

# Yemen Talks Stalled Over Terms of Negotiations in Geneva

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*United Nations talks were scheduled to begin on June 14 in Geneva, Switzerland ostensibly seeking to end the escalating imperialist-coordinated war against the people of Yemen.*

These are first announced attempts to reach a political settlement to the protracted struggle for control of what is described as the most underdeveloped state in the region.

Since March 26, the Saudi Arabian and Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) alliance has daily bombed the major population centers in Yemen as well as providing material and logistical support to the western-allied militias which are fighting against the advances of the Ansurallah.

The Houthis are accused of being supported by the Islamic Republic of Iran and the war is being characterized as a proxy conflict between Tehran and Riyadh.

Estimates that there have been anywhere between 2,000-4,000 deaths in Yemen since the bombing began, has created an extreme humanitarian crisis inside the country with as many as 500,000 people displaced.

During Sept. 2014, the Ansurallah took control of key areas of the capital of Sanaa and later spread their influence into the southern port city of Aden.

It is only the resistance of the Ansurallah forces to the United States and Saudi-GCC backed alliance that has forced the plans for talks in Geneva. Yet the terms of the discussions are serving as an impediment to any real cessation of hostilities.

The fugitive President Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi said prior to the scheduled meetings in Geneva that the basis of the talks would be centered-around returning him to power in Sanaa.

Prior to the recent plans for talks, the UN Security Council passed a resolution during April which favors the western-backed forces leading to the Ansurallah request that the nature of the discussions be expanded to include a transitional program for a new unity government.

A Wall Street Journal report notes that fugitive President Hadi is demanding that the talks focus on implementing UN Security Council resolution 2216, which was adopted in April mandating that the Houthis pull back from the parts of Yemen they have seized. But the Houthis said that the negotiations need to focus on a more inclusive political dispensation that would result in Mr. Hadi's resignation, the writing of a new Yemeni constitution and the scheduling of democratic elections.

Problems involving the transportation of Ansurallah leaders to Geneva along with other political difficulties were the causes for the delay in the meetings which were slated to begin on June 14. The talks were then moved to the following day but this was not possible either.

This same Wall Street Journal article says “Travel snags delayed the first significant talks between Yemen’s warring factions on Monday (June 15), as United Nations secretary-general Ban ki-Moon warned that continued fighting threatened the nation’s survival and offered refuge to terror groups. A plane carrying Yemen’s Shiite Houthi rebel delegation from the Yemeni capital of Sanaa to Geneva was grounded for eight hours in neighboring Djibouti Sunday then barred from landing in Cairo to pick up more officials, according to a Houthi spokesman. It wasn’t immediately clear where the plane was on Monday evening.” (June 15)

The Horn of Africa nation of Djibouti houses the largest Pentagon military base in Africa at Camp Lemonnier. Egypt’s military-turned-civilian regime of President Abdel-Fattah al-Sisi has been on board with the Saudi-GCC war against Yemen, with Cairo being the second largest recipient of direct aid from Washington internationally, only following the State of Israel.

In addition to the proposed talks in Geneva, in Riyadh the Organization of Islamic Conference arranged for Iran to participate in other discussions on resolving the situation in Yemen.

According to Press TV “The Iranian deputy foreign minister for Arab and African affairs has arrived in Saudi Arabia to take part in high-level talks attended by senior officials from Muslim countries on the ongoing conflict in Yemen. Hossein Amir-Abdollahian arrived in the capital Riyadh on Monday (June 15) to attend a meeting of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) on the Yemen issue, AFP reported.” (June 15)

This same article goes on to say “The extraordinary meeting, which is to be held on Tuesday (June 16) in the Red Sea city of Jeddah, is based on a request by the deposed government of Yemen, the OIC said in a statement, adding that the gathering has the backing of the majority of its member states. Amir-Abdollahian’s visit to Riyadh is the first such high-level trip by an Iranian official since Saudi Arabia started its aggression against Yemen almost three months ago.”

### **What’s Behind the Problems in the Talks?**

Moreover, prior to the beginning of the negotiations in Europe, difficulties associated with the character of the deliberations gave pause to the Ansurallah (Houthis) movement which has taken over large sections of Yemen forcing the U.S. and Saudi-Arabian supported former President Hadi into the open arms of Riyadh and Washington.

The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) reported on June 15 that despite the absence of the Ansurallah representatives who remained stranded in Djibouti and Cairo at the time, the talks were started anyway. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon stressed that the parties should resolve their differences otherwise Yemen would be destroyed.

However, the source of the conflict is the role of U.S. imperialism which has utilized Yemen as major base in its so-called “war on terrorism.” Numerous drone attacks and targeted assassinations have been carried out in Yemen. Despite the withdrawal of 100 U.S. Special Forces and state department personnel earlier in 2015, the Saudi-GCC forces are objectively

waging war on behalf of Washington and Wall Street.

Cross border operations by the Houthis into Saudi Arabia are continuing.

The BBC reports "In recent weeks, fighting between Saudi forces and the Houthis has intensified on Yemen's border with Saudi Arabia. On Saturday (June 13), Saudi Arabia claimed to have shot down a Scud missile fired by the Houthis. The attack followed fighting on the border on Friday, in which four Saudi soldiers and a number of Yemeni rebels died. On the same day, bombs hit the Old City of Yemen's capital, Sanaa, killing five people according to local sources." (June 15)

The UNESCO agency decried recent attacks on designated heritage sites by the Saudi-GCC alliance fighter bombers. Moreover, the entire population of Yemen is being terrorized by the elements backed by Washington.

### **U.S. Foreign Policy Collapses Again**

Yemen represents the failed foreign policy of successive U.S. administrations aimed at controlling for the purpose of exploitation the entire regions of the Middle East, North and East Africa. Nonetheless, the people in Yemen are building new alliances that are effectively challenging imperialist rule.

Anti-imperialist forces in the West must seriously study the history and political situation in Yemen. The developments in the area suggest that no matter how impoverished the people in the oppressed nations any efforts on their parts to exert independence and sovereignty is considered a serious threat warranting full-scale war and destruction.

In other areas throughout the regions, U.S. interventions have resulted in further underdevelopment and instability. From Iraq, Syria, Libya, Sudan and Egypt into the current crisis in the Mediterranean, Pentagon and Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) wars of regime-change have illustrated the failure of imperialism in the present period. The only choice the peoples of the regions have is to unite in a program of action aimed at defeating the foreign policy imperatives of Washington and Brussels.

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