقتصادية مع سوقين كبيرين، هما السوق الإماراتي والسوق السعودي. وانتم تعلمون أن بريطانيا بعد خروجها من الاتحاد الأوروبي اعتمدت على استراتيجية بناء شراكات عالمية، وركزت في المقام الأول على بلدان الخليج وعلى الهند.

Q5.1: أنت ذكرت في البداية في المصالح الأوروبية أن من مصالحهم محاربة التنظيمات الإرهابية ومن ضمنها تنظيم القاعدة، البعض يرى أن موضوع الحرب على الإرهاب نفسه هو غطاء فقط للتدخل في شؤون مثل هذه البلدان؟ ما رأيك؟

A5.1: طبعاً ورقة الإرهاب استخدمت بشكل انتحازي. مثال على ذلك تنظيم الدولة في العراق وسوريا، هو يُستخدم من قبل الاتحاد الأوروبي والولايات المتحدة الأمريكية في النفوذ على المنطقة، وفي إعادة هندسة المنطقة، وفي ضمان عدم وجود ارتدادات لتطور المنطقة على حساب الوجود الإسرائيلي، وفي الضغط على تركيا، كل تلك المسائل حاضرة. أيضاً كان هناك جزء كبير من عناصر القاعدة أتت من الخارج واستُخدمت استخباراتياً. إن إثارة ورقة الإرهاب في اليمن هي في نهاية المطاف مبرر لمنح الاتحاد الأوروبي والغرب دائماً سقف مرتفع للتعاطي مع ساحات الصراع هذه، بحيث أن تلك البلدان تقبل بفكرة استخدام القوة والعنف، والتماهي مع مصالح وتطلعات القوى الناشئة كالمملكة العربية السعودية والإمارات، بحيث تدعم طموحاتها وتطلعاتها، والحجة دائماً هي أن هناك مشكلة تتعلق بمكافحة الإرهاب، إذاً نحن ندعم هذه الدول لأن لها دوراً أساسياً في مكافحة الإرهاب في اليمن.

P4Q6: كيف أثرت وجهات النظر المختلفة للدول الأعضاء في الاتحاد الأوروبي بشأن الأزمة اليمنية على الموقف العام للاتحاد؟

P4A6: أولاً بريطانيا لم تعد جزءاً من الاتحاد، لكن أعتقد أن لألمانيا مصالح كبيرة في السوق الإيراني، ولها صلات قديمة مع الحوثيين، وسبق أن استضافت شقيق عبدالمكح الحوثى لسنوات في ألمانيا، ولها نشاط استخبارى فىما يتعلق بدعم المنظومة الشيعية، ولهذا لم تبالي مثلاً حين أوقفت تصدير السلاح للمملكة العربية السعودية والإمارات على خلفية الحرب فى اليمن، ولا أدري إذا كانت قد عادت للتصدير. ألمانيا ليس لديها حساسية كبيرة تجاه الحوثيين وإمكانية سيطرتهم على اليمن، بل إنها ربما تؤيد مثل هذا. ولكن هى محتفظة بالموقف العام (الاعتراف بالسلطة الشرعية _ تَقَهْمُ الموقف السعودى والإماراتى _ عدم اتخاذ موقف المواجهة مع السعودية والإمارات على خلفية الحرب فى اليمن الخ). فرنسا متحمسة جداً، ولها تصريحات قوية ضد الحوثيين. بمعنى أنها متماهية جداً مع موقف السعودية والإمارات فى الساحة اليمنية. بالمجمل هناك توافق على أساس الاعتراف بالسلطة الشرعية، ليس هناك خلاف ولا تباين، هناك عدم تصعيد ضد السعودية والإمارات وهذا نعتبره توافق، لكن هذه المواقف تتفرع إلى مواقف ثانوية تتعلق بعقيدة كل دولة ودورها على الساحة اليمنية استناداً إلى تراكم الفترة الماضية.

P4Q7: كيف يمكن للاتحاد الأوروبى تعزيز دوره فى حل الأزمة اليمنية؟

P4A7: أعتقد أن الاتحاد الأوروبى يجب أن يُطور موقفه التقليدى الحالى من الأزمة فى اليمن، والذى تتلخص فى كون أن الخطر الأساسى هو فى النشاط الإرهابى وليس النشاط الإنقلابى، ويجب أن يعترف بأن مهددات وجود الدولة يمثلها الحوثيون فى الشمال والانفصاليون فى الجنوب. عليه أن يفتح على صوت الشرعية، وعليه أن يفتح على بقية مكونات السلطة الشرعية، وعليه أن يقترب من الموقف الأساسى لمجموع الشعب اليمنى، لكي يدرك أن السلام فى نهاية المطاف إذا لم يُلبى تطلعات الشعب اليمنى بأغلبية فئاته ومكوناته، فإنه لا يمكن أن يظل سلام فى المنطقة. إذا كان المجتمع الدولى أو الغرب والاتحاد الأوروبى يعتقدون بأن استمرار الحرب والصراع فى اليمن يهدد السلام العالمى، فهذا التهديد سيظل مستمر، واستمراره يعنى تمكين الجماعات الانفصالية والإنقلابية والطائفية فى اليمن، وسيؤدى إلى تطويع وكسر إرادة الشعب اليمنى الذى يرفض بشكل كامل سيطرة هذه الأطراف ويدعو إلى استعادة الدولة وبناء شراكة وطنية واسعة. إذا كان الاتحاد الأوروبى لا ينسجم مع هذه القيم والتطلعات، فأعتقد أن دوره سيبقى سلبياً وانتهازياً تجاه الأزمة والحرب فى اليمن.

Q7.1: إضافة إلى تنفيذ القرارات الدولية كالقرار ٢٢١٦، هل تعتقد أن الحكومة اليمنية لديها طموح بأن يدعمها الاتحاد الأوروبى عسكرياً فى إنهاء الإنقلاب الحوثى؟

A7.1: ما لم يكن هناك قوة تعرفل طموحات السعودية ومخططاتها فى اليمن، وتعرفل أيضاً عدوانية الحوثيين والانفصاليين، فإن موقف الاتحاد الأوروبى سيبقى تقليدياً خلف ما تريده السعودية والإمارات بما يضمن عدم المواجهة مع شركاء اقتصاديين مهمين. لهذا أنا تقديري أن الاتحاد الأوروبى أمسك فقط بالأخلاقى، بمعنى أنه مثلما يتحدث عن البعد الإنسانى ويتحدث عن النشاط الإرهابى، أيضاً مطلوب منه أن يأخذ بعين الاعتبار مصالح الشعب اليمنى التى تتهددها التسويات الحالية، والذى ترمى إلى تمكين أطراف مرفوضة شعبياً على نطاق واسع مثل جماعة الحوثى والانفصاليين.

Appendix-6.

Assessing the impact of the European Union's policies on the Yemeni crisis (2011-2022).

A Western Diplomat

(First Secretary / Political Officer

European Union - Delegation of the European Union to Yemen)

Objet : Demande d'entretien écrit

Cher Gabriel Munuera Viñals,

J'espère que ce courriel vous conviendra. Je m'appelle Marwan Senan et je suis étudiant en master de sciences politiques à l'université ISTANBUL GELISIM. J'effectue des recherches pour mon mémoire de maîtrise sur “ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF THE EUROPEAN UNION'S POLICIES ON THE YEMENI CRISIS (2011-2022)”.

J'apprécierais beaucoup votre expertise sur ce sujet, étant donné votre rôle distingué en tant qu'ambassadeur de l'UE au Yémen. Dans le cadre de mes recherches, je sollicite votre participation à un entretien, qui peut être mené sous forme écrite.

Vous trouverez ci-dessous les questions auxquelles j'aimerais que vous répondiez de manière réfléchie :

1- D'après votre compréhension, quel est le point de vue de l'Union européenne sur les causes profondes du conflit au Yémen ?

Les « causes profondes » du conflit au Yémen nécessitent une approche multidimensionnelle. Le pays est en effet parcouru par des épisodes de divisions successives. Le Nord est trois fois plus peuplé que le Sud et est historiquement opposé à la présence étrangère. En 1962, l'établissement de la république ancre le pays dans le bloc occidental. Le Sud entre dans le giron soviétique après la fin de la colonisation britannique en 1967. Les deux « entités » se réunifient en 1990, mais les conditions de ce processus sont fortement contestées par les Sudistes, ce qui conduit à une tentative de sécession

réprimée en 1994 par le président Ali Abdallah Saleh. Saleh fera à un soulèvement révolutionnaire en 2011, aboutissant à sa démission en février 2012 et qui déclenche une phase de transition institutionnelle sous la direction du nouveau président Abdrabbo Mansour Hadi. Depuis le 26 mars 2015, l'offensive militaire appelée "Tempête décisive" est menée par originellement une coalition de dix pays, dirigée par l'Arabie saoudite. Son objectif affiché est de rétablir le pouvoir du président Hadi, reconnu par la communauté internationale. Le président Hadi a fait appel à l'Arabie saoudite après avoir été contraint de démissionner en janvier 2015 suite à la prise de contrôle de la capitale par les miliciens houthistes. Les houthistes, qui revendiquent leur identité religieuse zaydite, se sont alliés au clan de l'ancien président Saleh. En décembre 2017, Saleh a annoncé son alignement sur la stratégie saoudienne, ce qui a conduit à son assassinat par les houthistes, marquant un tournant dans le conflit. Cette situation a créé une période d'attente et des recompositions d'alliances au niveau local et tribal, qui ne profitent pas nécessairement à la coalition saoudienne. Le camp opposé aux houthistes est également divisé. Une partie des forces armées soutient l'offensive saoudienne, mais échappe au contrôle du président reconnu par la communauté internationale. C'est notamment le cas du mouvement sudiste (Conseil de Transition du Sud), qui plaide en faveur de la sécession des provinces du sud. La guerre au Yémen est principalement le résultat de la rivalité entre les élites politiques yéménites, issue d'une transition politique initiée avec le "printemps yéménite", mais qui s'est progressivement enlisée. Aujourd'hui, il existe des initiatives de dialogue portées par certains Etats régionaux et qui laissent entrevoir des espoirs de paix. Cela étant dit, les divisions au sein du camp gouvernemental restent nombreuses et vivaces et pourraient contrecarrer les efforts d'unité mis en place par le Président du Conseil Présidentiel Rashad Al Alimi depuis sa nomination au printemps 2022.

2- Quels sont les principaux intérêts de l'UE au Yémen et comment influencent-ils la réponse de l'UE à la crise ?

Nos intérêts au Yémen peuvent être synthétisés comme suit :

1. Stabilité régionale : L'UE cherche à promouvoir la stabilité dans la région du Moyen-Orient, et le Yémen joue un rôle crucial en raison de sa situation géographique stratégique.

2. Lutte contre le terrorisme : Le Yémen est confronté à une menace terroriste, notamment la présence d'Al-Qaïda dans la péninsule arabique (AQPA). L'UE est préoccupée par la propagation du terrorisme et s'engage à soutenir les efforts visant à combattre les groupes terroristes au Yémen.

3. Migration et sécurité : La crise humanitaire au Yémen a des répercussions sur la migration. L'UE s'intéresse à la gestion des flux migratoires et à la sécurité régionale dans ce contexte.

4. Droits de l'homme et aide humanitaire : L'UE promeut le respect des droits de l'homme et cherche à atténuer les souffrances humanitaires au Yémen. Elle fournit une assistance humanitaire, soutient les organisations de la société civile et plaide en faveur d'un accès humanitaire sans entrave pour répondre aux besoins des populations affectées par le conflit.

Ces intérêts influencent la nature des outils mobilisés dans le cadre de la réponse à la crise (voir réponse à la question 3).

3- Quel rôle l'Union européenne a-t-elle joué dans la crise yéménite et quelle est l'étendue de son efficacité ?

Nous avons mis en place une série d'interventions complémentaires pour répondre à la crise yéménite.

1. Diplomatie et médiation : L'UE travaille à la mise en place d'une solution politique pacifique et inclusive au Yémen. L'UE a soutenu les efforts de médiation, notamment en soutenant les initiatives de l'envoyé spécial des Nations Unies pour le Yémen. L'UE a également organisé des réunions et des dialogues entre les différentes parties prenantes afin de favoriser le dialogue et la recherche de solutions.

2. Aide humanitaire, aide au développement : L'UE est l'un des principaux contributeurs d'aide humanitaire au Yémen. Elle fournit une assistance financière et matérielle aux populations touchées par le conflit, notamment en soutenant les organisations humanitaires sur le terrain. L'UE a également plaidé pour un accès humanitaire sans entrave afin d'assurer la livraison de l'aide aux populations dans le besoin. L'UE finance également de nombreux projets de développement.

3. Pressions politiques et sanctions : L'UE a exercé des pressions politiques sur les parties en conflit pour promouvoir une solution négociée. Elle a condamné les violations des droits de l'homme et du droit international humanitaire commises par toutes les parties et a appelé à la responsabilité et à la justice. L'UE a également imposé des sanctions ciblées à l'encontre de certains individus impliqués dans la crise.

Quant à l'efficacité de l'UE dans la crise yéménite, la situation demeure complexe et difficile. Malgré les efforts diplomatiques et humanitaires, le conflit persiste. Les défis politiques, les divisions internes et les influences régionales rendent la résolution du conflit complexe. Cependant, l'UE continue de jouer un rôle actif et reste engagée dans la recherche d'une solution politique durable.

4- Comment les relations de l'Union européenne avec les pays du Golfe ont-elles influencé leur rôle dans la crise yéménite ?

4. Les relations économiques : Les pays du Golfe, tels que l'Arabie saoudite et les Émirats arabes unis, sont d'importants partenaires commerciaux et économiques de l'UE. Ces relations économiques peuvent naturellement influencer la position de l'UE ou de ses États membres dans la crise yéménite compte tenu du degré d'implication de certains États golfeques dans le dossier yéménite.

5. Les relations politiques : Certains pays du Golfe ont des relations politiques et de sécurité étroites (accord de défense) avec des États membres de l'UE, comme c'est par exemple le cas pour la France. Ces alliances peuvent évidemment influencer les positions et les actions de l'UE dans la crise yéménite, notamment en termes de soutien ou de critique des actions des pays du Golfe impliqués dans le conflit.

6. Les intérêts régionaux communs : L'UE et les pays du Golfe partagent des intérêts régionaux communs, tels que la stabilité et la sécurité dans le Golfe et la lutte contre le terrorisme. Ces intérêts communs peuvent conduire à des collaborations et des discussions entre l'UE et les pays du Golfe sur la manière de résoudre la crise yéménite et de promouvoir la stabilité dans la région.

5- Pensez-vous que l'héritage du colonialisme britannique au Yémen a influencé l'attitude de l'Union européenne dans la crise yéménite ? Et comment ?

Pas de réponse à cette question - cette question devrait être adressée à des interlocuteurs officiels UK.

6- Comment les différents points de vue des Etats membres de l'Union européenne sur la crise yéménite ont-ils influencé la position globale de l'Union ?

Les Etats membres de l'UE partagent le constat selon lequel il est nécessaire de parvenir à une solution politique inclusive pour mettre fin au conflit au Yémen. Les États membres de l'UE peuvent ensuite avoir des intérêts politiques, des priorités nationales et des relations bilatérales différentes avec les acteurs impliqués dans la crise yéménite. Ces différences peuvent se traduire par des préoccupations spécifiques liées à leurs intérêts nationaux. Certains États membres de l'UE peuvent également avoir des liens historiques, culturels ou économiques plus étroits avec le Yémen ou les pays de la région. La position globale de l'UE sur la crise yéménite (comme reflétée dans les Conclusions du Conseil des Affaires étrangères de décembre 2022) est le résultat d'un consensus entre les capitales des Etats membres afin de promouvoir des actions communes.

7- Comment l'Union européenne peut-elle renforcer son rôle dans la résolution de la crise yéménite ?

Il existe toujours des pistes de réflexion pour améliorer une action, quelle qu'en soit sa nature. Outre les actions que nous avons déjà mis en place, l'UE pourrait intensifier ses efforts diplomatiques en travaillant davantage avec les parties prenantes internationales et régionales pour promouvoir un dialogue politique inclusif et la recherche d'une solution négociée. En pratique, ceci peut se matérialiser par des initiatives de médiation ou des initiatives en faveur de pourparlers de paix. L'UE pourrait fournir une assistance technique et politique, partager son expertise en matière de consolidation de la paix et faciliter le dialogue entre les parties en conflit. Dans un monde idéal [et sans contrainte budgétaire, i.e. voir les répercussions financières de la guerre en Ukraine], l'UE pourrait renforcer son soutien humanitaire au Yémen en augmentant son financement pour répondre aux besoins humanitaires ciblant les populations les plus vulnérables. L'UE pourrait continuer à surveiller et à documenter les violations des droits de l'homme et du droit international humanitaire au Yémen, et à plaider pour la responsabilité des auteurs de ces violations.