



# **PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS DURING THE YEMENI CIVIL WAR**



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Red Sea

Persian Gulf

Gulf

Gulf of Oman

SAUDI ARABIA

**Abha**

EGYPT

SUDAN

ERITREA  
Asmara

YEMEN

BAHRAIN

QATAR

U.A.E.

OMAN

Duba

Ha'il  
Buraydah

Khafji  
Jubail  
Damman

Hofuf

★  
Riyadh

Doha

Dubai

Abu Dhabi

Muscat

Jeddah

Mecca  
Taif

Jizan

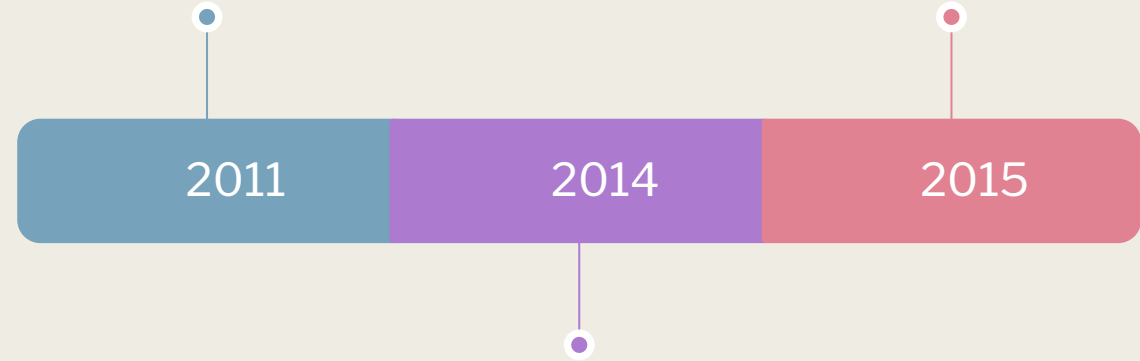
Sana'a

Khartoum

# Civil War in Yemen

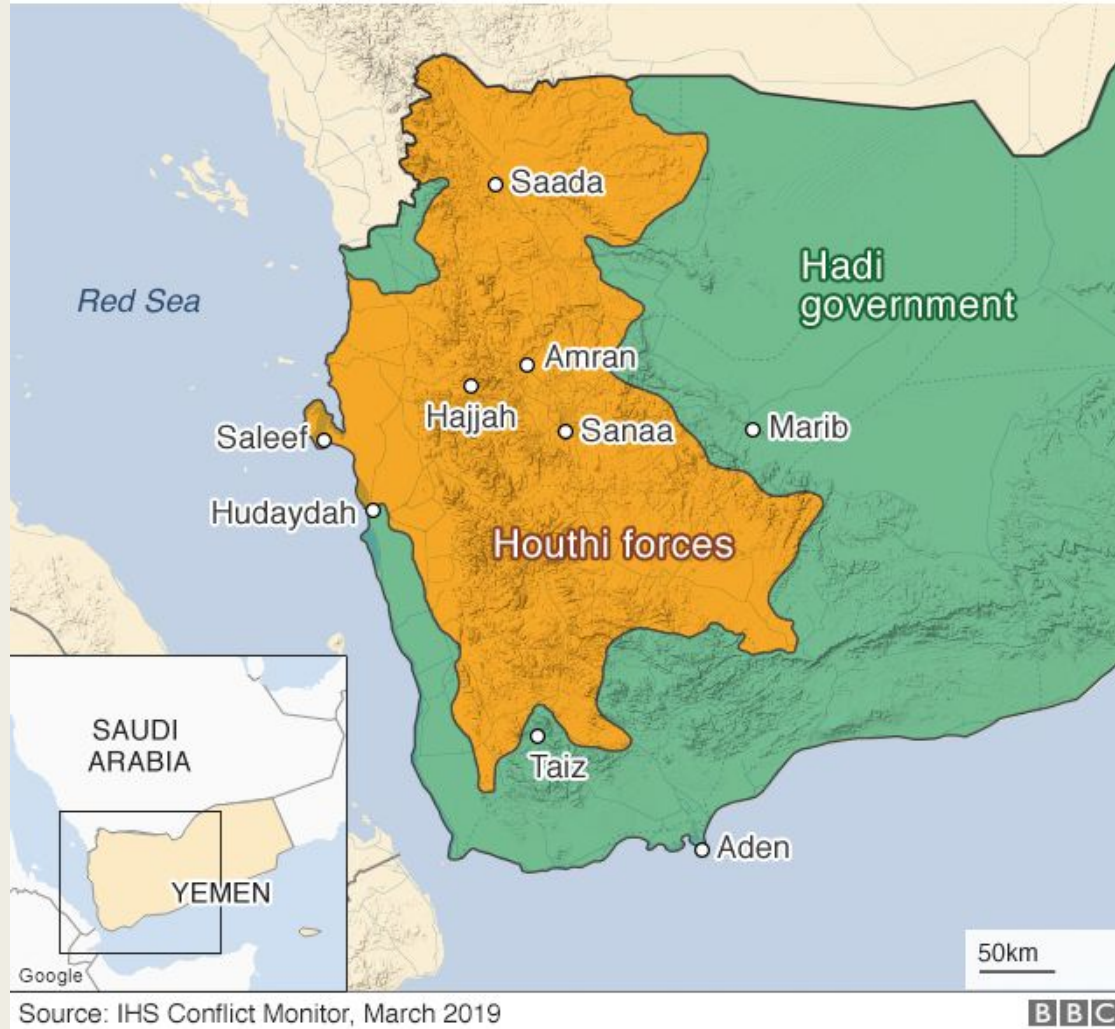
The conflict has its roots in the Arab Spring of 2011;

The current conflict intensified in March 2015 when a Saudi-led coalition intervened on behalf of the internationally recognised government against Houthi rebels.



Fighting began in 2014 when the Houthi Shia Muslim rebel movement took advantage of the new president's weakness and seized control of northern Saada province and neighbouring areas;

## Areas of control in Yemen



- There are two main groups involved in the ongoing conflict: forces loyal to the current Yemeni president, Abh Rabbuh Mansur Hadi, and Houthis and other forces supporting Ali Abdullah Saleh, the former Yemeni president.

# Human rights violations

- **Unlawful Airstrikes**
- **Indiscriminate Artillery Attacks**
- **Banned Weapons**
- **Arbitrary Detentions, Torture, and Enforced Disappearances**
- **Attacks on Civil Society**
- **Blocking and Impeding Humanitarian Access**
- **Children and Armed Conflict**
- **Terrorism and Counterterrorism**
- **Women's and Girls' Rights**
- **Accountability**





- A man carries a wounded child after a Saudi-led airstrike that killed eight members of her family in Sanaa, August 2017

# Unlawful Airstrikes

- Since 2015, Human Rights Watch has documented about 90 apparently unlawful coalition airstrikes, which have hit homes, markets, hospitals, schools, and mosques.
- In 2018, the coalition bombed a wedding, killing 22 people, including 8 children, and in another strike bombed a bus filled with children, killing at least 26 children.

# Indiscriminate Artillery Attacks

- Houthi forces have repeatedly fired artillery indiscriminately into Yemeni cities and launched indiscriminate ballistic missiles into Saudi Arabia. Some of these attacks may amount to war crimes. Houthi attacks have struck populated neighborhoods in Yemen, having a particularly devastating impact on Taizz, Yemen's third largest city.





# Banned Weapons

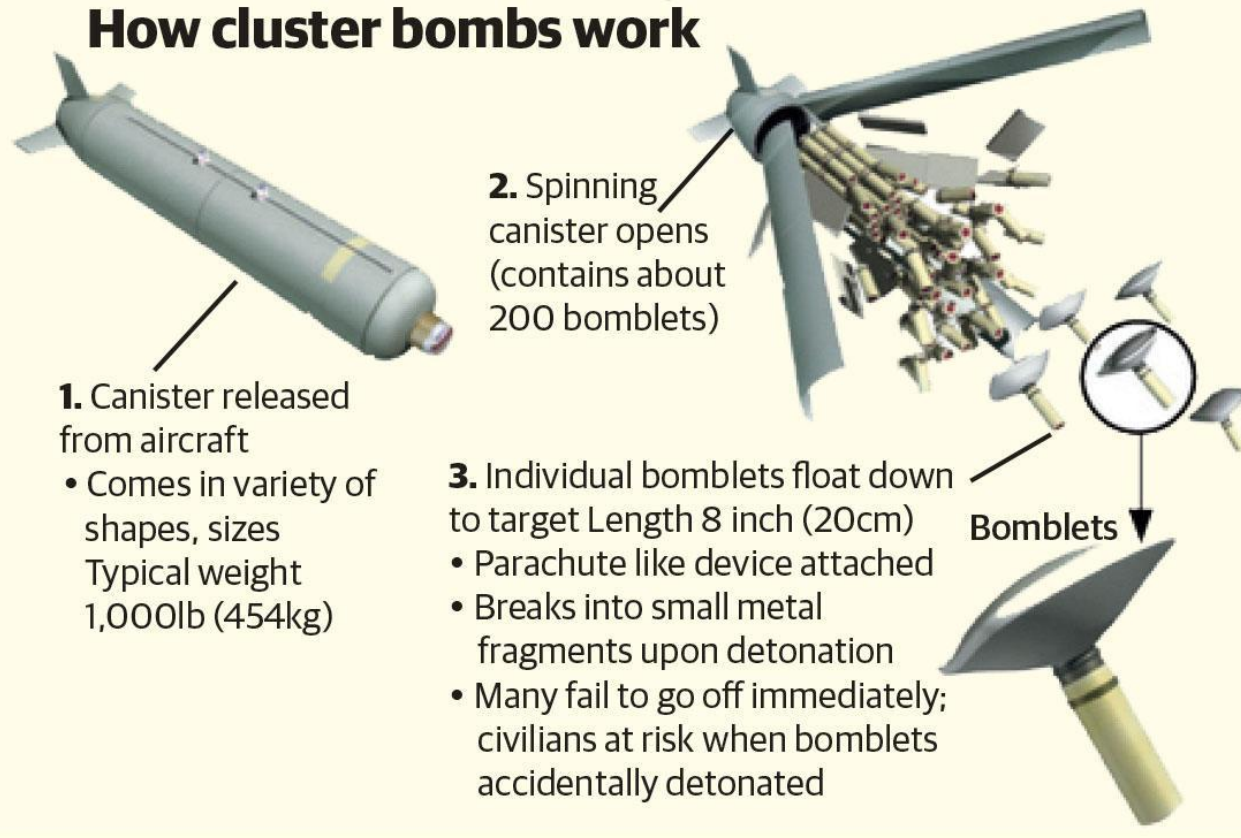
- Houthi forces have used landmines in governorates across Yemen, killing and wounding civilians and preventing their return home.
- The Saudi-led coalition has used at least six types of widely banned cluster munitions produced in Brazil, the US, and the UK.



## CLUSTER BOMBS

Nearly 100 countries are signing a treaty to ban cluster bombs, while the leading producers of the bombs, including the US, Russia, China and Israel, remain outside the pact.

### How cluster bombs work



# Arbitrary Detentions, Torture, and Enforced Disappearances

- Houthi forces, the Yemeni government, and the UAE and UAE-backed Yemeni forces have arbitrarily detained people, including children, abused detainees and held them in poor conditions, and forcibly disappeared people perceived to be political opponents or security threats.
- The Houthis have also taken hostages
- In 2018, the UN Group of Eminent Experts on Yemen concluded that the Houthi, Yemeni, Saudi, and UAE forces were credibly implicated in detainee-related abuse



# Attacks on Civil Society

- The Houthis have detained students, human rights defenders, journalists, perceived political opponents, and members of the Baha'i religious community.
- The Saudi-led coalition and Yemeni government forces have also harassed, intimidated, and arrested activists and journalists.
- Since May 2017, the coalition has restricted travel routes for journalists and international human rights organizations, including Human Rights Watch, to areas of Yemen under Houthi control, including via UN flights.
- The coalition has kept Sanaa International Airport closed since August 2016.

# Blocking and Impeding Humanitarian Access

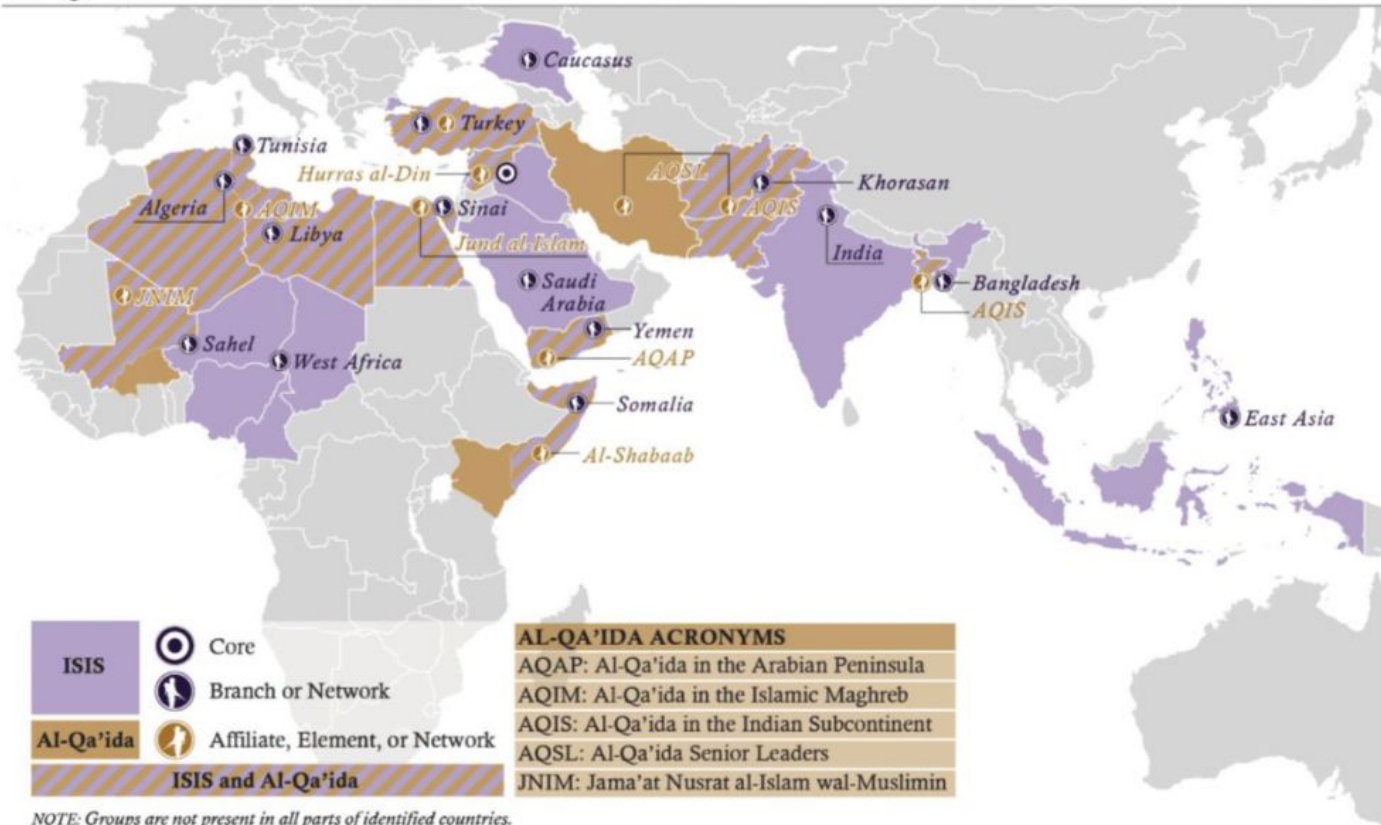
- The UN considers Yemen to be the world's largest humanitarian crisis.
- The Saudi-led coalition's restrictions on imports have worsened the dire humanitarian situation: it has delayed and diverted fuel tankers, closed critical ports, and stopped goods from entering Houthi-controlled seaports.
- Houthi forces have blocked and confiscated food and medical supplies and denied access to populations in need.
- Aid workers have been kidnapped, arbitrarily detained, and killed while conducting humanitarian operations in Yemen.



# Children and Armed Conflict

- Houthi forces, government and pro-government forces, and other armed groups have used child soldiers. In 2017, the UN verified 842 cases of recruitment and use of boys as young as 11, nearly two-thirds of which were attributable to Houthi forces.
- UN Secretary-General said in the annual report submitted to the Security Council that the coalition killed and wounded 729 Yemeni children in 2018.
- The UN said it verified 1,689 child casualties in Yemen last year, including the killing of 576 and the maiming of 1,113.

## Al-Qa'ida and ISIS as of 2018



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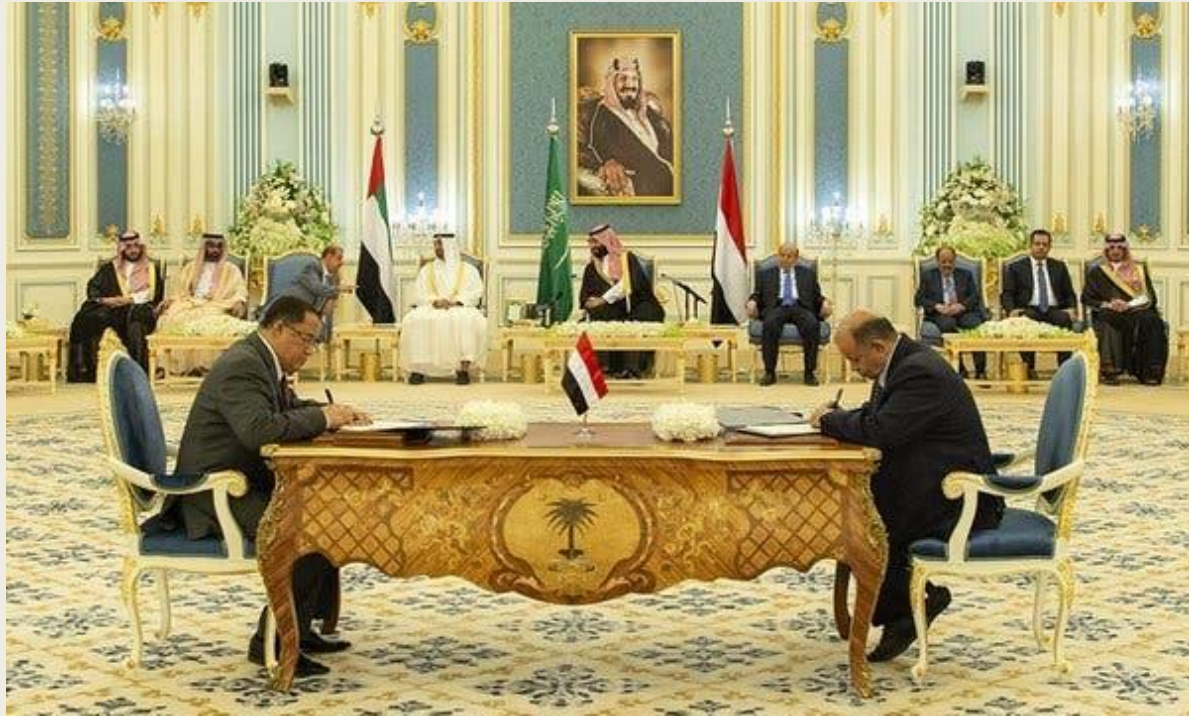
## Terrorism and Counterterrorism

- Both Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula and the Islamic State in Yemen have claimed responsibility for suicide and other bombings.

# Women's and Girls' Rights

- An estimated 3 million women and girls were at risk of violence by 2018, according to the UN. Forced marriage rates, including child marriage, have increased. Yemen has no minimum age of marriage. They cannot marry without the permission of their male guardian and do not have equal rights to divorce, inheritance, or child custody. Lack of legal protection leaves them exposed to domestic and sexual violence.

# THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE YEMENI GOVERNMENT AND SOUTHERN SEPARATISTS



# The agreement solves two short-term problems

It prevents a war-within-a-war between the southern separatists and Hadi's government.

It also provides more credibility to future government negotiations with the Houthis





THANK YOU FOR  
YOUR ATTENTION!

