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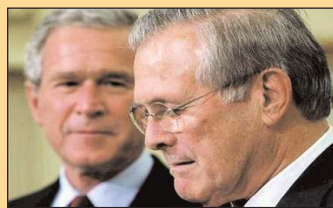
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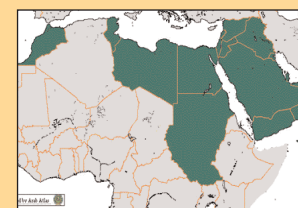
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Rumsfeld faces war crime lawsuit



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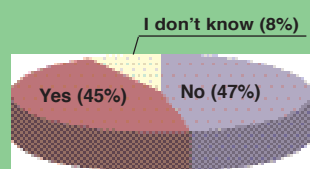
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Uniting Arab economies

Readers' Voice

Last edition's question:

Do you think Yemen will obtain support for its future projects from this week's Donors conference in London?



This edition's question:

Yemeni MPs doubt the capability of the existing Parliament's presidency board to keep pace with other parliaments across the world in controlling relations between executive and legislative authorities. Do you think Yemen's Parliament is like other world parliaments in its legislative and organizational performance?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

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and have your voice heard

Donors pledge funds to Yemen as conference begins

By: Yasser Al-Mayasi

SANA'A, Nov. 15 — Donors Conference activities began Wednesday in London in the presence of Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh and representatives of donor organizations and Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries that support Yemen's ailing economy.

At Wednesday's session, GCC nations announced \$2.1 billion in aid to Yemen, of which \$1 billion is from Saudi Arabia, \$500 million from Qatar and the United Arab Emirates and \$100 million from Oman. The remaining amount will come from other Gulf nations.

Through the Donors' Conference, Yemen aims to increase annual economic growth from 4.1 to 7.1 percent in order to qualify for GCC admission.

In cooperation with the GCC, Yemen prepared a report to diagnose Yemen's need for resources in order to

achieve the goals of its third five-year development plan, as well as meet GCC requirements, the cost of which exceeds \$48 billion. The Yemeni government also has prepared an investment project to cover the time period of the plan's implementation.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) presented a study to assess the entire cost for Yemen to fully integrate into the GCC bloc. It stressed the necessity of increasing competition, improving efficiency and reducing barriers to transporting commodities and workforce travel.

The study ascertained that Yemen's GCC admission will help achieve economic benefits because this is expected to enhance competition among GCC nations. It anticipates remarkable growth in investment, export volume and employment, while gross domestic production is projected to grow 20 percent in the long run.

According to the study, increasing

the level of competition in labor and product markets likely will benefit other Gulf nations more than Yemen, thanks to their strong economies. Developing the structure of markets and the level of competition in GCC countries is expected to reduce Yemen's currency conversion rate and increase GDP by 7 percent in the long run.

Addressing the conference, President Saleh said he hoped the results would be more positive than those of the 2002 conference in Paris, revealing that Yemen utilized only 20 percent of those results.

He reviewed Yemen's reforms process implemented since 1990 and its commitment to the democratic course. "The Yemeni government ensured women all of their legal and democratic rights and its most recent elections featured strong competition. The election was not a political ploy," Saleh emphasized.

Parliament presidency board treats MPs like soldiers, Hashed says



MP Ahmed Said Hashed

By: Mohammed bin Sallam

SANA'A, Nov. 15 — In an exclusive statement to the Yemen Times, Member of Parliament and human rights activist Ahmed Saif Hashed strongly criticized the Yemeni Parliament's presidency board, declaring that it deals with MPs like they're in a military camp and not the people's representatives.

"Parliament's presidency board doesn't deal seriously with issues put before the Yemeni Parliament for discussion," Hashed asserted, "Further, it treats MPs like they're in a camp and not elected by the Yemeni people."

He noted, "Parliament hasn't won a single case against the government since its establishment. Parliamentary authorities haven't investigated any minister in the way such investigations should be handled. Instead, they give ministers opportunities to present their lame excuses and justifications; thus, they leave ministers unquestioned."

Hashed added that there are no parliamentary norms to investigate government officials and that Parliament is "a décor with no soul."

"Deputy Parliament Speaker Yahya Al-Ra'ai didn't allow me to reply to Minister of Interior Rashad Al-Alimi during a parliamentary session to recount the events that have occurred. Furthermore, sympathizers weren't allowed to speak because their microphones were turned off," he commented.

He further alleged that Al-Ra'ai seized his camera while he was capturing Al-Alimi receiving special MP privileges.

"In its current state, such a parliament can't hold any official accountable. MPs begging from Al-Alimi is evidence that Parliament is weak and can't be counted upon," Hashed remarked.

When Hashed denied Al-Alimi's story concerning circumstances surrounding his detention last month and swore to Allah that Al-Alimi was a liar and didn't speak the truth, Al-Alimi found it a chance to withdraw from Parliament along with Political Security Apparatus Chairman Ghaleb Al-Qamish.

Al-Alimi and Al-Qamish attended Parliament's Monday session after being requested to give accounts of Hashed's Oct. 16 detention while participating in a demonstration involving hundreds of youth, women and elderly citizens seeking human rights activist Ali Al-Dailami's release.

Al-Alimi recounted, "There was a demonstration Mon., Oct. 16 at noon, during which a demonstrator was photographing the intelligence building, so a guard seized his camera."

"It later was revealed that the camera belonged to Hashed, who asked to meet with an intelligence official. He was allowed to enter the building, but found no one there because it was the end of the day. Thus, he told the demonstrators to go home."

Al-Alimi accused Hashed of com-

mitting numerous infringements, including demonstrating without obtaining security permission and going from the attorney general's office to the intelligence building with a large group of demonstrators. Further, he denied that Hashed was detained in the intelligence building.

Several MPs, including Abdulkarim Shaiban and Sultan Al-Atwani, strongly criticized Hashed's terrorizing experience, saying, "It's not the first time an MP's impunity has been violated and it won't be the last."

They also noted, "Session head Al-Ra'ai pressured Hashed and strongly requested that he apologize to Al-Alimi. He seemed like he was giving military orders, even though Hashed was right."

MPs expressed their surprise at Al-Alimi and Al-Qamish's withdrawals at the beginning of arguments with Hashed.

"Even if Hashed was incorrect, it was possible to ask him to withdraw his speech and resume discussing violations MPs and others experience in the intelligence building, as long as Parliament asked them to attend the session, not Hashed," they commented.

Independent MP Hashed represents constituency No. 70 including Lahj and Taiz and is a member of Parliament's Rights and Freedoms Committee.

Since joining the committee, Hashed has adopted issues concerning prison inmates and those in Ministry of Interior detentions, including hostages imprisoned by security apparatuses and detained influential private citizens, as well as those of marginalized groups, street vendors, the unemployed and children's issues.

He has disclosed several suppression and torture cases involving inmates in numerous governorates. He frequently differed with other committee members for presenting independent and anti-government reports, publishing them in newspapers and distributing them among civil society organizations interested in human rights and freedoms.

Ministry of Interior apparatuses have arrested Hashed numerous times, unknown parties have threatened his life on many occasions, asking him to give up defending the wronged and inmate issues and he survived a June 2004 attempt on his life, during which his driver was killed.

Yemeni-Saudi conference focuses on immune system diseases

By: Imad Al-Saqqaf

TAIZ, Nov. 15 — The second Yemeni-Saudi Allergy and Immune System Diseases Conference concludes today after three days of sessions and information exchange between Yemeni and Saudi specialists.

More than 150 doctors, research and medical specialists participated in discussing 50 technical working papers, which focused on three basic areas: infectious diseases, especially AIDS, the immune system and its diseases and allergies. Attendees discussed various immune deficiencies, especially HIV, as well as allergies present in the Yemeni community.

Taiz University College of Medicine organized the event, in coordination with the National Saudi Center for Allergy, Asthma and Immune System Diseases and Saudi's King Fahd University Medical Center. Yemen's Hayel Sa'eed Group and Omar Al-Esayi Saudi Establishment also financially supported the organization of



the conference.

Dr. Emad Koshak, head of the conference's Saudi scientific delegation, stated that the most important recommendations the conference would yield were to find solutions to treating immune system diseases and agree on a mechanism to provide asthma medicine. He added that today's laboratory specialists can diagnose immune system and allergic diseases by testing for inhibitors in the blood and noting their reactions to chemicals.

Taiz University President Mohammad Abdullah Al-Soufi stated in his welcome speech that the conference was a further step in medical cooperation between the two nations, especially since immune system and allergic diseases concern both Yemeni and Saudi authorities.

On behalf of the Saudi delegation, Dr. Jamil Abdulwali Al-Mughales, head of King Fahd Medical Center's Allergy and Immune System Medical Services, confirmed this point, adding



The number of attendees reflects the importance of the conference which covered infectious diseases, the immune system and allergies.

that because AIDS is an especially great concern, the conference aimed to lay a foundation for a common strategy to fight HIV, as well as other less attention-getting diseases like asthma and allergies.

The conference was especially important because both the Yemeni and Saudi private sectors supported it. Ahmed Hayel Sa'eed of the Hayel Group confirmed the importance of private sector involvement in scientific research and development, asserting that it will lead to a better future for both citizens and the nation.

Shoura Council head Abdulaziz Abdulghani expressed the Yemeni government's commitment to this field, especially as registered HIV cases increase. "We must work at both the cultural awareness and the medical research levels. As we seek to discover treatments for diseases, we must teach ourselves to accept infected individuals and allow them to integrate into society," he stressed.

According to Yemeni government records, adult HIV/AIDS rate as of 2001 was 0.1 percent, with 12,000 registered cases.

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In brief

Aden

Attractive investment in Aden
Nov. 14 — The Aden Governor Ahmad Al-Khuhilani met the Ambassador of Italy to discuss cooperation between the two countries to activate the Italian tourism in Aden and to attract the Italian tourists to Yemen. The governor said the Yemeni government makes facilities for foreign investors and businessmen in different fields to make business in Yemen easy.

Amran

Renewed oppositions between two armed tribes
Nov. 14 — Tribes in Amran renewed their opposition two weeks ago — leading injuries for four men. A source stated that the reasons were an argument over ownership of a garden. The two sides have used firearms during the past weeks. A previous disagreement flared up between the tribes in July leading to one death and other injuries.

Hodidah

Training course for local radio broadcasters
Nov. 15 — The general program for the media and public communication arranged training courses for trainees on Monday. The course aimed to train specialized radio broadcasters in how to prepare and produce awareness media letters and curricula as media tools. About 16 trainees were selected from the different radio broadcasts in Yemen.

Lahj

UNICEF discusses future projects and programs
Nov. 15 — The governor of Lahj, Abud Al-Wahab Al-Darah met with UNICEF on Tuesday to discuss the new strategy of UNICEF and highlight the health problems and difficulties in the governorate. The governor stated that the government will present the facilities for the organization to support its activities.

Sana'a

Yemen and Cuba discuss agricultural cooperation
Nov.14 — The head of the Agricultural Cooperative Union, Mohammed Al-Sheriff, met the Cuban Ambassador to Yemen, Vienvenido Garcia Negrin, to discuss joint agricultural cooperation. During the meeting, Al-Sheriff highlighted the Cuban success in different fields of development particularly in agriculture and women's empowerment. The Cuban ambassador expressed readiness of his country to enhance cooperation with Yemen through training courses and exchanging experience and information between two countries.

Program for medical supply

Nov. 15 — The Cabinet agreed on its Tuesday's meeting to establish a national program for medical supply. The program aims to reinforce medical policy to warrant bringing drugs and medical equipment from reliable resources according to the international standardization, measures and quality. The cabinet asked both ministers of public health and population, and legal affairs to complete the legal procedures necessary to issue the decree of establishing the program.

Taiz

Cultural activities at Al-Saad Foundation
Nov.14 — Al-Saad Foundation arranged cultural activities under the banner "UNESCO organization's role in improve the cultural, educational and scientific fields in Yemen." The secretary general of the national committee for culture and education stated the important role that UNESCO play in improving the education field; the Illiteracy Eradication's curriculums and in the cultural field; manuscripts repairing, improve the scientific museums and other activities.

Saudi delegation tours Hadramout's architecture

By: Saeed Al-Batati

HADRAMOUT, Nov. 14 — The Saudi universities delegation left Mukalla last Friday after a three-day visit to Hadramout governorate, during which the team viewed the mud buildings and ancient architecture in the governorate.

"The visit aims to help students know about the architecture in Hadramout Valley and the historic sights manifesting civilization of the world leading nation in the past," said Ibrahim Al-Nu'aiimi, Dead of Construction Department at Saudi's King Faisal University.

"Modern construction threatens mud buildings. This is the modern construction's cancer that destroys the ancient architecture. Saudi students came to this city to get acquainted with its unique architecture," he added.

The delegation was made up deans and faculty members from King Saoud University, King Faisal University and King Fahd University along with some members of government.

"We were surprised by the ancient sights we visited. We landed in Sayoun



The visit aims to help students know about the architecture in Hadramout Valley and the historic sights.

Airport to be hailed by officials in the city," said Al-Nu'aiimi. "Then we visited the historic city of Shibam and enjoyed its architectural antiques. Really, it is difficult for words to convey my impression about Shibam city.

The group also discussed the Emir Sultan Prize which was established for maintaining architecture.

"The prize aims to spread awareness among youths about the importance of

architecture," said Zaher Abdurrahman Othman, General Manager of the Heritage Foundation. "We hope to visit Hadramout governorate every year.

Concluding its trip, the delegation visited Hadramout University for Science and Technology and the Faculty of Civil Engineering. The delegation viewed the efforts pursued by the university to maintain the architectural heritage and mud buildings.

Yemen asked to continue down democracy path

SANA'A, Nov. 14 — Yemen should continue developing democracy, said Robin Madrid, out-going director of the National Democratic Institute in Sana'a, during a farewell ceremony organized by Women Journalists Without Chains.

Madrid thanked all Yemenis particularly those who criticized her during her post as NDI director. She said she worked neutrally with all political parties and civil community organizations in the country — her main goal was to make the democratic experience in Yemen a success.

Madrid urged political parties in

Yemen to work hard so the revote in some voting centers and 2009 parliamentary elections will be successful.

"Dialogue and open discussion are the ideal means to improve democracy. Yemenis have to continue dialogue and discussions until their country reaches the level of democracy experienced in the U.S. and other developed countries," said Madrid. "Ignorance and failure on the part of Yemenis to improve democracy will not be in favour of their country's progress and development."

And then taking some time to think about her time in the country Madrid

was able to succinctly wrap up her experience.

"I love Yemen and Yemenis, which is why I favoured to work in Yemen that proved to have an exciting democratic experience," she explained.

Madrid mentioned she recognized new friends and learned from their experience. She thanked those who criticized her since, according to her, this criticism had not affected her job.

Madrid faced harsh and slanderous media campaigns and sharp criticism by some local newspapers over her the institute's attitude toward elections and democracy in Yemen.

Clean water coming to a home near you

By: Amel Al-Ariqi

SANA'A, Nov. 14 — The second phase of the urban water supply and sanitation project got underway in Sana'a with a workshop.

The Minister of Water and Environment, Abdul-Rahman F. Al-Eryani, and the Director of World Bank —Yemen office Mustafa Rouis inaugurated the workshop which was attended by World Bank experts, officials from the Ministry of Water and Environment and representatives of Water Supply and Sanitation Firm.

"The Urban water supply and sanitation project is considered to be amongst the largest projects in the water supply and sanitation sector in the Republic of Yemen," said the General Director of the Project Eng. Ali Al-Kumairi. "The project is targeted at the water resources, in the sense of research and reinforcement and at the construction of new water resources, in networks, pumping stations, and tanks, in addition the rehabilitation of current water networks and sanitations lines in some cities."

Al-Kumairi pointed out that the over-



Minister of Water and Environment inaugurated the workshop

all project cost is US \$150 million. The value of the facilitated credit provided by the International Development Agency, which is an arm of the World Bank Group, to the project amounts to US \$130 million and the governmental contribution of US \$20 million.

"According to the administrative program, the project works are expected to end in December 2007," said Al-Kumairi.

According to 2005 statistics, there are 5.86 million people residing the urban regions. Achieved water supply coverage at the end of 2005 was 58 percent,

or 457,000 home connections, reaching a population of 3.43 million (up 11 percent from the 2002 baseline); whereas achieved sewage network coverage at the end of 2005 was 32 percent, or 250,000 homes, reaching a population of 1,875 million (up 7 percent from the 2002 baseline).

Jan Frank, Financial Specialist for the World Bank, stressed that water supply services must reach poor people.

"This demands a balanced sustainable water system where projected supply and ability to pay is balanced to serves many poor people as possible," he said.

Yemeni group to help Palestinian people

SANA'A, Nov. 14 — A Yemeni organization for lifting siege on Palestinian people was formed at Sheikh Abdullah Al-Ahmer's weekly forum on Tuesday.

The group is made up of people from different political parties, but they agreed on the formation of the executive committee. They selected Al-Ahmer as chairman of the group and other prominent positions will be held by Abdul Majid Al-Zindani, Chairman of Iman Islamic

University and Yahia Saleh, Chairman of Kana'an for Palestine Association.

"The beards accused for terrorism will disappear in the expected new Palestinian government," said Jamal Issa, representative of Hamas Movement. "Yemeni people at this time should work on lifting the siege on Palestinian people with all possible means." "Al-Ahmer said the group will focus on lifting the siege on Palestinian people." "The group will send a

message of solidarity with Palestinian people showing that Yemeni people have gathered to lift the siege on them," said Al-Ahmer. "The group welcomes all volunteers to support Palestinians for Palestine's issue concerns the whole nation, not only Palestinians themselves. "The group is preparing a large demonstration in coordination with different parties and organizations to take place Nov. 18 to reflect the Yemeni attitude.

British hand for Yemeni education

SANA'A, Nov. 14 — In a visit to Yemen the director general of the British Council said education is a top priority for the council's work in Yemen.

Restarting the training centre that previously provided English classes and teacher training to international qualifications for English teachers is one of the major projects of Sir David Green, director general of the British Council.

"The training centre has two sections; the first is teacher section that offers high quality English teachers for people to learn English. The second section is a training section to provide training for English teachers to get international qualifications," said Elizabeth White, the director of British Council in Yemen.

Green was on hand to open the new British Council exhibition, The Looking Glass. It is an exhibition of arts photographs of aspects of contemporary Muslim life in the United Kingdom and Yemen, by British and Yemeni photographers. The exhibition opened in Nov. 6 at the National Museum. Some of The Looking Glass photographs had been featured in the British Council's major Middle East touring exhibition, Common Ground.

During his visit he met Foreign Minister Abubakr Al-Qirbi and Minister of Education Abdusalam Al-Jawfi to discuss British-Yemeni co-operation, particularly in education.

"We reached to an agreement with the Ministry on a project providing assistance with plans to introduce English to curriculum to the primary level; from level four to six," said Green.

"We face two obstacles here in Yemen. The first is security, as it is known there several members of Al-Qaeda in Yemen. Moreover, kidnapping foreigners create another obstacle for us. But now the situation is different and we feel more secure. The second obstacle is perception of Yemenis about Britain. I am pleased of being here in Yemen as well as of the hospitality of Yemenis."

As an artist Green said he reserved the last day to paint, "Painting for me is more than a hobby. It is a part of my daily life that I can express my feelings through".

Green has been the director general of the British Council since 1999. Since his appointment, the organization has focused on working with younger audiences in achieving its objectives of building mutually beneficial relationships between people in the UK and other countries, and in increasing appreciation of the UK's ideas and achievements



British Council's Sir David Green

internationally.

Green's professional background is in development, education and the voluntary sector. He was Director of Voluntary Service Overseas from 1990 to 1999. Previously, he held posts at Save the Children Fund and started his career as a school teacher. He was born in 1948. He is a graduate of Cambridge University. He is a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society and of the Arts. He was knighted in 2004 and made a Freeman of the city of Freetown in the same year. A keen supporter of the theatre, the arts and an amateur painter, he is also a Director of the Royal Court Theatre.

The council's work includes teaching English, running information centers, promoting British education and training, working closely with governments and NGOs on reform and good governance and demonstrating the innovation, creativity and excellence of British science, arts literature and design. The Chevening Scholarship is one their annual projects to give students an opportunity to study in the UK. Such projects strengthen the relationship between Yemen and Britain. It started in November and it will last until Nov.22. for Yemeni students.

"Selected Yemeni students fulfill their task much better than the other students around the world," said Green.

The criteria of selecting students as Raja'a Bazara, a project manager stated, "When selecting students, we pay a lot of attention to students' educational background and qualification, work position, experience and their English language. All these criterion play an important role in selection. Most of the students are very keen and fulfilling their potential. Further we offer students English Language Testing System in order to get the admission. Lastly the students are interviewed by British Ambassador and we get the number down to around ten to twelve."

Yemen participates in postal conference

SANA'A, Nov. 15 — Minister of Telecommunication and Information Technology Abdulmalik Al-Mu'alimi headed Yemen's delegation to the UAE to participate in the World Post Strategies Conference, organized Nov. 14 to 16 by the International Post Corporation.

Al-Mu'alimi is accompanied by Mohamed Ali Murghem, General Manager of Post and Postal Savings Corporation and other officials from the Ministry of Telecommunication and Information Technology.

The Yemeni delegation accepted an invitation for the conference extended by Edward Dyane, general director of International Post Corporation.

It is for the first time that the Post Strategies Conference is held outside the International Post Corporation premises in Switzerland. Many countries are competing to host the conference in the years to come.

Eight hundred people from 130 countries, including ministers, chairpersons of post corporations and international organizations, as well as representatives of public and private post companies, are participating in the conference.

The conference aims to draw a road map for post sectors during the years to come via competition and approval of the postal strategies between 2008 and 2012.

Additionally, the conference focuses on issues related to sustainable development in the post sector, as well as the technical, economic and demographic transformations in post sectors. These transformations necessitate that decision-makers cooperate with strategic post partners to bring an international post infrastructure, characterized by dynamism and capability to offer top quality services and meet the growing demands of customers.

Global Gateway training in Yemen

SANA'A, Nov. 16 — Yemen will join the Global Gateway initiative as a strategic international partner in this month. Global Gateway is administered worldwide by the British Council on behalf of the UK's Ministry of Education, the Department for Education and Skills.

The agreement will be signed by Minister of Education Abdulsalam Al-Goofi as part of a large scale project to develop school links between Yemeni and UK teachers from 14 state schools and six candidates from the ministry staff will attend initial user training provided by two facilitators from Britain. Global Gateway in partnership with the Ministry of Education will hold ses-

sions from Nov. 19 to Nov. 22. The UK facilitators will present the available Global Gateway tools for the Yemeni education experts.

The trainers will equip the teachers with the tools necessary to instruct and encourage others in the process of adding an international dimension to their classroom activity and establish collaborative partnerships with teachers and students in other countries. Global Gateway held sessions during the last couple of weeks in Bahrain, Oman and Qatar.

Global Gateway is an on-line resource for schoolchildren and their teachers enabling them to establish contact with schools in other countries.

Rumsfeld faces war crime lawsuit

BERLIN, Nov. 15 — Lawyers for inmates of Iraq's Abu Ghraib prison and Guantanamo Bay asked German prosecutors Tuesday to open a war crimes investigation of outgoing U.S. Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld and other U.S. officials for their alleged roles in abuse at the detention centers.

Although the lawyers who filed the lawsuit acknowledged while there was little chance of seeing Rumsfeld in a German jail, the point was simply to increase the pressure on top brass they say are culpable. German federal prosecutors said they would examine the case.

"We are not expecting that Rumsfeld will appear in a court, but we are hoping investigators will begin looking into the case," said Wolfgang Kaleck, a German lawyer involved in the suit. The 220-page lawsuit, which also names 13 other U.S. officials, was sent to federal prosecutors under a German law that allows the prosecution of war



U.S. President George W. Bush with Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld after Bush announced Rumsfeld's replacement on Nov. 8. Civil rights groups filed a suit with German prosecutors on Tuesday seeking war crimes charges against Rumsfeld for alleged abuse of detainees at Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo prisons.

REUTERS

the world court before they ever set foot in any courtroom ... while people who are far more culpable and responsible have walked away blameless," Karpinski said during a presentation of the case in Berlin.

There have been 11 convictions and about a dozen courts-martial in the United States related to Abu Ghraib.

The suit is brought on behalf of 12 alleged torture victims - 11 Iraqis held at Abu Ghraib and Mohamad Al-Qahtani, a Saudi being held at the US military prison in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, who has been identified by the US as a would-be participant in the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks.

Captured in December 2001 along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border, Al-Qahtani would not crack under normal questioning, so Rumsfeld approved harsher methods, according to the testimony before Congress.

After FBI agents raised concerns, military investigators began reviewing the case and in July 2005 said they confirmed abusive and degrading treatment that included forcing Al-Qahtani to wear a bra, dance with another man, stand naked in front of women, and behave like a dog. Still, the Pentagon determined "no torture occurred."

German prosecutors already declined to investigate a more limited lawsuit in 2005, arguing that it was up to the U.S. to hold any inquiry and that there were no indications U.S. authorities or courts would refrain from doing so.

Since then, there have been "no efforts in the United States to go up the chain of command - they've basically been given impunity from any investigation or prosecution," said Michael Ratner, president of New York's Center for Constitutional Rights, which is behind the litigation.

The attorneys think they have a better case this time, armed with docu-

crimes regardless of where they were committed. It alleges that Rumsfeld personally ordered and condoned torture.

Bryan Whitman, a Pentagon spokesman, said U.S. officials had not seen the complaint, but said media reports suggested it was "frivolous."

"Abu Ghraib is something that the U.S. government has investigated very thoroughly," Whitman said, noting more than a dozen probes as well as congressional hearings. "The appropriate individuals have been held accountable."

Former U.S. Army Brig. Gen. Janis Karpinski, the one-time commander of all U.S. military prisons in Iraq, said she would testify against her superiors because only a handful of low-ranking soldiers have been convicted in the abuse at Baghdad's Abu Ghraib prison.

Karpinski, who was relieved of her command and demoted to colonel last year, said she wanted to "be a voice for my soldiers."

"They were tried and convicted in

Alfa Panasonic shows new products

SANA'A, Nov. 13 — Alfa Panasonic organized a symposium on popularizing the company's new products in the area of telecommunication and stationery.

The event was held in Sheraton Hotel in the presence of the managers of companies and foundations interested in telecommunication technology.

During the symposium, the company displayed many telecommunication devices including mobile phones, fax machines and modern laser printers.

People from Alfa Panasonic Company gave lectures about the new telecommunication devices that meet the growing demand of customers.

Concluding the symposium, Alfa Panasonic conducted a draw for prizes offered by the company.



General Tender Announcement Number (11) Year 2006

For The Second Time

Yemen Radio and TV Corporation re-announces tenders for the second time for the following:

- **Supply, supervise installation, test, guarantee and hand-over of the antenna systems and required peripheral equipments for one FM broadcasting station of medium wave of 600 kilo watts.**

Interested specialized and manufacturing companies in this field are to come to the Corporation's premises- engineering sector, projects department in Sana'a near the Ministry of Public Health and Population during official working hours in order to obtain the tenders documents.

Tender fees: Non-refundable US 500\$ an additional 100\$ is charged for optional postal delivery.

General conditions:

- 1- Primary guarantee of 2.5% of the total tender cost and valid for 120 days from the date of opening the envelopes
- 2- Valid tax card for 2006
- 3- Valid commercial registration card for 2006
- 4- Valid Insurance card for 2006
- 5- Valid Alms (Zakat) card for 2006
- 6- The envelopes are to be sealed in red wax
- 7- Commitment to the general and special conditions stated in the tender documents

Place and date for opening the envelopes:

The envelopes are to be opened at 11:00 AM on Saturday 2/12/2006 at the corporation premises.

Job Announcement

Health 20/20 Project, Funded by USAID, announces the following vacant position

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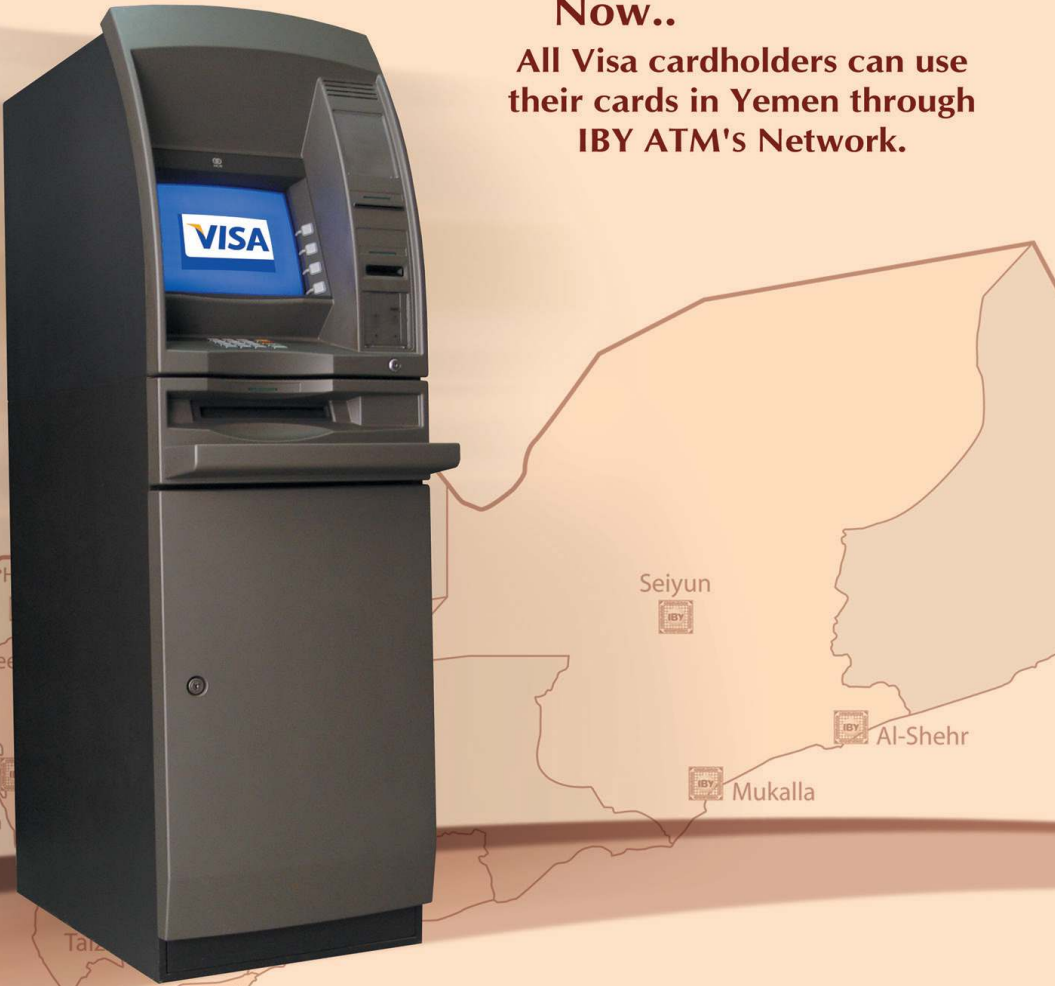
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Yemeni CSOs are ineffective and lack transparency

By: Anwar Mughram

Civil society is one of the basic concepts reflecting democratic transformations. Historically, it's related to the European society and Renaissance philosophers.

Civil society organizations (CSOs) suddenly appeared in Yemen in the early 1990s during the establishment of reunification, which was associated with democracy. The Reunification Constitution ensured citizens the right to form unions, associations and political parties. These organizations constitute a third sector, in addition to the government and private sectors, and contribute to the process of sustainable human development in compliance with its [process] goals.

CSOs are thought of as social agents and mediators between individuals and authorities. The civil society is an organization of social activists via channels run by private foundations that work to enable the individual to participate in public affairs.

Such non-profit organizations are characterized by flexibility and dynamism; thus, they emerge and develop on the basis of voluntary work and popular initiatives. Affiliating with such organizations is based on free choice, obedience to their principles and programs and their membership requirements.

CSOs aren't limited to a particular group of people, nor are they inherited, and their leaders undergo testing on the democratic process.

Also, the correlation process between CSOs remains weak and those in charge of such organizations lack full understanding about civil society culture.

Citizens realize that there are many CSOs, particularly as 5,387 such associations had received operating licenses from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor as of December 2005. This number includes societies, organizations, confederations and



Civil Society organizations are thought of as social agents and mediators between individuals and authorities.
PHOTO BY YASSER AL-MAYYISI

unions. However, the ministry canceled the operating licenses of 1,500 societies and foundations across the republic because their legitimacy is no longer active.

Development of CSOs in Yemen

In his book, "Modern Civil Society in Yemen," published in March 2000 by the Arab Center for Strategic Studies, Dr. Fuad Al-Salahi, head of Sana'a University's sociology department and holder of the first Ph.D. dissertation on the formation and development of CSOs in Yemen, said such organizations' development went through three stages:

- 1- Pre-independence stage: This was the first stage of the modern organizations, particularly in Aden and country of emigration, and was the beginning of laborers' congregations in the form of clubs and societies in the 1930s.
- 2- Post-independence stage: This stage witnessed the existence of two basic systems with different directions. Both systems agreed on refusing democracy and opposing political and intellectual plurality, but both systems had to control any established societies or organizations.
- 3- Republic of Yemen stage: This stage saw qualitative and quantitative development of political

parties that formerly exercised under-the-table activities. Unions, confederations and rights organizations were established during this stage.

Regarding the development of CSOs in Yemen, Abdulbari Taher, former president of the Yemeni Journalists Syndicate (YJS) and executive manager of Al-Afif Cultural Foundation, said, "Aden experienced transformations as World War II broke out. At that time, many trade unions, societies, political parties, press and literary unions and cooperative and charitable societies were established.

"Some cities in the Hadramout also witnessed private cooperative societies and unions in the early 20th century, whereas private cooperation in Hodeidah dates back to the 1950s. Taiz city experienced broader cooperation activities after the Sept. 26 revolution erupted, while several North Yemen unions and political parties were exercising secret activities."

Regarding CCO features and characteristics, Al-Salahi explained, "CSOs must be characterized by clear goals, programs and specification of the targeted social group. Such organizations should be effective, attain real achievements and enjoy transparency. They must welcome all social groups and individuals and their work must be related to societal

circumstances and successes. They aren't expected to work as donors require."

In an essay entitled, "Civil Society Development in Egypt," civil society activist and executive director of the Arab Network for Private Organizations, Dr. Amani Qendil, stated that, "Transparency and accountability are the two basic pillars in civic culture in general and the culture of civil society organizations in particular."

According to Qendil, accountability complements transparency and confirms such organizations' credibility to public opinion, governments, the private sector and international organizations. Accountability also enhances confidence and interaction on the part of individuals.

Regarding CCO ineffectiveness in Yemen, Al-Salahi opined, "CSOs are abundant in Yemen, but their effectiveness in real-life situations remains intangible. Additionally, citizens cast doubt on the effectiveness of CSOs due to motives and goals behind their establishment.

"The majority of these organizations don't have social bases – they consist of only one individual using his aides, who helped him found the organization, to seek support with the aim of material gain. Their efforts aren't aimed at social development."

He continued, "Through probes and research we conducted on CCO development over the past few years, it's become clear that society doesn't trust these organizations because most are ineffective and exercise propaganda at the expense of development activities."

Taher holds the view that backwardness, illiteracy and comprehensive isolation have hindered CCO development in different ways. Sixty-five percent of Yemeni males and 70 percent of females are illiterate; therefore, fanaticism and loyalty to the tribe play a primary role in deterring CCO activities. From this standpoint, one can understand that Yemen's civil society remains in the infant stage,

where it's been confined for years since its birth

Dr. Mohamed Ali Al-Maqtari, Executive Director of the Yemen Human Rights Observatory, attributed CCO ineffectiveness to absence of an institutional framework and limitations the CSOs legislation as well as lack of government support.

Abdullah Al-Mekhlafi, who has dealt with many CSOs, said such organizations tend to propagandize while running their activities, adding that such propaganda has no relevance to real-life situations.

Regarding CCO adherence to transparency, Taher clarified that, according to law, concerned parties must investigate the sources of financial support CSOs receive. Transparency regarding support and funding, coupled with controlling programs that benefit from these funds, is very important. According to law and the constitution, the state is responsible for supporting and backing CCO activities because only these organizations can truly transform society.

Al-Salahi is of the opinion that Yemeni CSOs don't abide by transparency and therefore, withhold their funding sources. "They never announce their final accounts. These facts indicate that CSOs have become profit organizations in their practices; however, they have programs like those of the non-profit organizations."

Hamid Ma'odha, Deputy General Manager of the Social Affairs and Labor Ministry's Associations and Unions Unit, which is responsible for granting operating licenses to such organizations and supervising their activities, said, "Most CSOs withhold their funding sources. Even the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor, which is the supervising party, knows those in charge of these organizations nothing about CCO funding sources."

He added, "Via field visits to CSOs to observe their financial and administrative activities, we found those in charge of these organizations saying they receive funds from philanthropists. CSOs are bound to fail

because their activities don't match their goals."

Al-Maqtari explained difficulties CSOs face, saying that the law imposes the state's power upon CSOs, which can't practice any activities or functions unless they obtain licensing from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor. Such obstacles hinder CCO development.

Regarding difficulties the ministry's Associations and Unions Unit faces while supervising CCO activities, Ma'odha listed the following:

- CCO transitions from one place to another
- CSOs don't report to concerned parties about their final accounts, nor do they provide their financial and administrative reports
- CSOs don't hold regular annual meetings, nor do they comply with their bylaws
- CSOs don't renew their operating licenses annually

According to Al-Salahi, some CSOs do exercise democracy in electing staff and in decision-making. However, in other CSOs, the organization head remains the indispensable leader approving every process and activity.

Ma'odha mentioned that most societies don't hold election in conformity with their bylaws; rather, they only conduct one election at the time of their establishment.

Ma'odha also noted that the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor learned that the legitimacy of 1,500 private societies and organizations is no longer valid, pointing out that the ministry annually supports 322 societies and organizations.

According to Ma'odha, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor has suspended issuing operating licenses to civil society organizations and associations since July 2006 because the ministry proposed a field survey of all working organizations.

Anwar Mughram is a journalist and researcher who has participated in numerous field studies on Yemeni CSOs.

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US policy and Yemen: Balancing realism and reform on the Arab periphery

By: Jeremy M. Sharp

In an ironic turn of events, Yemen's September 20 presidential and local elections garnered extensive favorable coverage by the normally critical Al-Jazeera, while they received only scant attention from the US government, heretofore eager to highlight any sign of reform in Arab states.

Why did US officials refrain from highlighting what many foreign observers have praised as successful elections? Possible explanations include a return to traditional priorities in which security interests supersede democracy promotion, a calculated US effort to promote Arab reform more quietly, or simply an oversight due to other distractions.

Yemen, a resource-poor Arab country situated at a healthy distance from the heart of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, is a crucible of sorts for US attempts to strike a balance between reform and other goals. US-Yemeni bilateral security and intelligence cooperation has been, and remains, the top US priority.

Since the 2000 Al-Qaeda attack on the USS Cole, the United States has helped Yemen build its coast guard to patrol the Bab Al-Mandab and to meet an Al-Qaeda-inspired terrorist threat that recent events demonstrate to be very real. On September 19, the day before the elections, Yemeni security forces thwarted two terrorist attacks

against oil installations in the northeastern region of Maarib and on the Gulf of Aden coast at Dhabba.

In Yemen, the United States also faces the challenges of mixing encouragement and criticism of Arab regimes' liberalization efforts and of deciding how to deal with Islamists. This is also true in Morocco and parts of the Gulf, where US officials are quietly urging liberalization. US policy toward engaging certain Islamist movements is left somewhat vague — perhaps deliberately so — but there are efforts being made to maintain contacts with moderate, non-violent Islamist factions.

In Yemen members of the Islah party (a coalition of old guard Muslim Brotherhood members, Salafists, and tribes) appear to welcome dialogue on reform and have participated, along with other Yemeni political parties, in programs sponsored by the US-based National Democratic Institute. Still US officials exercise caution, as the leader of the Salafist strain of Islah, Shaykh Abd al-Majid al-Zindani, has been designated as a US Specially Designated Global Terrorist by the US Treasury Department for his alleged role in providing financial support to Al-Qaeda operations and recruitment.

The Yemeni presidential election was about more than just esoteric notions of political reform; it was about the real issue of presidential succession. As in Egypt, where speculation abounds over the

grooming of Gamal Mubarak for succession, there is widespread concern among Yemen's opposition parties over the prospect of President Ali Abdullah Saleh's 37-year-old son Ahmed inheriting the reins of power.

This fear was among the main motivations that brought Yemen's diverse opposition parties — socialists, Islamists, and Baathists — together in this year's elections. In a recent Washington Post interview, opposition presidential candidate Faisal bin Shamlan (who received 21 percent of the vote) remarked that "We subordinated our ideological agendas to the one thing we all had in common, which was a realization that political reform was a necessity if we were to save democracy in Yemen and stop the country's descent into endemic corruption."

President Saleh's victory surprised no one; he is a populist leader who appeals to the everyman, and the ruling party's overwhelming resource advantage helped him considerably.

Despite opposition allegations of fraud, foreign observers released preliminary conclusions that the election was relatively free and fair with the typical shortcomings seen in developing nations: there were breaches in voting secrecy, underage voters, and a number of inaccuracies in the voting registry. US government officials were clearly encouraged by the relatively smooth election, believing that process is important despite imperfections.

The key policy question now is whether the Yemeni government will derive any tangible benefits from holding the election. In November 2005, the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) suspended Yemen's eligibility for assistance under its Threshold Program, concluding that after Yemen was named as a potential aid candidate in fiscal year 2004, corruption in the country had increased. Yemen can reapply in November of this year.

Despite the upcoming MCC decision, Yemen remains largely absent in public US policy discussions regarding democratization. Regime-manipulated political reform is but one malady in a long list of Yemen's socio-economic problems.

The country is still recovering from civil war and re-unification, and it has enormous social challenges including endemic poverty, high rates of illiteracy, and water depletion.

Yet, in a sense, the general lack of US attention to Yemen in itself creates opportunities. Unlike US relations with more strategically important countries such as Egypt, US-Yemeni relations are not under a microscope, giving policymakers on the ground flexibility and freedom to experiment.

Jeremy M. Sharp is a Middle East policy analyst at the Congressional Research Service.

Source: www.CarnegieEndowment.org

COMMON SENSE

What is wrong with the Arabs?

This year will probably go down as one of the worst years of Arab history. Except for the dramatic victory of Hassan Nasr Allah and his band of devoted and faithful Hezb-Allah fighters, the people of the Arab World have never seen so much let down in the space of 11 months that one simply could not wait further to the end of the year to do a solemn review of all the sad events.

Of course the bloody massacre of Beit Hanoun was the crowning event that brings to the back of many a faithful Moslem and patriotic nationalist Arab mind the reminder that notwithstanding the bright light at the end of the tunnel that the victory of the Lebanese against Israel may have seemed to many, we still have a bloody and dangerous enemy lurking in our midst.

The Beit Hanoun massacre and all the senseless massacres we are daily hearing about in Iraq are a clear reminder that the enemy will go to all lengths to undermine any positive sign that might beam a ray of hope that indeed things can be different here in this most volatile part of the world. Yes, there is a very strong tie-up between the senseless bloodletting in Iraq and the Zionist agenda and there is ample documentation to prove the link, if one wishes to explore. This is added by the fact that when the situation gets tough for Israel and now for the American right, one cannot help but notice the increase of the senseless killings that have become a normal element of the situation in Iraq.

This is further strengthened by the presence of a sizable Mossad force in Baghdad and the unusual seemingly inexplicable nature of the bloody executions that are unearthed almost on a daily basis. The Zionist movement is a movement that is nourished by the spilling of blood and all that one has to do is recall the long list of massacres the Israelis have instigated, not only in Palestine, but also in Syria, Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon. For sure had the Israelis made it to other Arab states, those states will also be able to have their land smeared with the spilt blood of hundreds of civilians as well.

If many Arabs are counting on the results of the American Mid-term Elections, then they are still fooled by illusions fostered by surface optimism that shows they have yet to fully learn about the American political mind-set. That the Zionist lobby is entrenched with the Democrats just as much as it was entrenched with the Republicans is a reality that no Arab or Moslem should ever overlook.

The observer is obviously impressed with the way that the American people have come out and unabashedly expressed their scorn for the failure of the Administration of George W. Bush to achieve a victory in Iraq, just as they once expressed a more militant stance for their government's fumble in Vietnam.

But Vietnam was not the Middle East and the Zionist lobby was not then entrenched as it is now (see the Walt and Mearshimer study on the Israeli Lobby, text of which can easily be found in the Internet by searching under either of these names). What one expects is that the Bush Administration will do all it can to maintain the status quo, at least until it finishes the last two years of its tenure.

In this case, the Democrats will not really push for much change, since they do not have the majority that can ensure that they can override any veto by President Bush and they will stay free from blame, noting that they are not fully in a position to bring about the changes they wish to instate.

But American politics is not the main concern here. The main element of worry that the observer is inclined to focus on is that the situation in the Arab World is not such that this vast and rich geographical expanse stretching from the Atlantic to the Persian Gulf does not take the shape of one nation, blessed with all the elements for easy cohesion and the right attributes for harmonized collaboration, even when it comes to seeing so many people from this nation become victims of senseless slaughter or Zionist bloodthirstiness, which can easily become the fate accorded to any habitats within this expanse.

The issue is not so much that most of the Arabs (in the streets) are not keen to this. The general Arab population is fully conscious of the sad predicament that has befallen the nation, but the tragedy is that after the fate of the once reclusive and seemingly untouchable Saddam, his counterparts in the other Arab states continue to act as if they have God given immunity to any harm coming to them. Sooner or later, it is bound to come, either from within or from the outside. In the case of the latter, as can be seen in Iraq, the tragedy becomes generic.

Hassan Al-Haifi has been a Yemeni political economist and journalist for more than 20 years.



By: Hassan Al-Haifi

French reading festivities

I have attentively followed up what Arab press had reported of festivities of reading in France, the country so keen on its language and culture. I wished that we, the Arabs, had just some of this keenness on our language and culture — instead it is exposed to aggression by the Arabs themselves. Those persons, through their behavior, show how much they hate our language constituting the biggest foundation in the process of preserving spiritual and national entity. Without the language they will, in a few years, disintegrated communities and groups more than they are now.

I have been surprised about the talk of the reading festivities France



By: Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Maqaleh

launches every year and I am now aware this country pays much attention to its language and spends billions for the protection and preservation of this language and to try to spread it. I know also that the

French citizen's interest in reading, but I was aware reading in this civilized country has seasons and festivities lasting one full month every year covering the capital Paris and all the French cities.

In a previous visit to France I noticed that bookshops are spread in villages as well as large and small cities. I also noticed the differences between villages and towns in Western Europe is almost non-existent as a result of the advancement in those countries and the result of linking the villages to the towns with means of communication and infrastructure. This link is something we are lacking or we never think about and why cultural activities in our Arab

countries are mainly confined to capital and large cities. There does not seem any change to alter this image inherited from times of backwardness and deprivation.

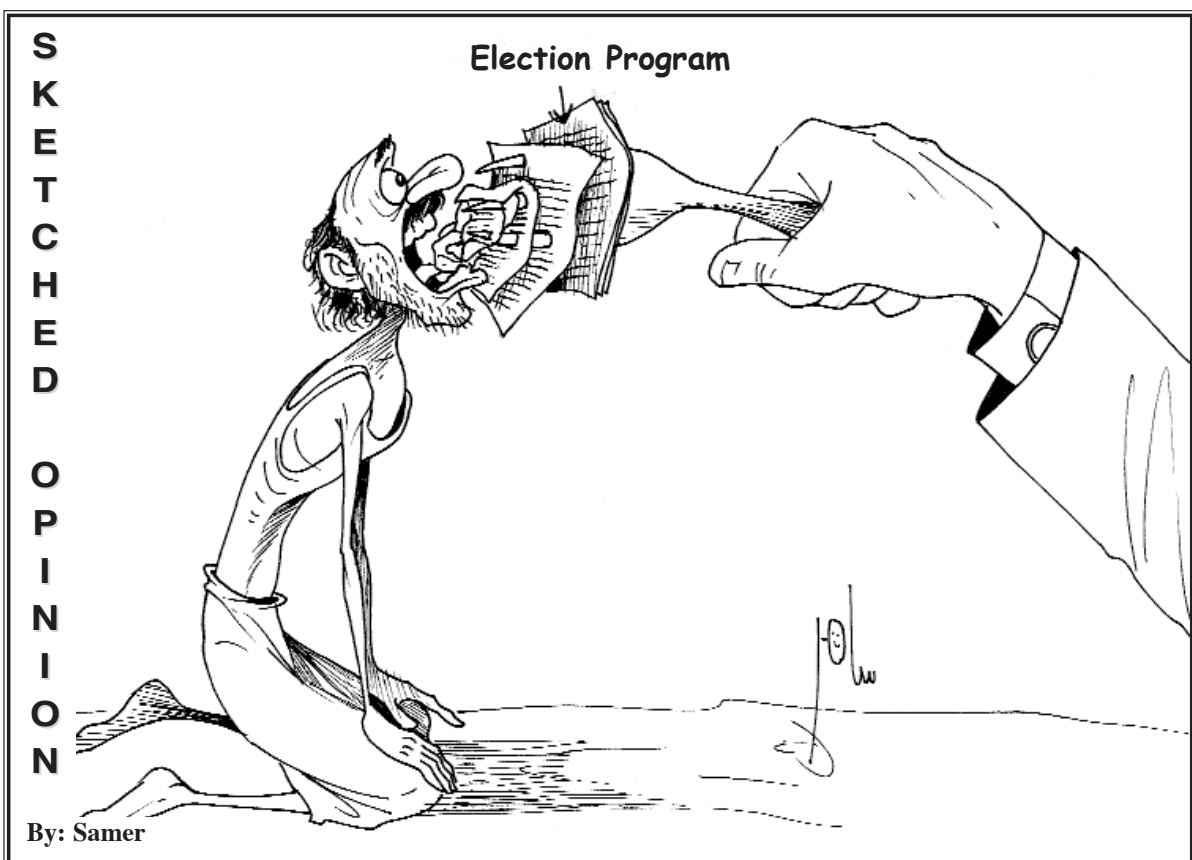
I was very pleased with the political festivities that covered our entire country, rural and urban areas, when flags and pictures were seen in every part of Yemen.

I would have been very pleased if the cultural festivities that began in Sana'a, when it was declared capital of Arab culture, would have reached the remotest village in the desert or atop mountains and small towns and villages. They need their share of the book. It would have been a great thing for reading to go to the sons of small towns and villages who are as enthusiast for knowledge as much as their yearning for pure water.

It can be taken for granted to say that the spread of small spots of backwardness in the body of the one nation makes its entire progress impossible.

Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Maqaleh is Yemen's prominent poet and intellectual. He is the director of the Yemeni Center for Studies.

Source: 26September Newspaper.



By: Samer

Letters to the Editor

Supposed Nasrallah victory

It was ironic to see Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah give a victory speech in Beirut amid the city's ruins and destruction by Israel. So Hezbollah is claiming this as a great victory — a victory for what, may we ask? How much territory did they conquer? How many Israeli troops did they kill?

Israel succeeded in killing hundreds of Lebanese citizens and Hezbollah fighters — at least 10 times more than Hezbollah. Israel captured hundreds of square miles of Lebanese territory,

as compared to zero Israeli territory captured by Hezbollah. Israel's vast destruction of Lebanon and Hezbollah's infrastructure overshadows any destruction of Israel. The only thing Hezbollah achieved was firing hundreds of rockets hidden behind civilian homes and from under deep concrete tunnels like cowards.

It seems the Muslim world, especially us Arabs, is living in a constant state of denial of reality. We're living in our fantasy world of illusions and dreams. Accepting a problem is the

first step toward its solution. Unless and until we begin facing reality and rejecting denial, we can't begin to solve our many problems. The Western world as well as the Eastern world (China, Japan, etc) are leaving us far behind. Our escape into religious fascism and fundamentalism must end if we're to progress; otherwise, there's no hope for any of us.

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Saddam's trial in context: Episode of victors' injustice

By: Nicola Nasser

American and European official and public opinion reactions to Saddam Hussein's guilty verdict on Sunday artificially removed both the trial and the death sentence out of context and focused instead on "flaws" in the legal technicalities of a fair trial and on death penalty as a punishment, which exposed the trial/s in Baghdad as merely another episode in the U.S.-British so far unsuccessful efforts to establish their occupation of Iraq and to develop the current status quo there as the new order.

Saddam's trials were staged to buy the U.S. and British leaders as well as the rulers of their new Iraq some time for political survival, but the trials needed no time to prove they are counterproductive and will in no way make the conclusion of a farce trial a turning point, a "milestone" or an end of era as President George W. Bush and Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki prematurely stated.

Democrats' crushing victory in the U.S. mid-term election was the latest proof that his administration's gimmick of orchestrating trials of Saddam Hussein was a failure that clearly turned the pre-planned verdict against Saddam into a popular verdict against Bush himself, in a referendum on his performance in the war on Iraq that broke his grip on power in Washington by depriving him of ruling with his own Republican party in charge of both houses on Capitol Hill, as he has done for six years.

While the western public opinion has criticized the trial on the grounds of its legal flaws the official European, Australian and Russian reaction in particular was confined to criticizing the death penalty and to some warnings against the fallout of the verdict on the Iraqi internal situation. Without underestimating both accounts this reaction fell short of Iraqi as well as Arab expectations: A farce trial orchestrated by an occupying power with the aim of changing a regime by an outside invading force outside the framework of international law should have had the

priority to condemn as a matter of principle.

American and western experts and mainstream media, like Nehal Buhta of Human Rights Watch (HRW), Malcolm Smart, Director of the Middle East and North Africa Programme, Sonya Sceats of the international law program at Chatham House, the Amnesty International, the New York Times and The Times of London have condemned or criticized the trial as a "shabby affair," a "shameless show trial concocted for political purposes," a "circus," and a "deeply flawed and unfair" trial where "political interference undermined the independence and impartiality of the court" by which "Iraq got neither the full justice nor the full fairness it deserved."

Justice served or not, the pre-staged trials are unsuccessfully trying to put on trial not only Saddam Hussein but the status quo ante, which on all comparable accounts has been proved preferable if not better than the status quo since the U.S.-led invasion in 2003. Nuri al-Maliki's statement that "The Saddam Hussein era is in the past now" was premature and could cost Iraq its territorial integrity, unity and sovereignty and hundreds of thousands more of Iraqi lives before it becomes a true description of the facts on the ground.

The fact that curfew was imposed on metropolitan Baghdad and three nearby provinces, including Iraq's largest province of Al-Anbar, Baghdad's international airport was closed, all US-led and commanded Iraqi troops and security forces were put on high alert and all military leaves were cancelled on the eve of Saddam's verdict testify contrary to al-Maliki's statement. All those precautionary measures do not indicate in any way that Saddam is already a bygone history. Al-Maliki government's recent decision to retract a U.S.-sponsored legislation to purge tens of thousands of Baathists except for some 1,500 top party officials is a further proof that Saddam and his party are still a power to reckon with.

U.S.-made Tribunal

Of course justice was not served. Saddam's trials have proved to be the worst form of victors' injustice, where

Al-Malki -- whose Dawa party had been behind the Dujail assassination attempt -- was trying the man whom he failed to assassinate during wartime when the man was the constitutional president of his country and where Bush, the leader of the occupying power, was trying the legitimate leader of the occupied country.

All evidence confirm Saddam trials are American in all except for conducting the proceedings in Arabic instead of English by Iraqis instead of Americans, which was the only logical option to convey the American message to Iraqis who do not understand English, thus turning the tribunal into another U.S. propaganda outlet to support the Voice of America and Al-Hurra satellite TV channel.

The "Iraqi Governing Council" the occupiers installed immediately after the invasion in 2003 established the "Iraqi Higher Criminal Court" with the permission of U.S. ruler Paul Bremer's Coalition Provisional Authority on Dec. 13, 2003, three days before Saddam Hussein's capture.

Scott Horton, chair of the International Law Committee of the New York City Bar Association, said: "This entire process from beginning to end is being closely superintended by the United States," he told IPS. "This whole process is funded by a 138-million-dollar grant from Congress and a large staff of people working out of the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad called the 'Regimes Crime Unit'."

Horton said Washington has especially tight control over the tribunal's schedule: "Access to the courtroom is controlled by the Americans, security is controlled by the Americans, and the Americans have custody over the defendants who must be produced before the trial can go forward, so whether they have the trial on day x or day y depends on the Americans giving their okay," he said.

The U.S. and Britain selected the judges, who were sent to London for training; "rehearsals" were staged in Italy and the Netherlands. Any judges who showed signs of impartiality were dismissed. Three defense lawyers and one witness were kidnapped and executed during this farce of a tribunal,

held deep in Baghdad's Green Zone behind bulletproof barriers and under armed guard. (David Walsh, World Socialist Web Site, 7 November 2006)

Whose Moral Authority

The victors' unjust trial also lacked moral authority. "We cannot even claim moral superiority," wrote Robert Fisk, for if Saddam's mistakes are to be "the yardstick against which all our iniquities are judged, what does that say about us? We have won. We have inflicted justice upon the man whose country we invaded and eviscerated and caused to break apart."

"Iraq is now swamped with mass murderers, guilty of rape and massacre and throat-slitting and torture in the years since our 'liberation' of Iraq. Many of them work for the Iraqi government we are currently supporting, democratically elected, of course. And these war criminals, in some cases, are paid by us, through the ministries we set up under this democratic government. And they will not be tried. Or hanged. That is the extent of our cynicism. And our shame. Have ever justice and hypocrisy been so obscenely joined?" (Robert Fisk, The Independent, Nov. 7, 2006)

The invasion of 2003 was a war crime; in the subsequent three-and-a-half years, the U.S. occupation was responsible for the deaths of 655,000 Iraqis according to a John Hopkins University study; from 1991 to 2003 the United Nations sanctions imposed under the U.S. pressure claimed the lives of one million Iraqis through malnutrition and disease.

Refuting Bush's statement that the trial was "a landmark event in the history of Iraq (and) a milestone in the Iraqi people's efforts to replace the rule of a tyrant with the rule of law," which the New York Times described as "overreacting," Malcolm Smart called the trial an "an opportunity missed" and said it "should have been a major contribution towards establishing justice and the rule of law in Iraq."

But it was not! Worse the fallout from the "missed opportunity" could create further obstacles to moving from a one-party-one-leader system into a multi-party western-style democratic

one, because the verdict if executed would doom reconciliation efforts and exacerbate the internal Iraqi divide to the point of no return away from a full-fledged civil war to settle it.

To judge with an obvious overwhelming vengeance the leader of a one-party system that ruled the majority of the non-western world during the cold war era at the hands and from the "liberal" perspective of his enemies and the enemies of the system could not be a fair trial; neither could be to judge him in isolation of the ongoing struggle between what he symbolizes and its antithesis.

The Real Divide

However it is still too early to say the saga of Saddam Hussein and what his era stands for is over, because he, whether dead or alive, symbolizes the ongoing and unabated fierce and brutal struggle between the occupiers and the occupied and between two visions: One offered by the American occupying power for Iraq and the region and one offered by Pan-Arabism as symbolized by Saddam Hussein and Jamal Abdul Nasser of Egypt before him, despite their mistakes and flaws of their approaches and systems.

Twice the US bought official Arab connivance or silence for targeting Iraq in 1991 and 2003 by offering to weigh in on Israel to withdraw from the Arab territories it occupies since 1967 in a land for peace deal but twice Arab governments were tricked to sacrifice Iraq for nothing. Therefore in Palestine, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and Egypt in particular any calls for celebrating Saddam's downfall would fall on deaf public ears; at the official it's another story.

Iranian and Kuwaiti cheers were very well understandable, but they should not obscure the fact that they are an expression of solace and dominated by the overwhelming vengeance of the foes, but could not in any way be interpreted as proof that the peoples of both countries would not come sooner or later to their good senses to put Saddam's trials in their proper historical context.

The Iraqi cheers from more than 17 ethnic and sectarian organized foes are

similarly understandable, but more resistant to common sense because Saddam represents their antithesis and their battle with what the man stands for, whether he is alive or dead, may never be won; however this doesn't justify short memory on their part.

True thousands of their followers were killed by Saddam's state, but they were killed in battle while fighting the "dictatorship" during war time against Iran in the north and against the US in 1991 in the south; the victims were not carrying flowers and celebrating family events at their homes, but were carrying weapons supplied by Iraq's war enemies and playing in the hands of those enemies in battles on which their ruling leaders now commemorate as "uprisings."

The unfolding "mass graves" tragically contain alongside their bodies the bodies of thousands of Baathists, Saddamists and official Iraqi troops whom they slaughtered in cold blood. The mass graves of the victims of their current atrocities that will be discovered in future will condemn their leaders who incited and recruited them at least as accountable as Saddam if not more in any objective reading of history.

Saddam Hussein's purged "party comrades" may have more convincing grievances against his rule and could have a more credible case against him in court, but -- unlike their sectarian and ethnic counterparts -- would not call in a foreign invasion to empower them to settle their accounts and did not hesitate for a moment, together with other national, pan-Arab and Islamic opposition to Saddam, regardless of sect or ethnicity, to join forces against the occupation of their country.

The issue at stake here is the foreign occupation that destroyed the Iraqi state and not the dictatorship or the democratic structure of an Iraqi regime in an occupied stateless country; all, Saddam inclusive, will be judged by where they stand vis-à-vis the occupation.

Nicola Nasser is a veteran Arab journalist in Kuwait, Jordan, UAE and Palestine. He is based in Ramallah, West Bank of the Israeli-occupied Palestinian territories.



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The Capital Secretariat and IPEC / International Labour Organization

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

The Working Child Rehabilitation Center in Sana'a announces a vacancy post as a Project Coordinator for annual period of one year. The incumbent will report to IPEC/ILO office in Sana'a.

Requirements

Education: Advanced university degree in relevant field.

Experience: At least five years of professional experience at the national level in the occupational area.

Languages: Excellent command of English and Arabic.

Competencies: Knowledge of programming and budgeting, project management administration. Good communication skills. Good computer application skills.

CVs will be received from 9am to 1pm from Saturday to Wednesday.

Please address your CVs to:

**International Programme on the Elimination of the Child
Labour, Yemen Office
Apartment # 23-4th floor Al-Nuzaily Building.Hadda St.
P.O.Box: 551
Sana'a-Yemen**

Uniting Arab economies

By: Abu Hamood Siddiqui

Arab countries need to link their economies in complementary frameworks if they want to have a stronger business image across the world. As the regional economies boom, it is the right time to evaluate joint economic action and give priority to collective rather than individual country-based interests, writes Abu Hamood. The 18-member Arab Economic and Social Council formed in late 2005, is all set to finalise a strategy for the full implementation of Greater Arab Free Trade Zone.

The Arab League's follow-up committee has recently reviewed ways to formulate the overall structure of Arab Free Trade Zone in order boost economic ties. It comes amid reports that showed overall trade internally within Arab states has increased following involvement of the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council in free trade zone pacts and the implementation of the GCC Customs Union.

Between 1998 and 2005 internal Arab trade exports jumped from US \$14 billion to US \$41 billion and imports increased from US \$13 billion to US \$37 billion. In comparison to total exports by member nations, throughout the seven years Arab internal trade exports increased from 11 percent to nearly 15 percent, while Arab trade imports, when compared to the total imports, increased from under 4 percent to over 8 percent. During the same period, trade exports of food products increased from US \$1.82 billion to over US \$7 billion and trade exports of petrochemicals increased from US \$2.24 billion to just under US \$6 billion.

The Arab League-sponsored study noted that the size of internal trade is determined by a variety of factors, such as commercial conditions, transportation and customs. It added that cross-border trade among member-nations is much smoother than the commerce between geographically distant countries. All these things hint at the acute necessity of a greater free trade zone in the region.

After reviewing these developments, the Secretariat of the Arab League has prepared a framework for a new strategy for joint Arab economic action. This strategy will be presented at the Arab Economic and Social Council meeting, and then it will go to the Arab summit for approval in March.



Member Countries of the Greater Arab Free Trade Area.

Apart from the full implementation of the Gulf Arab Free Trade Zone the strategy also aims at establishing the Arab Union by 2015 and then the Arab Common Market in 2020.

Although these objectives had always remained among major priorities since the establishment of the Arab League, they had not yet materialised in a practical sense. The Arab League had made several failed attempts over the past 50 years to achieve economic integration. There were the 1957 Agreement on Economic Unity, the 1964 formation of the Arab Common Market, and the 1981 Facilitation and Promotion of Inter-Arab Trade Agreement (the "Facilitation Agreement").

Geopolitical tensions, differences and fluctuations in policies of Arab countries, a lack of strong commitment to enforce collective decisions and agreements were afew of the reasons which undermined joint Arab actions in the past.

However, Arab countries are more aware of the realities and the demands of the global economy. The removal of trade barriers, the growing importance of multinational companies and developing consensus against national projectionist policies are paving way for the development of the regional economic bloc. In other words, most of the Arab countries now have started realising the importance of a Gulf Arab Free Trade Zone and a Arab Common Market. Almost every Arab country is witnessing economic boom and it is the right time to join hands to boost further economic growth.

Every sector of the economies of the region should strive to this goal.

Arab customs union

A greater free trade zone is also the basic requirement for the Arab Customs Union, which in turn would contribute to greater growth of all the regional economies. The dire need of a greater Arab Customs Union is also evident from the continuing success of the GCC economies, which already have a customs union.

Let us take the UAE as an example. The country's commerce with other GCC countries increased by 54 percent during 2000-2005, thanks to the regional customs union. A recent study by the Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry revealed that the average annual growth of the UAE trade with GCC countries reached 6.1 percent after joining the Customs Union, while it was only 2.3 percent before. While the trade with GCC members comprised 6.3 percent of the UAE's overall global trade, the imports had increased by 101 percent and exports rose by 128 percent.

Boosting overall Arab trade requires therefore unified customs, simplified procedures, strict application of guidelines set by Arab Standardisation Authority and a proper mechanism to solve the bottlenecks in the flow of goods along regional borders.

Agricultural integration

Recently, the Arab Agricultural Engineers Union convened its 16th technical conference to discuss "Agricultural Integration under the Establishment of Greater Arab Free Trade Zone."

"For 10 years, member-states reduced customs duties by 10 percent and in 2005 the duty free trade went into effect," said Yahya Bakour, secretary general of the Arab Agricultural Engineers Union in The Jordan Times.

The engineers discussed the effects of the free trade zone on agricultural investment in Arab countries and its role to increase agricultural exports. "The Arab Free Trade Zone is one step towards achieving a full customs union," said Jordan's Minister of Agriculture Akaf Zu'bi. "Agriculture cannot be developed in Arab countries without integration and co-operation between them.

"Although Arab countries failed in achieving a comprehensive union, they have reached some agreements such as the free trade zone, which includes agricultural products," said

Jordanian Agricultural Engineers Union President Abdul Hadi Falahat. "We hope the time of hampering the flow of products traded between Arab countries will end. When we reach this, we will be on the right track."

In this era of large economic blocs there is no room for small and fragmented markets, which remain on the standby to connect to the larger economic blocs through unequal relations with the economically advanced countries. It is high time Arab countries link their economies to each other in complementary frameworks, if they want to have a better business image. It is the right time to pause and evaluate joint Arab economic action, give priority to collective rather than individual country-based interests.

The best example is the recent free trade zone created between Iran and Iraq, two countries that fought wars for over a decade. The southern Province of Basra recently established free trade with Iran. The provincial council in Basra has separate trade agreements with Tehran. Shops in Basra and other southern cities are crammed with Iranian goods. Exact trade figures are hard to obtain in Iraq, but Tehran is believed to have become the Baghdad's top trade partner.

Iran hopes the warehouses at the new zone, the first between the two countries, will reduce transport costs for Iraqi traders. To assist the transport of its goods, Iran is constructing a highway linking the new zone to the provincial centre of the city of Basra. It is also repairing Al-Tanoma Bridge on the Shatt Al-Arab Waterway.

Trade exchange between the countries is now estimated at nearly US \$3 billion. Iranian exports to Iraq include food stuffs, household utensils, clothes, agricultural implements and electrical appliances. Iraqi exports to Iran include dates and hides. Apparently, no other two Arab countries have a history of such strained relations which took them to war for more than 10 years, but then realising the economic benefits, they chose to come together to create various free trade zones.

Other Middle East countries should also take a cue from them and sincerely start working for a full-fledged Greater Arab Free Trade Zone. After all nothing is more important than economic prosperity of a country or a region.

Abu Hamood Siddiqui is a UAE-based freelance business analyst.

Business In Brief

President Saleh chairing delegation to London

President Ali Abdullah Saleh is chairing the official delegation to the Consultative Group meeting in order to assert the government's commitments. The meeting is expected to raise funds to finance Yemen's third five-year developmental strategy to facilitate its accession to the Gulf Cooperative Council, amounting to US \$48 billion over five years.

Yemen to unify trade standards with GCC

The Yemeni authority for standards signed a memorandum of understanding with the Guld Agency for standards in order to unify the standards of products traded between Yemen and the GCC and develop a mechanism to monitor the products traded as well as an exchange of information on the development of trade in the region.

Power interruption investigated

A 12-hour power failure to almost all parts of the country which started at 8 am on the Nov. 10 is being investigated, sources at the Ministry of Electricity indicated that the nationwide failure was due to simultaneous disconnection of prime power links in Al-Makha which shut the whole system down and took over 10 hours to repair.

1,086 cases of corruption on trail

The minister of justice, Ghazi Al-Aghbary, said 1,086 lawsuits involving corruption of government officials and employees and misuse of public funds are being prosecuted. The total amount of lost funds from those cases amounts to YR 1.65 billion and US \$900 thousand. The minister however indicated that the verdicts of this type of corruptions are rarely enforced and the Central Authority for Control and Audit rarely follow up the execution of the verdicts.

Yemen and Eritrea to establish joint fishing company

Sources at the Ministry of Fisheries said Yemen and Eritrea are negotiating to establish a joint fishing company. The feasibility study recommended the company as it will serve the development of both countries, however the terms of the agreement have not been finalized.

Anti-monopoly government agency formed

The Ministry of Trade and Industry formed a government agency to promote competition and prevent monopolies. They will ensure stability of prices and the availability of commodities in the Yemeni market. The agency will be chaired by the trade minister in its initial stages and is it will work in coordination with the trade committee in the parliament.

Natural gas brings more employment

The Middle East executive director of Total said the progress level in the construction of the Yemen Liquefied Natural Gas Project has exceeded 35 percent and there were 4,000 workers this year and the number will double next year in order to start natural gas production in line with the initial plan.

Women affected more by poverty

An academic study indicated that women are affected more by Yemen's poverty and although their percentage of the population is slighter higher than men they continue to suffer from illiteracy, under-education and they lack of skills to help them find employment and achieve economic activity. The study was undertaken by Prof. Bader Saleh of Aden University and concluded that the current poverty-alleviation strategies do not do enough to help women escape the poverty trap.

OPINION

Water Crises

By: Raidan Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf
alsaqqaf@gmail.com

The UNDP's recent Human Development Report was on the theme of power, poverty and the global water crises. The report pointed out Yemen as an emergency case, indicating that Yemen has one of the world's lowest fresh water availability and the amount is dropping far below the global average.

With water becoming scare it will ultimately become more expensive, the report cites that violent conflict took place in locations such as Taiz where civil unrest resulted from water scarcity. With a population doubling by 2025 such civil unrest is expected to increase and spread and prices of water will keep increasing, especially as water extraction is unregulated and 99 percent of extraction is done by the privet sector, which will sell the extracted water to the highest bidder.

The pattern of water extraction increases the problem. In urban areas such as Sana'a scarcity and prices of water will exacerbate the crises especially as the population of Sana'a booms with immigrants

from other parts of the country.

Massive rural to urban migration is one of the consequences and its affect is related to the crises foreseen in the agricultural sector which employs 55 percent of the workforce and provides livelihood for 70 percent of the population. With increasing water prices and scarcity, agriculture productivity is bound to decrease, with the knowledge that non-rainfall dependent agricultural production amounts for over 80 percent of national agricultural production, therefore water scarcity will not only reduce the viability of agricultural activity and livelihood in rural areas. It will also decrease food security and force the economy to import more and more of its food products from the international market.

Yemen cannot cope with a water crisis of this size. There should be some fundamental policy changes and effective solutions to tackle this problem. Yemen isn't the only country suffering from water crises and it should learn from the pioneering solutions implemented by other countries. The Yemeni government should demand the technical assistance from the international community to solve this problem.



VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) Programme invites Yemeni nationals to apply for the following position with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

Post Title: National UNV Protection Clerk

Responsibilities:

Under the direct supervision of the Associate Protection Officer, the incumbent is expected to perform the following tasks:-

- Assist reception staff at the reception area;
- Type and renew attestation letters for mandate and asylum seekers;
- Maintain updated and accurate data of asylum seekers, refugees and persons of concern to UNHCR into the database;
- Prepare documents on behalf of refugees applying for work permits, or those accepted for resettlements;
- Perform other duties as required by the supervisor.

Qualifications:

- Completion of secondary education.
- Computer literacy.
- Flexibility in responding to additional requirements.
- No less than two years of experience in this field.
- Very good knowledge of Arabic and English. Knowledge of other languages (Ethiopian and Somali) will be considered as an asset.
- Strong commitment to volunteerism as a tool to achieve sustainable Development.

Interested candidates are requested to send their cover letter and C.V. to kawtar.zerouali@undp.org .

For more information on UNV Programme and the position, please visit <http://www.unyemen.org/unv/>

UNV is an equal opportunity organization and female candidates are encouraged to apply.

Deadline for receiving applications is 23rd November, 2006.



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International Day for Tolerance (16 November 2006)

It is easy to say, "I have no prejudices" or "I am not racist, so it has nothing to do with me", or "I didn't invite those refugees"

It is hard to say, "I may not be to blame for what happened in the past but I want to take responsibility for making sure it doesn't continue into the future".

At the initiative of UNESCO, 1995 was declared the United Nations Year for Tolerance, and it saw the launching of a world-wide campaign for tolerance and non-violence. The International Day for Tolerance grew out of the momentum of that Year. Building tolerance and trust in diverse communities is not done overnight, but takes time and commitment. Building tolerance requires access to education. Intolerance is often rooted in ignorance and fear: fear of the unknown, of the "other", other cultures, religions and nations. Intolerance is also closely linked to an exaggerated sense of self-worth and pride: notions taught and learned at an early age. Therefore in coming years, we need to place greater emphasis on educating children about tolerance, human rights and fundamental freedoms. But we should not forget that education does not end in school, that adults - firstly as individuals capable of committing acts of intolerance but more importantly in their capacity as parents, law-makers and law-enforcement officials - also need to be considered a priority target of our educational efforts. An

International Day for Tolerance can serve as an annual occasion for tolerance education as well as for wider social and political reflection and debate on local and global problems of intolerance. It is a moment to take stock of the progress made during the year and to propose fresh policies to close remaining gaps.

all different
all equal



The "all different - all equal" campaign

All over the world, societies suffer from a growing hostility and racism towards minorities. Whether it is in America against the continuous flow of Mexican's, in Europe where the refugees from Eastern Europe and North Africa continue to flow or in the Middle East, Yemen especially with the large numbers of refugees fleeing their countries in the African horn seeking a better life.

The European Youth Campaign "all different - all equal" against racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and intolerance was launched in 2000 in order to bring people together and give extra momentum to the struggle against all forms of intolerance.

The Council of Europe created an educational pack with posters, comic book and even a passport for this campaign.

For a campaign to be effective it needs

more than posters and T-shirts. Together with the support of pilot projects and the organization of training courses, a large effort was made by all the partners of the European Youth Campaign to produce support materials. The crucial importance of educational materials had already been recognized by the youth organizations cooperating with the European Youth Centre when they decided to publish "Alien 93" in time for the Vienna Summit. Young people are often their own best educators and this concept of peer education can be successful in fighting racism and intolerance as is shown in the manual «DOMINO». Tools for intercultural education in informal settings are provided in the «Education Pack». Importantly, such publications benefited from the input of knowledge and experience of educators from different countries - this meant that the materials could be adapted for use across Europe and beyond. One interesting idea that the campaign adapted itself was the Passport Against Intolerance, first published by France-Libertés - Foundation Danielle Mitterrand.

Discrimination in Yemen

In its concluding observations on the fifteenth and sixteenth periodic reports of Yemen published in August 2006, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination expressed its concern over the situation of the population group known as the Al-Akhdam, who faces discrimination on the basis of work and descent. The Committee specifically mentions the lack of recognition of this group in their report, and the barriers that exist for the Al-Akhdam to effectively exercise their right to own property, and request the State party to provide further information thereon to the Committee.

In Yemen, the marginalized people of African origins community constitutes an estimated 250,000-500,000 people who suffer various forms of discrimination. A

comprehensive shadow report submitted to CERD prior to the review provides in-depth information about the past and present social, economic, and political exclusion of them. The report prepared by Ms. Huda Seif from Alternative World in collaboration with the International Dalit Solidarity Network (IDSN) suggests that the systematic discrimination against these marginalized people is a practiced social reality in contemporary Yemeni society. One of the findings is that the discrimination faced by them resembles the practices of "untouchability" and extreme social exclusion, experienced by the Dalits of South Asia. The marginalized groups in Yemen, particularly of African origin, are subjected to a caste-like system of discrimination.

An act of racism means refusing someone, something or some service to which he or she is entitled, on the grounds of his or her origin or beliefs.

It also means:

Physical or verbal abuse on the sole grounds of a person's ethnic background, race, nationality or religion. Incitement to racial hatred, violence and discrimination.

Till date, no laws have been enacted to make punishable the socio-cultural practices of persecution of African people in Yemen, which include prohibitions on access to land, housing, market places, and public health care. According to the shadow report, they have for centuries suffered discrimination and persecution. They are systematically excluded from mainstream society as an "untouchable" ethnic outcaste.



Tolerance among Yemeni children

In order to test the tolerance among Yemeni children, Yemen Times did a small survey among a sample of Yemeni children between the ages of 6 to 13 years old. They were asked questions about whether they would like to have friends who are different, whether of darker skin colour, different origin, class and social layer or friends who are handicapped or disadvantaged physically.

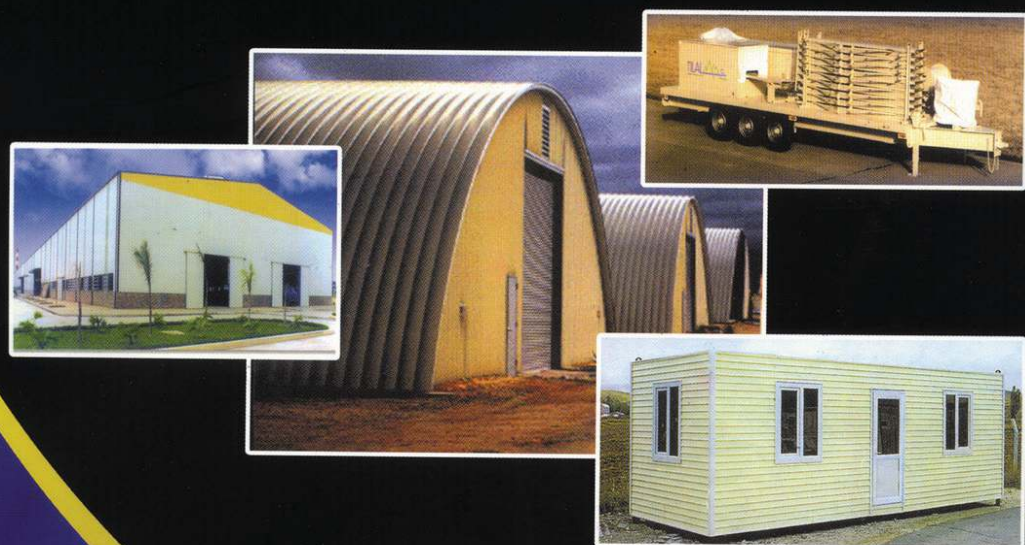
While Ali an 11 years old boy answered that he doesn't mind to have friends who are different his brother Aseel who is 10 years old disagreed completely and decided that boys with dark skin are mean and wicked because the boy who sits near him in class is dark skinned and bullies him. Maram, an 11 years old girl said that it didn't matter where her friends come from as long as they are nice to her. While Omaima a 12 years old girl said that she feels sorry for the poor girls in her class and she often shares her sandwiches or sweets with them. "my mom tells me that not all people are privileged and that we should thank God for our blessings" she said.

On whether a disfigured girl could have friends almost everyone agreed that she is likely not to. Osama a nine years old boy said that the other children would not want to play with her because she is mutilated, although he has friends from many nationalities. Abdulsalam a 13 years old boy admitted that he would rather have friends who are Muslim agreed that it would be difficult. Girls seemed more tolerant and sympathetic than boys. Mubarak, an 8 years old boy coming from the rural areas conveyed that he at first thought that no one wants to play with him because he is a villager. "But then I realized it doesn't matter and made friends with the boys regardless of where they come from". Of 8 children questioned for this report 4 boys and 4 girls, none of the girls held negative attitudes against different people. 50 percent of the boys did, and it seemed like in Aseel case it was due to previous unpleasant experiences with minority groups and Kholood a 9 years old girl said that she didn't get the opportunity to meet different children and she welcomes their friendship.

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