

# The war in Yemen

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# Geography



# Demography

- Total population: 27 million
- Religious affiliation
  - Sunni Muslims: 60%?
    - Mainly in centre and south
  - Zaydi Muslims (branch of Shia close to Sunni Islam): 40%?
    - In north
- Tribal groupings
  - Hashid
  - Bakil
  - Madhhij

# Political situation prior to 2011

- Country ruled by Ali Abdullah Saleh since 1982
  - leader of General People's Congress party
- Other political parties (more or less able to function and be represented in parliament)
  - Islah
    - Sunni party; close to Muslim Brotherhood
  - Yemeni Socialist Party
    - former ruling party of Soviet-aligned People's Democratic Republic of Yemen ('South Yemen')
  - numerous other parties

# Economic and security situation up to 2011

- Economy
  - Country mismanaged and corrupt
  - Dire economic situation as oil revenues decline
- Security
  - Repeated rebellions by Zaydi fundamentalist Houthis in far north of country
  - Spread of Al-Qaeda in various other areas

# Yemeni revolution: 2011

- 2011
  - Popular uprising against Ali Abdullah Saleh's government, brutally suppressed
  - With Saudi help, Saleh manages initially to cling onto power
- 2012
  - Deal brokered involving Saudi Arabia in which Saleh steps down in favour of his deputy Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi
  - Hadi to stand down after two years with subsequent free elections
- 2014
  - National Dialogue Conference ends after ten months, agrees document on which new constitution will be based
- 2015
  - Agreement breaks down; Houthis take capital San'a and later former southern capital Aden
  - Former President Saleh, who still controls army allies with Houthis
  - Saudi Arabia and UAE launch war against Houthi-Saleh alliance
- 2017
  - Former President Saleh tries to switch alliance back to Saudis; is killed by Houthis

# Points

- Saudis opposed original popular uprising, fearing democratic state on their border
- Situation is complex with multiple groups
  - not correct to say that this is Houthis vs. legitimate government
  - not correct to say that this is Sunni vs. Shia conflict
  - unclear how much support Iran has provided to Houthis
- US and Britain continue to supply Saudi Arabia with vast amounts of weapons, providing targeting information, and help Saudis enforce sea blockade on Yemen

# Current humanitarian situation

- More than 10,000\* people killed, 50,000 wounded, and 2 million displaced due to the war, according to the UN
- More than 50,000 children are believed to have died in Yemen in 2017, according to Save the Children
- More than 22 million people, including 11 million children, are in need of humanitarian assistance, according to UN officials and the International Committee of the Red Cross
- More than 8 million people are totally dependent on food assistance and considered a "step away from famine", according to the UN
- An estimated 17.8 million Yemenis are considered "food insecure," meaning they do not know where their next meal will come from, according to the UN
- More than 400,000 children are suffering from acute malnutrition, according to the World Food Program
- Some 15.7 million Yemenis lack access to safe drinking water and adequate sanitation services, according to the ICRC
- Some 16.4 million Yemenis lack access to adequate health care, according to the UN

<https://www.ctvnews.ca/world/yemen-the-world-s-worst-humanitarian-crisis-in-numbers-1.3769945>



Thank you