



THE YEMEN TREND

November
2018



RESEARCH . ANALYSIS . ADVISORY

The Yemen Trend is a monthly digest that highlights Yemen's key economic and humanitarian trends and political and military developments, providing context and analysis where necessary in order to facilitate informed discussion deeply rooted in the facts.

Executive Overview

In preparation for planned UN consultations in Sweden in December, the UN envoy sought throughout November to advance a ceasefire, enact confidence building measures, and negotiate a potential UN role in managing Hodeidah port. Griffiths travelled to the port city on November 23, where he announced the “UN should now pursue actively and urgently detailed negotiations for a leading UN role in the Port.” The Hadi government repeated that it will not accept any arrangement that does not put the port back under its control. The battle for control of Hodeidah city escalated at the beginning of November, as part of a coordinated nationwide military escalation against the Houthis. Anti-Houthi forces made substantial territorial gains toward Hodeidah port, in what the spokesman of the Al-Amalika brigades said was an attempt to establish a siege around the city.

Meanwhile, in an effort to counter this escalation, on November 19 the UK presented to the Security Council a draft resolution calling “on all the parties to introduce a cessation of hostilities in Hodeidah governorate, to end all attacks on densely populated civilian areas across Yemen, and to cease all missile and UAV attacks.” Yet as its own deadline for a ceasefire ran out, the US sought to delay a vote on the resolution under apparent pressure from the coalition. Hundreds of people were killed in the fighting in Hodeidah city alone, and relief groups condemned the Houthis for militarizing health and relief facilities, having positioned snipers on a hospital rooftop and stationed military equipment beside humanitarian targets to shield them from attacks.

The riyal continued to gain significant value against the dollar throughout November. From a record low of around YER 820 to \$1 at the beginning of October, the market rate fluctuated downwards and at one point in November dipped below YER 400. At the same time, however, the prospect of famine remains ever present: the WFP voiced concern over “a nearly 50 percent decrease in operations at Hodeidah port over the last two weeks,” which follows a 53 percent reduction in food imports in October compared to the previous month. The executive director of the WFP said preliminary estimates indicate about 3.6 million Yemenis have become “severely” food insecure in recent months, meaning that 12-14 million people are now “literally marching toward the brink of starvation.”

Timeline

- Nov 02 Anti-Houthi forces announce renewed battle for Hodeidah city
- Nov 09 Sana'a-based information minister Abdulsalam Jaber defects to the Hadi camp
- Nov 09 The US announces it is stopping mid-air refueling at coalition's request
- Nov 12 UK foreign secretary meets Saudi crown prince, says Houthis permitted to fly injured to Oman
- Nov 14 Emirati crown prince meets Islah Party leaders in Abu Dhabi
- Nov 19 UK submits UNSC resolution calling for immediate ceasefire, vote delayed indefinitely
- Nov 21 UN envoy arrives in Sana'a for a four-day visit
- Nov 23 UN envoy visits Hodeidah port, calls for "leading UN role in the Port"
- Nov 28 US Senate votes to bring to the floor a resolution to halt US military support for the coalition
- Nov 29 Saudi Arabia delivers fuel to Mukalla port as part of \$60 million monthly grant

Humanitarian and Economic Trends

Millions more Yemenis have been pushed into “severe” food insecurity. The WFP is planning to increase the number of aid recipients it targets to around 12-14 million, up from 8 million currently. “These are people literally marching toward the brink of starvation,” executive director David Beasley [said](#) on November 16. Based on initial findings from the last few months, he said 3.6 million people have gone from being “food insecure” to being “very food insecure,” including 1 million in the last month alone. “This is not on the brink of a catastrophe, this is a catastrophe as we speak,” Beasley said, cautioning that on its current trajectory – and even if humanitarian support remains steady – IPC Phase 5 Famine could occur in about 6 months. Separately, the UN Population Fund [warned](#) that the looming famine “may put an estimated 2 million malnourished pregnant and lactating women at increased risk of death.”

Nearly 85,000 severely malnourished children have died since April 2015. “Even by a conservative estimate approximately 84,700 children with SAM [Severe Acute Malnutrition] may have died between April 2015 and October 2018,” according to a new [estimate](#) by Save the Children. “Children who die in this way suffer immensely as their vital organ functions slow down and eventually stop,” the aid organization’s country director said. “Their immune systems are so weak they are more prone to infections with some too frail to even cry.” Mercy Corps [said](#) in November that in the last month alone its teams in Yemen have reported that in certain areas cases of acute malnutrition have doubled.

“The 50 percent of Yemeni children under the age of 5 who are today chronically malnourished are all children who will never develop to their full intellectual potential. That is bad for the children and bad for Yemen, if we ever want Yemen to be a country where it is good to live as a child.”

Geert Cappelaere, UNICEF regional director
([source](#))

Imports through Hodeidah have declined drastically in the last two months. “WFP is very concerned about a nearly 50 percent decrease in operations at Hodeidah port over the last two weeks,” WFP spokesman Herve Verhoosel [said](#) on November

27. “Shipping companies appear to be reluctant to call to Hodeidah port because of the high levels of insecurity in the city,” he said, adding that the private sector must be reassured to return to the port. This follows a large reduction in food imports for the month of October, which UN OCHA’s [commodity tracker](#) shows declined 53 percent compared to the month before. Only 17 ships offloaded cargo in Hodeidah in October, compared to the pre-November 2017 blockade average of 35.

At the same time, Relief Chief Mark Lowcock welcomed the Hadi government’s suspension of food-related provisions in Cabinet Decree No. 75 (*see box below*). “Experts had warned that immediate implementation of this decree could lead to worse food shortages and higher prices,” he said in his November 16 [briefing](#) to the UN Security Council. Days prior, Anwar Gargash, the UAE’s foreign minister, referenced this development when he [wrote](#) “removal of letter of credit requirements by Yemeni Central Bank will facilitate more food imports.”

Background: Decree No. 75

Cabinet Decree No. 75 of the year 2018 was issued to require all payments for imports of basic commodities and oil derivatives to go through the banking sector. The decree was issued in September, and its regulations related to oil derivatives went into effect on [October 10](#). Mark Lowcock, the UN relief chief, told the Security Council in his October 23 [briefing](#) that two vessels carrying fuel had been denied entry at the request of the Hadi government, and that starting November 9 regulations on additional goods would begin to be enforced.

“Traders trying to import six key commodities – wheat, rice, sugar, milk, cooking oil and fuel oil derivatives – are now being told, as a result of new Government regulations, that they must secure lines of credit from the Central Bank,” he said. “But only a handful of lines of credit have been issued since June, mostly in just the last few days.” He warned that the regulations were already having an alarming impact, and that the UN assessed without removing or altering the new requirements, imports of basic goods could fall by half.

In mid-November, a WFP economic expert summarized the situation as follows: Cabinet Decree No. 75 “was essentially control of six commodities, mostly food commodities plus fuel. Which meant in simple terms

that all the purchases of that had to go through the government. Now they have lifted that, which is a positive development, but that element on the fuel side is still there. So what we need to do is to have the decree also lifted off of fuel so the private sector can come in and play a better role than they are able to play right now” ([minute 34:40](#)).

However, the above descriptions by Lowcock and WFP is not accurate. The decree did not require securing lines of credit from the Central Bank, nor did it require all purchases to go through the government. What the decree required is for importers to go through the commercial banking sector to secure their foreign currency requirements and make their international transfers, as opposed to the prevailing practice (for the past two years) of resorting to black markets and informal international transfers through money exchangers. Two key challenges emerged in applying the decree: one was ensuring that the commercial banking sector is able to service the importers’ needs, and the other was agreeing on the entity that will review any necessary documents that prove the financial transactions went through the banking sector for any given shipment.

While the application of the decree to food shipments has been suspended indefinitely, the current process in place for fuel shipments mandates the Economic Committee to review the documents and issue the permit for any fuel shipments entering the country. The Economic Committee was formed by President Hadi in August 2018, and it is chaired by Hafedh Fakher Meyad.

Four UNVIM-approved vessels carrying oil were blocked by the Hadi government. As of mid-November, OCHA [said](#) that as a result of Decree No. 75, four vessels carrying 52,835 metric tons of fuel were being denied permission at the request of the Yemeni government. All four vessels had already been inspected in Djibouti and given clearance by the UN Verification and Inspection Mechanism (UNVIM), OCHA said. However, DeepRoot sources confirmed these four vessels did not submit the required documentations to the Economic Committee to obtain the permit, possibly for fear of repercussions from Houthi authorities if these importers deal with the Economic Committee. It is worth noting that despite Decree No. 75 coming into effect on October 10, about 145,000 MT of fuel products successfully arrived through Hodeidah ports. Fuel imports rose slightly in October compared to September, but have consistently hovered at around only 25 percent of monthly national requirements.

Saudi Arabia delivered oil derivatives to Mukalla port on November 29. The shipment is part of the first installment of the grant equivalent to \$60 million in oil derivatives that Saudi Arabia is shipping to Yemen monthly, the first portion of which arrived in Aden on October 29. The fuel is to be distributed to 34 power plants in Hadhramawt, Shabwa, Al-Jawf, Marib, and Al-Mahrah. “The oil derivatives are estimated to benefit some 8.5 million people,” the Saudi government [said](#). The use of Mukalla port was notable given the delivery came as authority over the port was [handed](#) from the coalition to the local Yemeni authority, in a formal ceremony attended by the American and Saudi ambassadors.

The Houthis have militarized health facilities in Hodeidah city. Houthi fighters “have been entering some of our warehouses and using them as safe havens, violating the most fundamental humanitarian principles on earth,” WFP executive director Beasley said following his visit to Hodeidah city ([minute 18:00](#)). He added that Houthi snipers have stationed themselves on top of health facilities and positioned their equipment beside WFP warehouses and buildings “because they know that they won’t get struck.” His claims were echoed by rights groups, including Amnesty International, which [said](#) that “in an extremely worrying development, Houthi fighters arrived at a hospital in Hodeidah and recently took up positions atop a hospital roof, placing numerous civilians inside the building in grave danger.”

Developments concerning specific health and food storage locations are covered in the Hodeidah city battle timeline and map on page 9.

The riyal continued to regain significant value throughout November. The Aden-based Central Bank of Yemen (CBY) announced on November 21 that the exchange rate for imports of basic food commodities is YER [520](#) to \$1, while the market price fluctuated downwards and at one point in November dipped below YER 400. This marked a monumental shift from the record low rate of around YER [820](#) to \$1 at the beginning of October. Meanwhile, the governor of the CBY, Mohammed Zemam, pegged YER [450](#) as the “fair” rate for USD. Relatedly, on November 15 Saudi Arabia, the UAE, US, and UK formed an advisory committee that, [according](#) to the SPA, will meet once per month “to establish measures aimed at stabilizing Yemen’s currency, management of foreign currency flows and support the government of Yemen in improving its economic management.”

The Hadi government resumed pension payments in November. Prime Minister Maeen Saeed [said](#) on November 23 that the government took the decision “to pay pensions to retirees all over Yemen starting from this week, including those who are under Houthis’ control.” This includes a total of 123,240 retirees, of which 38,942 are [said](#) to be in areas under the control of the Houthis.

Political Developments

UN consultations are scheduled for early December. In his November 16 [briefing](#) to the UN Security Council, Envoy Martin Griffiths said he has “received firm assurances from the leadership of the Yemeni parties; the government of Yemen and Ansar Allah, that they are committed to attending these consultations.” Earlier in November, the UN [pushed](#) the talks back to the end of the year, as opposed to the end of November as originally proposed. US Secretary of Defense James Mattis [said](#) “it looks like very, very early in December, up in Sweden, we’ll see both the Houthi rebel side and the UN-recognised government, President Hadi’s government, will be up there,” adding that the UAE and Saudi Arabia are “fully on board.” The British ambassador to Yemen also [said](#) it would be the first week of December.

Griffiths travelled to Yemen from November 21 to 24. In Sana’a, he [met](#) with Houthi leader Abdulmalik Al-Houthi and the group’s top figures, including Supreme Political Council head Mehdi Al-Mashat and Houthi Revolutionary Committee head Mohammad Al-Houthi. He then travelled to Riyadh, where he [met](#) Vice President Ali Mohsen and Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Yamani.

Background: the call for a ceasefire & peace talks

On October 30, a ceasefire was called for by Secretary of Defense James Mattis ([speech](#) min. 39:34) and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo ([statement](#)). The cessation of hostilities was intended to enable Griffiths to reconvene the parties in November to discuss the demilitarization of the border and monitoring of the Houthis’ heavy weapons. The call marked the most direct pressure the US has exerted on the warring parties since late 2016, when then Secretary of State John Kerry began aggressively pushing for a ceasefire and the resumption of peace talks.

On October 31, the UN envoy issued a [statement](#) welcoming the call for peace talks. “I urge all concerned parties to seize this opportunity to engage constructively with our current efforts to swiftly resume political consultations to agree on a framework for political negotiations, and confidence-building measures, in particular enhancing the capacities of the Central Bank of Yemen, the exchange of prisoners and the reopening of Sanaa airport,” he said.

See the [October 2018 issue](#) of the Yemen Trend for more background details.

The draft UNSC resolution calling for an immediate ceasefire was delayed. Parallel to the envoy’s efforts, on November 19 the UK presented to the Security Council a draft resolution. It [reportedly](#) calls “on all the parties to introduce a cessation of hostilities in Hodeidah governorate, to end all attacks on densely populated civilian areas across Yemen, and to cease all missile and UAV attacks against regional countries and maritime areas.” The truce would go into effect the day the resolution is adopted, and within two weeks of that date “any bureaucratic impediments” that could restrict the flow of essential commercial and humanitarian goods should be removed. On November 27, with only two days remaining on the 30-day ceasefire deadline given by the US secretaries of defense and state, the US [told](#) the Council “we look forward to offering more substantive comments to the draft once we have more information on the outcomes of the upcoming consultations.”

CNN [quoted](#) several anonymous sources as saying the reason the US sought to delay the vote, and therefore an immediate ceasefire in Hodeidah, is US hesitance to anger Saudi Arabia, which remains strongly opposed to the draft. “The Saudis blackmailed a number of missions saying it was possible the government of Yemen won’t turn up in Stockholm if this goes through,” the Guardian [quoted](#) a diplomat as saying. “The reason [the Saudis and Emiratis] are so against this resolution is they just don’t want the security council to constrain their capacity for military action. They believe they can finish off the Houthis.”

Russia and the Houthis criticized the US as insincere in its calls for a political solution. On November 9, the Russian foreign ministry [said](#) the recent military escalation called into question the sincerity of the US call for a ceasefire given Washington’s direct military support for the coalition.

“So far, everything indicates that the US side is not planning to change its policy in Yemen and the parties to the armed confrontation in that country are still staking on settling the conflict by force,” the ministry stressed. Later in November, following reports the UNSC resolution would be delayed, the Supreme Political Council [said](#) “this position by the US undermines any coming consultations or negotiations. The goal is to spoil the whole peace process before it begins and it is contrary to the efforts of the UN in building confidence.”

Injured Houthis will be permitted to fly to Oman ahead of the peace talks. Following his November 12 meeting with the Saudi crown prince, the British foreign secretary [announced](#) that “subject to final reassurances, Coalition forces will now permit the UN to oversee a Houthi medical evacuation, including up to 50 wounded fighters, to Oman, ahead of another proposed round of peace talks in Sweden later this month.” The transfer of Houthis to Oman was one of the main issues the group cited in their refusal to attend the Geneva consultations in September, the other being lack of assurances that the delegation would be allowed unimpeded travel back to Sana’a. Regarding the latter issue, Griffiths told the Security Council in November that he would “be happy to travel myself, if necessary, with their delegation to the consultations, if that is needed.”

The Hadi government said it will not accept UN management of Hodeidah port. Griffiths visited the port on November 23, and [said](#) that during his meetings with the Houthi leadership in Sana’a, “we have agreed that the UN should now pursue actively and urgently detailed negotiations for a leading UN role in the Port and more broadly,” without elaborating. The idea of UN management of the port has been consistently opposed by the Hadi government. “We welcome any steps or efforts by the UN envoy to persuade the Iranian Houthi militias to withdraw from Hodeidah and its port and to hand it over to the legitimate authority,” Information Minister Moammar Al-Eryani [said](#) on November 23. He [added](#), “it’s not possible to accept any formula for the management of the port that does not guarantee its return to the local authority.”

Despite professed support and progress, no confidence building measures were implemented. On November 1, the Hadi government [announced](#) its readiness “to immediately launch talks on the process of confidence-building, primarily the release of all detainees and prisoners, as well as those who have been abducted or subject to enforced disappearance.” For its part, the Yemen-based portion of the Houthi delegation to the upcoming consultations also [discussed](#) confidence building measures with the envoy. “I would like to take the opportunity to announce to members of this Council that we are about to conclude an agreement between the parties on the exchange of prisoners and detainees, it may well be the first signed agreement between the parties in this conflict,” Griffiths told the Security Council on November 16. The envoy said “I am sure it will happen in the coming days,” but no deal had been announced by the end of the month.

Hadi made several senior appointments throughout November, including four new ministers and two governors. The main appointments included the positions of:

- **Minister of Defense:** Mohammed Al-Maqdashi [replaced](#) Mahmoud Al-Subaihi, who had retained the title despite remaining under Houthi imprisonment since his capture in March 2015. Al-Maqdashi had been serving as acting minister in recent months, and before that he served as the military chief of staff.
- **Military chief of staff:** Abdullah Al-Nakhi [replaced](#) Taher Al-Auqili, who was made an adviser to the president.
- **Governors of Aden and Shabwa:** Ahmed Salem Rabea was [promoted](#) from deputy governor to governor of Aden. His late father, Salem Rabea Ali, served as head of South Yemen in the 1970s. Mohammed Saleh Bin Adyew was [appointed](#) governor of Shabwa.
- **Permanent UN representative:** Abdullah Ali Fadl Al-Saadi [replaced](#) Ahmed Awadh Bin Mubarak as Yemen’s permanent representative to the UN. Al-Saadi had been serving as ambassador to Turkey, while Bin Mubarak will continue to serve as ambassador to the US.
- **Planning and International Cooperation (MoPIC), Electricity and Energy, and Justice** ministers were also [appointed](#). The new ministers of MoPIC and Electricity and Energy [previously](#) served as the manager and deputy manager of Aden Oil Refinery, respectively.

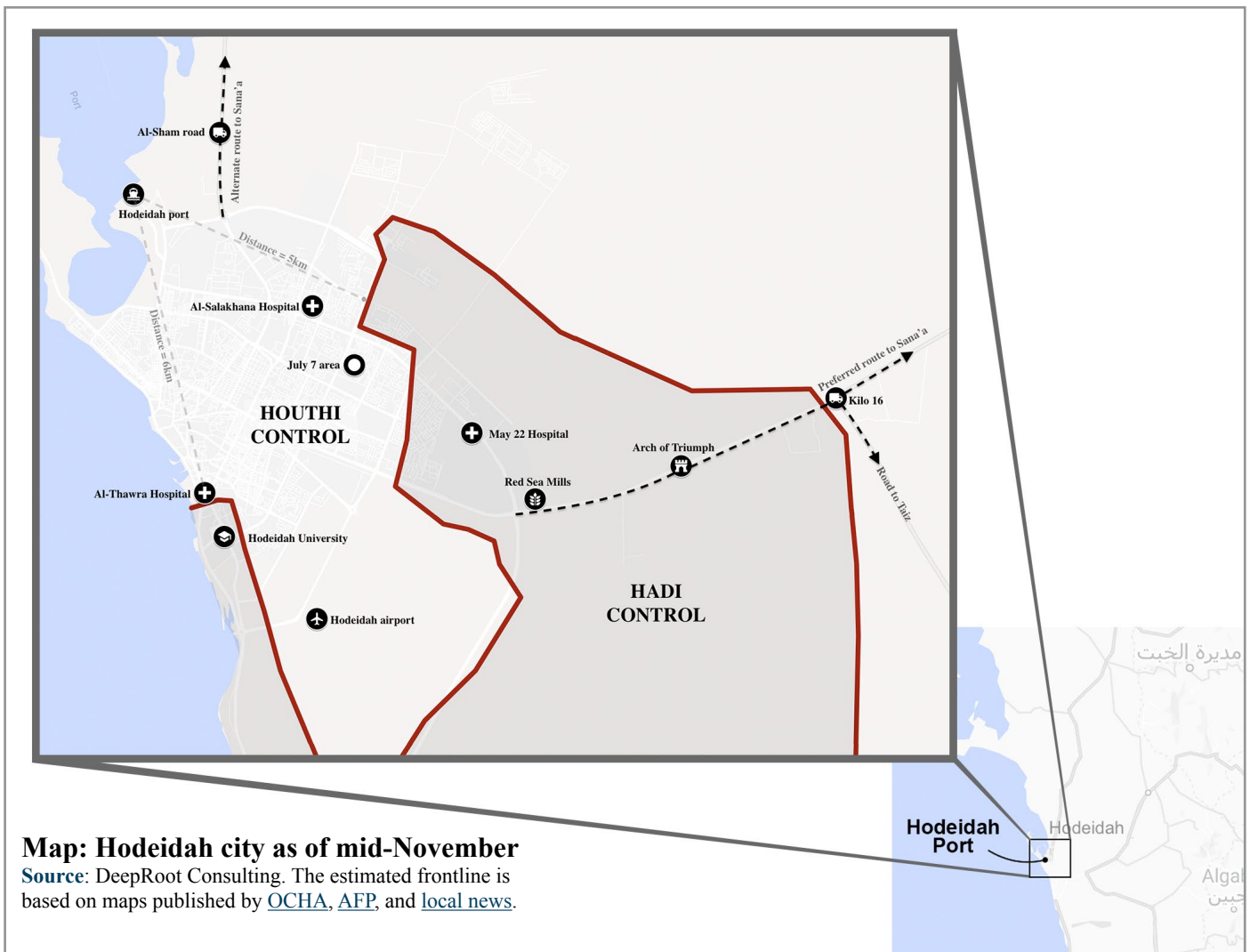
The Sana'a-based minister of information defected to the Hadi camp. In one of the most high-profile defections from the Houthi camp to date, on November 9 disputed information minister Abdulsalam Jaber fled with his family to Riyadh, where he spoke against the Houthis at a press conference. In Sana'a, the president of the Supreme Political Council appointed Dhaifallah Al-Shami, one of the Houthis' long-time media liaisons and Houthi Political Office members, as its new information minister.

The UAE & Islah Party leadership met in Abu Dhabi on November 14. Photos of the meeting were published on the social media of Emirati Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Zayed, who hosted party chairman Mohammed Al-Yadoumi and secretary general Abdulwahab Al-Anesi. The thinly veiled conflict between the UAE and Islah is perhaps the largest fissure within the anti-Houthi alliance, and the last time the three figures met publicly was in December 2017, in a surprise meeting hosted by Bin Zayed's counterpart in Riyadh.

Military and Security Developments

The battle for control of Hodeidah city escalated at the beginning of November, following a buildup of Hadi and coalition troops throughout October. The street-to-street fighting left a high number of casualties: The AP said 150 fighters were killed from either side over the first few days of the intensified clashes, and in under two weeks the agency had tallied 600 war-related deaths. "The ultimate goal is to impose a strict siege around the Houthi fighters who are still stationed amid the populated neighborhoods in the city center," said Colonel Mamoon Al-Mahjami, the spokesman of the UAE-sponsored Giants brigades.

The following timeline summarizes the progression of the battle, and all referenced locations are shown on the accompanying map:



- **Nov. 2:** Yemeni military forces [announced](#) the launch of a military operation on Hodeidah city, advancing the frontline closer to the city center. The Associated Press [reported](#) the fighting renewed late on November 1, and was concentrated around Hodeidah University (the Faculty of Engineering building was [reportedly](#) captured on November 10).
- **Nov. 4:** Reuters [reported](#) that the fighting was concentrated around the airport, “which the coalition failed to seize in a previous offensive,” the university, and the eastern entrance to the city.
- **Nov. 5:** an anti-Houthi commander [claimed](#) his fighters “advanced in several areas and recaptured the main gate between Hodeidah and Sana’a, which is called ‘the Arch of Victory’ [or ‘Triumph’], and clashes are ongoing in the other direction towards Al-Sham Road,” referring to a main road connected to the port, which is now the last open route between Hodeidah and Sana’a cities. The NRC [warned](#) that there is “a very high risk that further aerial or land attacks on roads or bridges could sever access roads between the cities entirely.”
- **Nov. 6:** Hadi-aligned fighters [captured](#) the eastern area with several factories and food facilities, including most importantly the Red Sea Mill. The Guardian [quoted](#) the deputy director of WFP-Yemen as saying “about 60 shells fell inside the compound since the clashes reached that area a few days ago but the silos and the grains were not touched.”
- **Nov. 9:** Emirati state media [claimed](#) the self-styled Yemeni Joint Resistance Forces “took full control of” the May 22 Hospital. The day before, it was damaged and fully evacuated.
- **Nov. 11:** Reported airstrikes in close proximity to Al-Thawra Hospital forced hundreds of patients and staff to [flee](#) the hospital. Al-Thawrah is the only health facility in the city that is equipped to give a secondary and tertiary care, and millions of people around the governorate depend on it.
- **Nov. 12:** The Giants Brigades posted a [video](#) online showing fighters within eyesight of the port.

In mid-November, a [visit](#) by senior UN officials to Hodeidah brought “relative calm” to the city. David Beasley of the WFP and Lise Grande, the UN resident and humanitarian coordinator, visited Hodeidah on November 13, and a reduction of hostilities was [noted](#) by the UN envoy. Though [accounts varied](#), it

was reported that around this time anti-Houthi forces were ordered to halt their advances into the city, and an informal truce may have been reached.

- **Nov 19:** Airstrikes and intense clashes [resumed](#), including in July 7 area. This coincided with the introduction of a UNSC resolution by the UK (*see Political Developments*). Apart from another pause surrounding the UN envoy’s visit to the city on November 23, airstrikes and ground clashes continued.
- **Nov 21:** MSF [warned](#) that its staff “can hear explosions and shootings extremely close by occurring every day around Al-Salakhana hospital.”

Military action escalated in several fronts nationwide, in what appears to be a coordinated move by Hadi and coalition forces. The fighters stepped up attacks in [Damt](#), a key town and district in Al-Dhale’a governorate, and in Hajjah governorate, where Hadi forces [captured](#) the strategic Ahem Triangle, where the road from Al-Tuwal land border crossing splits east to Sa’ada and south to Hodeidah. This nationwide escalation was apparent in humanitarian reporting. MSF [estimated](#) that “between 1 and 15 November, MSF teams treated 510 war-related wounded, including at least 31 women and 33 children at our facilities in Hodeidah, Abs, Aden, Hajjah and Mocha.” By the end of November, around 500 families had fled the frontline in Damt, indicative of the intensified fighting, [said](#) UNHCR.

Heavy clashes were likewise reported in multiple areas in Sa’ada governorate. These include in [Baqim district](#) bordering Saudi Arabia, and in Haydan district near the Maran mountains, the symbolic birthplace of the Houthis. “Soon the flag of the Republic will be raised in the peaks of the Maran mountains,” President Hadi [said](#) on November 3. “These military victories will continue until the liberation of the capital Sana’a and the fulfillment of the dream of the Yemeni people for a modern, federal civil state.”

Mohammed Al-Houthi called for a halt to aerial attacks but the group continued launching missiles. In a November 18 [statement](#), Higher Revolutionary Committee head Mohammed Al-Houthi said the group is “willing to freeze and stop military operations on all fronts” in a “show of good faith.” Reuters [wrote](#) “the Houthis’ decision to halt missile attacks could be a turning point in peace

efforts,” and the UN envoy [said](#) he “welcomes AA’s announcement to halt drone and missile strikes.” However, while the call was technically unilateral, Mohammed Al-Houthi made it in his capacity as head of the Revolutionary Committee, which does not have clearly defined responsibilities. That is, he called on the formal authorities to themselves call for a stop to the group’s missile and UAV attacks. In less than 24 hours Houthi TV channel Al-Masira [reported](#) the group fired a ballistic missile at the Midi front in Hajjah, and at the end of November the Houthis [claimed](#) to have fired a missile at an airbase inside Saudi Arabia.

The United States is stopping mid-air refuelling of coalition warplanes. “Recently the Kingdom and the Coalition has increased its capability to independently conduct inflight refueling in Yemen,” the state-run SPA [said](#) On November 9. “As a result, in consultation with the United States, the Coalition has requested cessation of inflight refueling support for its operations in Yemen.” The same day, Secretary of Defense James Mattis [said](#) “we support the decision by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, after consultations with the US Government, to use the Coalition’s own military capabilities to conduct inflight refueling in support of its operations in Yemen.” Ten days prior, Mattis [estimated](#) the US was refuelling “probably less than 20 percent” of coalition aircraft.

A resolution to end US military support for the coalition was advanced to the floor. On November 28 the US Senate voted 63-37 in favor of advancing the bill, which would halt all US military involvement in the war by invoking the War Powers Resolution. The Senate floor vote is expected to be in early December, [according](#) to the Guardian. The vote is only preliminary: the Senate will now hotly debate the resolution before voting on whether to pass it, at which point President Trump has veto power to prevent it from becoming law. Nevertheless, Chris Murphy, one of the senators who has long pushed this issue, [said](#) it was a historic vote because it was “the first time the Senate has ever moved forward a resolution under the War Powers Act to withdraw us from military activity overseas.”

Recommended reading and viewing:

Shorter articles

- For the Security Distillery, Ibrahim Jalal [argues](#) that “the liberation of Hodeidah will strategically enhance the UN-led peace process and the global humanitarian response to the world’s largest humanitarian crisis in 100 years.”
- The [text](#) of Rasha Jarhum’s speech to the UN Security Council on November 16 on behalf of the Peace Track Initiative and the Women’s Solidarity Network. Relatedly, Foreign Policy wrote that [Women Want to Put Yemen Back Together Again](#).
- Speaking to locals in Hadhramawt and neighboring Al-Mahrah governorate, which was ravaged by a cyclone in October, Yemeni journalist Saeed Al-Batati writes that [In Yemen, cities spared from war fall prey to climate change](#).
- A look at the curious case of Buthaina Al-Raimi, the five-year-old girl who gained global attention after being injured in an airstrike in Sana’a in 2017. Several of her family members now allege she was [kidnapped](#) by Saudi Arabia.
- To cope with psychological trauma from the war, [Desperate Yemenis resort to branding for traumatized children](#), Middle East Eye writes.

Longer reports

- Internet technology company Recorded Future released a detailed report on the warring parties’ attempts to take [Control of the Internet](#) in Yemen. It sheds light on the AdenNet ISP recently established in Aden, which is funded by the UAE and uses Chinese routers, and the authors assess “with medium confidence that the Houthi rebels within Sana’a are taking advantage of YemenNet’s vast IP infrastructure to host Coinhive mining services to generate revenue.”
- [Beyond the Business as Usual Approach: Combating Corruption in Yemen](#), a report by the Sana’a Center for Strategic Studies in coordination with DeepRoot Consulting and the Center for Applied Research in Partnership with the Orient (CAPRO) as part of the Rethinking Yemen’s Economy initiative.
- Tackling [The Geoeconomics of Reconstruction in Yemen](#), the Arab Gulf States Institute in Washington analyses the activities and interests of a variety of actors in Yemen with a view to understanding the role they might play in reconstruction.
- The International Crisis Group, providing its perspective on [How to Halt Yemen’s Slide into Famine](#), advocates for a deal to avoid further military action to retake the port of Hodeidah.



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