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YEMEN AND LIBYA:
THE MIDDLE EAST'S OTHER CIVIL WARS

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. BYMAN: Good morning and welcome. First, I'd like to make sure our video like with Doha is working. Ibrahim, can you give us a wave if it's working? All right. Thank you.

Thank you all very much for braving the aftermath of snow. I know in Washington that's usually a disaster that takes weeks from which to recover, so you all are ahead of your fellow citizens here by coming out today. I'm Dan Byman. I am the research director here of the Middle East Center at Brookings. I'm also a professor at Georgetown University.

We designed this event because we felt that U.S. attention, and really world attention, when it thought about the Middle East it was thinking about the wars in Iraq and Syria, of course. It was thinking about the Iranian nuclear program. Once or twice it was thinking about Israeli-Palestinian peace process. But it wasn't thinking about the crisis that were quietly brewing and getting worse. That, perhaps, something could be done about it at a relatively early stage.

In particular, we were thinking about Yemen and Libya. Where you had, what we saw, limited strife turned to more massive strife changing to relatively low grade civil wars. There's a question about these countries which is are we on a stage where we're going to see the violence dramatically increase where two three years from now we're going to say hundreds of thousands and peoples, or at least ten of thousands of people are dying. I wish we had done something sooner. I wish we had paid attention sooner. Part of the purpose of this event is to draw attention to these conflicts.

I'm delighted that we have, really, four great people to educate us about these conflicts and what to do about them. Our first speaker is Ibrahim Sharqieh from Doha, joining us by video. He's a fellow in our Doha Center. Of those of you who follow both Yemen and Libya, you know Ibrahim well. He writes extensively on these conflicts. He's someone who's very deep on both.

Our second speaker is to my immediate left, is Fred Wehrey who is a senior assistant at Carnegie right next door to us. He is just back from a trip from Libya. He, too, has written extensively on Libya, in particular, among other countries, and has a real in-depth knowledge of what's going on not just in general, but right now in the conflict today.

Our next speaker is Sama'a Al-Hamdani. She is the editor of the Yemeniaty Blog. She is someone who writes extensively on issues related to Yemen. I will stress, including women's issues and civil rights issues. She's one of the sharp observers of Yemeni politics today.

Our last speaker is Ambassador Barbara Bodine. In addition to a long and distinguished career in the Statement Department, having served in Yemen as ambassador, among other countries. I am delighted to say she is also a colleague of mine now at Georgetown, heading the Institute for the Study of Diplomacy there.

I feel these four speakers are really going to give us a sense of the challenges, and also some sense of what might be done about these conflicts. So, let's start with Ibrahim over in Doha. Please, Ibrahim, and thank you for joining us today.

Inevitably there are video problems. Ibrahim, if you could -- that's never a good sound to come out of any mechanical device. Ibrahim, can you hear us now? No. Okay. I'm actually going to vary the order a little bit. What I'm going to do is trust our technical folks can fix us in the interim and ask Fred to kick us off, and then we'll, hopefully go to Ibrahim after that. Fred, if you don't mind please.

MR. WEHREY: Okay. Well, thank you. Really a pleasure to be here, and I look forward to hearing my colleagues' comments very soon.

I've just returned from Libya and I can't emphasize enough that this is a conflict that has reached really dire proportions. Since the civil war started, you know, last year in May, about 2,500 people have lost their lives. That may seem somewhat of a paltry sum when you compare it to what's going on in Syria, but this is a country with a

small population. The other, you know, ripple effects of this conflict have been quite dire. I mean, massive refugee flows, the plummeting of oil production, and then, most recently, as we've seen, the growth of the Islamic State in Libya.

You know, how did we get here? I mean, we can walk back the clock to the NATO intervention, the failures after that intervention to assist the Libyan government, but I think what we're really living with is the aftershocks of Gadhafi's divided rule policy. This was really a civil war that reflected his 42 year rule of tyranny. The way he gutted state institutions. The way he played communities off against one another.

I think, obviously, the biggest failing of the transitional government period after the fall of Gadhafi was the absence of a government that could project its authority, that had the means to enforce its rule, that had a monopolization on force. So we're really talking about the absence of a cohesive military army and police. This lead to the proliferation of militias that we hear so much about.

Where are we at today? What we're really facing today is a civil war between two factions. One in the east that is recognized by the international community, based in Tobruk, that is broadly anti-Islamist in its orientation. The other faction is based in Tripoli, unrecognized. It has an Islamist hue. Although this distinction between Islamist and non-Islamist is really a simplification. I mean, what we're talking about here is multiple centers of power, multiple communities. Some of them ideological, some of them ethnic, some of them town based that have banded together against common enemies.

It's an incredibly complex civil war. If I was to point to one dividing line in Libya that I see as sufficiently explanatory that helps us understand this conflict it is really the split between the old order. The old officer class. The old technocrats. The remnants of the old regime. And the younger, what I would call, the revolutionary camp. Some of this revolutionary camp are, in fact, Islamists, some of them are former Libyan Islamic fight group Mokatalin, that had ties to Al-Qaeda, some are Brotherhood.

But I think that's the real, you know, dividing line. Where we're stuck right now is in a vicious cycle of mutual demonization and wild exaggeration. I mean, on the one hand you have the camp in the east that is led by General Haftar, Khalifa Haftar, there's an excellent profile of him in the New Yorker this week. That is, sort of, using the counterterrorism card to paint his domestic opponents, the Islamists, as terrorists.

On the other side, I just was in Tripoli on the Islamist side, you have this camp saying that this is a conflict about the return of the deep state. We don't want the old officer corp coming back. Khalifa Haftar is Gadhafi part two. We're stuck in this cycle of mutual de-legitimization.

I think one very worrisome development that we've seen in the last several weeks is the fragmentation of authority on both sides. So we speak about these two camps, the Dawn camp in the west. The Dignity camp in the east. But these are really loose coalitions of militias, different power centers, and they're fragmenting. On the one hand, that fragmentation is, perhaps, encouraging because it allows you to identify moderates that you can peel off and bring into a dialogue, and that's what's happening now with the UN sponsored peace talks underway. But at the same time that fragmentation is worrisome because you have spoilers. So just as this UN talks are underway you had the Islamists carrying out an airstrike on the Zintan Airport yesterday, which is very worrisome, and I think threatens to torpedo the peace talks.

Let me say a word about the rise of ISIS. I mean, the idea of Libya as a base, as a haven for extremism is not new. Obviously, it existed under Gadhafi with the City of Darnah that provided many volunteers to Iraq and Afghanistan. You know, after the revolution you had the growth of Al-Qaeda affiliated groups, the Ansar Al-Sharia, and, indeed, General Haftar's campaign was really designed to root out those groups from Benghazi, from the East.

I think what you've had in the wake of that campaign is not the decisive defeat of those groups, but rather their dispersal, their mutation. This is what we're

seeing now with ISIS. ISIS in Libya is really peeling away a lot of members of these older post-revolutionary jihadist groups that had affiliation to Al-Qaeda. You've had the influx of volunteers that went to Iraq and Syria to fight with ISIS. Libyans that went started returning last spring and last summer, and that formed the nucleus of ISIS in the City of Darnah. You've had ISIS spread to all three of Libya's major provinces. Of course, they've conducted some very high profile attacks against the Corinthian Hotel, and most tragically, recently, the killing of the Egyptian cops.

Again, let me move to some thoughts about policy options. I think one of the things that makes this problem so confounding is that we're faced with a terrorist problem in Libya that is embedded in a very complex civil war. There's not government to work through. There's two competing factions. So the question again, and we face this, obviously, in Iraq and Syria and Yemen, is what partner do we assist on the ground? How do we work with forces on the ground?

There's the danger, really, that if we provide counter-terrorism assistance to one faction that that assistance will be used politically against opponents in the civil war. Where are we at right now with resolving this conflict? The United Nations came out, I think today, and said if these peace talks next week don't resolve themselves, don't lead to some sort of resolution there's a real possibility of a UN intervention, and we may be moving toward that possibility.

By conversations with U.S. policymakers I think what the U.S. is trying to do is persuade more pragmatic factions of the Dawn Coalition, the Islamists in the West, to move towards a peace agreement with the Tobruk government. The first step is, obviously, a ceasefire. There has to be a policy of non-interference from regional states. The Egyptians are conducting air strikes, but my sense from U.S. policymakers, and my own opinion is that these strikes are unhelpful. They're going after camps in the East, but what it's doing is have a polarizing effect on the civil war. I mean, Egyptian intervention is not helpful in terms of resolving the broader political conflict.

I think the U.S. has a number, and the international community, has a number of, sort of, coercive measurers that they can use to try to force this conflict to an end. One of them is an asset freeze on Libya's Central Bank reserves or oil funds. Again, both sides in this conflict, ironically, both the Dawn Coalition and the Dignity Coalition are accessing oil funds. They're drawing from this pot of money to fuel the conflict, to pay their militias.

So the idea is you cut off that stream of revenue, freeze the assets, put sanctions on certain individuals who are known to be attacking civilian facilities and that will somehow end the conflict. Again, it's a risk hypothesis. There's a lot of operational questions because most of the Central Banks' assets are held in Europe, and my sense is that the Europeans are a little reluctant to do that because of blowback in Libya.

The question of a UN intervention for us, I mean, this is often heralded as a silver bullet, you know, send in the UN. Again, there's real questions about its mandate, who would pay for such a force, where it would be deployed in Libya. There's been some work about the numbers of troops you would actually need to secure key installations or key areas. If we're talking about Tripoli and Benghazi, combined they have a population of 3 million. By some calculations you would need about 30,000 troops to actually secure those areas. So again, a UN intervention for us is not the panacea.

My hope, and I'll just conclude on, perhaps, a guardedly optimistic note. I just got back from the City of Misurata which is the central port city in the West which fields the most powerful militias on the Dawn side. This is a business community. They're merchants, but they also have the most powerful militias. What I got sense there was that they're tired of fighting. There's an exhaustion.

You do have pragmatists emerging. I think the trick is to identify those pragmatists, bring them into the dialogue process. On the other side, on the Tobruk side, identify people you can work with. There has to be some sort of confidence building

measures on both sides. The most polarizing figures on both sides have to be moved out of the equation, I think, for a unity government to emerge.

I'll leave it at that. We can…

MR. BYMAN: Thank you, Fred. That was really an excellent beginning to our conversation. I'm going to try again. Ibrahim, can you hear us, and would you like to give your remarks now? Okay. I'm going to take that as a no. Ibrahim, can you hear us? Okay. I'm going to move on. We'll try again.

Okay. Again, apologies to all of you, and apologies to Ibrahim for our technical difficulties here. Sama'a, I'll ask you to punch in, if you don't mind please.

MS. AL-HAMDANI: Good morning everyone. I'm really happy to be here and to talk about Yemen. I just want to point out that a few years ago we were talking about Yemen and relationship to Tunisia as one of the successes of the Arab Spring. Now, here I am today, talking about it in relationship to Libya, and sometimes even in relationship to Syria. So I think this is an opportunity to kind of quickly glance over what went wrong. I think, maybe, could be a cautionary tale of what the UN should not do if they have an opportunity for a dialogue.

So just a quick look at what's happening now in Yemen. You have a health rebel movement that's been all over the news. They have control of 11 governorates out of 21 in Yemen. You have a strong southern secessionist movement. They're strong in the sense that they're demanding succession, but they're not united. It's a coalition composed of several groups.

You also have popular committees in the south of Yemen that used to belong to pro-Hadi. That's the former president who just resigned. So you have these three main agents taking place. Of course, in Yemen you also have tribes. You also have Al-Qaeda and the Arabian Peninsula that's called (inaudible) in Yemen. That's been America's biggest concern.

Putting all these players aside, of course there are a lot more than those.

Of course, I can discuss them in a question and answer section if you guys want, but looking at Yemen right now. What is going on in Yemen right now? You have a healthy rebel movement that took over the capital, Sana'a, that has taken control of most of the government institutions. You have a president and a government that resigned.

So what the Houthi group proposed for Yemenis is the creation of a 551 transitional national council that will take Yemen through another transition for two years. This council will select five members, and the five members are going to form a presidential council that's supposed to take care of anything that Yemen needs for two years, and then we can have elections. Of course, the threat of this is that we just finished a transitional process that's led by the UN, so the risk is are we recreating another transition that's just a lot of work, but no actual work would be implemented on the ground.

So I just want to quickly give you guys an explanation of who the Houthis are. We hear about them a lot on the news. So the Houthi movement, it actually started in Saada as a Zaydi Revivalist movement which is a Shia sect in Yemen as a Zaydi Revivalist movement. It then morphed in the mid-90s into a neo-Zaydi Rebel movement. By the early 2000s they were an enemy of the state.

Former President Saleh's government engaged in six wars with them from 2004 to 2010. So since the Arab Spring in 2011 they were able to present themselves as victims of the former regime, and to show that they have strength in the northern parts of Yemen. So they participated in Yemen's national dialogue with 33 members, and they also were able to secure an entire committee in this dialogue just to discuss their concerns. So while they were engaging in the dialogue they were engaging in warfare outside of the dialogue. They were fighting the Salafis which is a group in Yemen that belongs to the Sunni sector.

So what's happening now in Yemen because of the war between the Houthis, who are Shia, and the Selafis, who are Sunni, we're portraying it as if it's

secretarian war. In reality it's all about power and politics. I think that we need to keep that in mind. So the Houthis came to power by protesting a subsidy lift that President Hadi decided to do to save Yemen's economy. The subsidy lift was a very essential move that Yemen had to make in order to keep its economy from collapsing.

So when the people took to the streets the Houthis decided to capitalize on that. They demanded that the subsidy lift would be removed. So to reinstate, the subsidies, and then they pretty much held protests. Within six days they took control of the capital. So on September 21st the Houthis pretty much surrounded all government buildings and took charge of everything there.

Having said that, since they have demanded the creation of a new government there was a new prime minister who was appointed, a new government was selected, but the new government that they created just in November of 2014 actually consisted of technocrats. Political parties on the ground in Yemen refused to participate in this government which is problem why the government resigned. They had no actually effect on the ground.

So the government was created in November. They got approval from the Parliament in December and they resigned in January. That was a very short-lived government, and now Yemen has no government. Everything is in the control of the revolutionary committees that are composed by Houthis. The revolutionary committees, is a fancy name for militant and political Houthi branch on the ground that is stationed in Hadda, Sana'a. They actually report directly to Abdul-Malik al-Houthi who's the leader of the Houthi movement. They don't actually deal with the political office of the Houthis.

So why did the Houthis take over Yemen? What happened? What went wrong in the national dialogue's transition? So first of all, we get the usual critiques about Yemen's national dialogue that was led by the UN. It was too big. It took too long. There was, you know, the members were 565 members, but to be -- to take that a step further the failure of the transition was actually because of the government that was

created. So in 2011 we decided to have a national unity government that was going to be composed of different political parties.

That government, because it was composed of different political parties, they refused to work with each other. I think each political branch was trying to secure their position on the ground. Hadi's government really didn't work for him because he was a new president who was put in place just for a transitional period of two years. And so previous to 2011, we had a Yemini government that acted as a mediator or a middle man between the international community, and the West, and the local power holders on the ground. Yemen always had tribes. They always had sultanates, sheikdoms. They always had movements.

Even in some cases, you can, you know, if you're successful you can be a sheik. So the government always was able to create a flow of communication between, you know, the West and what's going on on the ground. Hadi's government kind of broke that tie because they didn't have ties to society. They couldn't communicate anymore. So it seems that led to the weakening of state institutions. The government wasn't able to deliver services.

On the ground political parties took advantage of discourses that weakened national identity. People on the ground were, for the first time, asking oh, are you Zaydi? Are you Sunni? What's your politics? Then they started pointing fingers at each other. That's all because of a strong political vacuum that was left.

So what was also another problem was that Yemen had no checks and balances in place. The military restructuring that took place weakened the military. The law wasn't effective. We also had a Parliament that was in place since 2003. There was a huge and dire need for Parliamentary elections, but that didn't take place.

The worst thing that happened during the transition period is that in February 2014 we were supposed to have presidential elections. That didn't happen. The period was extended, and the biggest problem was that the international community

and the players on the ground did not find a legal was of extending this transition which made it very easy for people to come and point out the flaws, and to take advantage of what's happening on the ground. The only thing that happened to explain the extension of the transition period is that the UN Special Envoy to Yemen, Benomar, he stated that the GCC deal, which had a time limit of two years, is only ending by the delivery of the transition and not by duration. So that's what brought us here.

What are the mistakes that the international community committed in Yemen was that they wanted to keep Hadi as a key ally because they were able to combat terrorism on the ground. Of course, they didn't extend an official process. They also had no plan B. So in Yemen they had the national dialogue conference, and that was the only game in town. All other ways of negotiation, any kind of tribal negotiations, or any kind of on the ground work didn't take place. Everything was entrusted into the UN's hands, and everything poured in that direction. That's a very big mistake because the realities on the ground were very separate from what was taken on behind closed doors in a very elite hotel.

So looking at Yemen, what now? What can we do? First of all, what's happening now is the U.S., the UK, France, and a bunch of other governments decided to shut down their diplomatic missions on the ground in Sana'a, and to pull them out. There's a policy or a strategy of isolating Yemenis, of isolating the Houthi movement on the ground. I think that this policy right now is probably the worst thing that they could do.

It's definitely pouring into what Saudi Arabia would want because Saudi is very upset that there is a Shia movement near their borders. However, this isolation will only push the Houthis towards the arms of Iran. It would also, probably, strengthen Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula because at the moment, with the government out of sight, the Houthis are the strongest power on the ground, and their enemy is Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula. So to fight the Houthis, any kind of funds or any kind of weapons that's going to go into strengthening the opponents of the Houthis is probably going to fall

into the hands of Al-Qaeda or any kind of militant branch that's similar to that.

So, in my opinion, the countries that evacuated Yemen should probably return and engage in negotiations. The immediate reality on the ground is that the Houthis are here to stay. They have control of the majority of the military. I would say at least 60 percent of the military is in their hands. They have control over the National Security Bureau and the Political Security Organization of Yemen.

So we're going to have to deal with them. I think while I strongly condemn their behavior, to arrest protestors and torture them, and to keep former government officials under house arrest they have control. So, unfortunately, if Yemen stays in isolation war is probably going to be the only business in town, and everything is going to pour into that. That's the last thing that I think anyone in the world would want in the Middle East right now given the circumstances in Syria, in Iraq, and even Libya.

Can we save Yemen? That's a question that I always hear. I think that, yes, we can save Yemen because there are always options. There's never one way. We just have to be flexible in our approach. We also have to put pressure not just on the Houthi Rebel movement, but also on other political parties to engage with the Houthis to come up with a transition.

The only option out of this is to, kind of, create a force right now on the ground that's composed of all the different parties, and, kind of, hope to hold presidential elections. So we need to stabilize Yemen. We need to save Yemen from a massive economic disaster that's going to come on the way. I think 62 percent of all Yemen is dependent on humanitarian aid, and about 14 million people are in dire need of clean water. And so looking at the circumstances there, we need to kind of assess these people and we need to, kind of, advice Benomar who's the UN Special Envoy to Yemen, he's still in Yemen, holding negotiations between political parties and the Houthis.

I think, maybe, it's in our best interest to ask him to change his strategy, and to hold negotiations that are open and transparent before everyone. The Yemeni

people need to know everything, and I think on the ground Yemeni's don't know as much as you guys probably know here. They don't know what's going on behind closed doors. I think it's very essential to keep all the negotiations open and transparent, and to engage the people in any kind of transition moving forward.

The only thing is I just want to say that it's a shame if we lose Yemen to the Houthi scenario that we're going to see in the future because Yemen displayed one of the few unique democratic experiences in the Arabia Peninsula. There was real hope for democracy. It was one of the few countries where a women's participation was actually going somewhere. I think that the U.S. has invested too much to kind of let Yemen go by isolating them or by abandoning all the work that they have there.

MR. BYMAN: Thank you. I'm going to Ambassador Bodine next, and then, hopefully, our technical issues can be resolved and we can hear from Ibrahim, so please.

MS. BODINE: Thank you. Thank you all for coming here this morning, battling the remnants of what passes for a blizzard in Washington. I notice a number of people in the audience who could do just as well sitting up here as sitting out there, so look forward to the question and answer.

Thank you for your overview of where we are on Yemen and bringing us up to date on Libya, which I profess not to know very much about. I have to say that sometimes when I hear people talk about Libya I kind of envy you. Because it seems as if you've got a nice neat -- you've got the East versus the West.

MR. WEHREY: I made it too simple.

MS. BODINE: Yeah, no. I know. I took your point on fragmentation and everything. But when you do get to Yemen you get to what I've often described as a kaleidoscopic political structure where you've got a finite number of pieces in an infinite number of patterns. Who is allied with who, and who is in coalition at any given time is constantly shifting. I am sometimes concerned that in Washington we try to find mosaics

which are static as opposed to kaleidoscopes which are in constant motion when we're trying to do policy.

I think one of the first questions on a policy side that the U.S. and others need to ask is do we judge whatever we have as a Yemeni government solely through the prism or by a standard of compliance to serve as a proxy ground for our war on terrorism, and particularly on Al-Qaeda. With the financial focus primarily on issues like working with local partners, and a rhetoric that is almost solely focused on counterterrorism.

Even the other day when I was speaking about Yemen somebody from U.S. AID noted, you know, how much we have increased our economic assistance to Yemen over the years, but described it as fully integrated in supporting our counterterrorism effort. So our development work, our governance work was all put within the context of counterterrorism. So are we looking at Yemen as a compliant partner in a proxy war or are we willing to go back to, as was described, looking at the various stresses on this state, and on this society that over the last couple of years really have undermined the legitimacy and the efficacy of the government, and allowed the extremists narrative to become the operative one.

We used to be very much engaged in governance and development projects in Yemen. We were never the largest donor, but we were a very active donor, and Yemen was, at one point, a emerging, but indigenous democratic experiment. In fact, the first community of democracies summit meeting was held in Sana'a.

Unfortunately, I think what Washington has been doing over the last several years -- we opted for the first alternative, that we have seen Yemen solely within the context of our counterterrorism fight, which is a highly narcissistic way to be structuring your policy. Your national interest absolutely needs to be first and foremost, but it need not be narcissistic. Ours has become narcissistic.

In fact, a couple of months ago after the September takeover by the

Houthis, but before the January, whatever we're calling that, there was some talk about Washington starting to open a dialogue with the Houthi. But it was all done within a context of, well, will they let us continue our counterterrorism policy. So we were defaulting right back to where we had always been.

The other problem with this is that it's very short-sighted. I would also make the contention that it has not been successful. We have been so focused on AQAP that a constant stream of reports going back at least a decade on the Houthis, on the Southern Succession movement, on all the various security and political stressors within the country were not really fully realized or addressed. In fact, I've recently heard someone -- a senior policy person describe what is going on in Yemen as an intelligence failure. I was very surprised because it was not an intelligence failure. Anybody who has been following Yemen knows Yemen, knew what was coming. Perhaps, not the exact date, but certainly was not surprised. I think what we have had is a policy failure.

Persistent efforts to squeeze Yemen into pre-existing templates have proved to be of nominal effectiveness. An example is the current effort to try to squeeze Yemen into this secretarian battle. That it's between Sunni and Shia. The fact that they are Zaydis and Shafi'is gets completely lost. By putting it in this secretarian vocabulary we also, again, walk away from having to face what are the real stressors in the society in the state? Which are again, governance and development.

We start to see the problems as externally generated. If it wasn't for the Iranians everything would be fine. Well, everything was not fine. The Iranians are actually fairly late arrivals to this. We have been raising the profile and the status, therefore, of AQAP as the defenders of Sunnism against the onslaught of Iranian-backed Shi'ism. That is an enormous distortion.

The Houthis are an internally focused indigenous political movement. I agree with Sama'a that their tactics have been very wrong, but to think that they can somehow step down. The recent UN resolution which asks the Houthis to basically walk

away was naïve, if best. They are a political force. They are a security force. They are there, and they're not going to step down.

Ironically, if they were to step down, let's just say they actually kind of went, oh my god, the UN Security Council has told us that we have to step down. I guess we're going to have to do it. There would be a total vacuum in Yemen. There is no party. There is no coalition which is currently capable of running the country. Even with the constantly shifting coalitions. So this is one where a UN intervention force would be about as counterproductive as anything I can imagine. It would not work. I don't know what side they would be on. I don't know what they would be doing except, perhaps, unifying all of the Yemenis against them.

But where the political dialogue with these ever shifting coalitions is frustrating, no guarantee of success, but is the only step forward. What we have to do in terms of policy is think what happens the day after. This is what we did not do with a national dialogue which was an amazing experiment in rewriting the social contract. But the international community was not set to step in the day after the national dialogue, and provide to the Yemeni people the economic employment governance changes that had been behind the 2011 revolution to begin with.

We kind of went, national dialogue over, we have constitution, you know, put it in the success column, go home. Well, we can't do that, so we need to learn from our most immediate failures and our, I think, our failures going over a number of years to start thinking about, you know, we don't want the shame of losing Yemen. We're not at that point yet, but we have got to change our approach and our commitment to Yemen to be one of something other than a proxy war, seen as somebody else's proxy war, and actually get at what are the stressors within Yemen. This is a savable country. Thank you.

MR. BYMAN: Thank you. I think we still have some technical difficulties, but let me check. Ibrahim, are you on the other end?

MR. SHARQIEH: I think it's solved now. Can you hear me?

MR. BYMAN: Yes, we can. So as we originally planned, our last speaker will be Ibrahim Sharqieh. Ibrahim, please go ahead.

MR. SHARQIEH: Hello?

MR. BYMAN: Hello.

MR. SHARQIEH: Yes. Well, thank you everyone. Thank you in Washington, and thank you for starting this very important discussion early in the morning. It's almost 6:00 p.m. here in Doha. I'm glad to finally overcome this technical issue, and share with you my thoughts, and join the discussion with Washington. Thank you, everyone. Thanks also to my colleagues for their great insights.

Well, I'm trying after these great presentations on Libya and Yemen, I'm trying to recognize some patterns and do some bridging between Libya and Yemen, and run some comparison, and recognize some patterns over here, try to understand civil wars that are taking place now in the region. It is, sadly, we being with this that only we simply are talking about change and non-violent resistance and national dialogue, and now the narrative or the debate has shifted from change and peaceful means that we're talking about civil wars in the region.

Looking at two countries, two cases, Libya and Yemen, there are a number of patterns that can be identified here. The very first one is that, in my view, the process of a transition itself, in my view, this adds levels of instability and the violence that we are seeing that's taking place in both countries, actually, is not completely out of the norm for transitions, looking at world-wide experiences and how other countries dealt with this transitional period.

So transitions are going to be complicated, messy, difficult, very challenging, and yes, can be violent. In many cases, actually looking at a number of cases, there is an estimate of approximately only one-third of transitional conflicts that make it successfully peacefully without experiencing levels of violence. Estimates of two-

third of transitional conflicts after negotiated agreements they usually suffer some aspects of instability. Especially in the first five years of transition and after a regime change or after a civil war, and all of that.

So what is happening now four years or five years after the uprising, I think we're still looking at it from a global perspective it's still within the norm, but we shouldn't, of course, take that for, you know, for granted, and recognize that especially because -- and here this takes me to the second part. Which is, you know, these conflicts or these civil wars, call them whatever you want to call them, can still be contained. Looking at civil wars in general, also globally, the duration of civil wars usually lasts between 5 years to 15 years.

Here we are still in the beginning. Actually, this is good. This gives us hope. This tells us why, probably, we haven't -- I see the point why some are hesitant about calling them civil wars, so I definitely see that. Probably we haven't bridged a serious civil war that is happening in these two countries, so it's still debatable, and it's still within the first couple of years after the transition. So I think in my view this gives hope as it can still be contained, and can be prevented from entering more of a vicious civil war as we see in other places.

The third pattern that I'm seeing, which is quite alarming, and we should be careful, and we should notice it now, in fact, which is these conflicts or civil wars are becoming more self-sustaining conflicts. Meaning that this experience of instability that the two countries are experiencing actually are generating into issues that did not exist in the past. For example, in Libya, only as a result of the recent fighting the number of displaced people has reached almost 394,000 people.

This, of course, adds to approximately half a million from the revolution under the regime, so this takes the number to now approximately 800,000 or some estimates put it even to 1 million. So this large number or influx of refugees emerging as a result of the current fighting is pushing the conflict in Libya to becoming more self-

sustaining because you have new issues that are making is stronger or more resistant to a resolution.

In addition, another example, actually, is the number of militias. In the past I remember we were talking about probably a handful, a few number of militias in Libya. Today we're talking about dozens. Some estimates actually put it to 23 active militias working in Libya. Regardless of the number actually, of the exact number, this, actually, is alarming in a way that this is emerging. We have emerging war lords here that are benefiting from the status quo. So it is in their own interest for this conflict to continue, and that is, again, the self-sustaining aspect here where those who benefit from the continuation of the conflict becomes more alarming.

Another pattern that the two countries also have shared which is the spillover effect. We have seen it's obvious now that Egypt or the conflict in Libya has aspects of it spillover in Egypt. We are clearly and publicly seeing Egypt becoming or taking an active bombing part in the conflict in Libya.

In Yemen we have to be careful because always whenever we talk about the instability there we always -- the immediate thing that comes to our mind is Saudi Arabia and how this is going to spillover in Saudi Arabia. Of course, 2009 is still present in our minds when Saudi was pulled into the conflict between the central government and the Houthis in the north, and made the conflict or the situation even more complex or more complicated.

Beyond the spillover, actually in the neighboring countries, another pattern also that is emerging here is the regional or even the global aspect of a spillover of the conflict in the two cases. I'll give you an example here of the oil supplies, oil markets and how this is -- and within the own market's going to be impacted as a result of these civil wars of the two countries.

In Libya, for example, the oil production has dropped in Libya to today almost 400,000 barrels a day from 1.6 in the past, so it's almost now -- Libya is producing

less than one-third of its capacity in oil production. This is going to have, of course, a continuous impact to the world market, oil world market.

In the case of Yemen, also, the Houthis, as you know, they're getting closer to the Bab-el-Mandeb, and now we're hearing Bab-el-Mandeb more often in the debate in Yemen. A failed misstep or a civil war in Yemen, a protracted civil war, of course, is going to have a serious impact on the Mandeb Strait where we have almost 4 million barrels of oil go through the Mandeb Strait daily. So that is also another impact that we're going to see more beyond the region, and how it's going to impact others.

The spoilers, we're seeing that, you know, partners emerging as a result of taking more active role. That against the transition, against the political process, and working against everyone, basically. We know of Al-Qaeda in Dara Peninsula for a long time in Yemen, and now we are seeing Daesh or ISIS or ISIL or whatever you want to call it, also becoming more active in Libya which is the two countries share.

Another alarming aspect here or pattern is that we started to face an issue of legitimacy in the two countries. In the case of Yemen we know the Houthis are representative of themselves. They have representation. But on the other side, actually who represent who, the south, the north, the joint meeting partners that used to be more functional in the past is no longer the case. Now the youth or who exactly is represented above the other side, and also even within Libya itself. We were talking about Dawn Libya or Fajr Libya or operations.

On the side of Dawn Libya who actually represents this party? We have a number of parties, actually a coalition of different parties that we're not really certain about who represents who. So who, for example, represents Ansar al-Sharia? Though they're fighting, does actually the leaders of Fajr Libya represent Ansar al-Sharia. I'm not certain about that. So this makes the situation more complex.

Now, after talking about these patterns that the two countries have demonstrated and shared some solutions or where do we go from here. The solution in

both countries, in my view, will have to come from within. It will have to come from the two countries themselves, and, of course, they should be supported from the outside world. But in case you're wondering whether there is a military intervention or bombing or drones or (inaudible) that is not the solution to Yemen or to Libya. Because already the debate has started in Libya of Italy declaring its willingness to fight or to bomb or all that. This is not going to solve Libya's problem. Drones in the U.S., and I share my views with Ambassador Barbara Bodine also, that we had a policy failure in the past, drones policy in Yemen failed, failed miserably, and actually exacerbated the situations.

Part of one reason why we are where we are today in Yemen is because of that short-sighted security approach of the drones attacks, short thinking that this is going to solve Yemen's problems. In fact, actually we missed an opportunity for a political transition through national dialogue to succeed that was magnificent and achieved magnificent results in the past two/three years in Yemen. But, in fact, actually, the past two/three years in Yemen showed that we had the international community ignored Yemen, neglected Yemen, avoided dealing with Yemen.

Of course, this finally led to where we are today, and unfortunately that transition or the solution from within has been disrupted. I think the solution, again, in Yemen will have to come from within. Probably the non-violent resolution, the non-violent resistance or uprising might need to continue at this time, but I agree with also my colleague from Washington that probably, you know, striking against or isolating the Houthis this is not going to solve the problem. It's going to make it, I think, more difficult.

Again, I think we need to emphasize that a local solution from within supported by the international community in terms of non-violence assistance, national dialogue, and with the hope in Libya for the peace negotiations that are taking place. Here for the UN is a very important lesson to learn from Yemen where actually the UN became too much involved in managing the schedule and then the dialogue of the Yemenis during Jamal Benomar time leading the national dialogue. That actually lost the

concept of ownership of the Yemenis.

I think this is a lesson that's important for Libya to learn today is that the ownership of the peace negotiations in Libya will have to be Libyans, and the Libyans will have to solve it. I think moving the negotiations from outside to Libya was a step in the right direction. I can't resist, actually, to say one final word because I see this -- I'm sorry about taking more time, because that has become central to the debate, especially in Yemen, whether we're having a secretarian conflict.

In Yemen, it has never been a secretarian conflict. Zaydis and Shafi'is always live together in peace and harmony in many levels; political, tribal, you name it, civil society organizations. However, I am particularly concerned with the way that the crisis is being managed that one day that secretarian aspect is becoming more vicious and more present, and starting to cause more of the cause rather than benefit.

So with that, I will stop here, and thank you again for this discussion.

MR. BYMAN: Thank you, Ibrahim, and thank you, also, for your patience and the audience as well as we dealt with technical issues.

Before we go into audience Q&A I'd like to ask a few of my own. Ibrahim, I'm going to start with you just taking advantage of the fact that the video system works, and fearing that it might stop at some point. My question for you is, your solution of dialogue from within, of change from within, to me, sounds very compelling. But there is another possibility which is, simply, the violence from within gets worse, and that five years from now we're talking about a much more bloody conflict.

What is your sense of the trajectory of violence? Do you feel that we're going to be looking at resolution or that it's actually going to a more dangerous stage?

MR. SHARQIEH: Well, thank you, Dan. This is a really, really important question. What I would like to see is the following, is that because the rest of the political parties in Yemen are still overwhelmed with the Houthis movement. Although they started, the Houthis started the coup, and back in my view in September, they're still

overwhelmed.

They haven't really been able to put their thoughts and their strength together and form a balance of power to the Houthis. I think their strength and the solution, and I hope -- and I wrote about this also in Arabic for the Yemenis, is that for the other political parties to come together in a non-violent continuation of the non-violent uprising that we saw in the past, and to balance the power with the Houthis there in Yemen.

I'm hoping still that the other parties or the rest of the political parties in Yemen will realize that and be able to form -- to come together and balance and engage with the Houthis on a solution. But I am actually concerned that, and this is a good question, again, I'm concerned that it's not taking that direction yet because I haven't seen -- I'm seeing more signs of civil war or civil violence. The tribes in Marib and in Juve they already formed a power together, a coalition together, will see the southern secessionists in the south that they're also forming their own power.

So I'm afraid it's not taking the direction of the solution that I would like to see, but more of exacerbated the crisis and the civil war. So more on that, this is a responsibility of the political parties of Yemen is to take, and for the international community to support the push in that direction.

MR. BYMAN: Thank you. Fred, if I could ask you, really since the killing in Benghazi of Ambassador Stephens and other U.S. officials, it seems that the United States has been in retreat from Libya both in a policy sense, but also in an institutional sense. There's been a reluctance to have people at risk, which is quite understandable, but the result is that as a situation becomes more and more complex U.S. knowledge on the ground, ability to work with people on the ground diminishes.

First, I'd like your sense of is that actually right? Is my impression from D.C. correct? But more importantly, if that is the logic, how and why should the U.S. be more engaged in Libya, right? I mean, is it reasonable to say, it's a tough situation, okay,

moving on. We have other priorities.

MR. WEHREY: Well, I mean, again, the attack in Benghazi it did force this retreat. You know, I went to Libya five times since the revolution. Each visit I saw that the U.S., you know, just presidents and, you know, talking to Libyans they just say, you know, we never get visited by the Americans anymore. Then you go to the Embassy and they say, look, we have all these programs on the book to help civil society, to train media, to do, you know, advice on the constitutional level, but we can't execute these programs because we don't have the staff. It was a skeleton crew there at the Embassy, and they just couldn't get out in the country.

The same thing with helping the security sector. I mean, we make a lot of noise about, you know, should we have helped the Libyans build their army and their police early on. You know, there were plans on the books to do that, you know, I think part of it was some U.S., you know, reluctance to get involved. We were waiting for the Libyans to pay up front for this program, to write the check, and they never did that because there was such political dysfunctionality and divisions. We can get into that.

The question also was where would this training occur? I mean, it would have to occur, you know, overseas. So again, I think the question was -- the problem was one of distraction, no doubt, I mean, obviously Syria, Iraq, Ukraine. Libya started sinking lower and lower on the priority list. I think there was a sense in Washington that this is a European problem. I mean, they're the ones that are, you know, 200 miles off the coast from this problem. They need to step up to the plate and do that.

Perhaps there was an overreliance on the UN, and the UN mission in Libya. There's been a lot of after-action thinking about its mandate, its capacity. Early on, the UN was actually quite frank in acknowledging that they focused too much on the elections, early on. They were so geared on having these successful elections, and they were successful, but then they neglected the security sector, and so while those elections were happening you had the rise of militias. You had the deterioration of security in

Benghazi. This rise of extremism.

You know, I mean, I think, you know, moving forward when I talk to people in senior level policy positions now there's this sense that if there is so sort of peace deal, if there is a unity government in Libya the U.S. approach going forward is going to be more forceful. They're not going to be waiting for the Libyans to ask. There's going to be -- I don't know what that mean operationally, but you do get the sense that Washington is taking this problem very seriously.

Unfortunately, and this goes back to Barbara's point, is it's the ISIS thing has focused, you know, U.S. attention. And so my danger is we're going to view this problem, again, through a counterterrorism lens. There was an effort early on to try to train a very small Libyan contingent of counterterrorism forces. The program fell apart. We can get into why that happened.

What we were essentially doing was training a factional militia, not a counterterrorism force. So again, inserting ourselves into this very kaleidoscopic, mosaic situation, multiple factions, inserting ourselves into that trying to train one faction to go after "terrorists" could be more destabilizing in the long run.

MR. BYMAN: Thank you. Sama'a, if I can ask you if there is anything that will catch U.S. attention as much as terrorism it's Iran. And, as you know, there have been press reports of a great Iranian role in Yemen, especially backing Houthis. Can I get your sense of, simply, first of all, how extensive is this? Is this, kind of, you know, one Iranian showed up and all the sudden it became an Iranian division in Yemen or is it something more serious? But also, what your sense is that Iran wants to accomplish by having a presence in Yemen?

MS. AL-HAMDANI: I think it's clear that they don't like Saudi Arabia and their presence in Yemen is to weaken and undermine Saudi Arabia, first and foremost. But it's also to create allies in the Arabian Peninsula. They don't have a lot of friends there right now, but they are a growing force.

I think to answer this question with certainty or with a clear answer would be very hard. First of all, the Houthi movement itself is kind of a mysterious movement. We don't know if they're still practicing Zaydism, as it used to me. We don't know if, you know, there are new holidays that they're celebrating that are not part of the traditional Zaydi sect that was practiced in Yemen, and so I -- what I call them now is neo-Zaydi movement just to, kind of, not put a label on it. They're not Twelvers yet. They're not, like, Hezbollah in Lebanon who are very similar to the way Twelvers are in Iran.

I think to say with certainty how much support they're getting from Iran would be really hard. I know that at the start of the revolution the Iranians did provide support not just to the Houthis, but also to some civil society organizations on the ground. The kind of support they provided Yemenis is more logistical than it is financial. They are training them to be organized, how to present themselves, probably presenting strategies.

It's very obvious from Abdul-Malik al-Houthi's speeches, who's the leader of the group, that he is mimicking Nasrallah's attitude of giving speeches. Also, the uniform and some of the strategies -- the views on the ground are very similar to what Hezbollah's done in the past.

However, what's not like it, so Hezbollah has come into Beirut before twice, which is the capital of Lebanon, but they withdrew after their demands were met. In Yemen's scenario we have the Houthis coming into the capital and refusing to leave, and kind of trying to take over the entire area. I don't know if this is an Iranian strategy, because it seems like a very Yemeni one, to come and take control of everything. So it's very vague. I think the only way to find answers is really -- you know, this situation has never happened before in Yemen, and to kind of say anything with certainty would be a mistake.

MR. BYMAN: Barbara, if I could ask you to conclude, at least, my part of the Q&A. You've been thinking about counterterrorism more than the vast majority of

Americans. You've done this for quite some time in a professional capacity, and you've also been thinking about it in the Yemeni context.

With that in mind, how do we think about Al-Qaeda and the Arabian Peninsula? If drones are not the answer then what is, especially in the context of a lack of a government?

MS. BODINE: Yes, thank you. I will say that I do think -- I agree with a lot of observers that the drone policy -- when drones went from being a technical tool to a, you know, the full strategy we began to lose, and lose very badly.

Interestingly, when we first -- I won't count the very first drones we used, but when it became more the focus of our approach. What we've actually done is spread Al-Qaeda, AQAP. Its supporters have grown. Its territory have grown. They also did see the vacuum that was created by the 2011 revolution and used that to expand their territory.

What we should be doing is not so much an instead of, but an in addition to. This goes back to what I was saying that our CT strategy in Yemen has been too narrow and too short-focused. As Fred noted, you know, you end up training what you think is a CT unit, and you just really, sort of, just trained, you know, a militia.

We didn't work with the Yemeni government on what do you do, let's say, after 2013 when Hadi came in. He was very focused on AQAP. AQAP was primarily in Abyan and in the south. That's where Hadi is from. And so the AQAP presence and problem became much more personal. Even though the Yemeni military on the ground was effective, and the drones were being used where we failed is going in afterwards and rebuilding.

You know, it's one thing to take out, you know, some tiny village in the middle of Abyan and scatter the AQAP people, but if you don't go back in and rebuild the homes, and provide the services, and provide something else you haven't moved it forward. You know, we used to have, what was it, you know, clear build and something.

I never could remember what the order was, but we never got around to the build part. AQAP has a fairly limited reach in Yemen because it is such a Salafi-Sunni organization, and a large part of the country is not. We never capitalized on that. We never, kind of, used that as a way to build bull works against it spreading in other parts of the country.

So what I would say, and this is to borrow from something that a Yemini official once said to me. It's not so much that we need to take our focus off of security, but we need to broader our focus, broaden our aperture, look at the mid-term and long-term stressors on the society, and be seen as involved in those as we are in what I think a lot of Yemenis see is our proxy fight against Al-Qaeda that is completely divorced from them.

MR. BYMAN: Thank you. I'd like to open it up to the audience. A few notes. A microphone will be coming around, please speak into the microphone. Short questions, and they actually have to have a question. Also, please identify yourself. I'm going to take them in groups of three, so, yes please.

MS. DAWKINS: Good morning, thank you. Pam Dawkins with Voice of America. A question for Fred, actually a couple of questions. You mentioned that you were recently in Libya. What's your insight concerning the recent beheadings of the Egyptians? Is it your sense that this was carried out by the core Islamic State group or more so by affiliate supporters? If so, what does that say for the U.S.-led counterterrorism strategy?

Also, along that line, in relation to the White House Extremist Summit that's underway here. What needs to be done to address this type of extremism in Yemen if this is, indeed, the core Islamic State?

Mr. BYMAN: In the very back corner.

MR. ELMORE: Thank you. Daniel Elmore, U.S./Italy foreign policy. Two questions on Libya. The first one, what do you think about the Algerian role in these gain? Because the Algerian's are a great question mark from the Italian point of view.

What they want, if you have any hint on this, to do with Libya, especially with the south of Libya?

Second, don't you think that having an Egyptian-led UN mission in Libya could, in some case, have a new Somalia-style situation with the Ethiopians? So you have a bordering country going inside Ethiopia with Somalia, Egypt with Libya. Thank you.

MR. BYMAN: Yes, in the center.

MR. COMMON: Graham Common with ICRD. How would -- if the south succeeded from Yemen how would that affect the situation? Thank you.

MR. BYMAN: Great. I think we have a good, kind of broad set of questions on the table now. I'll ask our panelists to respond. Ibrahim, again, taking advantage of a functioning video link, please respond as you see fit to any of the questions you want to take on.

MR. SHARQIEH: All right. Thanks, Dan. One thing, actually, is on the issue of Libya of that type of intervention. I think this is going to be -- again, keep in mind that we have spoilers, partners that are not representative of any, and not in agreement with the rest of the groups in Libya. I think an operation or direct intervention in Libya, in my view, will lead to catastrophic results.

It will deteriorate the situation much further. Libya is a vast country. There are many active groups that are operating in Libya. These groups are indigenous groups. They're part of the Libyan society. They're the groups that participated in the revolution against Gadhafi. They have wide representation within the Libyan public, so they're not isolated groups probably like Al-Qaeda or AQAP in Yemen that they're not linked to the public.

Looking at Tripoli today, you have -- the different legions have wide representation whether it's within Tripoli or Misrata or in other parts of Libya. So any solution in Libya, if we're thinking of this type of Somalia intervention or troops that go

and intervene and start the strikes as we see by the Egyptian government I think this will make the situation much worse. The hope will have to be given or -- the effort will have to be doubled on the peace negotiations if you cannot bring the partners together.

I think there is a ground for this because the mere commitment for the past weeks for the negotiations shows some willingness from the partners. I think that's where the efforts much be doubled, and ensure that you have an agreement there, and that you can save the country from (inaudible).

MR. BYMAN: Fred, you want to chime in?

MR. WEHREY: I completely agree. I mean, Egyptian-led intervention, I think, would be disastrous. I mean, Egypt is really a party to this conflict. I mean, they're backing on side, the Dignity Faction. This has been ongoing since last year. They've been backing it with intelligence, logistical support, actually conducting strikes now, so to ask them to be a neutral arbitrator in this conflict I think is unreasonable, and it would be polarizing. It would lead to great conflict.

On the issue of the Islamic State, I mean, what do we mean by core Islamic State in Libya? I mean, you have -- I think if there is a core it's in Darnah. It's this Islamic Youth Shura Council that was among the first groups to declare loyalty. I mean, that's probably the only place where you have real operational control, and even then, in the City of Darnah, it's not complete.

You know, the people that conducted the execution, I mean, obviously there's foreign elements there. You know, so the real question is, you know, what does this mean for the Islamic State's actual reach? I mean, what kind of coordination and communication is going on between the Islamic State core and then this new, you know, sprout up group in Libya. Certainly there's emissaries. Certainly there's the transfer of communications, technology, I mean, I think the videos really speak to that. But it's unclear to me what that really means, you know, operationally.

You know, I think the danger is that what we're seeing is the weakening

of these core, sort of, jihadist groups in Libya, the Ansar Al-Sharia. They've been pushed out of Benghazi. Their brand if suffering, if you will, and so you have younger members of these groups that are gravitating, you know, toward the Islamic State.

With regard to the White House counterterrorism -- counter extremism conference, and how that applied to Libya, again, I think there's a real role for civil society activism, for NGOs to be involved here. You know, I was talking to a lot of groups in Libya on the Fuzer side, the so-called Islamist side. I mean, they're worried about the spread of Daesh, and their communities.

I mean, I spoke to one young man in Maserati, you know, he has a large family. He said, you know, some of the members of my extended family have gone to fight with Daesh. So this is a problem that affects communities, and so I think there has to be some inclusion of that community based approach in Libya. Not just from the traditional, sort of, Dignity side, but from the so called Islamists. I mean, the quietest Salafis in Tripoli. There are other partners that U.S., you know, should be engaging on that issue.

MS. AL-HAMDANI: So on the subject of southern succession in Yemen we have a joke that's been going on for a few years saying that the guaranteed -- the reason that Yemen has not succeeded is actually because of the southern succession. They are composed of a coalition of several groups who cannot agree with each other, so from 2011 until 2014 the south has definitely had several opportunities to just break apart and have its own nation because the government was weak, the military is not there, pretty much. But they're still trying to come together.

We have a leader called El-Jeffrey who flew to Reav as soon as the Houthis took over Sana. He's trying to bring together all the Hirak movements to unit, and to kind of come up with a southern solution. In my opinion, if they could not do it since 1994 they will not be able to do it now. But what they can do is right now they're going to take a lot of funds and a lot of support from the outside work to kind of combat or

counteract the Houthi movement.

Looking at a possible fragmentation scenario. So you have several governorates in Yemen that probably will want to be an independent state. That would not want to follow any other governorate. The biggest example of that would be the governorate of Hadramaut where two oil sites are located. Of course, you're going to have sultanates, sheikdoms, tribal warfare between then. Then you're going to have political parties, they're dispersed all over, are they going to unit or what are these political representatives going to do? We're not really sure.

Then, of course, we have a new youth movement within the southern secessionists group that is not following the older generation of Hirak that want to do their own thing. They're really angry. I think we have to keep our eyes on the youth because that's pretty scary in the south. Having said that, I think that moving forward in Yemen a succession scenario is not in its best interests.

MS. BODINE: If I can just kind of add to that, I think it's very -- I agree totally with what was just said is that we tend to talk about the southern movement. It tends to be capitalized as the southern movement or Hirak, and there is no movement. There's an enormous range of views and parties to what that means. Often what passes for the southern movement is really an Adeny movement. It has nothing to do with many of the surrounding governorates and has very little to discrimination with Hadramaut.

The idea that even if Yemen were to fragment, and I don't personally think that that's going to happen, dividing along the old 1990 line is probably not the way it would break up in any event. That was an artificial line. You know, we've all talked about how we shouldn't be looking at Yemen in secretarian terms, but I would say that, you know, the Zaydi-Shafi'i line is not at the 1990 north Yemen, south Yemen line.

You've got two major, very important, governorates Ta'izz and Ibb which are north of the old line. Really are not part of Ayden, but maybe closer to is in some ways. Certainly don't have anything to do with, you know, are not that connected to the

Hadramaut. So the north/south division along old lines I really don't think is going to happen.

I have heard that there are some parties, and we were talking about spillover going out of Yemen or Libya. I'm actually more concerned about spillover coming in of some parties in the region who do believe that a divided Yemen is actually in their interest, and are actually starting to talk about this again. They talked about it in 1994, and the U.S. government, quite wisely, went to them and said a divided Yemen is not in your interest, our interest, or Yemen's interest, and I would say that's very much the case now.

If we're concerned about, you know, the Houthi -- the Al-Qaeda not being adequately confronted, if we're worried about failed state and the humanitarian side, if we have problems with one Yemen, two or three is going to just be two or three that much more failed states. So that is not a solution to the problem. I'm not really sure how it would work anyway. I've never been able to find out where the line between the north and south really is as opposed to old 1990 line.

MR. BYMAN: I think we have time for one more question. I'm going to take one in the very front here, so, sir, just wait for microphone please. It will be coming.

MR. EMBRY: Thank you. Will Embry from DynCorp International. Fred, could you talk a little bit more about the central bank? How it's related to the two sides? What's it funding? Is it able to stay independent? How's it dealing with the oil companies, the oil revenue?

MR. WEHREY: Well, just very generally, I mean, there has been a real battle over ownership of it, and, you know, the Benghazi branch of the central bank was raided. There was questions about who was the head of the central bank.

You know, my understanding is that its reserves are declining rapidly. I think that's, sort of, the real focus of the international effort is to safeguard that. That entity is, sort of, the last, you know, remaining mutual institution. The probably is, I mean,

the two sides are accessing funds from it. Again, from what I hear lately is there's this move to freeze the assets of the bank which the majority of them are held in European capitals.

The Europeans tell me that they're reluctant to do that. I mean, the Americans are pushing hard on that. The Europeans, I think, are a bit reluctant because if they cut off the funds to all these militias they're going to have a bunch of angry militias, so they're afraid that this could completely change the dynamic of the Europeans as sort of neutral, you know, normalize arbitrators, and that they're backing one side. You know, there could be blow back down the road.

But, yeah, I mean, the funds are still flowing. I mean, when I was there the salaries were still there. These militias are incredibly well-armed. I mean, they're both flying aircraft around. Somebody's helping them repair those aircraft. We're talking artillery tanks, howitzer, so this is a very well-armed conflict.

MR. BYMAN: Great. With apologies for those of you whose hands I did not get to we have to end our event now. If you're like me you are both more depressed and better informed.

MS. BODINE: That often happens.

MR. BYMAN: Please join me before we depart in thanking our panelists for, really, an excellent conversation. Again, thank you all for coming out. Have a nice day.

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