



A man carries an injured child through the aftermath of a Saudi-led airstrike in Sana'a in August 2017 ([BBC](#))

Addressing Allegations of Crimes Against Humanity in Yemen

UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

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LETTER FROM THE DAIS

Dear Delegates of the Human Rights Council,

We are delighted to welcome you to this year's MinasMUN conference and are honored to serve as the chairs of this prestigious committee.

The Human Rights Council stands at the forefront of international efforts to promote and protect fundamental freedoms worldwide. As one of the most influential committees within Model UN, it requires delegates to approach debate with diplomacy, empathy, and a strong understanding of international human rights principles. Throughout the conference, you will be challenged to analyze complex global issues, balance national interests with universal values, and work collaboratively toward meaningful and realistic solutions.

We strongly encourage you to use this study guide as a foundation for your research, while also exploring additional sources to deepen your knowledge of the topic and its broader implications. Please feel free to reach out if you have questions, comments, or concerns whatsoever. We look forward to assisting and guiding you through UN procedures.

Sincerely,

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COMMITTEE DESCRIPTION



UN Human Rights Council in Geneva, Switzerland. ([International Service for Human Rights](#))

The Human Rights Council is an intergovernmental body of the United Nations responsible for the promotion and protection of human rights around the world. Established in 2006, the Council is composed of 47 Member States, which are elected by the UN General Assembly for staggered three-year terms. Seats are allocated according to geographic distribution, ensuring representation from all regions of the world.

The Human Rights Council addresses situations of human rights violations, including gross and systematic abuses, and makes recommendations on how to better implement international human rights standards. The Council's headquarters are located at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, where it meets regularly throughout the year in scheduled sessions, as well as in special sessions convened in response to urgent human rights crises.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Introduction

The conflict in Yemen has evolved into one of the world's most severe humanitarian crises, marked by escalating violence and widespread hunger. More than a decade of conflict has left the country deeply unstable, with civilians increasingly targeted and essential infrastructure repeatedly damaged. The situation in Yemen does not exist in isolation; rather, it is closely connected to broader regional tensions that continue to fuel insecurity across the Middle East.

The conflict primarily pits the Houthi movement against Yemen's internationally recognized government, backed by a Saudi-led coalition. Regional rivalries and international political divisions have complicated peace efforts and contributed to ongoing instability.

Alongside the violence, Yemen is facing one of the world's worst humanitarian emergencies. The country is currently the third most food-insecure in the world, with over 17 million people experiencing hunger and millions more at risk of extreme starvation. Approximately 70% of households lack sufficient food, and 21.6 million people, nearly two-thirds of the population, require humanitarian assistance, including 11 million children. Widespread displacement, the collapse of healthcare services, and repeated disruptions to aid delivery have worsened civilian suffering.

History

Early Religious and Political Foundations

The roots of Yemen's conflict stretch back centuries and are intertwined with the country's religious and political history. Islam in Yemen has traditionally been divided into Sunni Islam,

primarily the Shafi'i school, dominant in the South, and Zaydi Shia Islam, concentrated in the North. Zaydism, a distinct branch of Shia Islam, historically held political authority through a series of imams who ruled much of northern Yemen for nearly a thousand years.

Following the decline of regional dynasties and increased foreign intervention by the Ottoman Empire, Yemen gradually fragmented. After the Ottoman defeat in World War I, North Yemen emerged as a Zaydi-led monarchy, while South Yemen later became a socialist state aligned with the Soviet Union. These divisions entrenched regional, sectarian, and political inequalities that would later resurface.

In 1962, North Yemen experienced a civil war between partisans of the Mutawakkilite Kingdom and supporters of the Yemen Arab Republic, drawing in foreign powers, including Saudi Arabia. Although the republic ultimately prevailed, governance remained fragile, and political power continued to be centralized among elite networks.

Unification of the Saleh Era (1990 - 2011)

The Yemen unification took place on 22 May 1990, under President Ali Abdullah Saleh, when the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (South Yemen) and the Yemen Arab Republic (North Yemen) merged together, forming the modern Republic of Yemen.

During this period, economic mismanagement, corruption, and uneven development intensified dissatisfaction, particularly in the north and south. In the northern Sa'dah region, the Houthi movement, rooted in Zaydi revivalism, emerged in the early 2000s, accusing the government of political exclusion and cultural repression. This led to a series of localized conflicts known as the Sa'dah Wars.

The Arab Spring and the Collapse of Political Transition (2011- 2014)

Inspired by the Arab Spring, mass protests erupted in Yemen in 2011, forcing Saleh to end his three-decade-long rule, marked by the perceived lack of democratic reform, widespread corruption, and human rights abuses carried out by him and his allies. Power was transferred to his deputy, Abd Rabbu Mansour Hadi, under a Gulf Cooperation Council and UN-backed transitional plan. However, the transition failed to resolve Yemen's structural problems. President Hadi struggled to assert authority, the economy deteriorated, and armed groups expanded their influence. In 2014, the Houthis capitalized on widespread dissatisfaction and seized the capital, Sana'a, forcing Hadi's government to flee. This marked the beginning of Yemen's full-scale civil war.

Regionalization and the Saudi-Iran Rivalry

The Yemeni conflict quickly transformed into a regional proxy war. In March 2015, Saudi Arabia launched a military intervention, leading a coalition aimed at restoring Hadi's government and countering perceived Iranian influence. Iran has been accused of supporting the Houthis politically and militarily, a claim it denies. This rivalry is rooted in decades of tension between Saudi Arabia and Iran, particularly following the Iranian Revolution of 1979, which reshaped regional power dynamics and intensified Sunni-Shia competition. Subsequent conflicts, including the Iran-Iraq War, the Iraqi civil war, and the Arab Spring, further entrenched proxy warfare across the Middle East, with Yemen becoming one of its most destructive arenas.

Saudi-led airstrikes and naval blockades, combined with Houthi missile and drone attacks, escalated the conflict and significantly worsened civilian suffering. The blockade, in particular, played a central role in triggering widespread food insecurity and economic collapse.

Fragmentation of Armed Actors and Internal Divisions

The fragmentation of Yemen's conflict is partly shaped by the Sunni-Shia divide, which originated from a dispute over leadership following the death of the Prophet Muhammad. Today, Sunnis represent roughly 85% of the global Muslim population, while Shia communities form a minority. In Yemen, this divide is reflected in the confrontation between the Zaydi Shia-aligned Houthi movement and the Sunni-backed internationally recognized government, supported by Saudi Arabia. However, Yemen's war cannot be reduced to sectarianism alone.

Despite these sectarian affiliations, Yemen's war is not purely a Sunni-Shia conflict. Many tribal and political alliances in Yemen are pragmatic rather than ideological, with shifting loyalties based on local power struggles rather than religious identity. Even the Houthis, despite their ties to Iran, were once allied with former President Saleh, a Sunni, before turning against him in 2017.

Regional intervention has intensified these divisions. The Houthis receive support from Iran and actors such as Hezbollah, while Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates back government forces and allied militias. Since 2015, the Saudi-led coalition has carried out over 25,000 airstrikes, while the Houthis have launched hundreds of missile and drone attacks.

The conflict has also allowed extremist groups, including Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula and ISIS in Yemen, to exploit the security vacuum. At the same time, internal divisions within the anti-Houthi camp, particularly the rise of the Southern Transitional Council (STC), which seeks southern independence, have further weakened national cohesion.

Humanitarian Consequences and Allegations of Crimes Against Humanity

After nearly a decade of conflict, Yemen represents one of the gravest human rights and humanitarian crises in the world, with widespread allegations of war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by all parties to the conflict. According to UN estimates, over 377,000 people will have died by 2022, with approximately 60% of deaths caused indirectly by hunger, disease, and the collapse of essential services rather than direct violence.

- Widespread Civilian Harm and Unlawful Killings

All parties to the conflict, including the Houthis, the internationally recognized Yemeni government, the Saudi Arabia-led coalition, and UAE-backed forces, have been implicated in arbitrary and unlawful killings. Between August 2023 and July 2024 alone, Yemen's National Commission for the Investigation of Alleged Violations of Human Rights documented 74 cases of extrajudicial killings, with 42 attributed to Houthi forces and 12 to government-backed forces. Indiscriminate attacks on homes, markets, mosques, schools, and hospitals have been repeatedly documented. These attacks violate the principles of distinction and proportionality under international humanitarian law and, when carried out systematically, may amount to war crimes.

- Arbitrary Detention, Torture, and Enforced Disappearances

Arbitrary detention and enforced disappearance are widespread. In 2023, Yemeni NGOs documented 833 cases of arbitrary detention, of which over 90 % were attributed to Houthi authorities. Between May and June 2024, the Houthis detained more than 60 humanitarian workers, including at least 13 UN staff members, with several detainees reportedly subjected to torture. UN experts confirmed that at least 5 detainees died in custody during the year as a result of abuse. Torture methods reported include beatings, starvation, electric shocks, mock executions, and sexual violence, particularly in Houthi-controlled detention facilities.

UAE-backed forces, including the Southern Transitional Council, have also been accused of operating informal prisons where detainees were forcibly disappeared.

- Children and Vulnerable Groups

Children have borne a disproportionate share of the suffering. More than 11 million children require humanitarian assistance, and over 11,200 have been killed or maimed since the conflict began. Armed groups on all sides have recruited child soldiers; however, the Houthis are responsible for the majority of documented cases. Human Rights Watch reported that over 70,000 fighters, including children as young as 10, were recruited by the Houthis since late 2023. By mid-2024, at least 696 Houthi-run indoctrination camps enrolled approximately 15,000 children. Early and forced marriage has increased sharply as families cope with economic collapse. 30 % of Yemeni girls marry before age 18, and 1.3 million before age 15, exposing them to lifelong health risks and economic exclusion.

- Food Insecurity, Blockades, and Aid Obstruction

Yemen remains the third most food-insecure country globally. In 2024, 17 million people struggled to access sufficient food, with 70 % of households unable to meet daily needs. More than 21 million Yemenis depend on humanitarian assistance, yet aid delivery is routinely obstructed. Both the Houthis and the government impose excessive regulations, while aid workers face intimidation, detention, and violence. The Houthi siege of Taiz, in place since 2015, has severely restricted access to food, medicine, and clean water. UN agencies report that 17.8 million people lack access to safe drinking water, and 6.1 million face emergency-level food insecurity, conditions that may constitute the use of starvation as a method of warfare, prohibited under international law.

- Landmines and Migrants

Landmines and unexploded ordnance continue to kill civilians long after active fighting subsides. In 2022, a child was killed or injured by explosive remnants every two days on average. Houthi forces have continued to deploy anti-personnel landmines, violating the Mine Ban Treaty. Particularly grave are allegations that Saudi border guards killed hundreds of Ethiopian migrants and asylum seekers attempting to cross from Yemen, using firearms and explosive weapons. Human Rights Watch has stated that, if these killings were part of state policy, they may constitute crimes against humanity.

- Accountability Gap

Despite the scale of abuses, accountability remains virtually nonexistent. Since the UN Human Rights Council ended the mandate of the Group of Eminent Experts on Yemen in 2021, no independent international mechanism exists to investigate violations or preserve evidence. Victims have received little to no reparations, and peace negotiations have largely excluded discussions of justice. As a result, Yemen's humanitarian catastrophe is not only a crisis of aid but a crisis of accountability, placing human rights at the center of any sustainable political solution.

Current Situation

Yemen's current political and security landscape is the product of years of fragmented governance, unresolved conflict, and continuing foreign involvement. In 2022, President Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi formally transferred power to a Presidential Leadership Council in an effort to unify anti-Houthi factions and revive stalled peace efforts. Despite this restructuring, the conflict in Yemen remains unresolved, with territorial control divided among multiple actors.

The Houthis continue to control much of northern Yemen, including the capital, while the internationally recognized government and allied forces operate primarily in the south and east. Recently, the Houthis have sought to elevate their regional profile by linking their struggle to the Hamas-Israel war, framing their actions as part of a broader Shia resistance movement. In October 2023, they launched missiles and drones toward Israel and began targeting commercial shipping in the Red Sea, hijacking one vessel and attacking at least 33 others by January 2024. These actions disrupted nearly 15 % of global seaborne trade, prompting military responses from the United States and the United Kingdom.

Regionally, the rivalry between Iran and Saudi Arabia continues to shape the conflict. Although the two states agreed in April 2023, through a China-brokered deal, to restore diplomatic relations, their competing strategic interests in Yemen persist. Saudi-Houthi talks, mediated by Oman and supported by the United Nations, have resumed intermittently since the lapse of the UN-brokered ceasefire in October 2022. While large-scale hostilities remain relatively low, negotiations have produced few tangible outcomes. Western nations, especially the U.S., remain deeply entangled in the region's conflicts, balancing their support for Israel with attempts to maintain strategic alliances with Arab states. As long as external powers prioritize their own strategic goals over genuine peace efforts, the Middle East is likely to remain a region of perpetual conflict.

Past UN Actions/Previous Attempts to Solve the Issue:

The following UN resolutions, reports, and debates illustrate the deep-rooted geopolitical struggles in the Middle East, particularly the situation in Yemen and the Saudi-Iranian proxy war.

UN Panel of Experts Reports on Yemen (Annual Reports since 2015)

Since 2015, the UN Panel of Experts on Yemen has provided detailed investigations into the war that is ongoing in the country, exposing violations of international law by both sides. Reports highlight Iran's support for the Houthis, including the smuggling of advanced weapons such as ballistic missiles and drones. At the same time, the Saudi-led coalition's airstrikes have been scrutinized for targeting civilians and critical infrastructure. These findings have fueled international debates over accountability in Yemen's war and the Saudi-Iranian proxy conflict.

UN Mediation Efforts - Special Envoys for Yemen

The UN has made multiple diplomatic attempts to broker peace between the warring factions in Yemen, particularly between the Saudi-backed Yemeni government and the Iran-backed Houthis. Special Envoys Martin Griffiths (2018 - 2021) played a key role in securing the Stockholm Agreement (2018), a ceasefire deal for Hodeidah. His successor, Hans Grundberg (2021 - present), has continued efforts to push for inclusive peace talks, though tensions remain high. These mediation efforts reflect the UN's struggle to resolve proxy wars in the Middle East.

UN Human Rights Council Reports on Yemen (2017 - 2021)

Between 2017 and 2021, the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) published multiple reports documenting war crimes and human rights violations in Yemen. These reports condemned Houthi forces for indiscriminate shelling, child soldier recruitment, and executions, and the Saudi-led coalition for airstrikes targeting hospitals, schools, and civilians.

The Saudi-Iranian rivalry exacerbates the war's brutality, with both sides using Yemen as a battlefield for their regional power struggle. In 2021, under Saudi pressure, the UNHRC voted to

end its independent war crimes investigation in Yemen, illustrating the limitations of international accountability.

UN Security Council Resolution 1696 (2006) - Iran's Nuclear Program

This pivotal resolution marked the beginning of UN sanctions on Iran. The Security Council demanded that Iran suspend uranium enrichment, fearing it would lead to nuclear weapons development. Iran rejected the demands, calling them unjust and politically motivated. The resolution set the stage for escalating sanctions, leading to further measures in 2007, 2008, and 2010. Israel viewed this resolution as a necessary step against a potential Iranian nuclear threat and continued to advocate for harsher sanctions and military deterrence. This resolution intensified Iran's tensions with the West and Israel, fueling conflicts in Lebanon, Syria, and the Gulf.

POSITION OF MAJOR BLOCS

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia is one of the primary actors in the Yemeni conflict due to its leadership of the Saudi-led coalition, which began military intervention in 2015 following the Houthi takeover of Sana'a. The Kingdom maintains that its involvement was initiated at the request of Yemen's internationally recognized government and was intended to restore political legitimacy and counter Iranian influence in the region.

However, Saudi Arabia has faced serious allegations of violations of international humanitarian law, particularly regarding airstrikes that have resulted in civilian casualties and the destruction of infrastructure such as hospitals, schools, and water facilities. Human rights organizations and UN reports have raised concerns about possible war crimes and potential crimes against humanity, particularly in relation to widespread and systematic attacks affecting civilians.

Saudi Arabia has generally rejected accusations of systematic wrongdoing and has emphasized its Joint Incidents Assessment Team (JIAT) as a domestic accountability mechanism. In the UNHRC, Saudi Arabia and its allies have opposed the continuation of independent international investigative mechanisms, arguing that such measures infringe upon state sovereignty.

The conflict has also affected Saudi Arabia through cross-border missile and drone attacks from Houthi forces, raising national security concerns. The Kingdom's broader goals include limiting Iranian regional influence, maintaining border security, and ensuring a friendly government in Yemen.

United Arab Emirates (UAE)

The United Arab Emirates has been a major actor in Yemen since joining the Saudi-led coalition in 2015, initially framing its involvement as support for Yemen's internationally recognized government and as part of a broader campaign against instability and armed non-state groups. Over time, the UAE's role became more distinct from Saudi Arabia's, with a strong emphasis on counterterrorism operations, control of strategic coastal areas, and influence over local security forces and political partners in southern Yemen.

The UAE has been widely linked to supporting and training local forces, including units associated with the Southern Transitional Council (STC), which advocates for greater southern autonomy or secession. This has contributed to fragmentation within the anti-Houthi camp, at times leading to clashes between UAE-backed forces and groups aligned with the internationally recognized government. The UAE's involvement has therefore shaped not only the conflict with the Houthis but also internal power struggles in Yemen's south.

The UAE has faced allegations from human rights organizations and UN-linked reporting of serious abuses by UAE-backed forces, including arbitrary detention, enforced disappearances, torture, and the operation of unofficial detention facilities. The UAE has generally denied systematic wrongdoing and emphasized its humanitarian aid contributions and counterterrorism objectives. In international forums, the UAE tends to favor political negotiations and domestic or coalition-led accountability rather than renewed UNHRC investigative mandates, often emphasizing sovereignty and stability. The conflict has affected the UAE through reputational costs, scrutiny of its regional military policy, and ongoing security concerns tied to regional escalation and maritime security around key shipping routes.

Iran

Iran is widely accused of supporting the Houthi movement (Ansar Allah), although it denies direct military control. It has been alleged that Iran has provided weapons, training, and financial

assistance to Houthi forces, contributing to the prolongation of the conflict. Iran frames its position as support for Yemeni self-determination and resistance against foreign intervention, particularly criticizing the Saudi-led coalition's military campaign.

Iran strongly condemns coalition airstrikes and has accused Saudi Arabia and its Western allies of committing war crimes. It frequently highlights civilian casualties and the humanitarian crisis, presenting the coalition's blockade and air campaign as primary drivers of famine and infrastructure collapse.

At the same time, Houthi forces have been accused of arbitrary detention, recruitment of child soldiers, indiscriminate shelling, and attacks on civilian areas, which have also raised concerns under international humanitarian law. Iran typically rejects allegations that it bears responsibility for these violations.

Geopolitically, Yemen represents part of a broader regional rivalry between Iran and Saudi Arabia. The issue has affected Iran diplomatically by intensifying sanctions pressure and increasing tensions with Western states. Iran's general goal is to expand regional influence while framing itself as opposing foreign intervention and supporting anti-Western resistance movements.

United States

The United States has played a complex role in the Yemeni conflict. While not directly conducting large-scale combat operations, the U.S. has provided logistical support, intelligence sharing, and arms sales to members of the Saudi-led coalition. This involvement has led to criticism regarding potential complicity in alleged violations of international humanitarian law.

The United States officially recognizes Yemen's internationally recognized government and has consistently framed the conflict as both a civil war and a regional security issue, particularly due to concerns about Iranian influence and terrorist groups such as Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP).

In recent years, the U.S. government has adjusted its policy, announcing an end to “offensive” support for coalition operations and increasing diplomatic efforts to encourage a negotiated settlement. The U.S. has also emphasized humanitarian assistance, becoming one of the largest donors to Yemen’s relief efforts.

Within the UNHRC, the United States has generally supported accountability measures and independent investigations, though critics argue that its strategic partnerships complicate its position. The conflict has affected U.S. foreign policy credibility, especially regarding consistency in human rights advocacy.

The U.S. aims to balance counterterrorism objectives, regional stability, alliance management, and human rights concerns.

United Kingdom

The United Kingdom has historically been a key diplomatic actor regarding Yemen, acting as the “penholder” on Yemen at the UN Security Council. It has supported UN-led peace processes and ceasefire negotiations.

However, the UK has also faced criticism for arms exports to Saudi Arabia, raising legal and ethical concerns about potential violations of international humanitarian law. Domestic court challenges have questioned whether continued arms sales are compatible with the UK’s obligations under international law.

The UK generally supports investigations into violations and has expressed concern over civilian casualties caused by all parties to the conflict. In the UNHRC, it has supported accountability frameworks, although its voting patterns have sometimes reflected broader diplomatic considerations.

The UK views Yemen through both a humanitarian and strategic lens, including maritime security in the Red Sea and Gulf region. The crisis has also affected UK foreign policy debates about arms trade regulations and human rights consistency.

Yemen

The internationally recognized Yemeni government maintains that it is the legitimate authority and that Houthi forces carried out an unlawful coup in 2014. It requested assistance from the Saudi-led coalition in 2015 to restore territorial control.

The government accuses the Houthis of committing widespread abuses, including arbitrary detention, recruitment of child soldiers, suppression of political opposition, and indiscriminate attacks.

At the same time, areas under government or coalition control have also seen allegations of abuse, corruption, and human rights violations, complicating the narrative of legitimacy.

The conflict has devastated Yemen economically, socially, and institutionally. State institutions have fragmented, public services have collapsed, and millions remain displaced.

The Yemeni government's goals include regaining territorial control, securing international recognition, and rebuilding state institutions. However, internal divisions and dependence on coalition support have limited its autonomy.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

Date	Description
1500s	Ottomans absorb part of Yemen into their empire, but are expelled in the 1600s.
1849	Ottomans return to the north.
1920	The Ottoman Empire dissolves, North Yemen gains independence, and is ruled by Imam Yahya.
1948	Yahya is assassinated, but his son Ahmad fights off the opponents of feudal rule and succeeds his father.
1962	Imam Ahmad dies and is succeeded by his son, but army officers seize power and set up the Yemen Arab Republic, sparking civil war between royalists supported by Saudi Arabia and republicans backed by Egypt.
1967	Britain withdraws from the south after years of a pro-independence insurgency, and its former territories unite as the People's Republic of Yemen.
1969	A communist coup renames the south the People's Democratic

	Republic of Yemen and reorients it towards the Soviet bloc.
1970	Republican forces triumph in the North Yemen civil war.
1978	Ali Abdallah Saleh becomes president of North Yemen.
1990	The two Yemens unite as the Republic of Yemen with Ali Abdallah Saleh as president, as the Soviet bloc implodes.
1995	Yemen and Eritrea clash over the disputed Hanish Islands in the Red Sea. International arbitration awarded the bulk of the archipelago to Yemen in 1998.
2002	Al-Qaeda attacks and badly damages the oil supertanker MV Limburg in the Gulf of Aden, killing one and injuring 12 crew members, and costing Yemen dearly in lost port revenues.
2009	The Yemeni army launches a fresh offensive against Houthi rebels in the northern Saada province. Tens of thousands of people are displaced by the fighting.
2012	Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi was inaugurated as president after uncontested elections, but is unable to counter Al-Qaeda attacks in the capital as the year goes on.
2014	Presidential panel approves draft federal constitution to

	accommodate Houthi and southern grievances, but Houthis seize control of most of Sana'a in August and reject the deal.
March 2015	The Islamic State carries out its first major attacks in Yemen, two suicide bombings targeting Shia mosques in Sana'a, in which 137 people are killed.
June 2015	Leader of Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, Nasser al-Wuhayshi, is killed in a US drone strike in Yemen.
2018	Southern Yemeni separatists, backed by the United Arab Emirates, seize control of Aden, the main city in the South.

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Group of Eminent Experts (GEE)

An independent UNHRC investigative body established in 2017 to examine violations committed by all parties in Yemen; its mandate ended in 2021.

International Humanitarian Law (IHL)

The body of law regulating conduct during armed conflict aimed at protecting civilians and restricting methods of warfare.

International Human Rights Law (IHRL)

Legal obligations that protect fundamental rights and freedoms of individuals at all times, including during armed conflict.

Accountability Mechanism

A legal or investigative process established to document violations and potentially prosecute those responsible for international crimes.

Child Soldier Recruitment

The use or enlistment of individuals under 18 in armed conflict is prohibited under international law.

Arbitrary Detention

Detention without legal basis, due process, or fair trial guarantees.

Universal Jurisdiction

The ability of national courts to prosecute serious international crimes regardless of where they were committed.

State Sovereignty

The principle that states have authority over their internal affairs without external interference.

Responsibility to Protect (R2P)

The international norm that states must protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity.

FURTHER RESEARCH

1. Group of Eminent Experts (GEE) on Yemen archive

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/hrc/yemen-gee/index>

2. UN Security Council Sanctions Committee (2140) – Panel of Experts reports

<https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/sanctions/2140/panel-of-experts/work-and-mandate/reports?>

3. International Crisis Group

<https://www.crisisgroup.org/middle-east-north-africa/gulf-and-arabian-peninsula/yemen>

4. UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)

<https://www.unocha.org/yemen>

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- ❖ What legal threshold must be met for violations in Yemen to qualify as crimes against humanity rather than isolated war crimes?
- ❖ How can the UNHRC promote accountability while respecting the principle of state sovereignty?
- ❖ Should the Human Rights Council re-establish an independent international investigative mechanism for Yemen? If so, what powers should it have?
- ❖ What mechanisms can ensure accountability for non-state armed groups as well as state actors?
- ❖ How can the international community address allegations of violations without jeopardizing ongoing peace negotiations?
- ❖ What role should arms-exporting states play in preventing further violations of international humanitarian law?
- ❖ How can humanitarian access be guaranteed in areas controlled by different armed factions?
- ❖ What measures can be implemented to protect vulnerable populations, including children, detainees, and internally displaced persons?
- ❖ How can regional actors contribute constructively to accountability and reconciliation efforts?
- ❖ What long-term justice mechanisms (truth commissions, hybrid courts, ICC referral, domestic reform) would be most realistic for Yemen's context?

WORKS CITED

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